

## Cover Art

Digital Drawing by Anna Humphreys: Communication in the Era of Covid

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## Cover Art

Digital Drawing by Anna Humphreys: Communication in the Era of Covid

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 41<sup>st</sup> edition of Comm-Entary, the undergraduate research journal of the University of New Hampshire's Communication Department. Our dedicated team of editors has spent the past year collaborating and working hard to bring you this newest edition that features some fascinating pieces on media, rhetoric, and interpersonal studies. We are so excited to share it with you.

The annual publication of Comm-Entary is a time-honored tradition here at UNH's Communication Department. Through this annual publication, we celebrate the academic excellence achieved by young scholars within our field of study. Comm-Entary has continued to grow over the past 41 years to provide a platform to share the unique perspectives of UNH's Communication students with a global audience, reaching readers on six continents and in dozens of countries worldwide.

This year's edition is especially fitting for the era of COVID-19, as the publication features more multimedia and digital works than ever before, a true testament to how digitized our communication has become in these times. We hoped to represent this important evolution of communication in this edition's cover artwork: a digital drawing of one of UNH's signature landmarks, Thompson Hall, surrounded by various motifs of digital communication.

In the year since the outbreak of COVID-19, our team has faced many unusual challenges, but took them head on with a sense of passion and determination that made me proud to be a part of this organization. The flexibility and commitment of our Editorial Board and student editors made the publication of the 41<sup>st</sup> edition such a success. And, of course, none of it would have been possible without the guidance and leadership of our incredible faculty advisor, Professor Michael Jackson. Thank you everyone for your hard work, dedication, and passion for learning that keeps this journal going year after year.

Comm-Entary is truly a celebration of scholarship and young minds coming together to create something lasting. From the Comm-Entary team to you, we thank you for celebrating with us and we hope you enjoy!

Sincerely,

Ellie Humphreys Editor-in-Chief

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## Jamie Azulay

Jamie Azulay is an undergraduate English Journalism and Communication student at the University of New Hampshire from Reading, MA. She is a member of the Comm-Entary editorial board, a sister of Alpha Xi Delta, and a dancer on the UNH Dance Company, and a member of the Society of Professional Journalists. Following her graduation in May, Jamie will pursue a career in broadcast journalism working as a multimedia journalist in Utica, NY.

"Breaking News: Journalism is at the Brink of Extinction"

In a digital age crippled by "fake news" and the spread of disinformation, what does the future look like for journalism in the United States? Declining trust in American news media has been a trend since the internet was first introduced. With changing forms of communication came changes in our demands for news. Things such as the concept of an online public sphere, social media, memes and even the president have all played a role in how journalism is viewed and accepted in American society.

"Changing the World One Girl at a Time: The Barbie Dream Gap Project"

This paper is focused on the RPIE cycle, with specific attention to the Barbie Dream Gap Project's implementation and the many ways in which Barbie is working to spread the word and promote their project. They have released a number of press releases, created video campaigns that are seen online and on TV, Barbie vlogs, social media posts, partnered with GoFundMe and bloggers who have been paid to write about the project, and they also made a new line of dolls modeled after female role models. Barbie has gotten criticism in the past saying that the brand negatively impacts female body image and limits what girls can do. This new project is working to repair that image.



# Jake Connelly

Jake Connolly is a Senior at the University of New Hampshire, and is a Communication: Business Applications major with a minor in Business Administration from Canton, Massachusetts. During his time at UNH, Jake has focused on communication courses that deal with media and rhetoric. More specifically, Jake is interested in the rhetoric of displays such as monuments. In the upcoming fall, Jake will begin work on his honors thesis which will be done with Professor Lawrence Prelli and will look at counter memorials and iconoclasm in Civil War memorials. Aside from his academic studies, Jake is an active member of the Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honors Society, a UNH Admissions Tour Guide, and a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. Currently, Jake is working as an honors discussion assistant at the University for Professor Katherine Gaudet and her class Plague: Literary Histories of Epidemic. In his free time Jake enjoys to ski, watch movies, go to concerts, and spend time with family and friends.

"Apologetic Discourse in Sexual Allegation Scandals"

This paper examines apologetic discourse in relation to sexual allegation scandals. Specifically, the paper focuses on Bill Clinton's televised speech on August 17th, 1998, addressing the Monica Lewinsky scandal, and Donald Trump's video posted to Facebook on October 7th, 2016, addressing the recently leaked Access Hollywood Tape. These speeches are analyzed rhetorically with the central question being when facing scandals of a sexual nature, what different rhetorical strategies are used by rhetors in order to achieve redemption with their different audiences and restore their image, and are they successful with the rhetorical strategies they employ in their speech? Conceptually, the work of Ware and Linkugel (1973) and the four common strategies of denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence in apologetic speeches guide the analysis. Overall, it is determined that neither Trump or Clinton reached the mark and each failed rhetorically. This is because both speakers reverted to attacking their accusers and opponents instead of being remorseful for their actions. Trump and Clinton would have been successful rhetorically, had they expressed mortification and given corrective action. Instead they attempted to evade their responsibilities and digressed into attacks when what was needed was a genuine apology.



# Sarah DeSimone

Sarah DeSimone is currently a Junior double majoring in Political Science and Communication at the University of New Hampshire. She is also an Italian Studies minor, as well as participant in an accelerated master's program for Political Science. She loves to write, and is very excited to be included in this year's publication of Comm-Entary.

# "LGBTQ+ Representation in Friends"

This paper explores how LGBTQ+ people and relationships are portrayed in the television show "Friends". This show is a beloved family favorite to many, so much so in fact the use of homophobic and insensitive jokes about the LGBTQ+ community are often overlooked. This paper explores stereotyping, framing, and hegemony as ways that the writers of the show were able to diminish and dehumanize non-straight characters and storylines.



### **Evan Edmonds**

Evan Edmonds is a Senior studying Journalism and working towards a minor in Communication, and also a Staff Writer for the student-run newspaper "The New Hampshire". Besides his interest in studying Journalism, he enjoys exploring early concepts in the curriculum of Communication, such as argument, civil discourse and propaganda/persuasion.He is hoping to apply his writing and communications skills to continue publishing meaningful works that tell an important story.

"College Students Hold the Keys to Cultivate Civility"

"College Students Hold the Keys to Cultivate Civility" focuses on how younger generations are continuing to make waves in the way that we interact in our everyday lives. A dangerous and unhealthy "Argument Culture," plagues the way people interact and share their views in this country - the younger generations, particularly college students, have the power to shift that back in a positive direction. I argue in my piece that learning the right way to share opinions and ideas is learned in real-life scenarios taken up between students in a classroom setting. Practicing these techniques at college age can only benefit the future of society, as more and more students graduate and take their skills of meaningful deliberation out into the world, impacting those around them and spreading the keys to restoring our public discourse.



### Elunia

ELUNIA is a New Hampshire-based recording artist and singer-songwriter-producer, executing all of her own visuals. She strives to capture the endless meaning of human interaction as an immersive experience. Each track delves beneath the surface, with striking electronic textures, soaring melodies, and observant, probing lyrics. She has been trained in music from an

early age, and a multi-instrumentalist who began writing and producing incessantly, hiding away in school practice rooms as a coping mechanism for the isolation she faced in the world around her. Fragments of thought noted in the midst of heart-wrenching moments evolved into ethereal, liquid atmospheres. Co-producing with multi-million streamed producer JMAC (Haux, Luz), the result is a flood of wild self-expression channeled through cinematic soundscapes.

### "Borderlines"

"Borderlines" was created to help visualize the duality of mental illness. It represents the fluidity and inability to define such labels, but explore the fluctuating state of being. I found myself torn between two sides of my personality while struggling with anxiety; a right vs. left brain complex where one side of me was trying so hard to conform while the other side was begging for uninhibited self-expression. The truest part of me wanted to experience the world in full color, even if it was through a lens of introversion that others wouldn't understand. Eventually, I realized that it was the people around me who were missing out, not the other way around. In 2018, the song's production materialized when I had a chance conversation with multi-million streamed producer JMAC (who has produced for artists such as Haux, Luz, Matilda Mann, Rosie Carney) in which I sent him an audio of some synths that I had been working on, not thinking anything would come of it. But he wanted to collaborate on it, which was incredible. I ended up co-producing all of the music that I've made so far with him (including my second single, "Soak," which is also out on streaming platforms alongside "Borderlines"). The "Borderlines" music video, which was directed, produced, and edited all by me, was one of those concepts that came to me in the middle of the night, and then I couldn't sleep afterwards. I suddenly just saw what it needed to be - I saw two clones in sparse, white space; one like a blank canvas and the other slightly insane, painting their face and throwing paint. It symbolizes this idea of a split personality - one side of me wanted to conform, and the other wanted to tap into this wild creativity.



### **Danielle Forte**

Danielle Forte is a Senior at the University of New Hampshire from Glastonbury, Connecticut. She will be graduating with degrees in Communication and Sustainability. She has been drawn to Communication to explore creativity and writing, as well as implementing interests. She is most interested in the media aspect of Communication, more specifically, how rhetoric

within the media affects the masses.

"Memorial Narratives: A Local Syncretic Memorial and How it Projects Public Identities"

Portsmouth, New Hampshire was a major entry point for slave ships in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century. In October of 2003 a work crew dug up the remains belonging to those of African ancestry. Now, Portsmouth has an established burial site for those that built the very city that forgot them. Being that the majority of African and Black memorials studied are positioned in the south, this research examines the effects of an African memorial site in the center of a prominent New England city. The author further examines how memorials operate rhetorically to project public identities. The research also demonstrates that this memorial serves a generic function while taking on a mutual projection.



# **David Hadley**

David Hadley, a New Hampshire native, is currently a Senior at the University of New Hampshire and is pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Communication. Earning an Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts at Great Bay Community College, David became a certified tutor and also earned an outstanding achievement award for his high academic success. Currently on the University of New Hampshire's Dean's List, David hopes to utilize the skills and knowledge that he is accruing as a means to obtain a fulfilling career in film production. With a constant drive to learn, when he is not playing the piano, David can be found spending time refining the skills that most interest him. Most

notably: baking, guitar, photography, and creating both audio and video projects.

"Dealing with Absolutes" (Podcast)

Modality is a podcast series that attempts to answer an extremely important question; what is the purpose of music? Music is all around us and is constantly affecting our attitudes. From massive concerts to elevator music, every instance of the artform plays a significant role in our daily lives. Indeed, the ways in which music is utilized is never without purpose. Instead, it inherently attempts to communicate some message. Yet, what this message is is still under debate. On this first episode of Modality, the creator takes a critical stance on one side of this argument, which determines that music's purpose is to actually not have any purpose at all. Specifically, he catalogs the long history of music as it developed through the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods of music. In doing so, he critically analyses how composers of the time considered music to be a medium that existed in a totally artistic realm of utter ambiguity. This research demonstrates that, in considering the compositions of the past

"Behind the Farm Stand" (Film)

The United States is in desperate need of restructuring its agricultural landscape. As a country whose economic system encourages the exploitation of nature for monetary gain, the U.S. has become a nation whose agricultural system seems to exist in a state of irrevocable unsustainability. Yet, there exists one potential avenue for generating more sustainable practices—local farming. In an effort to create a more informed citizenry, this short documentary draws on insight provided by three New England farmers and covers several unknown, albeit common, challenges that many local farmers face in their production process. More importantly, however, this film highlights many of the sustainable practices that local farms undertake, and the benefits of buying locally are considered. Indeed, this film reveals that buying locally moves the U.S. toward a more generative agricultural landscape. As such, the discourse within this short documentary acts to shed light onto the intricate world of local farming and also to encourage its audience to recognize the importance of buying locally grown food.



# Brian Heaney

Brian Heaney is Junior Communication major at the University of New Hampshire with a minor in Economics. He is pursuing a career in the legal and consulting fields and plans to attend law school after graduation. At UNH, he is actively involved with the Connors Writing Center, a resource for students on campus to meet with other student writing assistants to work collaboratively on their revision process for their papers. Outside of school, he has worked with the recreation department and school district in his hometown as a camp supervisor and substitute teacher, and in his free time he enjoys spending time with his friends on Baboosic Lake.

"Nike's Dream Crazy Movement"

In September of 2018, Nike, an athletic apparel company that has been a giant for the past 50 years, released an advertisement featuring professional athlete Colin Kaepernick which launched their Dream Crazy campaign. This campaign was focused on athletes pushing past the confines of just being athletes and representing so much more than what they are known for in their sports, including NBA player Lebron James who has been with Nike for years and aside from being a superstar basketball player has also opened his own school and changed the lives of thousands of children. However, this campaign was not met with support from everyone, as there were others that felt that these athletes should stick to what they are paid to do, and it that it was not Nike's place to try and promote these athletes for anything but wearing the company's apparel. This campaign, while controversial to some, accomplished things that no other sports campaign has done, and opened doors for what other companies can utilize the platform they have through their athletes.



## **Margaret Hicks**

Margaret Hicks is a Senior at the University of New Hampshire, where she is pursuing a degree in Communication: Business Applications and minors in Business Administration and International Affairs. Maggie is an executive member of the Communication Honor Society Lambda Pi Eta, and her academic areas of interest include rhetorical studies, persuasive and analytical writing, history, and economics. Upon graduating, she hopes to pursue a legal career and plans on attending graduate school. In her free time, Maggie enjoys reading classical American literature, going for walks with her black Labrador puppy Finley, and spending time with her friends.

### "The Marketplace of Internet Data and Surveillance"

On the current Web 2.0, every click matters; whether you are online shopping, conducting a Google search, or even scrolling through your social media feeds, each and every one of your digital activities are recorded as data points. Data colonialism, a corporate mindset that positions personal data as an exploitable, tradable, and profitable commodity, first evolved in response to the discovery of personal data's value. From data colonialism rose data capitalism, the enacted practice of collecting, exploiting, and appropriating data. In recent years, the rise and growth of surveillance capitalism in the Internet marketplace marks a new turn in the Web 2.0, and the substantial implications it has on the corporate entities that use it, the consumers who are affected by it, and the Internet marketplace in which it operates in, undeniably calls for a greater assessment of how it came into being, how it functions currently, and how it facilitates the pervasive surveillance of our lives. This essay examines the development of the Internet data and surveillance capitalism, and explores how Google is a pioneer of surveillance capitalism, how surveillance capitalism is a form of a surveillant assemblage, and the themes of power asymmetry and the exploitation of the unpaid laborer and the appropriation of personal data.



### Jocelyn Kenyon

Jocelyn Kenyon is a Senior at the University of New Hampshire. Jocelyn majors in Communication with a focus in Business Applications and a minor in Sales. She is an active member of the Lambda Pi Eta Communication Studies Honor Society. She is currently a fashion marketing intern for an online fashion boutique. In her free time, Jocelyn likes to stay active, go shopping, and travel. After graduation, Jocelyn hopes to pursue a career in the marketing or public relations field.

### "The Analysis of the 9/11 Memorial as Ritualistic"

Memorials are an important part of history that people visit daily. Rhetorically, memorials can be studied from a number of vantage points. The purpose of this paper is to reveal how applicable memorials are when analyzing them rhetorically. Specifically, this paper will focus on the 9/11 Memorial from a rhetorical framework of ritual, civic religion, and social hierarchy to answer the research question, "Why do people visit death sites such as memorials?" The three features of the memorial include the entrance to the memorial overlooking the twin pools, the engraved names on bronze plaques, and a distinct tree beyond the pools which is known as the Survivor Tree. These features will be thoroughly analyzed to understand the 9/11 Memorial as ritualistic, recognize the symbolic meaning it can hold for people, and the social order that is imposed on

people when visiting. Ultimately, from a rhetorical perspective, this analysis will communicate the various reasons why people visit memorials such as the 9/11 Memorial.



#### **Brooke Marston**

Brooke Marston is an undergraduate student in Communication at the University of New Hampshire, minoring in Justice Studies, Philosophy, and Sociology. She currently serves as the President of the Communication Honor Society Lambda Pi Eta, as well as the Manuscript Chair of Comm-Entary. During her time at UNH, she has engaged the greater university community as an academic tutor, resident assistant, and student notetaker. Much of Brooke's scholarship is focused in the area of media studies, and she is particularly interested in the relationships between new media and politics as well as the intersections between

technology and social inequality. In her free time, her interests include multimedia production, watching video essays on YouTube, and crafting.

## "The Cool Candidate: Bridging the Gaps of the Modern Meme Candidacy, from Bloomberg to Biden"

Former mayor Mike Bloomberg began an optimistic but ultimately unsuccessful 2020 presidential run much later than his fellow Democratic competitors, with a unique strategy that involved ignoring multiple states in favor of garnering support for Super Tuesday, entirely self-financing his own campaign, and pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into advertising efforts. Particularly in socially liberal Democratic circles and among younger voters, internet users reacted with cynicism to Bloomberg's candidacy— painting him as yet another old, white, and male billionaire corrupted by years in politics. With a track record poised to disparage his reputation among many young Democrats, Bloomberg's campaign opted to reach out to this demographic in new, sometimes baffling ways. Social media were at the heart of these strategies, from posting nonsense on Twitter to contracting Instagram's most popular influencers to make cringe-worthy sponsored posts. The analysis that follows will examine how Mike Bloomberg's presidential campaign bandwagoned upon a culture of subversion, adapting to both modern meme culture and the increasingly prevalent attention economy. While this approach was not successful in earning Bloomberg the Democratic nomination in 2020, the campaign's methods nonetheless warrant exploration in order to understand the necessity of a digital candidacy in our current world, and to predict potential challenges that the presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden may face going into the general election.

"Campaigning With The Stars: Examining the Growing Intersection of Fandom and Politics"

In the past decade, the developed world has seen a dramatic rise in the spread and influence of fan communities or fandoms, along with only a small glimpse of the massive power these groups can wield in non-digital spaces. Some of the most resonant examples lie in the realm of United States politics, where politicians on both the right and left have found themselves at the center of mass idolization movements. In this analysis, the emergence of fandoms and subsequent rise in their collective consumer power is considered alongside structural changes to dominant forms of media communication. The fandom's collective power is examined through the lens of politics, through the discussion of contemporary politicians with their own fandoms including Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump. Through these case studies, questions such as how these new political fandoms form and how they are similar or different to our traditional understanding of fandoms are addressed. These findings are then reapplied to discuss the current role of fan-like behaviors in US politics, and what implications the existence of political fandoms may hold for the integrity of political processes.

"Ethnomethodology of Gameplay: A Collaborative Enactment of Meaning, Rules, and Structure"

The following account is a case study of ethnomethodology, or the use of social interaction to construct participants' views of the world, in the activity of gameplay. Using the board game Skull, I analyze five cases from gameplay to illustrate the various [methods] implemented by players in both acquainting themselves with the game's rules as well as carrying out the actions of game-playing. Additionally, I discuss how phenomenal field details of the game experience and understanding of the game's structure are collectively and interactionally achieved through accounting for actions, professionally coding and representing functions of gameplay, using conversational facets such as overlap, aligning understandings through repair, and understanding and using 'nextness' in gameplay.

"United States of Satire: Borat and Political Culture Jamming as a 'Get-Out-The-Vote' Effort"

The term *culture jamming* refers to tactics utilized in order to critique or subvert mainstream culture, to the extent of 'jamming' its usual function. Historically, culture jamming has existed as a set of subcultural practices, often playful and creative, that undermine or point out the shortcomings of dominant culture. Sometimes this is encapsulated through the media genre of satire, which utilizes the rhetorical or structural forms of a source in order to take a critical lens to that source. As part public-performance art and part mockumentary, 2020's Borat Subsequent Moviefilm effectively engages in culture jamming through its immersion in mainstream political culture as a means of satirization. As Sacha Baron Cohen portrays the dated and clueless European journalist Borat, he acts as a blank canvas upon which unwitting subjects authentically project their own beliefs regarding politics, religion, and other topics that comprise mainstream culture. Baron Cohen's actions take on the ideals of culture jamming as they are brought out into the public, with the purpose of satirizing participants who believe they are in a real situation

when they are actually being pranked— and in doing so, attempt to paint a grim future of United States politics in order to encourage American audiences to vote in the 2020 general election.

## "Emancipation and Exploitation: Examining the Political Roots and Social Consequences of the Contraceptive Pill"

The contraceptive pill is widely regarded as a landmark development of the 1960s. Not only did its development lead to new discoveries in the field of pharmacology, it was also seen as the first potential solution to the perceived problem of world overpopulation, and ultimately would open many doors for women by placing them in control of their reproductive choices. While "the pill" is rightly seen as a step in the right direction for the cause of women's liberation, as a technology largely inspired and championed by women, considering the social and political backdrop it was created against reveals darker intentions for and practices in developing the pill. This analysis incorporates historical primary sources related to the pill to illustrate how the pill changed as a marketable product since its initial release, how public relations materials attempted to shape public perception and acceptance of the pill as a contraceptive method, and the social and political messages these materials sent to women consumers specifically. The messages in these materials are reflective of the social and political ideas that pervaded the time period in which the pill was developed, and I reflect on how such messages helped to socially construct birth control as an inherently feminine practice which still persists today.

## "Fake Geek Girl: Analyzing (and Gamifying) Gendered Fan Gatekeeping"

Fan cultures, or fandoms, have attracted academic and cultural focus for the unique ways in which their members express and maintain community, as well as how members of fandoms view their identities in relation to their participation and membership in such communities. While fans have been historically written off in these circles for their perceived obsessions, one subgroup— the male fan— has come to be cautiously accepted, with fan behaviors commonly associated with alternative yet valid expressions of masculinity. However, while more than one way to be a man has made its way into mainstream discourse, the same flexibility does not quite exist for women, as made evident through the myriad of gatekeeping behaviors that have been observed towards women in fan communities. My game, Fake Geek Girl, is an attempt to gamify the experience of women fans on the receiving end of gendered gatekeeping. It is a frustrating experience that subverts the traditional expectations of a game— achieving each objective yields degrading messages rather than points, and completing the game does not feel much like "winning" at all. The game is meant to reflect the experience of the female fan as one that can be emotionally challenging, isolating, and defeating, in the hopes of sparking conversations regarding the inclusivity of more niche 'geeky' spaces as well as the greater internet of all genders and walks of life.

Honors Thesis: "Uses Unaddressed: How Social Technologies Tacitly Allow Gender-Based Violence"

Growing technological capabilities have enhanced and intensified the potential for surveillance in many areas of life. Particularly, the placement of advanced technology in the hands of everyday people has produced ample opportunities for interpersonal monitoring. This growing capacity to surveil others we know without sophisticated techniques has concerning implications for acts of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence, which often hinge on surveillance, isolation, and control. Often, technology is used to the advantage of abusers in achieving such ends, and the wealth of personal information that is often available online leaves users vulnerable to acts of gender-based violence such as cyberstalking. In the following analysis, I systematically and forensically interrogate the seemingly mundane apps Find My and Venmo to investigate how these and other apps could be used to aid in such behaviors, paying special attention to privacy settings and account security features. I find that these apps generally overlook special risks that are often present in gender-based violence and intimate partner violence, especially hindering users' efforts towards independence when their account may be compromised by an abuser. Additionally, limited privacy settings on social apps like Venmo leave an abundance of personal information publicly accessible with few options to improve security while continuing to use the service. In light of these findings, I make recommendations to help alleviate gender-based privacy and safety concerns, including more equal gender representation in technological development, and more advanced security features such as fingerprint identification or facial recognition.



#### Alexa McNamara

Alexa McNamara is a senior communication major and studio art minor. These two areas of study, combined with her work as a student Fellow for the UNH Civil Discourse Lab, were key influences in choosing this thesis topic. Pursuing artistic and creative opportunities as well as having discussions with a variety of individuals is something she strives to do regularly.

Honors Thesis: "Art Spaces as Third Places for Everyday Political Talk"

Contentious subject matter is often avoided in conversation. Additionally, there are not many places in which open discussion on such topics is considered acceptable, but the country needs them. In this thesis, I discuss third places as places of gathering for various individuals and the integration of everyday political talk, natural civic discussion (Oldenburg, 1999; Kim & Kim, 2008). The data analyzed in this study consists of ten transcripts from ten interviews conducted over zoom. The result of the analysis shows that art museums do foster everyday political talk through the elements of visualization, facilitation and the environment. In turn, the investigation works to fill the gaps of knowledge that separate third places, everyday political talk and the quality of conversation within art museums.



### **Gabby Podmore**

"Going Viral(ish) in 2020"

This paper explores the evolution of the viral and the conditions that accompany, launch, and follow from viral content.