Content Creation & Critical Reflection

For the content creation part of my assignment, I decided to mimic fellow YouTuber

Tommy Bryson. He's an accountant that focuses most of his content on financial ideas and

suggestions. I'm already a black guy with dreads, so I decided to also wear a snapback to imitate

the look he was going for in his YouTube profile pic. If I were to go with Simone Browne's

logic, I am an African American college student who attempted to make a great YouTube video

and offer surveillance of myself to the general public. Interesting enough, even though certain

traits of myself identify who I am to the public eye, I am unsympathetic. The branding of

blackness has become a norm in today's generation. During the times of slavery, African

Americans were identified distinctively. But, obviously, those times are of the past and consisted

of much harsher living conditions. In addition, surveillance of African Americans in terms of

branded blackness is also evident in the video game industry. As Leonard stated, "The

exploitative relationship with the black community and the video game industry is significant

within these urban sports games" (Leonard, 2002). 'NBA Live', 'NBA 2K', 'Madden NFL', and

'NCAA Football' are all "urban sport games" heavily influenced by the African American

community. Furthermore, African Americans are stereotyped to the point where one would think

a successful black man has to be either in the entertainment industry, playing sports, or a drug

dealer. This is part of the reason why I felt comfortable choosing Tommy Bryson as my example

in the first place. He's someone who aspires to be successful without fulfilling the African

American stereotype. After watching his effort to inform us financially in his videos, I became

inspired enough to give the content creation experiment a try. In hindsight, I should have

mentioned the importance of this in my video while having #yeahwearegoingthere #blackentrepreneur in my video description.

During the creation of my youtube video, I found myself often trying to multitask with recording, keeping track of the topics discussed, showing my computer screen, typing out comments I wanted to include, and adjusting the lighting. There was a large amount of preparation prior to recording, but I still had more ideas. Of all things, the extraction of camera data was giving me a difficult time. There were two separate videos sessions for the content creation. The strategy I used, for both sessions, was to produce one long video recording of me discussing all the topics I wanted to touch on. After recording, I took pieces of the video and separated them to reorganize them in my editing program. This technique seemed familiar as I have seen it with other YouTube videos. The 1st session was 25 minutes long, but it felt rushed since I hadn't prepared well enough in terms of organizing my topics. My main issue was touching on too many topics at once. Along with this also came the issue of a broken memory card reader that's installed in my laptop. This discovery led me to a Best Buy parking lot where I found out all stores were closed, and only online pick ups were available. I scrolled through Best Buy's website and purchased a memory card adapter online, but they didn't have any adapters at the store after all. Waiting a couple of days, I finally got myself the product I ordered online. With great responsibility comes great opportunity. Deciding to reshoot my video entirely improved my overall experience. I took what I learned from my 1st video session and fixed it the second time around. Also, I only included the topics that I felt best summarized my content, and edited my video in one and a half hours using Final Cut Pro.

Overall, the experience of being in front a camera came easily once I started filming while saying random things to break the ice and become comfortable expressing myself. Honestly, I believe anyone with a video camera can use YouTube to express themselves in a healthy therapeutic way. As it says in 'Keyboard Design', a lot of people came together for the development and invention of a typewriter. After that invention, an abundance of other inventions followed. The same thing happened with internet videos. In 2004, a few viral videos came about along with the introduction of YouTube as a platform. After the creative innovation of internet videos, we also got vlogs, tutorials, interviews, streaming services, monetized video content, live streams, podcasts, and many other types of videos. YouTube is a digital media platform that allows users the freedom to broadcast video content despite whether it's homemade, amateur, or professional. The platform helped to shape the internet today by focusing on user generated content at an early stage of the internet. As much as it is a media platform for users to express themselves, it also a business. A decade ago, barely anyone would consider posting YouTube videos to be an occupation. Times have changed drastically. There are YouTubers who work in a profession, but decided to create fun video content about their profession and monetize it. Some people have become so successful at this that they yielded enough passive income to never practice their professions again so long as YouTube videos were being produced and monetized. It was quite interesting to see how modern day YouTube videos are made. There's a good amount of skill going into creating a well known youtube channel that yields millions of views and subscribers. Before participating in this experiment I thought to myself "how hard can this be, really?". The truth is it isn't hard to make and publish a YouTube video. Literally with enough effort, anybody can do that. What is difficult is producing quality

content that generates thousands or millions of views. The content tends to be challenging to create especially considering the standard that other YouTubers have set over the past several years. There's something admirable about people who create YouTube content to give us essential, useful answers to questions we didn't know we were asking! It is a service providing the suggested video that no one wanted but indeed needed. There is a video on YouTube for anything and everything! How can one not love YouTube?

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