

SOCI2534 Reading Assignment
Stephen Cole
3553803

Rebecca Jennings (2020). Ticked off: What happens when TikTok fame fades. Vox

The first article highlights the possible long-term effects of putting so many young children in the spotlight. The author gave examples like Sam Benarroch who has accumulated 166k followers at merely 16 years old and how this massive following caused him so much grief and anxiety. These massive amounts of TikTok stars are caused by a surplus of users on the platform which is evident from the 1.5 billion downloads in less than two years and a platform that is so addictive that it suggests to its users to take a break.

Marwick, A. E. (2015). Instafame: Luxury Selfies in the Attention Economy. *Public Culture*, 27(1 [75]), 137–160.

In this article the author focuses on fame on the platform Instagram. On this platform users seem to come off less harsh than other social media outlets where the majority of what the users sees are walls of text, on Instagram “textual description and replies to followers are de-emphasized”. The author also speaks of how extremely rewarding it is for users to get thousands and thousands of likes from a simple photo; even a selfie. However, with all this reach comes the opportunity advertisers to target specific groups of users by paying a pricey fee to have the Instagram famous stars to pose with/post their product.

Parkin, S. (September 8, 2018). The YouTube stars heading for burnout: 'The most fun job imaginable became deeply bleak'. *The Guardian*.

The next article shines some light on what seemed to be a dream job but ended up being a nightmare. The author follows Matt Lees a full-time youtuber through the burnout he experienced trying to keep up with the blazing pace of the YouTube algorithm. Matt along with many other of the same profession were highlighted in this article, all with very similar stories of being pushed to their limits just trying to stay relevant.

Volpe, A. (2019) How Parents of Child Influencers Package Their Kids' Lives for Instagram. *The Atlantic*

This reading focused on how children's lives are displayed to the public by their parents for monetary gain. This article is riddled with examples of parents being referred to as the child's manager instead of mom or dad. The visual aesthetic of these children has its own niche on Instagram and children such as Vada who is only 4 has already amassed over 40000 followers. The process of recording a person's entire life has never been seen on such a large scale and we can only guess how this will affect the rest of their lives.

Julia Carrie Wong (2019). It's not play if you're making money: How Instagram and YouTube disrupted child labour laws. The Guardian

This article takes a harsher tone on displaying children on social media platforms for monetary gain, stating "It's not play if you're making money". The author focuses on how children are being forced to act and model at a young age, while "Every dollar a kid earns belongs to his parents". This is something that would be seen as very different if the child we're working at a store or doing manual labour; however, it has been normalized by relating these children to movie stars. The problem with this is child actors have some idea what they're doing many child influencers think they're just playing.