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How does social media use affect creativity?

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How does social media use affect creativity?

by

Fardina S. Rahman

An abstract of a Project in Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

Fall 2022

Buffalo State

State University of New York

Department of Creativity and Change Leadership

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

Social media is a parasitic relationship that is more beneficial for data companies and the platforms than it is the user. However, users still reap many unexpected benefits from engaging with different socials. Through observing how users interact with the platforms and each other using a Creativity focused framework, it is quite observable social media can be an effective tool to improve one's creativity if used properly. Social media facilitates a combination of humor and community in a way that is difficult for traditional media and community to replicate. While humor inspires positive emotion and novelty and laughter binds a community together, only social media can combine the two in a formation that provides support for those with niche interests. Despite this unique benefit, the creative benefits of social media are mirrored by their negative counterparts, specifically jealousy and envy. Any given user may experience envy of the audience and respect that comes with another user's creativity, and this envy seems to create a barrier to entry in the minds of those who are not naturally talented content creators.

Additionally, social media comes with extremely fascinating and unique challenges, from the potential for a creator to be canceled for past social wrongs, classic cultural insensitivity in new virtual forms (ex: digital blackface) and the ever present and proliferating threat of getting content stolen. The most important aspect to recognize in this relationship between creative users and social media platforms is that personal data is harvested as a by-product of users engaging with new and creative content. Creativity on social media is incentivized then not for its own sake, but for the sake of the market and to improve the algorithm in a cylindrical process that makes creative authenticity difficult to identify.

Keywords: social media, creativity, positive, negative, algorithm,

Fardina S. Rahman

Your Signature

Date: December 20, 2022

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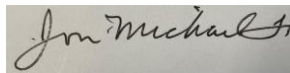
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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

Purpose and Description of Project

In the past, culture could be defined by the ones advancing it. If one were to ask a child of the 1940s who represented the media they consumed, they might reply with Cary Grant. A 1960s youth might answer with Julie Andrews. One could categorically start from the dawn of radio and finish in the 2000s and assemble an incredible list of actors, singers, and journalists who defined their own culture, acting as the voice of the zeitgeist. However, once one approaches the 2010s, and beyond, it suddenly becomes quite difficult to define the age based on the creators who inhabit it. If media had been a straight, gray line for most of history, then modern media is a crooked and zagged line, colorfully flying from point to point. In the current landscape of content creation and social media, chaos is the standard, and order is unusual. Social media circumvents the usual media gatekeepers and allows the average person with a creative idea to potentially rise to the top (Napoli, 2015). Typically, reaching any level of fame requires support from people and/or organizations already in prestigious positions. Social media has been ushered in to be a facet of life. It is more uncommon to hear that a person has no social media. Up until last year, I didn't have any. Now I use it daily.

Before my research, I thought the situation was simple. A parasitic relationship is more beneficial in favor of the companies than it is the user. A prime example of premature closure on my part. Social media has its negatives, but from my preliminary research, it can be effectively utilized to grow an individual's creativity and help them find a community.

Creativity has existed since the evolution of humankind but has only been formally studied since the 1950s (Guildford, 1950). Social media exists because of creativity. Social media was born in 1997 (Hines, 2022). Social media has proven to be consistently profitable,

with platforms generating more than a billion dollars a year and enough power to influence political elections on a massive scale (Gutmann, 2020). In 25 years, we've learned several things, and internet rules that didn't exist in 1997 have become more commonplace and unspoken. The web has developed from a limited wild west to a large ocean that is complicated and complex. It has been widely established that social media companies' main goal is to keep users engaged, so it can profit from users' personal information and tendencies. Since interests are ever-growing and marketers are dealing with more competition than ever, this is an ongoing battle to have the best content every second of the day.

My personal goal during this project is to have a better understanding of social media, creativity, and how they intersect. I never cared to use social media in the past, but now I think there are ways to facilitate creativity on existing social media platforms. With the turn of Covid-19, we've seen an increase in social media use, and it was an important tool for those that were far away due to quarantine or government-mandated shutdowns. It allows us to keep in contact with each other.

Rationale for Selection

Social media platforms collect information about users for three main reasons, sell user information for profit, sell partner company's products and improve their algorithm. This absolute reliance on users drives companies to do their best to accommodate the needs of their users. Social media platform companies want the most content creators and users to collect the maximum amount of data. Users control the digital environment, which is the key reason social media can be creative and facilitate creativity.

The digital environment is so interesting to me because I like talking to people and solving problems. That's why I chose to go into communications. Truthfully learning to use

social media was a skill to develop for a public relations career. I had no interest in it. However the relationship between users and social media holds a lot of my attention. Due to my educational background, I've been on both sides. I've read a lot of material that highlights the pros and cons of social media use. However, I think the most meaningful thing I've gained is the understanding that social media platforms need users to exist and provide content. Social media is not a requirement to participate in society, (yet) although it's now an ingrained part of society. Also, seemingly overnight, most young people made the transition from Facebook to Instagram, and now TikTok is considered the youth app.

I read scholarly articles on social media and creativity. It is a medium that is constantly shifting to keep users engaged. I have gathered a literature review that I've been building for this topic. Using the data I gathered, I plan to write a master's project that may serve as a foundation for future academic publication.

To accomplish my goals, I'll need to do a few things. First, I need to do more research into my topic. Then, I need to grow my understanding of the APA format. Third, I understand the need for a set of citation guidelines. My goal is to build the foundation of research for further use in the future.

I think this project will help others for a number of reasons. First, for my project, I am going to stay in the style of academia but reach back to my undergraduate roots and write it as accessible as possible for the average reader. One of the biggest things I noticed is how jargon-filled academic papers are and that can isolate readers that have interest in the topic but not necessarily the educational background. Finally, with the understanding that creativity can flourish in digital environments, it may help people that want to use it but are trying to avoid the

pitfalls. As well as people, like me, who initially wrote it off with it having no value for facilitating creativity.

SECTION TWO: PERTINENT LITERATURE AND RESOURCES

Scholarly articles will be my main resource, my school has an online database with countless articles. I will focus on articles written in the last ten years for more recent and relevant information, with a few exceptions. Some articles written prior to ten years are relevant information and will be included. Below is my literature review and is alphabetical order and annotations for each source.

Literature Review

Ali, A., Wang, H., & Khan, A. N. (2019). Mechanism to enhance team creative performance through social media: A transactive memory system approach. *Computers in Human Behavior, 91*, 115–126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.09.033>

In terms of knowledge management, this study creates a mechanism to examine the effects of the three dimensions of social media (social, cognitive, and hedonic use) on team creative performance. I would like to argue that the hedonic used with purpose obligates a system of exchange between the social media creator and their audience. The creator makes content that occupies and informs a system of thought or argument.

Burgess, J., Foth, M., & Klaebe, H. (2006). Everyday creativity as civic engagement: A cultural citizenship view of new media. In F. Papandrea (Ed.), *Proceedings 2006 Communications Policy; Research Forum* (pp. 1–16). Network Insight Institute. <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/5056/>

This article essentially predicted digital civic engagement. I would argue that social media almost acts as the primary method of engagement for young people. Creators who are political act as civic leaders of sorts.

Chen, N.-C., Brooks, M., Kocielnik, R., Hong, S. (Ray), Smith, J., Lin, S., Qu, Z., & Aragon, C. (2017). SparQs: Visual analytics for sparking creativity in social media exploration. In G. Meiselwitz (Ed.), *Social Computing and Social Media. Applications and Analytics* (pp. 394–405). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58562-8_30

In this study, they explored the notion that data from relevant research might be included into social media visualization tools to stimulate creativity and direct investigation. They did a content analysis of articles that dealt with social media in order to generate an effective overview of the field to use as the foundation for SparQs, a visual analytics tool that encourages exploration of social media. They found that tracking social media data is hard to find the patterns due to it being noisy, disorganized, or chaotic.

Choi, G. Y., & Behm-Morawitz, E. (2020). Discovering hidden digital producers: Understanding motivation and creativity in social media production. *Psychology of Popular Media*, 9(3), 318–327. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000240>

This article measures creativity by applying the self-determination theory and the 4 C's of creativity. They identified four media activities, text, photo, graphic, and video production. They surveyed digital producers. In the discussion, their research contradicts the research found by Pew Research Center that Youtube is not the most used social media field. The article takes the stance that the line is clear due to production being more of a labor-intensive process. The articles categorize their results: text production correlated with not-creative, graphic production with mini-c and little-c, and video production with Pro-c.

Cui, X., Yang, X., Liu, L., Cun, X., & Hu, D. (2018). The role of social media usage in enhancing team members' trust and team creativity. *PACIS 2018 Proceedings*.

<https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2018/227>

Online creation has undergone a significant transformation as a result of social media's quick development and rising popularity. Over the past ten years, social media has been increasingly embraced by businesses, creating potential to encourage team innovation and creativity. The use of social media by teams in organizations is investigated in this study.

de Saint-Laurent, C., Glăveanu, V. P., & Chaudet, C. (2020). Malevolent creativity and social media: creating anti-immigration communities on Twitter. *Creativity Research Journal*, 32, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2020.1712164>

This article discusses the community-building creativity that social media propagates, this case for something negative. There is still a great point to be made about how effective media makes community creation. According to their investigation, users of this social media platform who oppose immigration have a distinctive habit and utilize a number of particular tactics to create online echo chambers. One of these tactics involves the employment of novel terms and slogan variations that clearly define their identity and fulfill the practical goal of fostering community.

Gros, D., Wanner, B., Hackenholt, A., Zawadzki, P., & Knautz, K. (2017). World of streaming. motivation and gratification on Twitch. In G. Meiselwitz (Ed.), *Social Computing and Social Media. Human Behavior* (pp. 44–57). Springer International Publishing.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58559-8_5

This talks about gratification and award mentality on Twitch. I think that creativity can be argued to be a gratification method on streaming platforms in particular. One of the main conclusions demonstrates a relationship between the amount of time and money users spend on Twitch. The importance of the component "Socialization" is also noteworthy.

Hashimi, S. A. A., Muwali, A. A. A., Zaki, Y. E., & Mahdi, N. A. (2019). The effectiveness of social media and multimedia-based pedagogy in enhancing creativity among Art, Design, and Digital Media Students. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET)*, 14(21), Article 21. <https://doi.org/10.3991/>

Big data, cloud computing, social media, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and other rapidly developing technology advancements have prompted many instructors to pursue and implement a variety of digital tools in the classroom. They began implementing a technology-centered educational system in order to broaden their educational perspectives, boost the potential for innovatively combining concepts and imparting knowledge to their pupils, and expand their instructional techniques. They examine the intersection of creativity and technology in the classroom in this paper. This shows how an essential system can lead to long-term learning for people already engaged in Digital Media.

Hashimi, S. A., Mahdi, N., Muwali, A. A., & Zaki, Y. (2019). Proposing a framework for evaluating digital creativity in social media and multimedia-based art and design education. *Global Journal of Design Art and Education*, 9(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjae.v9i2.4238>

Researchers have begun examining the impact of developing social and digital applications in fostering students' creativity as their use among today's students and academics is expanding quickly. From this basic statement and the research supporting it, there is an aspect to digital play that cements the promotion of education and connection between concepts. Of course, this is an educationally-based concept, but it is still usable.

Helms, R.W.; Booij, Eric; and Spruit, M.R. Reaching out: Involving users in innovation tasks through social media, (2012). *ECIS 2012 Proceedings*.

193.<https://aisel.aisnet.org/ecis2012/193>

This discusses the corporate desire to pool from a collective creativity that exists on social media and how perceived closeness impacts innovation. If consumers feel closer to the product, they will inadvertently innovate for it without knowing. A creator's audience operates similarly, with the creator facilitating this innovation of content for a self-feeding cycle.

Hildebrand, C., Häubl, G., Herrmann, A., & Landwehr, J. R. (2013). When social media can be bad for you: Community feedback stifles consumer creativity and reduces satisfaction with self-designed products. *Information Systems Research*, 24(1), 14–29.

<https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.1120.0455>

This article can serve as a good counter argument for my thesis. This claims that creative processes are stifled by consumer reaction, which can be compared to feedback from this community on social platforms. While it does not support my argument, I might be able to structure a solid defense of social media from this point.

Hu, S., Gu, J., Liu, H., & Huang, Q. (2017). The moderating role of social media usage in the relationship among multicultural experiences, cultural intelligence, and individual creativity. *Information Technology & People*, 30(2), 265–281.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-04-2016-0099>

Studies have shown that, in contrast to informational social media use, socializing social media use enhances the association between intercultural experiences and cultural intelligence. This research argues that cultural intelligence informs individual creativity, and I could make the point that social media standardizes cultural intelligence and therefore leads to a sense of communal creativity (ex: okbuddy in Hasan's streams).

McKay, A. S., Grygiel, P., & Karwowski, M. (2017). Connected to create: A social network analysis of friendship ties and creativity. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 11(3), 284-294. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aca0000117>

This article focuses on the relationship between friendship and creativity. This supports my online collaboration aspect of my thesis. "These social connections allow them to gain new information, identify others who they can work with, and gain "buy-in" to implement their ideas." Researchers have examined the connection between social media and creativity for the last decade. They had two major hypotheses, the first one had mixed results with the high school students both nominating friends when they had similar creativity scores. The second hypothesis showed a positive relationship between friendship and originality, with people nominating people that score high on creativity regardless of friendship. They did not know that there was an age difference between the high school and elementary students. Notes that creativity research focuses on the individual. They also identify a correlation between creativity and popularity.

Peppler, K., & Solomou, M. (2011). Building creativity: collaborative learning and creativity in social media environments. *On the Horizon*, 19(1), 13–23.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/10748121111107672>

The article identified three components consistent with Csikszentmihalyi's research: the individuals, knowledge of domain, and field of informed experts. Individuals' impact on the field and where the emphasis is placed on the growing body of knowledge. The article notes that some social media platforms are easy to identify with creativity but others, the example given Amazon with its rating system, challenge the definition of creativity. The researchers specifically focus on the value of the ideas entered into social media. The reach they have and the length of life. They examine two games. Second Life and Quest Atlantis differ in content and objective, but the key is building a community online and how people use their creativity within a constrained arena. Social media allows us to see the collaboration that goes into content and is exponentially easier to track than it would be in the physical world.

Piller, F. T., Vossen, A., & Ihl, C. (2011). From social media to social product development: The Impact of social media on co-creation of innovation (SSRN Scholarly Paper No.

1975523). <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1975523>

This paper aims to discuss the impact of social media on customer co-creation in the innovation process. Customer co-creation denotes an active, creative, and social collaboration process between producers and customers (users), facilitated by a company, in the context of new product or service development. We propose a typology of co-creation activities to develop

conceptual arguments on how social media can impact the relationships among customers involved in co-creation and the relationship between customers and the hosting firm.

SECTION THREE: PROCESS

Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes

The foundation of my project is research and synthesizing the material into my insights found in section four. At this stage I started with articles that used keywords like creativity, social media, positives, negatives, algorithms etc. Then used the references some of the authors also used to cast a wider net. After reading through the articles, I annotated most of them by adding the title and summary of its contents or a short paragraph about something that stood out to me specifically for later use in my master's project. Once I had established an idea of what my project was trying to say, I looked for case examples. I asked my friends and family what they would categorize as big media moments and from general internet research. I focused on a few examples that I felt encompassed key aspects of creativity and social media. I wanted each example to reflect a part of the creative process. The master's project was proofed and ready for peer review in December. The outcome of my project will be a literature review and an articulation of my insights in section four.

Project Timeline-02/01/022-12/14/2022

Research: Over a period of four months, I read many articles, spoke to my peers and began writing my reflection on what I learned.

Concept Paper: Numerous revisions

Class submissions:

Concept Paper: 02/14/2022

Approval of Project: TBD

Sections 1-3: Monday, March 21

Section 4-6: Dropbox by Monday, April 18

Entire Project, Completed Master's Project Document to dropbox by:

Submission to Digital Commons, Completed Master's Project (approved for uploading by instructor) to Digital Commons.

Target date is December 20, 2022

Class Presentation of Project: Monday, May 16, 2022.

Ideally, the master's project will be proofed and ready for peer review by the end of December.

Evaluation

There are a few ways to evaluate my products, which include my literature review and my written insights in my section four outcomes. First, section four can be rated on the understanding of the written material, citations, and how accessible the material is. The literature review can be used for its applicability. Finally I had two major goals. One, was to make two products for my peers. The second was to gain a better understanding of the intersection of creativity and social media.

Section Four: Outcomes

Introduction

Section four is a result of two topics I am greatly interested in, social media and creativity. This section is a blend of all the research I've conducted over the semesters as a masters student and my literature review. It is a snapshot of what I found to be the most compelling insights that also serve as a good foundation for further research into other related topics.

Social media is like medicine. It is what the user makes it. This section aims not to scare users into never using social media. Instead, it is rather to utilize it like a tool and make it effective in a person's creative journey. It can positively affect creativity and serve as a gateway to building a community, an important factor of being creative. However, it can negatively impact creativity through emotions, like envy and frustration.

Basic aspects of social media and creativity

Social media is constantly evolving and is incredibly accessible. It is designed to be. Most apps work on smartphones, typically equipped with in-app editing and post content features. This allows any user to create content known as a content producer or view content, known as a content consumer. The Four C model introduced by Kaufman and Beghetto (2016), charts the progression of creativity from mini-c (personal creativity) to little-c (daily creativity) to pro-c (expert creativity) to big-c (genius creativity). Choi and Behm-Morawitz, (2020) applied this model to four media activities, text, photo, graphic, and video production. The 4 C's are separated into tiers, text being the most basic tier of effort and video production being the highest tier of creativity and effort. They discovered that blogging and text interaction was the most popular. Youtube, known for videos, was not the most used social media. On platforms like

TikTok and Twitch, users can record themselves for thousands to see. On Twitch, viewers can watch posted videos and the creator in real-time depending on the setup in the digital environment. A subscriber could interact with the streamer. It highlights the difference in engagement and commitment between consumption and production. A solid factor that drives content producers is the high possibility of being rewarded for popular content.

Globalization, Popular Culture, Memes and Trends

Social media is one of the driving forces behind globalization. Traditional forms of communication are being utilized less as time advances, influencing the communication process. Internet, social media, mobile phones, and text messages are examples of new forms of communication that have already been embraced and used in the Western world. Technology is a big part of how public relations is done nowadays (Ifigeneia & Dimitrios, 2018). Before social media and the internet, media content was limited to geographical regions. Now a person can access content from anywhere on the planet instantly. People can consume media from around the globe from the comfort of their phones. One of the key things about social media is that everyone signs up the same way. People pick a handle or username that reflects them, make a password, and access apps. Anyone can use these apps, from the richest to the poorest, as long as a person has a smartphone and internet. The prime example of this is a meme. A meme's lifespan is measured by how relevant it can be. Images that describe base emotions like happiness or anger keep interest longer. Memes are humanity's effective way of sharing knowledge specific to one's culture, specific niche groups and experiences. Hermes and Stello (2005) state that cultural citizen can be defined as :

"Cultural citizenship can be defined as the process of bonding and community building, and reflection on that bonding, that is implied in partaking of the text-related practices of reading, consuming, celebrating, and criticizing offered in the realm of (popular) culture (p. 10)".

Everyone is aware of the world of popular culture whether they want access to it or not. When the algorithm on a social media app first encounters a new user, it uses memes and popular celebrities to gauge their interest. As a result, pop culture is immersed in society and blurs the line between online and in-person interaction. This creates a common thread of information between users and comes into play when influencing what becomes trendy or not.

Trends have a very accessible nature and make them the premier method for gaining awareness and spreading information quickly. In 2014, the ALS Awareness Ice Bucket challenge went viral. The trend had people participating from all areas of life, from the common person to the A-list celebrities dumping ice on their heads. The ALS association made a record \$115 million that year in donations (Strub, 2019). Social media has accumulated a lot of power and it's up to creatives to harness that power in effective ways. The mostly open borders of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitch, and TikTok, have become a very interesting place to be that can quickly become good or bad.

Potential negatives: theft, discouragement and getting canceled

Social media platforms do not exist without some incentive. Although the internet is intangible, it still costs money to occupy space in the form of a website and to store data. In addition, it costs a significant amount of money to have the technology and personnel to run a company. The platforms afford all of this by selling the demographic information used to

calibrate an algorithm (Leetaru, 2018). The algorithm uses that data within the app to make the user's feed as interesting, engaging, and appealing as possible based on their previous activity. As well as sold to marketing companies which in part use users' data to find out what people are interested in and what products people would be willing to buy. A marketing company may approach the social media app to post targeted ad content on a user's feed. This is a parasitic relationship, but for a select few like influencers, celebrities, and anyone who went viral a few times, this can provide extremely appealing extrinsic motivations. For example, expecting parents may view videos where content creators who are parents review their favorite products, the algorithm measures the amount of time spent on the video, if they commented, liked or engaged with the other content the creator produced and specifically if it falls in line with childcare products. The platform can then sell that information to marketing companies that sell or manage brands that sell childcare items. The advertising company can then tell the platform to flood the users feed with content and ads related to their companies childcare products. The user's data is unwittingly shared and then used to influence them to spend money. However, users do have a certain amount of control over what content affects their creativity and appears on their feed through their engagement on the platform.

One of the main motivators for stealing content is jealousy and envy. Users can feel that there is so much good content that they could not raise the bar or even meet it. When a user is on the same platform as billionaires and other extremely wealthy people, the resources a creator may have to produce content are vastly different. When users are faced with those obstacles, it can be very disheartening. This separates users into two groups: content creator users and content consumer users.

People have always created groups, especially based on their interests. With the internet leveling the playing field-not entirely, algorithms are built for melanin-less skin and Caucasian features. While it is easier than ever to find representation on the internet, some drawbacks to the algorithm that dictates much of social media use is not designed to look for nonwhite features. Implicit, or unconscious, biases are more difficult to overcome in the absence of more diverse workplaces and governmental policies that address prejudice detection and mitigation (Lee, 2018). Content creators can be elevated to celebrity status to create content that appeals to a targeted demographic and only be popular in that community. In addition, there is the development of phrases and hashtags that allow access to the community's content, for example, BookTok, White Twitter, Black Twitter, and many more.

There is a drawback to using social media platforms that is inherently built-in. The companies often make their revenues from selling the users' information, so having an easy-to-use interface and content encourages others to engage with them. Creative content and personal information is constantly stolen on these platforms. The exposure of the creation leads to more engagement. A user having their content stolen or copied with proper credit due can have a heavily negative effect on the content creation. For example, black TikTok was outraged that black choreographers' dances went viral, but they went uncredited, and the white tiktokers were invited to The Ellen DeGeneres's show or similar platforms. Predatory inclusion, cultural extraction, and fungibility are all characteristics of digital blackface on TikTok. Dance challenges provide a multifaceted site to analyze the racial and gender violence of platform capitalism within today's most dominant social media platform, due to these factors (Davis, 2022). In response, black tiktokers refused to create new content for the popular songs in

summer 2021. It leads to a wider conversation on where these trends originate, who can perform which trends and how to prevent the lack of recognition and accreditation in the future.

One of the major drawbacks with stealing content or not crediting the right people is getting “canceled”. The first recorded use of canceled to remove someone for their behavior was done by Nile Rodgers with the song he wrote for his band, the Chic, "Your love is Canceled," in 1981. While the song did not do well compared to other songs in the album, “Take it off” (McGrady, 2021), it profoundly affected culture. With the consistent use of the internet, celebrities popping up and rising to a new height of fame find themselves at the mercy of the immature and often prejudiced things they said in the past are being brought forth by active internet users. Regardless of mainstream celebrity status, even going viral can open users to being canceled for past negative comments and then in turn go viral again for being canceled. The court of public opinion has never been a fair one, and when millions of people weigh in with their comments, typically, the most vitriol is viewed the most. The algorithm is guided by user engagement, and it cannot tell the difference between positive and negative engagement.

Potential positives: humor, intrinsic motivation and community

Creativity thrives under certain conditions, intrinsic motivation, community, extrinsic motivation, humor and inspiration. Humor is proven to facilitate creativity and build community relations. Two very important factors that influence a person's creativity is being a part of a community and being in a good mood, which leads to a higher potential for creation. Content creators rely on keeping their audiences in a good mood and their spirits high in order to facilitate the act of being in community with one another.

On TikTok, audio can go viral, and people will personalize it by adding very specific details to the typical format and can see how it evolves. In 2021 a new trend took its inspiration

from Adult Swim commercial messaging, tiktok creator VANO3000 is credited with uploading a sample of BadBadNotGood's "Time Moves Slow." and subsequently triggering a trend that Tiktokers took up the challenge to make their version of Adult Swim's style, choosing to employ a number of mediums, from digital art to photography (John, 2021). Many content creators appreciated the direction of the trend being more art and filming based than the usual dancing trends that Tik Tok is known for.

The positive effect of social media is the digital environment, in conjunction with the algorithm, is designed to keep users entertained and engaged. The most effective way to do that is humor. Humor inspires positive emotion and novelty, which social media has in droves. Laughter binds a community together. "Humor is also considered a creative act that entails sudden shifts in cognitive perspectives and thinking patterns (Dixon, 1980; Koestler, 1964; Martin & Lefcourt, 1983; O'Connell, 1976). The positive association between the ability to express humor (or sense of humor) and creativity has been well-documented (O'Quin & Derks, 1997)." (Eliav, 2017). Humor generates positive emotions that, in turn, develop personal relationships. Those relationships turn into a community. Usually if a group finds something funny there is a level of shared interest.

Many people feel isolated in the real world, so they turn to the internet to connect with the broader world and be entertained. TikTok has proven time and time again that anyone can have a meteoric rise to the top of the list. There are a couple of factors that go into creating content, and the one to focus on is the desire to participate and pay the laugh forward. It is important to note that even though numerous celebrities create content, most of the interaction isn't based on specific content. More so, what drives views is their previous popularity. Creating

content is not limited to those who have resources. People have gone viral for the sole reason that they told a highly engaging story or shouted something funny while falling.

One of the main appeals of social media use is to find communities that cater to a person's specific interests or personality. Once a user is in those communities, the purpose is to interact, which is done by sharing, engaging, and being supportive. Social media gives people with niche content to thrive. On social media, the average person needs to create or comment, which is a different form of creation, to find others. Tasker (2017) recommends creating content for the self versus creating content to get popularity or likes or reach significant fame. Tasker's own story of being a homemaker with postpartum depression and a camera turned made for an interesting story that turned her into the UK's top blogger and content coach to other bloggers. Her rise to the top made for a great story and serves as personal fantasy for the common person. There's something for every and anyone.

There are a couple of significant extrinsic motivations offered by consumers and the social media platform itself. "In terms of motivation, extrinsic motivation seems to be inevitable on these social media platforms, and external rewards become crucial in motivating young people to participate in social media production." (Choi and Behm-Morawitz, 2020). It relates to data for the platform. The social media platforms want and encourage content creation. Creating is very difficult and costly in time or resources. By offering money or the possibility of brand deals allows for very targeted advertising and user engagement. In previous generations, the desire was to become an astronaut, rock star, or movie star. An often desired occupation by the younger generations is an influencer, social media content creator, or entrepreneur. The fourth most favored professional desire for children is "social media celebrity." The youth are influenced by the millions that their favorite influencers made by being fun and engaging (Min,

2019). Even though the good sounds very good with all careers, there are some very serious drawbacks and risks that come with developing one's creativity on social media. There has been a dramatic increase in social media use and its grand potential for facilitating creativity.

One very unique element that social media provides for creators is that it records everything. It serves as a tool that can be set up to automatically track a person's creative desires from specifics of when they create content to how people respond to their content with little involvement from the creator themselves. Social media catalogs the growth and direction a content creator develops in. For example when an artist uploads timelapse videos of their art, it documents the process in two ways, one the act of creation via the drawing itself. Secondly, it serves as a record of how much a person was creative in this time and space and allows creators to chart their progression. This is how the internet can serve as a time capsule, Social media makes it possible for the creator to document their process in great detail.

Twitch, unconventional facilitation, and Hasan Piker

Facilitation is a cornerstone of creativity. Twitch is a prime example of this. The users who produce content on Twitch are known as streamers, and the viewers can be separated into two categories: subscribers and casual followers. There is monetary gain for the streamers. On Twitch, they are allowed to sell airtime to commercials. Amazon acquired Twitch in 2014 for \$970 million in cash (Kim, 2014). It was primarily used and designed for video gameplay viewing. Since being subsidized by Amazon, the platform has developed to include channels about politics, live-streaming painting, bathing in hot tubs, and other activities. On Twitch, a streamer typically live streams their content using multiple monitors and a camera, and their viewers are allowed to send messages to the streamer via a chat box. Some streamers have moderators that moderate the chat for whatever phrases the streamer banned. Twitch chat rooms can range in

complexity and restriction. Similar to creativity, they typically abide by a set guideline that is supported by having moderators. In gaming settings, users feel free to express themselves at the cost of others comfortably. Some streamers allow everyone to participate, and others have moderators whose job is to block anyone using any language or topics the streamer deems offensive.

Twitch is a form of facilitation in the nontraditional sense. The streamer is controlling the process as well as the content. One streamer, Hasan Piker, has risen to the height of popularity in the last couple of years for consuming news, spitting it out in easy-to-understand terms and being somewhat controversial. He was one of the most-watched streamers in the 2020 election. In addition to politics, he streams his gameplay and attends TwitchCon. The Twitch sponsored convention where fans and top streamers gather and often get together with their fellow streamers.

Piker is known for his high level of engagement. Piker is known for his animated and engaged talking style, typically sharing his thoughts out loud and following it with his audience. He saw an unprecedented level of success as a representative of the left-wing in United States politics. He identifies as a progressive socialist and is known for his criticism of both republicans and democrats. He has experienced the positives and negatives of being popular on social media. His most popular controversy was regarding comments he made regarding 9/11 and Republican congressman Dan Crenshaw (Grayson, 2019). He would later amend his statement by saying it was true but could have been better stated Piker, familiar with the media, further legitimized and popularized him. He averages tens of thousands of views everyday and spent most of 2020 streaming and making content. In May 2022, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Piker partnered with CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere) to play games on his

stream and donated \$100,000 for Ukraine relief funds and had over 70,000 people watching him (Ousley, 2022). Piker is a prime example of a content creator that has an engaging personality that appeals to most which leads to mostly positive content creation process except for when he is too unfiltered and less diplomatic in his statements. Regardless of his multiple controversies of differing levels, Piker has experienced the highs and lows of being a major content creator on social media.

Conclusion

Despite the few that greatly benefit from it, social media is parasitic in nature with its users. Some relationship elements can change depending on the user being a content creator or content consumer. Although, at the end of the day, choosing to engage with social media can be extremely advantageous for a person's creativity. Social media is designed to keep people interested, show them funny, quirky, novel things, and encourage others to interact on the platform. However, social media can also show people create content that trumps their current level and give rise to a lack of desire to create. Creativity is profoundly impacted by its environment, whether digital or physical.

Section Five: Key Learnings

Introduction

When I consider the writing of this master's project over the long period of time that it has taken to get it done, I think I have two key sets of learnings. The first is "process". I needed a better process in place from the beginning in order to hit appropriate deadlines. As this is my last year in school, I hit a major wall at the end of the year. I felt like I had no good ideas, and nothing came easily to my brain while exploring the how and why of this project. A better process from the start would have helped me to stick to deadlines and not push off production when I felt like I had nothing left in me.

When I first started this project, I had high expectations of all I could achieve. One of the most familiar feelings I had since starting my journey was the fear of failing. I did fail, but failure always serves a purpose. This project is for all those that come after, and I want to tell you what was told to me. It is okay not to meet your expectations and goals when dealing with creativity. I planned three products for this project, and I completed one. Education does not exist in a bubble, and while the pursuit of knowledge is an admirable one, so is being healthy and having a job that provides a person with the means to support themselves. Therefore, I focused on producing a well researched masters project. I also wanted it to be accessible, as one of the hardest parts of academia is jargon.

Secondly, I learned a lot about the changing bounds of what we consider creativity in the modern age. In the age of new media, we have so many ways to produce content and share our insights, experiences, and opinions with people we would never have had the chance to in the past. Seeing the use of older terms and a lack of new ones to adequately describe what I wanted to convey was often a wall I ran into. Still, I hope that with future research and time, I will be

able to hopefully contribute to a solution for that problem. As someone who uses social media every day, I can personally attest to the value of this information in the academic and personal spheres. Unfortunately, there is no true framework of creativity that can be smoothly applied to social media content production, as it is so new and ever-changing. However, I feel that if we are to continue a worthwhile study and expand the field for the future, then we owe it to ourselves and future creativity researchers and students to take a deep, analytical dive into the digital world and find how we fit in currently, as well as ways we can grow to encapsulate this new frontier of digital and social media.

Finally, I am looking forward to my future research due to writing this masters project. It honestly brought up more questions than it answered, but I am satisfied in knowing that my goals require that I produce some sort of answer for those questions over time. In other words, the future I want for myself obligates me to develop a true understanding of the creativity of the digital sector.

As I wrote in Section one, this project explores how social media affects creativity. I found that the positive effects were based on developing the digital environment to suit the users' needs through community building and humor. On the other hand, the negative effects of social media on creativity are losing novelty by being stuck in a niche field, getting canceled, and losing oneself in extrinsic validation.

My personal goals were to do a project that compiled all of my research on the topic into a cohesive and easy-to-understand masters project. I wanted to let my fellow creatives know the dangers and benefits of using social media to facilitate their creativity. When I started my research, I expected to find that social media did nothing for the creative, and I was wrong. Social media can be an effective tool to improve one's creativity if used properly.

Process

My process was simple. I used Buffalo State's online database to find articles that contained the keywords, social media, creativity, positive and negative . After reading the articles, I would sometimes find more possible sources from the articles' reference section. It was an incredible amount of information, and my cataloging system could have used some serious work. Once my literature review was finished, I found there were common themes across the papers and marked them for further consideration. I decided to focus on the ones that had the most evidence and that I could find examples of. Then I spent the next few weeks writing section four while dealing with health and technology problems. Finally, my advisors reviewed it and uploaded it to the digital commons.

Section Six: Conclusions

With the upload of this master's project, my graduate career is over, and I have learned so much. Of course, I will continue to learn, but my focus has changed. Social media is ever-changing and growing, so there will always be something new to research. While this might be a break before I pursue a doctorate, I found what I was looking for, a complex connection between creativity and public relations. I hope this project provides useful information. This master's project was peer-reviewed to fix any significant flaws. I researched the topic extensively. My professors served as advisors and gave me the green light to upload on our online digital platform.

Further Exploration

I could not use all the resources I found when doing my literature review. However, I will use them in the future when I start to develop my other two products, a survey and creativity criteria. Below are some key resources in understanding facilitating creativity through the use of social media that serves as possible future references.

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