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Reflections on Politics in the Age of Youtube

Henry Jenkins’s article entitled, “Reflections on Politics in the Age of Youtube” talks about an interesting concept of videos related to politics made by regular individuals. Since today’s society is more tech savvy and convergence has taken part in creating a more digital world, we see a rise in video content reflecting politicians. Some of these videos are meant to be harmless and others aid in changing voters’ minds about the politicians. Even when these videos are made by the voters, they influence how other individuals view politicians. Because of this, it can also become a good campaign for certain politicians, and bad one for others.

One user created a still image composition of unflattering Hillary Clinton photos, and she also made a parody song to go with it. Within the song, he user incorporated several of Hillary Clinton’s mistakes and failures to show the audience a specific side of Clinton. As someone who doesn’t know too much about Hillary Clinton, I didn’t take everything that video said to heart. Instead, that video interested me and I wanted to learn more about Hillary Clinton and find out for myself what kind of person she is and what she stands for. I think videos that put politicians in a bad light can go one of three ways, depending on the individual watching it. People can either have the same mindset I do, they can believe what the user created video is telling them, or they can believe the opposite of what the video says.

Another video that Henry Jenkins talks about is a user created cute animated snowman asking politicians questions about global warming. I understand some people may feel as though this is insulting to politicians because it seems so immature, however
I saw the video differently. I thought it was an interesting way to get an important issue verbalized because people sometimes overlook specific issues. One politician went along with the snowman video and spoke about the issue respectively because he realized this is still a concern from the people whether it’s coming from a snowman video or not. That also shows good character in my eyes because no matter the format an issue is being talking about, it should still be taken seriously because it is something people want to know and care about deeply.

Generally speaking, I think user created videos featuring politicians is a good thing. Nowadays, people don’t seem as interested in politics even though they should be. When trolling the Internet and Youtube, people can come across these humorous videos and make what they want out of them after watching. Just as I said before, when I watch these political videos that put politicians in a negative lighting, I do my research before making any quick assumptions and I judge them on my own research and knowledge. So in some sense, I can see how these videos damage politicians’ reputations, but I also feel like they are necessary to get people involved and interested.

Henry Jenkins makes some good points that I agree with, especially when talking about Youtube in a way to distribute information and content that users create. I don’t think it should be frowned upon to create and use videos, and post them on Youtube to get a political idea across to the public.