

Cord Green  
12/11/14

Online Folklore

Item #1

Contributor: Cord Green

Title: Yik Yak - Sex/Love/Relationships

Category: Techniques

Semester: Fall 2014

Instructor: John McDowell

Text: 1- "Pulled down his pants, he's uncircumcised. Well I'm drunk and naked in this stairwell, too late to turn back."

2- "Liking people is stupid. All you end up doing is ruining songs that you really liked beforehand"

3- "Remember if you have a crush in one of your classes then this is the last week to get their number"

4- "This guy has been begging for my virginity for a while now... trying to decide if I should let him"

Points of Interest: "Yaks" concerning love, relationships, and sex seem to be the most prominent topic on the app. Users will often post about attractive classmates, bleak love lives, crushes, what they desire from the opposite sex, and insecurities. That the most prominent topic among college students is dating is quite telling.

Links: N/A

Additional Information:

Item #2

Contributor: Cord Green

Title: Yik Yak - Academia

Category: Techniques

Semester: Fall 2014

Instructor: John McDowell

Text: 1- "Well there is always next semester..."

2- "We are all in the same boat when it comes to finals, and that boat is the Titanic."

3- "It's beginning to feel a lot like fuck this"

4- "#boycottfinals2014"

Points of Interest: Many students, especially near finals week, post about academic topics, specifically complaints of failing and difficulty. These students fears are echoed by many other students in similar situations. Yik Yak provides a great venue for users to complain about their shared experiences.

Links: N/A

Additional Information:

Item #3

Contributor: Cord Green

Title: Yik Yak - Humor

Category: Techniques

Semester: Fall 2014

Instructor: John McDowell

Text: 1- "So moving forward is called PROGRESS, then isn't the opposite called CONGRESS?"

2- "You can never trust someone with one hand in their pocket cuz it makes you wonder what they did with the other disembodied hand from their victim"

3- "Don't feel bad if you didn't do so hot this semester. Just remember someone from your hometown is still trying to become a rapper."

4- "Life is like a chipotle burrito. It is what you make it and when it falls apart, you just put it back together the best you can and keep eating and smiling because you're at chipotle."

Points of Interest: Humorous posts on Yik Yak tend to be the greatest source of folklore, and have a strong theme of repetition with variation. Many humorous yaks tend to be borrowed or stolen material, often with variation relating to college life, or local tradition/customs. Other campus' yaks can be viewed in their own sections, which non-local users can only read. This allows users to see popular content at other campuses, and to repost it for their own campus, in a similar way to the many local variations of hitchhiker tales.

Links: N/A

Additional Information:

## Discussion

Yik Yak allows users to post anonymously on a localized message board. This message board is composed of "Yaks" which are statements, jokes, complaints, hashtags, etc. These Yaks are only displayed to a user if they come from within a certain radius of the user, meaning that users can't see Yaks from beyond a certain distance, thus all Yaks that I've gathered for this assignment have come from IU students or non-students residing on campus. Yaks, often original material, are somewhat frequently copied from other campus' Yaks, sometimes with minor variation. As was seen above, older jokes are also posted, like the congress/progress joke, which I'd first heard some years ago.

Yik Yak is very similar to offline folklore, because it creates a venue for performance among users who exist in the same physical space. Users who can interact with each other using the app can also plausibly interact with each other in the physical world. Users will have similar experiences and will all be familiar with the same local traditions, locales, culture, and events. This shared experience brings Yik Yak users together in sort of social media/town forum hybrid. The gratification of a successful yak is increased by this shared experience, because users receive approval from those with similar background who exist in their communities, a sort of "in-group". The approval of those who live in distant lands with unfamiliar cultures doesn't bestow the same sort of real-life approval.

Pulled down his pants, he's uncircumcised. Well I'm drunk and naked in this stairwell, too late to turn back.

4

🕒 9 mins

2 replies

Liking people is stupid. All you end up doing is ruining songs you really liked beforehand

13

🕒 15 mins

Remember if you have a crush in one of your classes then this is one of the last weeks to get their number

27

🕒 31 mins

2 replies

This guy has been begging to take my virginity for awhile now...trying to decide if I should let him

5

🕒 55 mins

5 replies

Well there is always next semester...

12

🕒 31 mins

1 reply

We are all in the same boat when it comes to finals, and that boat is the Titanic.

29

🕒 19 mins

It's beginning to feel a lot like fuck this

20

🕒 32 mins

#boycottfinals2014

7

🕒 7 mins