

## TikTok banned in the United States, officially dark as of 0000 UTC -5.

Alright, look, I literally never used TikTok. I had it blocked at the network level for years but only capitulated to allow it through due to my mother. She wanted to use TikTok, nae, she *demanded* to use TikTok. So, that left a bad enough taste in my mouth. But, that's no fault of hers. I just cannot grasp the *need* to use an app to that extent.

As one would expect, the banning of this app means absolutely nothing to me. I didn't use it before, I can't use it now, it's as if it never existed for me. However, that's not to say that I wasn't still given my dose of TikTok-by-proxy. Whether it was friends or family sending my something funny or interesting they'd seen on TikTok, or stumbling across TikTok compilations on YouTube... I was inadvertently exposed to it. And as such... I have some thoughts. Now, these thoughts tie into two groups of people:

- The current people crying that TikTok was banned (and their subsequent reasoning)
- The people who were on TikTok (and the absolute degree of dispicable and deplorable people that plagued it)

Starting with the first category, it's pretty hard to miss that there are so many people near God-defending TikTok for a multitude of reasons, but the most common I am seeing is "But people made an income and living from TikTok!!" Now, I get it. To have an income source stripped away suddenly is pretty distressing and could be a problem. But lets focus down a bit for a second... If you were making enough of an income from TikTok that it was allowing you to survive from it, surely you had enough income from it to also pad out a savings account in the even that you know... unexpected things come up? Ah no right that makes too much sense and is too responsible! (At least gross majority of TikTok users.) I guess that also means you never stopped to conceive the fact that an income source can go away **at any time** and you need to have contingencies for that. This goes for any job, or income source. Doesn't matter if you're slinging sacks or doing a 9-5 or you're a full time content-creator.

No. I don't believe that you being a content-creator is worth a full time position. It's absolute insanity how many people made solid five-figure incomes for sitting at home on their mobile phone.

Moving onto the second category; the people who actively used TikTok. Now, I'd like to say that a good majority of people that used TikTok, be it posters or just lurkers, they're harmless. They'll see funny, interesting, weird, or whatever types of TikToks and just consume it as pass-time content without second thought. That in and of itself is a discussion for another time... sheer depressing doomscrolling bile. Anyways, I digress. If you've been on the internet in the recent years, you'll know of applications like Discord and Twitter, maybe Telegram for some of you. You'll also know that they actively have had countless issues actively facilitating CSAM (CP).

TikTok though... man oh man... the amount of absolutely disgusting nonce's preying on teenagers who post on TikTok, it's shocking. But what makes it worse is they're not hiding it, nor is TikTok combatting it! You will see the comments section of pre-teen and teenagers, hell even often on young-adults, just predatory, vile comments.

Now, I could go on about this for another few paragraphs but you get the idea and frankly, I don't want to smash my keyboard thinking about it. So, we'll move on. The second type of people that really took to TikTok (say that five times fast...) as a haven were the self-diagnosing and illness-imposing types. You likely know exactly the type I am referencing. The ones who will insist that they have every damn possible diagnosis in the DSM-V, at the little old age of 21-26. And as if that isn't bad enough, they'll do their best to convince *you* that you *also* have said illnesses. Why? Because it boosts their engagement and builds a faux-community of people who believe they're ill, but in reality, they're just brainwashed by a content-creator dubbed "influencer".

The degree of inherent harm caused by this is measurable. The amount of young-adults and teenagers ending up in hospital, or seeking medications for an illness that they simply *do not have*!! The chemical imbalance isn't there, and they're being medicated for it, all because "well an influencer on TikTok said I might be depressed or schizophrenic so pls give me meds, yes I definitely hear voices and see things". I won't go into the doctors and pharmacological companies that have turned pill-mill as that's not the point of this post. But, TikTok has demonstrably given a rise to false-diagnosis and over-medication of our youth. Plus, the glorification of these illnesses. Yes it's fine to recognise an illness, but to make it your personality, and a hill that you'll gladly die on... No, just stop.

Look, TikTok is but an app. The stuff I mentioned above will happen on any app if given the potential, but TikTok, by its mere design is intended to not only amplify those behaviours, but it's meant to do so on an exponential level. You'll get TikTok, enjoy it, show it to your friend, they'll show it to 5 of their friends, so on and so forth. It's a plague. Nothing more.

So rather than sit here and whine and complain about TikTok being banned. Throw those people who have lost their income source some resources like local job openings. Or, find alternative sources to post your content on and learn to diversify. Don't put all of your content on one disk, so to speak.

It's not the end of the world. You're still breathing. You're still eating. You're still alive. Just because an application on your phone is gone does not mean you have changed at all. Grow up.