

#THE PROLETARIAT

HOW TO IGNITE A MOVEMENT USING SOCIAL MEDIA



Welcome to the first issue of the movement

WRITTEN BY GROUP 4

Social media has created a platform that allows many to express their opinions, opinions that, in some cases, would not have been heard without the vehicle social media provides. In countries that struggle with government censorship, their political climate was polarizing. Major events were being slandered, under-reported, or overlooked. With the rise of social media and technology the general public has been given the opportunity to take power into their own hands and this is where social media activism takes off.

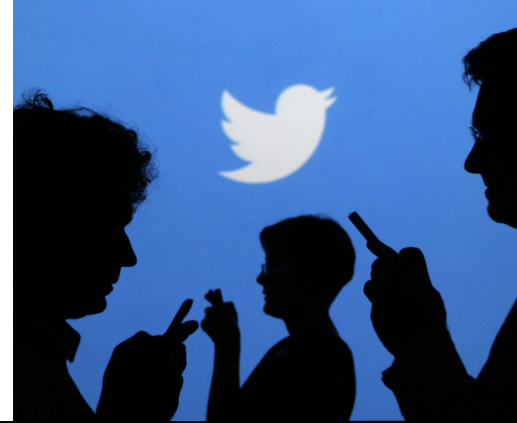
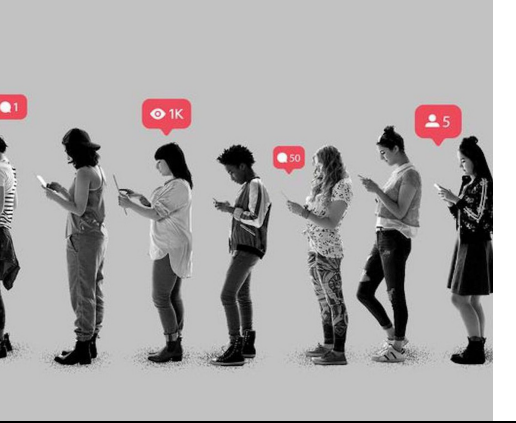
Social media has long been mocked as a dystopian reality. Many refuse to recognize its legitimacy and potential as a tool for the proliferation of ideas across the world. Despite real people, real issues, and real stories occupying the platform, critics refuse to let social media operate under the label of "reality". Author Nathan Jurgenson explores this narrative in his book *The Social Photo*. He writes, "If we can fix this false separation and view the digital and physical as enmeshed, we will understand that what we do while connected is inseparable from what we do when disconnected." Jurgenson explains that social media is not not real life, as a lot of what we document on social media and a lot of the information that we gather from social media is a product of our physical world. He wants us to envision society in symphony with technology, not portraying it as an evil influence but as an inevitable reality -- this perspective is especially important when speaking in terms of digital activism.



Follow us on twitter
for daily updates on
activism

@TheProletaria12

[HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/THEPROLETARIA12](https://twitter.com/theproletaria12)



"Attention is oxygen for movements. Without it, they cannot catch fire."

(Twitter and Tear Gas, p.30)

Hashtag by Elizabeth Losh gives the great example of (can you guess?) a hashtag, which demonstrates how society works well with social media. Losh states "A hashtag affirms that a communication channel is open, that being heard is possible, and that an interdependent web of social ties between equally viable nodes can be made visible for navigational purposes when necessary." Hashtags are able to create a sense of community. They give people a voice on platforms with millions of other users. Many activist movements use hashtags to create a public space where they can share their information. The farther we try to push away from technology, the more out of touch we are from not only what is a huge part of many people's lives but also a huge part of many people's voices. As Tufekci writes in *Twitter and Tear Gas*, "Attention is oxygen for movements. Without it, they cannot catch fire." Hashtags play an integral role in garnering this attention and noise that movements need to begin and survive.

The main force behind social media movements are the people that drive them. Hashtag Activism speaks out on the topic of performative allyship. The book reads, "A LOT of people perform 'allyship' in ways that are actually really harmful. This, folks, is ally theater. And there is a big difference between it and real solidarity." It's important to realize that allyship is more than just expressing solidarity on an online platform. Problems occur when performative allyship finds its way into organizational and capitalist culture. Often times companies will do little more than express support which leads the public seeing

expression as enough, opposed to action of course. Another problem facing social media activism is the lack of empathy overstimulation of technology breeds. In his book *Irresistible* author Adam Alter speaks about the lack of empathy in young people due largely to the rise of social media platforms and extreme use of technology. A study done by the University of Michigan found that modern day college students are 40% less empathetic than generations prior and less likely to be affected by mass tragedy. Thus, causing young folk to take less to activism. Though, mixing activism with social media combines two concepts to form movements many can easily participate in.

So, how would this campaign work? Well, we'd combine our twitter profile with a weekly newsletter that highlights any movements or news trending in the world of social media activism. Our twitter account will stay up to date; tweeting about major protests in certain areas, retweeting breaking news in the world of activism, updating folks on how to show solidarity, and most importantly spreading information and keeping the public informed. We would then pool together the most groundbreaking news from that week and compile it all into a newsletter that would be sent out to our audience or, our subscribers. Our subscribers would most likely be those who are interested in staying informed and taking activism seriously; beyond just performative allyship.