Adapting to COVID-19: Resources for Natural History Collections in a New Virtual World

Using social media to support and promote natural history collections

Sadie Mills, Florida Museum of Natural History
Gabriel Santos, Alf Museum of Paleontology
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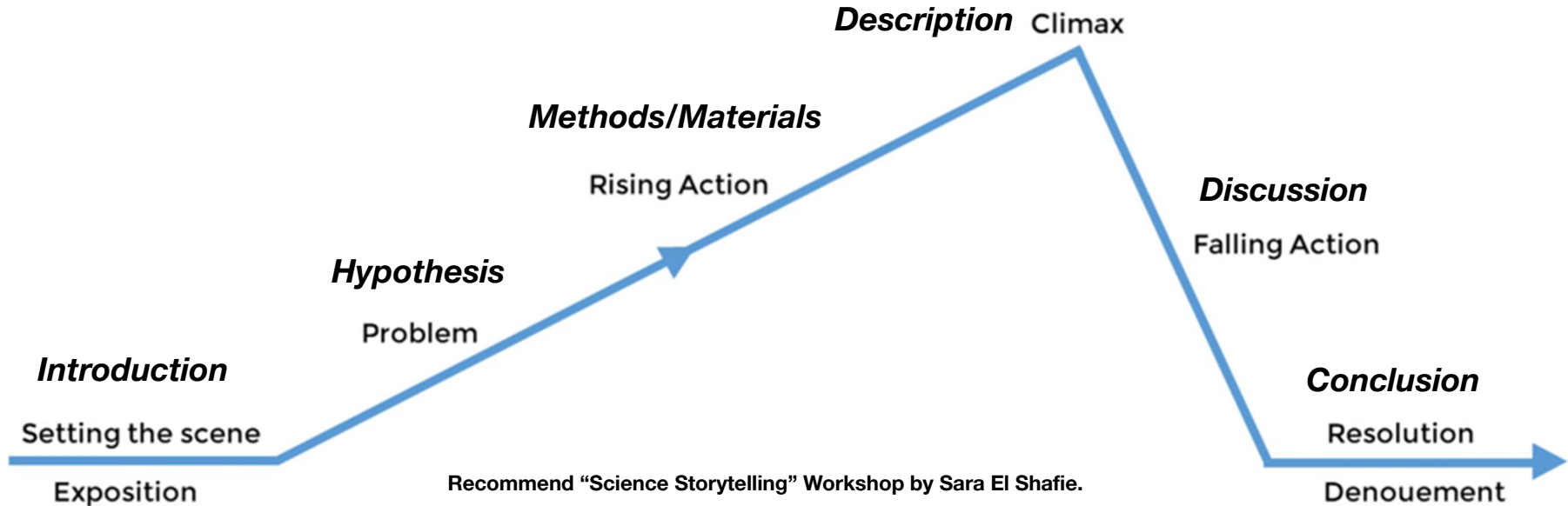
"Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world."

-Robert McKee

STRUCTURING A NARRATIVE

Introduction
Setting the scene
Exposition

Hypothesis
Problem

Methods/Materials
Rising Action

Description Climax

Discussion
Falling Action

Conclusion
Resolution
Denouement

Recommend "Science Storytelling" Workshop by Sara El Shafie.

https://www.sara-elshafie.com/workshopsx

The Role of Narrative in Communicating Science

Lucy Avraamidou ✉ & Jonathan Osborne

📄 Full Article   🖼 Figures & data   📰 References   66 Citations   📊 Metrics   🖨 Reprints & Permissions   Get access

Abstract

The present theoretical paper presents a case for the use of narrative (i.e., fictional written text) in science education as a way of making science meaningful, relevant, and accessible to the public. Grounded in literature pointing to the value of narrative in supporting learning and the need to explore new modes of communicating science, this paper explores the potential of narrative in science education. More specifically, in this paper we explore the question: *What is narrative and why might it be of value to science education*? In answering this question we propose a view of narrative and its necessary components, which permits narrative a role in science education, and is, in fact, the main contribution of this paper. Also,
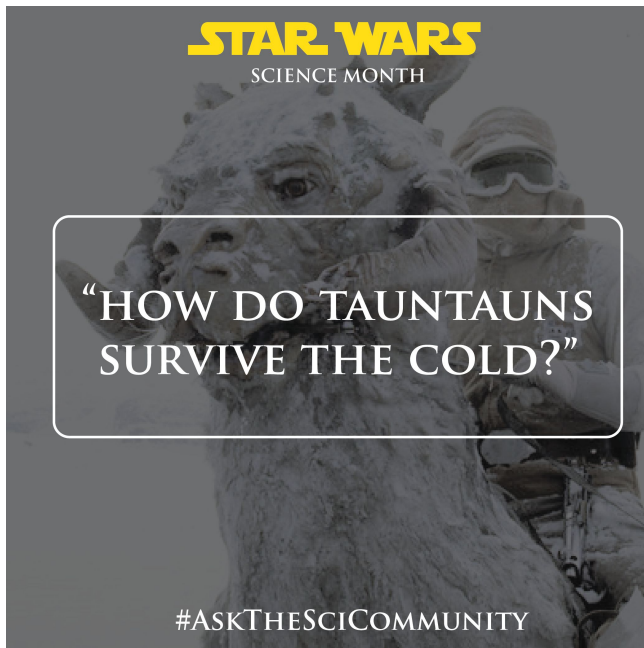
What story do you want to tell?

- Fact sharing vs science communication vs storytelling
- Every fossil is worth 1000 stories
- Center people, places, and events to connect audiences
- Are you the main character or the narrator?
- "Stories that whisper": https://youtu.be/8hXIHQurRfE

What story do you want to tell?

- Connecting stories: accessibility, relatability, and perspectives
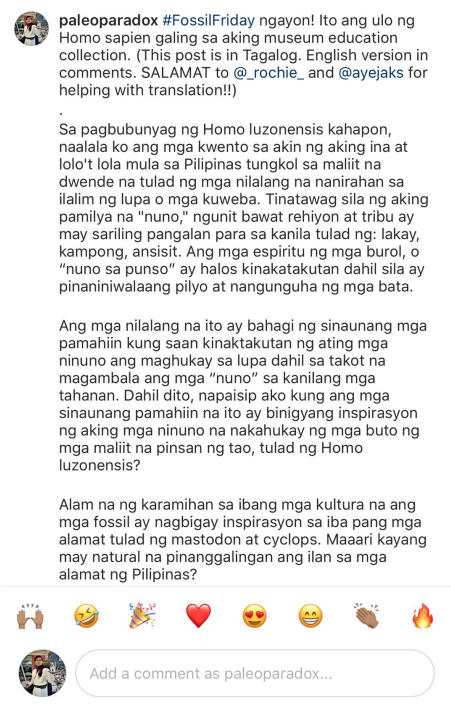- Cultural
- Ecological
- Contemporary

Broadening Perspectives & Connections

- Local, regional, global, universal
- Deep time and audience's "Moment of Time"
- Call-to-Action
- cultural, political, economic, historical, geological, ecological

- Recommend: National Geographic Education Framework & Storytelling Courses

paleoparadox
Raymond M. Alf Museum of Paleontology

Liked by silli_scientist and **182 others**

paleoparadox #FossilFriday ngayon! Ito ang ulo ng Homo sapien galing sa aking museum education collection. (This post is in Tagalog. English version in comments. SALAMAT to @_rochie_ and @ayejaks for helping with translation!!)

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.
Sa pagbubunyag ng Homo luzonensis kahapon, naalala ko ang mga kwento sa akin ng aking ina at lolo't lola mula sa Pilipinas tungkol sa maliit na dwende na tulad ng mga nilalang na naninirahan sa ilalim ng lupa o mga kuweba. Tinatawag sila ng aking pamilya na "nuno," ngunit bawat rehiyon at tribu ay may sariling pangalan para sa kanila tulad ng: lakay, kampong, ansisit. Ang mga espiritu ng mga burol, o "nuno sa punso" ay halos kinakatakutan dahil sila ay pinaniniwalaang pilyo at nangunguha ng mga bata.

Ang mga nilalang na ito ay bahagi ng sinaunang mga pamahiin kung saan kinaktakutan ng ating mga ninuno ang maghukay sa lupa dahil sa takot na magambala ang mga "nuno" sa kanilang mga tahanan. Dahil dito, napaisip ako kung ang mga sinaunang pamahiin na ito ay binigyang inspirasyon ng aking mga ninuno na nakahukay ng mga buto ng mga maliit na pinsan ng tao, tulad ng Homo luzonensis?

Alam na ng karamihan sa ibang mga kultura na ang mga fossil ay nagbigay inspirasyon sa iba pang mga alamat tulad ng mastodon at cyclops. Maaari kayang may natural na pinanggalingan ang ilan sa mga alamat ng Pilipinas?

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paleoparadox With the reveal of Homo luzonensis yesterday, I was reminded of the stories my mom and grandparents would tell me from the Philippines about the little dwarf-like creatures that lived in the ground or caves. My family called them "tianak" but every region and tribe had their own name for them: lakay, kampong, ansisit. These "spirits of the hills" were almost feared because they were supposed to be mischievous and would kidnap children. These creatures were part of ancient superstitions where our ancestors were afraid to even dig up the ground for fear of disturbing their homes. Thinking about that now, I wonder if these ancient folktales were inspired by my ancestors digging up bones of our diminutive human cousins like Homo luzonensis? We already know that in other cultures, fossils inspired other myths like the mastodon and the cyclops. Could it be that much of a stretch that Philippine mythology has origins in the natural world too? But also, just as warning, if you are ever in the Philippines and see a dirt mound or termite mound, bow and say "excuse me" before you pass. Otherwise the tianak will appear and drag you into the ground!! . . . At least that's what my mom used to tell me. haha

25w   7 likes   Reply

m1cha3l0904 I have always believed that many of the myths and legends we have as a

What Platform is best for your story?

Do feel like you have to use every platform. Find the one that is best for your story.

- Long format videos: YouTube, IGTV
- Short format videos: Insta Stories, TikTok
- Photo stories: Instagram
- Fact sharing: Twitter

FOSSIL FRIDAY CHATS

NEVADA HAS DINOSAURS?!

Featuring - Joshua Bonde, PhD., *Nevada Science Center*

LIVE 01/29/21 10AM PT

**FOSSIL FRIDAY** CHATS

MONSTER HUNTIN' WITH PALEONTOLOGISTS!
Featuring guest paleontologist Dr. Andrew McDonald & Billie Guerrero

LIVE **02/19/21**
10AM PT

Who is your audience, and how do you reach them?

- **Twitter:** academics, scientists, teachers, professionals, celebrities
- **Facebook:** teachers, middle aged and older lifelong learners
- **Instagram:** teachers, younger adult lifelong learners
- **Tik Tok:** youngest learners!
- **YouTube:** everyone! Teachers/students, hobbyists.
- Be open to new platforms and watch trends:
  - Twitch.TV, Discord
  - Clubhouse, Hive
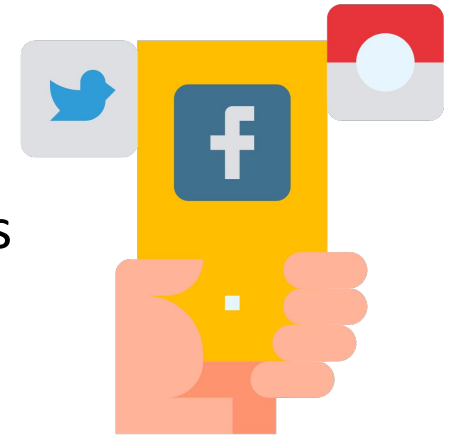
How to tell your story.

- Visuals + Words
  - Graphic Design ≠ art, keep it simple
  - 7 principles of graphic design
  - Sometimes a simple, clean photo is best
- Video, audio, animation
  - *Always have an inclusive mindset*
- **ALWAYS CREDIT YOUR SOURCES!!!!!!!!**

Want to connect?
paleoparadox.carrd.co

Be my
verte-bae?

Tools for Social Media Design and Scheduling

Graphic Design:

- Canva

Video:

- Adobe Spark, iMovie, YouTube Studio

Post Scheduling:

- Hootsuite
- Later
- Buffer
- Countless more!
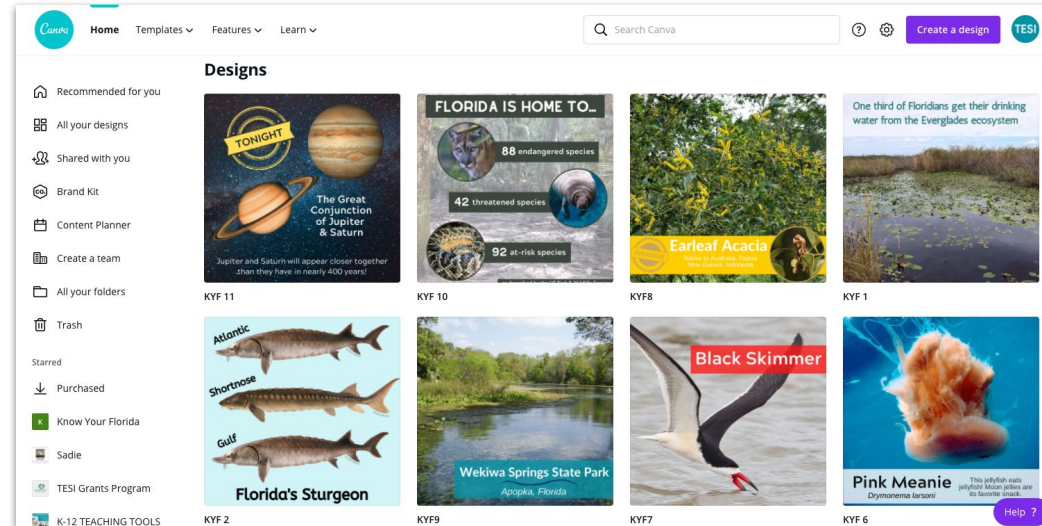
www.canva.com

Working with Undergraduates (& Volunteers)

- Consider diverse majors/backgrounds: marketing, communications, journalism, education, etc.

- Promote them and their work on your socials/website!

Working with Undergraduates (& volunteers)

- Develop and use a protocol to set expectations for content.

- Always have final review before anything gets posted!

Know Your Florida
Instagram Protocol

1

Creating a Know Your Florida Instagram Post

1. **Pick a topic.**
   a. Review the Post Caption and Graphic Archive to make sure that topic hasn't already been covered.
   b. For inspiration, review the Topic Brainstorming document.

2. **Research the topic.**
   a. Find publicly accessible, open access, and reputable sources of information. Examples include:
      i. Federal Agency websites (USGS, NOAA, USFWS, etc.)
      ii. State Agency websites (FWC, FDACS, etc.)
      iii. Florida Museum pages
      iv. University (.edu) pages
      v. Reputable and relevant non-profits and societies (e.g., Florida Native Plant Society, The Nature Conservancy, etc.)
   b. Save the links to all used sources in the Post Caption and Graphic Archive spreadsheet.

   Examples:

Strategic Communications Ecosystem

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Md-PHJ5EokYTjiT280TLuHsieJeBrhbDA9alhXGMnuk/edit?usp=sharing

- Organic vs Paid growth
- Likes vs Engagement
- Influencer vs Storyteller

Measuring Success

- How will you know your social media efforts were worth the time and resources?

Measuring Success

- All social platforms provide basic analytics.
- Some key terms:
  - **Reach** (FB, Instagram)/**Impressions** (Twitter): the number of unique accounts that saw your content.
  - **Engagement**: the number of interactions with your content. Usually likes, comments, shares.
  - **Engagement Rate**: Engagement/Reach. This allows you to compare content and see what your audience likes best.

Measuring Success

Post	Type	Targeting	Reach		Engagement		Promote	Engagement Rate
		Reach: Organic / Paid		Post Clicks		Reactions, Comments & Shares		
Join @alfmuseum and @WesternCenter on 12/11 for a		🌐	540		8 27		Boost Post	6.5%
Join @TampaBayFossilClub for a talk by Dr. Richard Hulbert and UF		🌐	1.1K		19 32		Boost Post	4.6%
Join @alfpaleo and @westernsciencecenter on 11/20		🌐	585		9 24		Boost Post	5.6%
Join @alfpaleo and @westernsciencecenter for a		🌐	507		3 16		Boost Post	3.8%
There's another #FossilFridayChats tomorrow with		🌐	438		8 10		Boost Post	4.1%

Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

- **Work to make social content accessible:**
  - Use plain, understandable language
  - Use Camel Case for hashtags (#NaturalHistory vs. #naturalhistory)
  - Provide alt-text for images
  - Use captions on videos
    - Webcaptioner.com
- **Universal design**
  - http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/

Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

- **Work to make social content diverse & inclusive:**
  - Promote the work/experiences of historically excluded people
  - Incorporate untold perspectives and details
  - Don't shy away from uncomfortable history
  - Connect to the story

Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility - Example 1

Promote the work/ experiences of historically excluded people

knowyourflorida

knowyourflorida Lewis Colson was the first Black settler in Sarasota, Florida. He came to the area with his wife Irene (pictured) and helped survey and plat the new town in the 1880s. He drove the first stake into Five Points Park, formally beginning the process of laying out the town. A formerly enslaved person, he helped start Sarasota's first Black community, Overtown, and founded its first Black church, the Bethlehem Baptist Church. Colson became a minister, and his wife served as a midwife. Colson died in 1922, and a hotel and street were named in his honor. Colson and his wife are the only two Black people buried in Rosemary Cemetery in Sarasota, which was historically segregated. Info from...

Liked by fl_trails_wildlife_scenery and 78 others

DECEMBER 18, 2020

Add a comment...   Post

Lewis Colson
First Black settler in Sarasota

Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility - Example 2

Incorporate untold perspectives and details

Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility - Example 3

Don't shy away from uncomfortable history
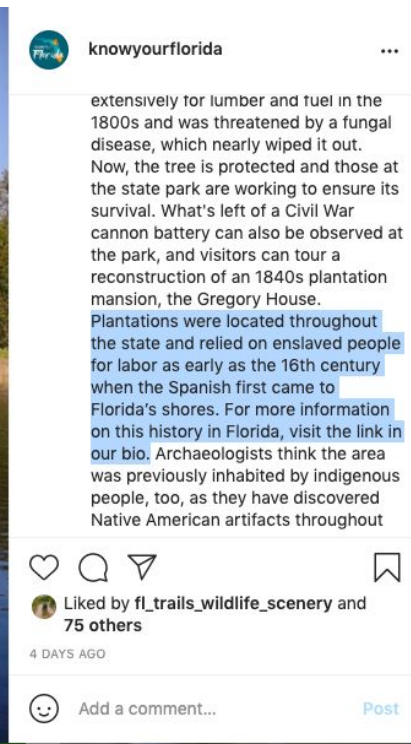
Overwhelmed? Try some backwards planning!

1. **Decide on your audience and story.**
   Who do you want to reach with social media (audience), and what do you want to tell them (story)?

2. **Decide on your platform(s) and frequency.**
   How much time do you have for social media each week? What is a reasonable amount that you can produce? Which platform can help you accomplish your goals considering your time limitations?

3. **See what's already out there!**
   Lurk on the social platform you're interested in, and see what's already popular related to your topic.

4. **Find your niche and dive in!**
   What's missing from the existing social media chatter? Get creative and share your message.

What if you're tasked with promoting a conference?

- This is a very different setting than your everyday posts
- Focus on the conference but tie it to your goals
- Use a hashtag to identify the posts
- Use the voice of the presenters for content and yours for announcements
- Include your sponsors!
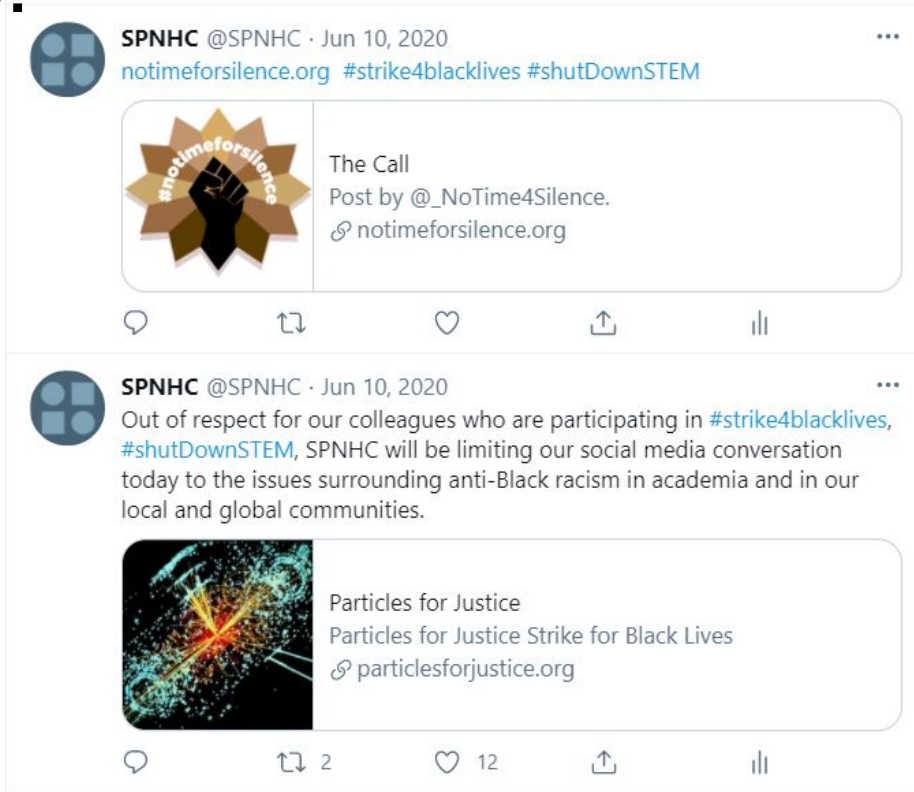
What did we do for #SPNHC2020?
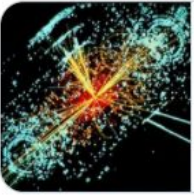
- Form a team of volunteers!
- Assign tasks and roles, and communicate
- Harvest tags from authors and institutions
- Post talks on YouTube (with permission)
- Take first slides of talks and posters
  - Facebook: create albums with sessions
  - Twitter: live tweet
- Engage, interact, connect
  - Capture new audiences!
- Be respectful and mindful

How did we perform?

Post Reach

The number of people who saw any of your posts at least once. This metric is estimated.

How did we perform?

Your Tweets earned **84.7K impressions** over this **5 day** period
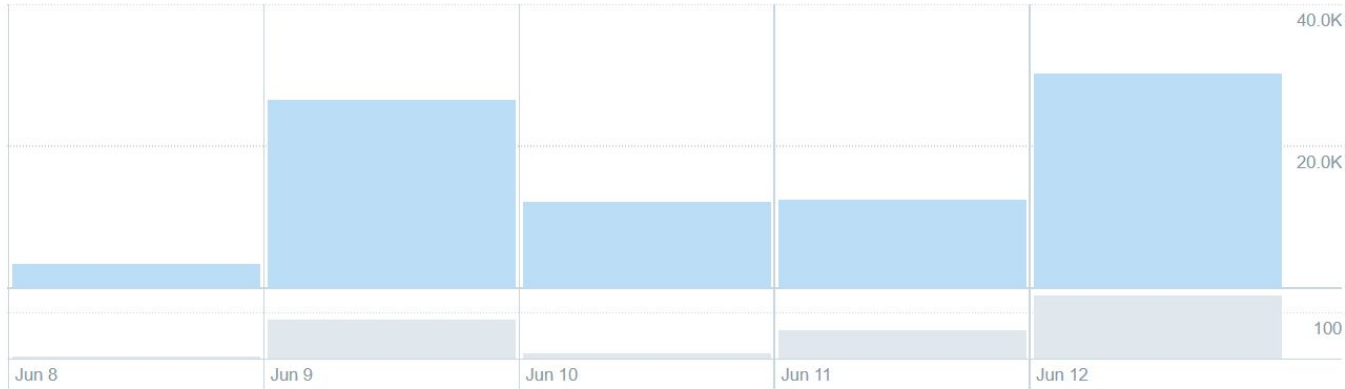
YOUR TWEETS
During this 5 day period, you earned **16.9K impressions** per day.

How did we perform?

In June, people watched your videos 4,877 times

Views	Watch time (hours)	Subscribers
4.9K	945.2	+321
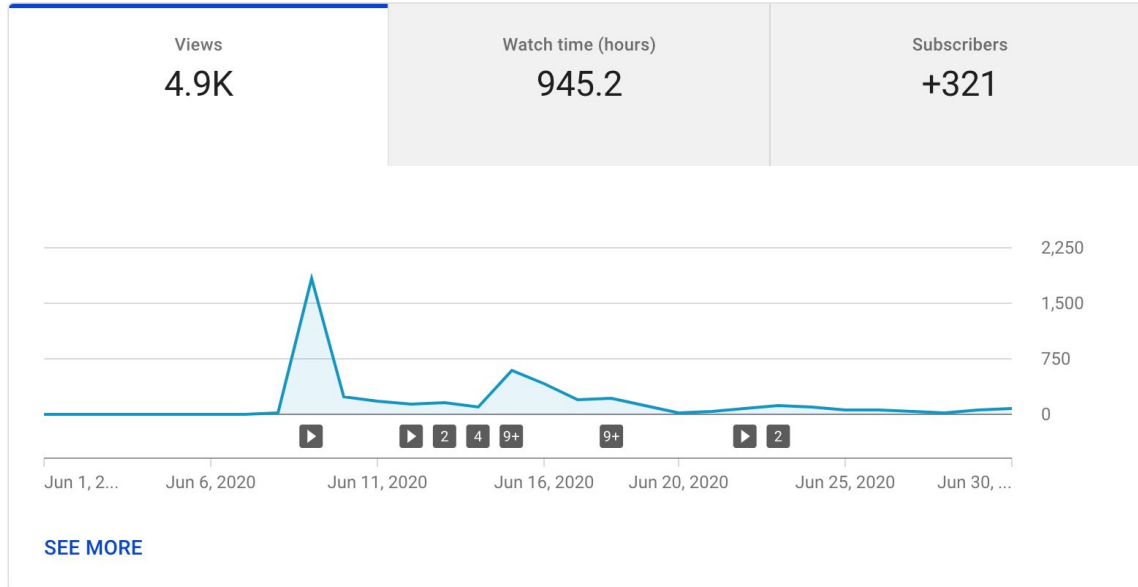
SEE MORE

Realtime
- Updating live

376
Subscribers

23
Views · Last 48 hours

-48h .... Now

Top videos	Views
SPNHC/ICOM NATHIST virt...	10
SPNHC 2020 Thursday Sessi...	2
SPNHC 2020 Thursday Sessi...	2

SEE MORE

What did this mean for the Society?

Now what? #SPNHC2021

We get to do this all over again…

And we hope you join the conversation!

SPNHC
@SPNHC

Curious about when we will have SPNHC-focused sessions during our joint conference with @conservators this year? Well, we got you covered!

Click below to find out more 👇

culturalheritage.org/events/annual-...

Join us for the 2021 AIC/SPNHC Joint Virtual Annual Meeting
May 10-June 24

SPNHC
ADVANCING COLLECTIONS CARE

AIC

Transform 2021

5:22 PM · Feb 15, 2021 · Twitter for Android

View Tweet activity

7 Retweets   13 Likes

Webinar series survey:

https://ufl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8nQeWXm6636Tqo6