

Economics is Bejeweled: Teaching Economics using Taylor Swift Songs

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Pop Culture and Economics

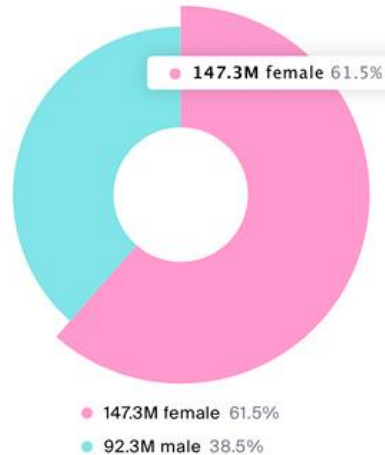
- [Economics Media Library](#)
- [Econ Gone Country](#)
- [Music 4 Econ](#)
- [Broadway Economics](#)
- [Economics of Parks and Recreation](#)
- [Bazinganomics](#)
- ...and many more!

Why Taylor Swift?

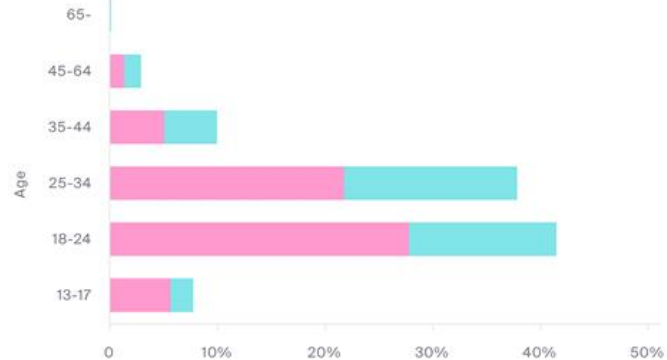
Audience Gender & Age ⓘ

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Gender



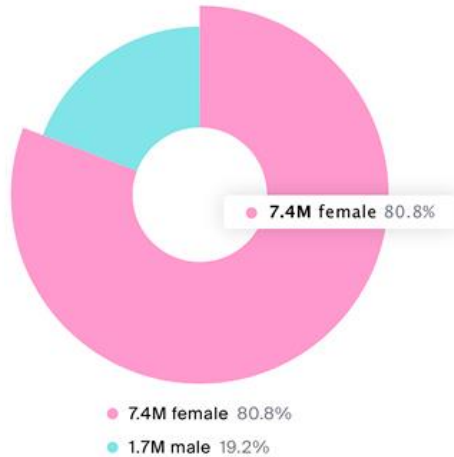
Age & Gender



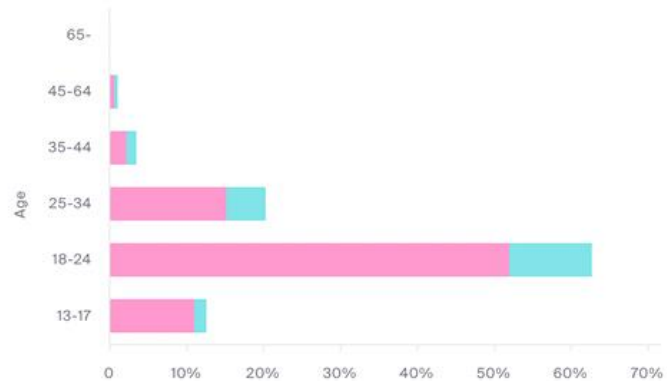
Why Taylor Swift?

TikTok Followers Gender & Age Distribution

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Age & Gender

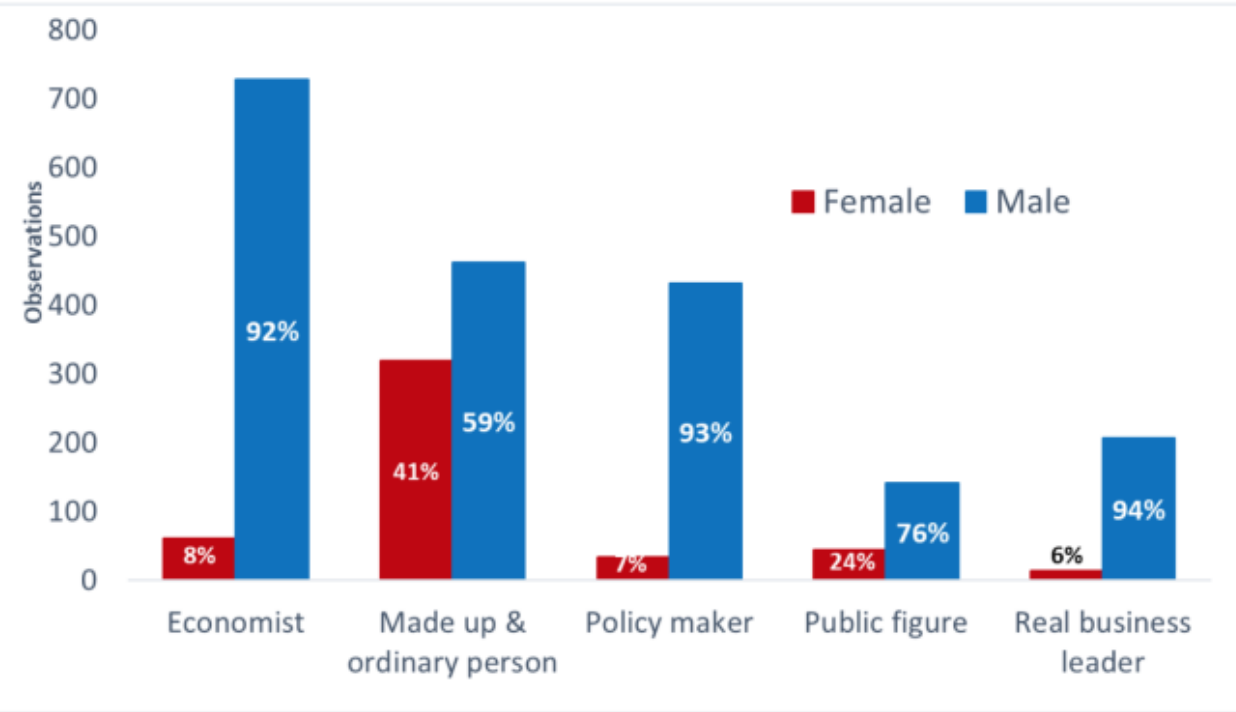


Why Taylor Swift?

- Women only receive 34% of undergraduate economics degrees
 - Compared to 55% of undergraduate degrees in the US
- Only 35% of economics PhDs go to women
- Only 22% of tenured and TT faculty are women
 - Women make up 15% of full professors and 31% of assistant professors

Why Taylor Swift?

Male and Female Mentions By Category of Person



How to use in the Classroom

- Timing
 - Before or during class
- Activities
 - Polling prompts
 - Think-Pair-Share

You're On Your Own, Kid

- Concept: Opportunity Cost
 - Line: “Everything you lose is a step you take”
- Activity: Concept Review
 - Question: What concept from last week does this line represent?
- Activity: Think-Pair-Share
 - Question: Consider a time where you faced a trade-off. What did you have to give up to gain something else? How did you reconcile with it?

Midnights



Blank Space

- Concept: Marginal Thinking, Marginal Analysis
 - Line: “So it's gonna be forever? Or it's gonna go down in flames... Got a long list of ex-lovers... They'll tell you I'm insane... But I've got a blank space, baby... And I'll write your name”
- Activity: Think-Pair-Share
 - Question: What does it mean to think on the margin? When have you had to think on the margin? How does Taylor demonstrate marginal thinking with her list of ex-lovers?



Shake it Off

- Concept: Sunk Cost Fallacy
 - Line: “Cause the players gonna play... And the haters gonna hate... Baby, I'm just gonna shake, shake, shake...I shake it off”
- Activity: Concept Check
 - Question: This song demonstrates which reason why consumers do not behave rationally?
- Activity: Think-Pair-Share
 - Question: Name some reasons why consumers may not behave rationally. Which is demonstrated in this song? When is a time that you have fallen for this fallacy?



Bejeweled

- Concept: Externalities
 - Line: “Best believe I’m still bejeweled, When I walk in the room, I can still make the whole place shimmer
- Activity: Polling Questions
 - Question: What concept from last class does this song represent?
 - Question: What type of externality is described?
 - Question: Does a positive externality result in over- or under-production?
 - Question: Give another example of a positive externality

Midnights



Mine

- Concept: Labor Force
 - Line: “You were in college, working part-time waiting tables”
- Activity: Polling Questions
 - Question: Was he in the labor force?
 - Question: What could be different about the scenario to make it so he is not in the labor force?
 - Question: How are part-time workers calculated in the unemployment rate?



Superman

- Concept: Labor Force
 - “He puts papers in his briefcase and drives away to save the world or go to work”
- Activity: Think-Pair-Share
 - Question: Is her “superman” in the labor force or not? Why or why not?



Welcome to New York

- Concept: Economic Growth
 - Line: “The lights are so bright, but they never blind me”
- Activity: Think-Pair-Share
 - Question: What do you find to be most interesting about the satellite maps? What do they tell us about economic growth? Think both about historical patterns and the geography of growth.



Student Feedback

- “Economics, at least for me, is not the most interesting subject, but Dr. King tried her best to make it more interesting by linking the topics to pop culture and real life.”
- “ECON is not for everyone... but she really tries her best to engage everyone with the content and make sure everyone understands it as we go through it. She also relates the information to real world content, specifically to things the students would relate to and like such as relating it to famous artists like Taylor Swift which is very fun”
- “[I learned] that simple everyday activities, such as listening to songs, involve economic thoughts.”
- “I would say the most interesting thing we learned is how subtly tv and movies try to teach us about economics, or even how they can be applied to economics... And it also allows for learning econ to not be so daunting to those just now learning.”

Thank you!

Questions or comments?

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