

The Double Mirroring of Short Video Spread

Yue Yue

School of Journalism and Communication, Shandong Normal University, Jinan, China

Abstract: *As China's Internet penetration rate rises year by year, short video has become a major way of Internet transmission. With the emergence of various short video platforms, the explosive growth of short video users, and the explosive spurt of content production, the short video carnival of universal participation has become a new media spectacle. At the same time, it also presents a double mirroring image: on the one hand, it's the carnival of expression freedom and information explosion; On the other hand, it's the propagation anxiety behind the carnival. The first mirror is the carnival: this kind of short video carnival with the characteristics of universality, ritual and comedy is largely in line with Bakhtin's "carnival theory"; from the viewpoint of the main body of the carnival, its carnival is reflected in the platform, the disseminator and the content, etc. The second mirror is the anxiety behind the carnival: while enjoying the surplus of short-form video content, modern people are also anxious about whether the social trend of entertainment to death, as suggested by Pullman, will emerge. This paper uses literature and case studies to analyze the current situation of short video revelry based on Bakhtin's theory of revelry, analyze the anxiety problem of short video development on the basis of reality, and propose solutions from the perspective of different subjects to provide some reference for future short video development and create a positive short video environment, so that there will be no anxiety behind the revelry.*

Keywords: *Short Video Propagation; Carnival Theory; Spreading Anxiety; Algorithm*

1. Introduction

Douglas Kellner introduced the concept of "media spectacle" based on his investigation of popular culture phenomena. Media spectacle refers to media and cultural phenomenon that reflect contemporary social values, guide individuals to adapt to modern lifestyles, and dramatize the conflicts and solutions in contemporary society. Accordingly, short videos dramatize daily life, social hot issues and film clips by filming and editing, sweeping the Internet space with fragmented and visualized presentation and viral dissemination speed, becoming a vehicle for Internet users to vent their emotions and express themselves, and setting off a short video carnival with universal participation.

This nationwide participation in the short video carnival has led to the explosive growth of short video users, each individual can become the shooter, viewer and disseminator of short videos, and there is almost no boundary between the transmitter and the receiver, collectively called "users"; various short video platforms are growing wildly, and there are a large number of short video platforms such as Tik Tok, Snake Video and Volcano Video. The production of content is also exploding, covering a wide range of areas, but the quality is mixed. Therefore, this paper analyzes the double mirror of short video communication based on the theory and reality of carnival.

2. The First Mirror Image: Carnival

Through reading literature, we found that the current situation of short video communication has a high degree of fit with Bakhtin's carnival theory in terms of its universality, ritual and comedy, etc. The following will take Tik Tok as a case to study for analysis.

2.1 Characteristics of the Carnival

2.1.1 Universality

In Bakhtin's carnival theory, universality is the most basic feature of carnival. Carnival is an all-embracing intimate intercourse in which everyone participates, and the carnival square provides a venue for all people to participate and express themselves equally, without any distinction of race, class

or status, and immerse themselves in the carnival atmosphere. In contrast, the short video platform acts as a carnival square, where the social identities and classes of participants are temporarily separated, and the boundaries between content production and consumption are opened up, with users playing the roles of short video creators, short video protagonists, and short video viewers and disseminators. Without discrimination in terms of education, occupation, or class, everyone is equally free to create, like, and comment on videos in a virtual space like the short video platform, gaining full freedom of expression.

In the Tik Tok, a variety of templates have been produced, and then you only need to select and import a certain number of photos to make a card-point video, which no longer requires pre-design and professional technology; you only need to press the shooting button and follow the instructions to complete the nod and other actions to complete the special effects video. According to the 2020 Tik Tok Big Data Report, as of August 2020, Tik Tok had 600 million daily users, which means that half of Chinese netizens use Tik Tok every day[1]. The change of Tik Tok slogan from "Let the worship start here" to "Record the good life" also illustrates the universality of the carnival.

In addition, the short video platform represented by Tik Tok has the characteristic of decentralization, which is no longer focused on the stars, but every video publisher and every user may become the focus. An inadvertent may become the secret code of network flow. For example, Li Ziqi who has 30 million fans in Tik Tok originally made video only for life. A fountain of food and a scoop of drink are filmed and edited by her, but now, she change from the "little sister in the countryside" into "famous social media influencer" and eventually go international by e-commerce.

2.1.2 Ritualistic

In carnival, the ritual refers to the "crowning" and "uncrowning" of the king, which in the short video platform, the video publisher takes off his real identity and "dresses up" himself. After the well-connected design, just publish the work and presented to the audience, which marks the completion of the ritual. The "coronation" is that the audience give a thumbs up or comment on the video, which indicates the recognition of the video creator. According to the current use of short videos, coronation is mainly divided into creator coronation, clown coronation and film character coronation.

2.1.2.1 Creator Coronation

In the rapid development stage of short video in which "everyone can be a director", a large number of short video creators flock to the video production field, hoping to find the particular memes for click bait and become one of the idols through the traffic effect, while the audience expresses their approval through following, liking, commenting and rewarding, which enhances the influence of the creators. The works that gain widespread popularity create a carnival on the Internet, which raises attention and eventually realizes traffic, crowning ordinary short-video creators in the short-video frenzy.

2.1.2.2 Coronation of the Clown

The ugly netizens, represented by "Miss Guo", once had a negative impact on the spread of short videos. The words and actions of netizens penetrated people's daily lives through interpersonal communication and imitation, especially the imitation of some ugly characters by young people. Clowns have received unprecedented attention in the carnival of national participation. Currently, the state has banned many "clown" netizens to avoid negative effects on society and youth.

2.1.2.3 Coronation of Film and TV Characters

Many short video users have creatively adapted or spoofed some classic films and TV works, giving the characters the popular jokes of the moment, and after the repeated dissemination, they have gained new memory points and influence that will last forever, marking their coronation in the short video carnival spectacle.

On the Tik Tok platform, the performers are crowned as both real and online celebrities, and are crowned again and again by users' constant attention, likes and comments, becoming the "kings" of Tik Tok's short video square.

2.1.3 Comedy

"Comedy" is an important feature of "carnival", and likewise, the dissemination process of the videos is full of laughter. For example, "Grandmother Tian" on the Tik Tok platform, whose bright laughter and mischievous grandson have attracted more than 30 million followers, and created a cheerful division, with many laugh-out-loud points to release their stress.

2.2 Performance of Carnival

The short video platform represented by Tik Tok, as an open carnival square, provides people with a place for carnival. The participants in the square, as the audience, under the role of algorithm recommendation, watch their favorite videos in large numbers, pay attention to them, like and collect them, which is called triple-click. As a communicator, there is no high threshold and technical obstacles, constantly publishing works, recommending works, and producing their favorite content. The platform is the biggest beneficiary. Therefore, the performance of the carnival is divided into three parts: the carnival of the platform, the carnival of the disseminator, and the carnival of the content from the perspective of different subjects.

2.2.1 The Carnival of the Platform

From 320 million daily active users in July 2019 to 600 million in August 2020, Tik Tok has made a leap from 300 million to 600 million daily active users in about one year, becoming the most popular short video social app among young people. The huge traffic and wide audience have attracted the attention of countless "brand fathers", and there are more and more brands cooperating with the platform and netizen users, forming a grand business carnival.

In this carnival on the Tik Tok platform, the Tik Tok marketing of Haidilao Hot Pot is a model with the field. There are many videos on Tik Tok with topics such as "Haidilao Hot Pot's birthday", "Haidilao Hot Pot's secret code" and "Haidilao Hot Pot's newest way to eat", which take advantage of the curiosity and participation of young people and amplify the advantages of the product. The product advantages were exaggerated in the short videos, which impressed the audience with the advantages, and coupled with the word-of-mouth propaganda of the long queues in the videos, the circular chain propagation of online driving offline and offline refeeding online has brought a booming business to Haidilao[3]. Not only the food brands such as Haidilao Hot Pot and HEY TEA, but also various brands and even applications are also cooperating in marketing through Tik Tok short videos.

At the beginning of 2018, Tik Tok also cooperated with Taobao, and when you click into the product to view the details, you can jump to the Taobao product page. In the era of new media, although content is the king, it is especially important to choose a correct channel for information dissemination. Nowadays, short video has become a popular way of information dissemination, and because it comes with its own traffic, the cross-platform cooperation carnival of "short video plus" will continue.

2.2.2 The Carnival of the Propagator

The openness, universality, and low threshold of Tik Tok and other short video platforms allow every user to become a content propagator, and everyone's creativity and talent are given equal opportunities to be displayed on the Tik Tok platform, thus attracting more and more users to join the Tik Tok carnival.

First of all, because of the universality of the short video platform, workers from all walks of life, such as delivery boys running around, teachers who are moved by students, housewives who prepare three meals a day for their families, etc., are willing to record, show and share their lives through short videos.

Secondly, in addition to the most common record, the spreading of the carnival can not be separated from the word "cash". The celebrity artists who bring their own traffic get paid a lot through short video live streaming and cooperation with brands, while the netizens continue to enhance their own communication power through the skyrocketing number of likes and comments, and later cash in by planting advertisements.

2.2.3 The Carnival of Content

With the development of the times and the maturity of the platform, the content has become more diversified and balanced, forming diversified themes such as food, funny, parent-child, sports, study, government, and star-chasing. The following are some of the hottest ones today.

2.2.3.1 Recommending and Shopping Guide Category

Recommending and shopping guide videos include product promotion, product evaluation, dressing, beauty, etc. They will promote products to the audience through personal experience and scientific method analysis. If fat sisters wear like this, they will immediately look thinner 20 pounds than themselves! It is recommended to collect, otherwise it will be gone after brushing. Are you still using it?

Such topics combined with visuals, voiceover and storyline to make a perfect advertising package for the product, so as to stimulate users' senses and make them unconsciously like and collect or order to buy.

2.2.3.2 Knowledge Learning Category

The short video of knowledge learning category mainly teaches audiences some life tips, learning experience sharing, course training as well as emotional interpretation. This category has a wide range of audiences, from students to working people to moms to middle-aged and elderly people, all of whom are attracted by the knowledge of the video publisher. Life tricks include fixing home appliances, tying shoelaces, tying scarves, folding clothes, etc. Learning experiences and training courses include English, software tutorials, painting, photography, short videos, food production, etc. During the epidemic, a series of food production such as egg tart, spicy hotpot and cold skin received high attention; in Tik Tok, "Mr Zhang Eating with a Jar" drew the attention of young students with his bets on the Grade 4 and 6 exams in 2020, in reality, he is a graduate student of Xi'an Jiaotong University, often sharing from time to time about the exams, teaching qualifications, Grade 4 and 6, and part-time work. In reality, he is a graduate student of Xi'an Jiaotong University, and he often shares his thoughts about examinations, teaching qualifications, grade 4 and 6, part-time jobs, etc. from time to time, which has gained the attention of nearly one million young people.

2.2.4 Audience's Carnival

The audience's fragmented time is almost filled by Tik Tok, and some young people even watch it for several hours, saying that they are "poisoned" by Tik Tok and cannot stop once they brush it. This is precisely because of the short and interesting nature of Tik Tok short videos, which meet people's needs for fragmented consumption in a fast-paced society; the variety of content on the platform meets the different needs of the platform audience. It can be said that with the support of the algorithm, users of the short video platform can find their own fun, thus triggering the revelry of the audience. The revelry of Tik Tok audience is mainly reflected in imitating and following their favorite videos, sharing interesting videos to social circles, and commenting and interacting with their favorite short videos.

2.3 Positive Significance of the Revelry

First of all, the short video carnival has become an important landscape of contemporary society. The entertainment and popularization of short video content have overturned the original elite production and created a new order of communication, allowing everyone to be the director, express what they want to express, and let the public see it. Secondly, except some funny and witty video content, more and more users are spreading positive energy and promoting excellent culture in the video content, which opens up the space for spreading positive energy and excellent traditional culture and provides a broader platform. In addition, the short videos are always a good way to take a short break from real life. The pressure and dissatisfaction in the heart are released.

3. The Second Mirror Image: Anxiety

3.1 The Chaotic Image of Short Video

3.1.1 Serious Homogenization

The content production mode of short video UGC determines the end of homogenization, which stimulates user participation and triggers users to imitate each other, forming a kind of mechanized repetition, which will lead to aesthetic fatigue over time. In addition, the algorithm recommendation will be pushed according to the user's browsing and liking records. Although this method can satisfy the user's demand, the long-term recommendation of the same type of video content will not only lead to more serious homogenization, but also generate boredom. Therefore, users are now consciously controlling themselves, avoiding the control of the algorithm through less likes, less comments, and less traces on the network.

3.1.2 Lack of Quality Works

Because of the universality of Tik Tok short videos, there is no threshold of education and rank, and everyone can create their own videos, which also leads to the uneven quality of videos, most of which are not professionally studied and have low media literacy. A 15-second quality video, from pre-planning, mid-shooting, to post-editing, may take hours or more for the filmmaker to create. For

example, the "One Second Dress Up" video, which is very popular on Tik Tok, shows the scene of dressing up in one second on the screen, which makes people feel magical and cool.

3.2 Spread of Bad Values

The huge number of users leads to the generation of massive video content, and the instantaneous nature of dissemination has undoubtedly increased the difficulty of platform supervision. In addition to the homogenization of the content, the content of unhealthy induction and improper values are also frequently seen on Tik Tok. The short video platform is full of girls with heavy make-up, sunbathing people and cars, and luxury goods everywhere, which will have a negative impact on the formation of youth values. In addition, the "ugly" Netflix nowadays are also subconsciously eroding the spirit of young people and spreading bad values.

3.3 Worry About the Death of Entertainment

As Bozeman mentions in *Entertainment to Death*, "We no longer have to worry about the totalitarian rule of Big Brother, but about losing our freedom through pleasure, about destroying the things we love, about becoming a species of entertainment to death". Initially, people used short videos to make full use of fragmented time and to satisfy their cultural consumption needs. But now, with the development of short videos, the entertainment is somewhat serious, and the video content is only catering to the taste of the public to meet the audience's sense of pleasure, which will make the mobile short video content lack of depth, and there is even a trend of gradually developing in the direction of entertainment and vulgarity. If this goes on, it will lead to short-video communication distortion and fall into the endless whirlpool of entertainment, becoming a vassal of entertainment.

4. How to Guide the Healthy Development of Short Video Carnival

In order to guide the healthy development of Tik Tok short video orgy, it is necessary to establish a long-term management mechanism among the platform, users and the government.

4.1 The Platform Should Be a Good "Gatekeeper"

The platform plays an important role of "gatekeeper" in the process of video content dissemination. Firstly, it should strengthen the audit of video content; secondly, it should improve the algorithm function to filter and screen the extremely similar and unhealthy contents based on the understanding of users' preferences before pushing them to users, so as to improve users' viewing experience and avoid the secondary dissemination of undesirable contents; thirdly, it should require the platform to establish a long-term management mechanism between the platform, users and the government. Third, we should require users to authenticate their identities on the platform, and actively encourage them to report complaints against illegal content and warn or even permanently ban creators who publish undesirable information; fourth, we should set up a time reminder function so that users have a clear understanding of time in the process of watching and avoid excessive addiction; fifth, we should encourage innovation in the form of content and spread valuable and in-depth content. Fifth, we should encourage innovation in the form of content and disseminate valuable and in-depth content.

4.2 Innovations in Short Video Content and Form by Disseminators

Innovation in the content and form of short videos can not only provide audiences with visual effects of picture sense, but also deeper investigation and enjoyment of emotion and attitude, and increase the influence of short videos. In following the objective law of communication, when innovating the content and form of short videos, communicators should be good at integrating the correct values and mainstream ideology into them, so that audiences can be influenced by the correct values in a subtle way when watching the videos in fragmented time, thus achieving an optimal communication effect.

4.3 Audiences Strengthen the Correct Understanding of Short Videos

As the main participants of the orgy, users should improve their media literacy and moral concepts and strengthen their self-management ability. They should maintain rational thinking in the orgy and

avoid blindly following the trend of imitation; cultivate a wide range of hobbies to enrich themselves and avoid losing themselves through excessive addiction to Tik Tok.

4.4 Strengthen Government Guidance

The government and relevant departments should play a leading role in strengthening the supervision of short video platforms, building relevant laws and regulations and imposing strict penalties for violations, so as to guide the orderly development of short video platforms.

5. Conclusion

From the traditional media monopoly of the right to speak to the short video carnival of "everyone can be a director" , it is the embodiment of human subject consciousness, but carnival does not mean to examine the ugly, discard the rational alive and ignore the law, each subject should maintain a rational cognition, in order to ensure the healthy development of short video carnival, the platform, users, and the government should work together to create a healthy environment. In order to ensure the healthy development of short video carnival, the platform, users and the government should work together to create a healthy and positive short video environment, only then, there will be no anxiety behind the carnival ,and the short video can be better continued.

References

- [1] *China's News Network:Tik Tok released the 2019 data report,more than 400 million daily active users,[EB/OL].*
- [2] *Wang Xuecheng, Yang Haochen:Coronation in Short Video Carnival and Its Paradox of Significance[J],Contemporary Communication, 2021(06):87-89+96.*
- [3] *Cheng Minna:Research on the phenomenon of "carnival"of short video on Network [D] Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education, 2020.DOI:10.27042/d.cnki.ggztc.2020.000022.*