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Vlog Critique

Harrison Arkansas is known as “America’s most racist town.” The area gained attention online from numerous videos of the locals performing racist acts and screaming horrible slurs at minorities in public. In the video I chose to critique, Niko Omilana, a British YouTuber since 2011 who has six million subscribers, and over 482 million views visited the town as a minority and managed to interview the leader of the KKK by tricking him into it. The YouTuber is originally known for his parody videos and sketches but has since shifted his focus towards trolling racists at public events in an interview style format. The title of the video, “I Pranked America’s Most Racist Man” catches the attention of the viewer from the very beginning, and effectively gains clicks. This particular video surmounted over 33 million views, which proves to display the effectual success in making the racist group look foolish. The tactics Niko uses in editing, vlog format, and an overall catchy delivery of the content serves to send home a powerful delivery of such a captivating subject.

To begin, the introduction was incredibly pivotal in catching the viewers' attention after choosing to watch the video. Within the first 13 seconds, we as the audience learn all of the key points we need to know before watching the rest of the 34-minute presentation. We first get a visual of ‘America’s most racist man’ and then learn Niko Omilana had to find him, trick him

into participating in an interview, and that this all occurred on accident – a very engaging start! The foreshadowing serves to peak our interest and strive to learn more, thus we keep watching.

After the fast-paced introduction, the format serves to slow down and break down the information further. Niko gives a background of Harrison Arkansas, and then further documents his travels in arriving at the town. By interacting with locals, we further gain a personal account of the fears of visiting this area, and the dangers Niko might encounter. He catches a ride with someone from the airport who has personal connections with the racist region. The driver tells Niko about his friend who went to high school in the Harrison district and had to deal with all of the racist people daily. This personal account further stresses the unease of the situation and the potential for an uncomfortable outcome.

Upon arrival, Niko settles down at a local hotel, and decides to go out at night to see what people do in the area – he quickly learns the entertainment is limited. Eventually he stumbles across a local who gives more context about the town. He invites Niko to join him and his friends to play games at a local comic bookstore. This event serves to show that not everyone in the area is a monster, and subtly changes the assumptions of the town because of this kind invitation. They all have a cordial discussion regarding the towns' reputation, and a genuine relationship is formed. The juxtaposition of hearing the stories from the driver at the airport compared to the local and his friends effectively gives two sides to the story towards the towns questioned notoriety.

After more progression in the videos and numerous interactions with locals, we slowly gain more information about the leader of the KKK's whereabouts. The search for the man creates a suspense for the viewer, resulting in an inclination to keep watching and effectively engaging the audience. Eventually after some trial and error, Niko finally gathers all the

information needed and secures the interview with Thomas Robb – the leader of the KKK. By Niko presenting a false security to the man by claiming to be interviewing on behalf of the BBC, Thomas Robb agrees to the interview. This results in the climax of the narrative of the overall video, and we get to see the sit-down discussion had by the pair. Niko asks both serious and mocking questions that go over Thomas Robb's head. Considering that Robb continually misses the clear jabs aimed at his adverse group, we learn he isn't the most educated or well-informed. He says several questionable things that further send home the message Niko is aiming to convey in the overall video. Niko also parody's as being on the side of Thomas Robb, which serves to gain his trust, and thus get more telling answers.

On the technical side, this video is well produced and doesn't seem rehearsed in its delivery. The graphics and musical enhancements serve to supplement the overall video and its message, for example, the music was helpful to discern both playful and dramatic scenes. Transitions were smooth, the volume was consistent, and the length was needed to complete the story. The interview itself was brilliant in its delivery – the way he framed the questions in such a way as to make Thomas Robb look uneducated was incredibly smart. Overall, this channel does a great job of getting clicks through its stylish composition, enthusiastic host, and engaging topics. To conclude, I liked this video. Everything was done with incredible professionalism, which serves to engage the audience through every minute implemented.