



TASA The Australian
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TITLE: Engaging students and their publics through making sociological films

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While sociological learning and teaching is still dominated by the word, students are increasingly immersed in visual culture. Audio-visuals can be extremely powerful in their ability to communicate complex messages about the world. Accordingly, it is now established practice to include audiovisual material in teaching sociological ideas. Moreover, audio-visual communications, such as Youtube videos, are growing in importance as a means of informing public debate. At the same time, recent developments in technology equip anyone with access to a computer or smartphone with the means to make a film.

Getting students to make a short film seemed like a way of catering to diverse skill sets and interests while simultaneously engaging students in a form of Public Sociology. This article provides a critical examination of a newly developed undergraduate unit where students had to communicate a sociological idea through first conceptualizing and then making a short film during the semester.

After explaining the pedagogy behind the unit, this paper focuses on the experiences of, and learnings from developing and teaching such a unit. It contributes to the collective effort of academics teaching Sociology to find ways to engage students more deeply and assist them in engaging the world.