

The Impact of Social Media on Social Movements



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Hcom 475: Senior Capstone Project Proposal Research Essay Project

1. Provide your name and identify your area of concentration

My name is Gabriela Aguilar and my area of concentration is English Subject Matter Preparation (ESMP) and Spanish minor.

2. Focus: Has seeing injustices on social media on a daily basis encouraged activism on social movements or has it normalized this behavior as the same old thing because of its high exposure? I chose to focus on this issue because with technological innovation there have been positive outcomes to social movement activism but there have also been negative outcomes. With the evolution of social media, audiences are able to speak up about anything they're displeased about in society and also about issues that require immediate attention. Social media has the power to mobilize communities through raw footage and raw information of injustices occurring. However, it also develops a lazy and disconnected approach towards movements because people do the bare minimum with online sources such as sharing or liking content then going on with their day thinking they've done enough. The impact that activism used to have no longer has as fewer people physically participate in social action.

3. Alignment with Common Theme and HCOM:

My project's direct alignment comes through the idea of change. There have been many changes to social movements because of the innovations of media. As media changes forms, activism adapts to these new formats. When the printing press was invented there was a surge of activism through print, as people now had access to newspapers and books. There was a better form for communication as print not only consisted of information through text but also through drawings which would be easy for semi-literate audiences to understand. Today, we can find just about anything on the internet through social media platforms such as Twitter and TikTok. In these platforms, it can be appreciated that there are no censorship and raw footage and information is spread around the globe. Social movements reach a bigger audience that helps the process of advocating for change and outsiders have the opportunity to contribute in activism that is not local. Social media connects audiences through time and space, one thing that was not previously possible with media.

4. Purpose:

With this project, I hope to gain more knowledge about the use of social media and how our generation is using it today in regards to making change. The question that I will be pursuing is

to what extent is social media a supporting source for social activism and to what extent does it encourage "slacktivism"?

5. Capstone Title:

The Impact of Social Media on Social Movements

6. Working Summary:

As time passes by there is more representation of social movements due to their high exposure on social media. Technology has become a major part of our everyday lives and on average we spend many hours on social platforms, and we are exposed to the injustices that occur every minute of every day. Before, when technology wasn't common all the news we received was from what we watched on television, newspapers, or even magazines. Now, we have platforms such as Twitter and TikTok among others that provide us with news on any malpractice that occurs in our communities and society. With these platforms being active, a place is created for the community to expose the abuse of power and social movements are more represented and more active because of the lack of censorship there are. Unlike television, where oftentimes we don't get to see the other side of the story, as it has occurred in many cases. Including the case of George Floyd; where Floyd was suffocated to death by police officers.

In this research, along with the positive outcomes, I also want to focus on the negative byproducts. The high exposure of injustices that we see everyday, every single time we log into any social media platform desensitizes us from the real issues occurring. I will be talking about the changes that have occurred in social movements due to social media and its increased usage. People become emotionally detached from the transgressions that are shown online due to their recurring appearance. There are instances when we log into social media, see a video or picture of someone being harassed or crying for help and we continue scrolling because it is not something new that we haven't seen. Lastly, I will investigate the effects of news on activism in media platforms and how impactful this has been on the call for action.

7. Sources:

I want to focus on scholarly peer reviews as well as books and other websites such as Twitter to evaluate the efficacy of the change from television to social media. I would like to incorporate the book *Media/ Society* and *Social Movements and New Technology* as contrast can be seen from old media forms to new media forms and how these have affected social change. I will also use other online sources such as Jstor, Ebsco, and Proquest to look for information on the key terms for my research.

8. Next Steps:

To begin with, I will focus on the historical background of media and how these evolving innovations made an impact on activism. I will use the printing press and television as key innovations in technological advances to understand how activism has been evolving along with

technology. Then, I will move on to the impacts of the internet in regards to social movements activism and lastly, research the negative effects of social media on activism.

9. Timeline:

I want to do a little bit of research every week to start compiling information and sources that may be helpful to me. With the help of an annotated bibliography, I will be able to keep track of my sources and make sure that I have strong supporting evidence for my research. Per week I will look for sources and write at least two pages of research. Also, plan towards my lesson plan and come up with the best way to implement my topic. During the week of Thanksgiving break, I will finish the draft for the 10 pages to proofread and perfect. Also, start working on my lesson plan to have some of it done before going back from break. From November 29 to December 3, I plan to be mainly working on my lesson plan to then meet with my mentor and do the finishing touches. My resume will be done by November 19 and I will do some final touches to be more professional.

The Impact of Social Media on Social Movements

In the 21st century, the representation of social movements is more present than before as media outlets become more accessible through any smart device. With the increased usage of technology, many more social media platforms have been arising, and these are used among many for everyday activities such as news, entertainment, or personal purposes. As phones, tablets, computers, and even smartwatches bring easy access to social media such as Twitter and TikTok among others, we are provided with raw news of the malpractices that occur in our communities and society. In the late 20th century when technology was scarce, most of our information came from outlets such as newspapers, television, radio stations, or even magazines. Because information was censored, it was hard for people to get both sides of the story. Now, social movements are more common and awareness is spread through raw footage of injustices or online posts in efforts to mobilize minorities. In this research, I will investigate the evolution of media and its impacts on social movements. Along with the positive outcomes of the evolution of social media, I also want to focus on the negative byproducts of the heavy exposure we receive of news on social media and to what extent these affect or support social movement activism.

It is important to understand how social media and media, in general, have evolved over the years and how this has contributed to social movements. Going from the printing press in the mid-1400s to the first signs of the internet in 1969, there were major changes in between those years that entirely changed communication worldwide. In *Media/Society*, David Croteau and William Hoynes talk about the impact that industrialization had on the evolution of innovations and how this motivated following rapid change and spread dissimilarity:

19th-Century industrialization drastically increased the pace of technological innovation, bringing the telegraph, camera, telephone, photograph, radio and motion pictures in rapid succession. The world of media technology became more diverse, complicated and rapidly evolving. (27)

Change is bound to happen, and it can be seen through media that underwent a process of survival of the fittest. As inventions surged and our patterns of unearthing, spreading, and the reproduction of content developed only the most effective innovations would survive. Media forms are reshaped as needed in our societies based on usage and demand to facilitate our everyday lives. With new innovations, communication became easy and accessible to a wider audience causing a labor increase and a big flow of immigration. Because innovations brought a diversity of ethnic background, it became complicated for people to continue living like before as they were now aware of what was happening outside their communities. The article "An Intellectual Dilemma and Tragedy: Social Darwinism, Pragmatism, and the Industrialization of the American Dream During the Latter Half of the Nineteenth Century" talks about the racial disparities that occurred in white communities with "accepted by the overwhelming majority of white Americans, the racial attitudes form an integral component of the late nineteenth-century American culture"(Sbrega 2021). Racial attitudes were developed with the representation of people of color on media platforms but also in the workforce. Given that industrialization brought many innovations and changes, white Americans became apprehensive towards the inevitable changes. Industrialization is the prime example of how each new technological innovation led to an increased demand for supplies, labor, and technology to be more efficient as well as diversified communities.

Innovation is a chain of cause and effect that contributes to the rapid change that occurs with technology. Prior to the first innovation being the printing press, texts were handwritten which made them less accessible to the ordinary citizen who earned a low wage. It prevented people from learning to read and write making it hard for activism to reach the lower class, the use of print technology allowed for artists to propagate information through images. Images were the universal language for anyone to understand despite the lack of education. In the article "Representing Workers, the Workers Represented: Artists, Unions and Print Production in the Mexican Revolution," John Lear talks about the importance of print during the Mexican revolution in efforts to reach the common citizen and those who may have been illiterate:

While prints and murals shared content and style, were aimed at a similar semi-literate public and were forms often practised by the same artists, the print tradition allowed for a greater autonomy from state patronage...The unprecedented process of mobilization included the organization of the working class and the elaboration of a 'revolutionary' art in which the worker emerged as an essential actor. (2014)

Jose Guadalupe Posada was an illustrator and cartoonist who became one of the most emblematic illustrators of Mexican culture for his contribution to the political cartoons he published in the newspaper. His art spoke to the people, and it clearly showed the suffering they were encountering due to the Porfirio Diaz regimen. When there was censorship due to Diaz, he was one of the few advocates that became involved in the call for action towards free state patronage. This also became known as the print revolution, where they now had the ability to print many pages such as the newspapers and it allowed for information to spread at a faster pace within communities. Correspondingly, the article "El Taller de Gráfica Popular and the

Chronicles of Mexican History and Nationalism" explains the critical role of print in this movement, "They also took to printmaking, producing posters, portraits, landscapes, vivid depictions of Mexican daily life and other images meant to stir public awareness... print could be read to imply that these very different men shared common ideological values and were, thus, fighting together to achieve common goals in relation to land rights, campesino rights and freedom of the press"(Avila 2014). Citizens needed to know they weren't alone in this fight for justice and more people could be recruited to participate as the prints that were being distributed represented them (campesinos). It was extremely important to get the message across for the citizens of the injustices happening, not being able to have a free country and mobilize them to fight for their freedom in the revolution. This revolution showed the importance of activism from the citizens and portrays the way in which technology has been an aid towards change.

Another innovation that came to impact the daily lives of many people was the invention of the television in 1928. While television was firstly aimed for entertainment purposes as the years progressed, so did the content presented on television. In the following years, the civil rights movement would rise and this would be a pivotal time for their movement as television news was already established. Television proved to be the way to keep the civil rights movement as the center focus of American moral sense. As stated in the book *Revolution Televised: Prime Time and Struggle for Black Power* by Christine Acham:

Martin Luther King Jr. and members of the Southern Christian leadership conference became aware of the power of the television image. King understood the impact that the assaults on peaceful protesters had on a wider u.s population. (28)

Martin Luther King Jr. knew the importance of their protests being televised because many people would be able to see the racism that occurred towards the black community even though they were peacefully protesting. This way he became a public figure for the black community, a symbol of hope towards a better future. Their activism in peaceful protesting was able to be broadcast to a vast audience because of the benefits that were brought with television. As Acham also mentions, "When President Lyndon Johnson made his televised appearance before the joint session of Congress a week later to propose the Civil Rights Act of 1964, he referred to the Selma attacks in his speech" (28). Television news gave importance to the march in Selma which allowed the president himself to see it and understand the severity of the movement which eventually led to the passing of the act. This helped show the injustices that Jim Crow represented for this minority group; it gave them something to see. These movements by Martin Luther King Jr would support their claims if their word wasn't enough, then white Americans would see it with their own eyes through a medium like television. From this, other movements would occur towards the rights for African Americans such as doing sit-ins, walk-outs, and protesting which would be documented on both print and the news.

As we keep moving forward, there are many more technological advances and new generations become more technical. This leads to the invention of the internet which has been called one of the most transformative creations in human history. With the invention of the internet, there was a lot of speculation of how negatively this would impact people but also communities as a whole. They were afraid of how virtual communication would work and if this would affect the lifestyles of individuals who became involved with the so-called "internet." The use of email was very effective so likewise many researchers believed that the introduction of the internet and digital communication would be fruitful. In the book *Digitally Enabled*

Social Change: Activism in the Internet Age by Jennifer Earl, Katrina Kimport, Kirsten A. Foot, and Bonnie A. Nardi, they talk about the positive outcomes of digital communication and how this has allowed communities to unite even if they are outsiders:

Web usage changes the process of organizing by investigating a novel type of activism facilitated by the online environment: flash activism.

Organizers no longer need to cultivate the ongoing allegiance of participation to a movement or organization. (27)

With the surge of the internet, platforms were created that facilitated activism for communities. The web has opened many doors for organizations to post information and to spread awareness about their ideals. Through social media, people are able to express any discontent that they might feel about the social structure of their communities and unite with others who agree with these same thoughts. Digital communication takes down the distance barrier and everyone is at an equal level to express themselves, despite their social class, ethnicity, or gender, being able to share their experiences. Similarly, Victoria Carty supports this idea in her book *Social Movements and New Technology* where she goes on to explain that “with new digital technology at their disposal, social movement actors have access to innovative media outlets that help nurture a new political terrain within which they can discuss grievances, disseminate information, and collectively make demands” (5). The internet has the power to sway one's perspective and ideology based on what we see published through the media. Audiences are able to connect and relate with other people through their posts, this way movements are published and anyone can interact with them. We are now able to see the other side of the story, not just what news outlets want us to see.

Social media has had an impact on the relevancy of social movements and has helped the call of action for justice through platforms such as Twitter. Twitter is a microblogging and social platform that allows users to post and interact with “tweets” (messages, photos, videos), audiences are able to like, post, or even repost content on this social media. This platform is used by many people, according to “Understanding Human Mobility From Twitter”, “more than 500 million people” post over “340 million tweets per day”(Jurdak, Raja, et al. 2015). A lot of content is shared in this platform and in the same way that many people have used it to earn followers and become well known such as accounts to post memes, there have also been others who have used the platform as a form of activism. An example of this activism can be seen through the case of Michael Brown Jr. in August 2014, where the 18-year-old black teen was fatally shot by 22-year-old Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri. While some witnesses indicate that the teenager attacked the police officer, others say that the officer had been the one to aggravate the teen. As it was said that Brown had his arms up when he was shot by Darren Wilson. The predominantly black community was outraged by the occurrence and sparked several protests for justice to be served (Eligon 2020). One of the main platforms for this social movement, the spread of this case, and the injustice that was occurring was Twitter. In the article “Grievance- based social movement mobilization in the #Ferguson Twitter storm” by Rebecca Kay LeFebvre and Crystal Armstrong, they talk about the time during the wait for the verdict and how impactful the death of this teen was in the community but also to outsiders:

During the 3 weeks surrounding the announcement on 24 November, social media activity increased dramatically with the hashtag indicator #Ferguson appearing in over 6 million tweets on Twitter. (2016).

The speed of social media is extremely fast, which lets people share information in real-time and to a vast audience. This case was not only reaching the audiences within the community but also to people outside it, this is the power that social media holds. Strangers get to share, express, and show their support towards these issues of importance and towards the families. People are hungry for justice and when actions like this occur, it touches the hearts of many people because of how young Michael was and the tragic way in which his life ended. Regardless of the situation, the case shined light towards an issue that was already ongoing, so it was easy for people from similar communities to identify themselves with the situation. As seen in the article “#Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States” by Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa where they say, “other tweets recontextualized the situation in Ferguson as part of global affairs (e.g., “#Egypt #Palestine #Ferguson #Turkey, U.S. made tear gas, sold on the almighty free market represses democracy”), while others critiqued the appropriation of this event” (2015). The research shows that this case propelled the appearance of similar issues that were going on around the world. Getting the attention of numerous people to talk about the police brutality that had been going on towards people of color. These hashtags are posted in real-time, which means that people are able to receive updates or new information on movements immediately after they happen. Through cellphones, computers, or even watches, we can now receive notifications about these movements and the way it evolves as new evidence or protests occur.

Video has always been the number one evidence of the injustices that occur around the world, these lead to protests that encourage social movement. While microblogging platforms can be used to propagate video evidence, other platforms have surged to aid this process such as Tiktok. Tiktok is a video-focused social network where users can post a variety of short videos

from pranks and dances to videos of police brutality and racial inequality. There have been many examples as to how social media has mobilized social movements and the call for justice has been heard. As seen through the fatal death of George Floyd in the hands of a white police officer. The article "Benzinga: three other policemen charged in George Floyd case" by Dhaliwal Shivdeep gives some details on the case and talks about the repercussions that occurred with the globalization of the tragic event on TikTok:

“On May 25, Floyd, 46, died gasping for air while pleading, 'Please, I can't breathe.' Bystanders kept urging the police to let him up. Floyd was suspected of trying to pass a counterfeit bill. The sudden death led to nine days of protest and civil unrest across the United States at press time, reported Reuters” (2020).

The video of George Floyd, a black man, being suffocated by a police officer, a white man, circulated all over the internet, but special attention was brought to it on TikTok, where the video was uploaded at the time it happened by several witnesses. Having occurred amidst the pandemic, the first place I saw this video was TikTok, it was a trending topic that for many days, even weeks after his death I would still continue to see multiple videos of George Floyd with the hashtag “I can't breathe” per day. With the amount of coverage it received this was a topic that was talked about by many, including the classroom, not only did it show the cruel reality for many people, but it also made people aware of the racial inequalities that continue to happen. In class, we talked about the way in which we felt based on what we saw on social media, many referring to TikTok mainly, and how this made us reflect on the fact that when you are of color not even your life is your own. There was an emotional connection to this case because this can happen to anybody when you are a part of a minority group, the videos, and images that

circulated on every social media outlet showed the inhumanity that continues to happen to primarily black lives. Anyone who hears the name of George Floyd knows about the disruption and polemic that it caused in our societies. Protests for justice were uploaded to several platforms, however, when logging into TikTok like it or not the first thing to pop up were videos of the protests that promoted activism towards this cause and to stand up for all those other lives that have been lost in similar cases. Social movement is encouraged The article “Tear Gas, Teens, and TikTok” by Gillian Tett explains the way that this social media network influences activism on anybody even teens, “last weekend, one of my teenage daughters showed me a TikTok post from a young white male “influencer” she adores called Hiram. His top tips were focused on tear gas – and how American teens should deal with the likelihood it will be fired at them during a protest like those that have erupted after the killing of African American George Floyd.”(2020). “Influencers” were using the platform to encourage teens to participate in these protests, they become informed of what to do and what not to do, even when this is not something they were searching for on their own. Everyone is exposed to these kinds of social movements when social media platforms are the main source for information.

Social media has encouraged activism and has been of extreme importance for the reformation of laws and has helped serve justice to the cases that otherwise would have been dismissed as we have seen previously. In the case of Michael Brown Jr., although the police officer was dismissed because no crime was found in the investigation, his death served to bring racial discrimination as the center of focus and caused laws and courts to change how they function (Eligon 2020). Although there was no change done to the verdict to give justice to the family, it brought attention to the issue of police brutality and helped reform laws to aid this movement. Whereas in the case of George Floyd, the police officer was found guilty and

therefore justice was served to the Floyd family. Due to all the protests and movements that were done towards the justice of killing a man in such an inhumane way, there had to be consequences. The article “MH advocates respond to verdict on George Floyd case” by Wiley Periodicals Inc. says, “Today's verdict in the trial of Derek Chauvin comes with a wave of intense emotions that have been building for the last 11 months. While many will feel relief that justice was served, others may feel frustration at the time it took to render a verdict when the event was captured in real-time nearly a year ago” (2021). The ultimate goal of injustices being posted by social movement groups is to ultimately serve justice. The families of these victims deserve to at least know that those officers will be dismissed and that it won't happen to others. Their lives can't be brought back, but their deaths should also not be in vain, they are remembered, and their deaths have been out at the front of the racial inequality that we have in America.

However, A downside of social media and social activism done online is that it almost encourages people to not go further into the movements. It encourages what is called “slacktivism”, as explained in “Activism or “Slacktivism?”: Digital Media and Organizing for Social Change” is a term that combines slacker and activism which have been used to describe the disconnect between awareness and action through social media (Glenn 2015). This occurs when a person sees a movement online and simply likes or shares the content of that movement and believes they've done their part. Nothing is being done other than spreading the word, but it also takes the value away from that movement as other people will probably do the same thing and go on with their day. Similarly, the article “Beyond Slacktivism: Examining the Entanglement between Social Media Engagement, Empowerment, and Participation in

Activism” by Brian G. Smith, Arunima Krishna, and Reham Al-Sinan explain the issue of activism online in a relationship with its effectiveness on social movements:

As such, arguments against social media's effectiveness propose that without organization and face-to-face interaction, social media are not enough to sustain a protest movement, rendering them one of the many tools in the protestor's “repertoire of contention” (2019).

Social movements lose their effectiveness through social media, as audiences do the bare minimum by liking and sharing posts about these movements. After a while, these movements are forgotten and soon become just another hashtag or another video of an injustice online, but not much is done to change the core issues. The frequent use of social media and the heavy exposure of injustices online encourage audiences to be slacktivists. With the direct participation of individuals through social media, audiences are able to get direct information and no longer feel the need to physically participate in social movements. It is always the same storyline but with different names, we become emotionally detached because of how often we've seen it occur.

Social movements have made themselves more present than before as the accessibility of technological devices have increased throughout the years. Having access through any computer, cellphone, tablet, or smartwatch, social movements have become easier to spread awareness and information through social media at a global level. Technology is now used among many for everyday activities such as for news, entertainment, or other personal purposes, as technology evolves the surge of social media arises. Two social media platforms that have made an impact on social movement activism are TikTok and Twitter, which have aided the process of social justice in different cases of racial inequality. Previously, we were able to see activist movements such as peaceful protests, walk-outs, etc., and these were sometimes televised or written about in

the newspaper as a call for action. This activism also required some kind of association or “trust” with the people in the movements, however; now strangers are able to participate in these activist movements because they have been following the information online. Social media appeals to the audience because of the raw footage presented, as well as, the fast access of information, there is no longer a need to wait for information to be approved in order to be released.

Information has become accessible to everyone, creating a more democratic environment and these new media platforms have led to law reforms in our communities as well as other systemic changes. We are all connected through different social media platforms that incite activism in communities to fight for equality, as it has happened in the past with George Floyd and Michael Brown Jr.; whose stories touched the hearts of many and whom we continue to remember. The same way that social media brings many benefits to social movement activism, it also has some drawbacks. Online activism becomes an issue as audiences no longer feel the need to physically show support to social movements anymore, they develop a “slacktivist” approach. With online activism, people believe that by liking, sharing, or resharing they are doing their part in the movements and don't go deeper into the issue at question. The high exposure of everyday injustices on social media make people have a disconnection with the real life injustices and these are taken as just another fatal situation. Malpractices are normalized as it is always the same storyline but with different names each time, and activism loses its impact on society because fewer people physically participate. Truth is that for better or for worse, the evolution of social media communication has had a great impact on social movement activism, given that they bring awareness to all communities regardless of class, gender, ethnicity or sexuality. A more democratized atmosphere is created where everyone has a voice to express discontent or support towards first world issues.

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Social Media, Social Movements and Change Lesson Plan

Developed By Gabriela Aguilar

Lesson Title: Using Social Media as Support for Social Movements

Grade 12, 1 week

Module Purpose

The core text in this module focuses on the evolution of social media and how it has played a major role in the increased activism on social movements. In history we were able to see how the innovation of the printing press influenced the print revolution 1440 as well as television did with the representation of the civil rights movements 1954. Over time social media has influenced social movement activism through platforms such as Twitter and TikTok that allow audiences to share, like and repost videos and information. These interactive platforms allow outsiders to participate in movements regardless of their familiarization with the organizations. As it has been seen through the cases of Michael Brown Jr. 2014 and George Floyd 2020. Where in both cases a man of color was killed in the hands of white police officers. Hashtags such as #Ferguson and videos showing the actual moments of racial injustice circulated all over the internet and communities all over the globe were angry at these actions. Students will study this evolution of media and then research the impact it had on social movement activism and to which extent social media is actually mobilizing communities. Students will conduct primary and secondary research in order to understand change in social movement with the evolution of technology and consider the obtained information to foster critical thinking and analytical skills.

Questions at Issue

The questions at issue in the module are the following:

- What are media forms?
- How does technology encourage change?
- Does social media mobilize communities?
- How is activism supported on social media?

Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content domains 	1.1 Literary Analysis 1.3 Literary Criticism 1.4 Analysis of Non- Literary Texts 2.3 Literacy Studies 3.5 Research Strategies 4.2 Media Analysis and Journalistic Applications
Central Focus/ Learning Target	Social movements, activism, influence of social media and change
Academic Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Writing • Critical Thinking • Making Predictions 	Students will discuss inferences about impacts of social media on society in small groups. Students will research and write main ideas of their findings. Students will collaborate together to discuss the importance of research writing. Students will create an analytical research essay.
Assessment plan, rubric and feedback	Students will be assessed on journal entries to stimulate their writing skills at the start of class throughout the unit. Students will receive readings that will be annotated and graded based on completion. Students will receive credit for participation in class discussions. Students will receive credit for small research paragraphs throughout the unit.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Journal • Social media platforms (Twitter, TikTok) • <i>Media/Society</i> by david Croteau and William Hoynes • Internet Sources

Reading Rhetorically

Day 1; Time Allotted 1 hour 10 minutes

Preparing to Read

Purpose: To help students understand the role that innovation had on society and how these contributed to activism to create change as stated in the core topic of the module.

Before the reading, students will reflect on their own ideas of the impacts of these innovations and how they believe these influenced the changes that have occurred in our society. They will

also write what they think about the main themes of the book that we will be analyzing: *Media/Society* by Croteau and Hoynes. The main points being the evolution of media and how these have influenced different aspects of everyday lifestyles. They will think about their own knowledge of social media movements and their experiences in participating in activist movements.

Students will then have the opportunity to share their reflections in small groups or in the large group discussion. There will be documentation of the class discussion to later use when preparing for writing research papers.

Activity 1: Writing Prompt

Write for 10 minutes in response to one or more of the following questions, be prepared to share in small groups, partners or as a large group.

- What roles does media play in our everyday lives? How have these changed over time?
- Based on your own knowledge, how did the invention of the printing press contribute to social activism?
- How is activism portrayed in television in comparison to the internet? Why?
- What do you know about social movements? Can you name any social movements that you think are important to the contribution of social change?

Share findings in small groups or as a whole class for 10 minutes.

Text– Croteau, David and William Hoynes: <i>Media/ Society</i>

Exploring Key Concepts

Purpose: To understand the changes that came with the evolving technology from the printing press to the invention of the internet and how these impacted society as we knew it.

It is important to give students the historical background of media as it will help them understand the impacts each innovation had on communities. Students may know about industrialization but not about the impact it had on the evolution of technological innovation and media. It will help them understand how change has been perceived throughout history, it will motivate them to look at sources they use for their own activism.

Activity 2: Explore Key Concepts

As a class we will read chapter 2 of the book called *Media Society* by David Croteau and William Hoynes, which will guide the students on the historical background of media. It talks about the impacts of the innovation of the printing press and this helped citizens into what later would become a print revolution. It gives information on other innovations such as radio, telegraph, telephone and television which one by one contributed toward the invention of the internet. Students will identify what new technologies and older technologies are. Two key concepts that students will learn about are "technological determinism" and "social constructionism". "Technological determinism" is an approach that identifies technology or technological developments as the central causal element in processes of social change. "Social constructionism" emphasizes the social construction of technology, focusing on the role of active human agents in ultimately determining how technology is developed and used. They will also annotate the importance of these key concepts keeping in mind social change.

We will analyze figures 2.1 and 2.2 on pages 25- 27 to better understand the evolution of each technological innovation.

Activity 3: PearDeck

As a whole class join Peardeck and review concepts learned in the chapter. Students will have questions displayed and will answer them in real time to make sure everyone is on the same level of understanding the concepts. This will be a closing activity.

Questions:

What is technological determinism? Provide an example.

What are social constructions? Provide an example.

What are the social constructions of technology?

What is an example of social change?

Applying Criticism of Electronic Sources

Day 2; Time Allotted 1 hour 10 minutes

Purpose: To make observations about the text and critically assess the extent to which social media takes the emotional factor of activism.

Students will get the opportunity to learn about the effects of easy access to information through social media. The way in which audiences no longer feel the need to physically attend activist movements; do the bare minimum online. They will learn about slacktivism and how they might be a part of this approach. They will read the scholarly resource Glenn, Cerise L. “Activism or ‘Slacktivism?’: Digital Media and Organizing for Social Change.” *Communication Teacher*, vol. 29, no. 2, Apr. 2015, pp. 81–85. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/17404622.2014.1003310. to point out key elements of slacktivism. They will write about their experiences with social movement activism and to what extent they were active in them.

Before getting into the purpose of the class, students will have time to reflect on personal experiences with social media and activism. They will jot down their experiences and have the opportunity to share these with the class.

Activity 1: Writing Prompt

Write for 10 minutes in response to one or more of the following questions, be prepared to share in small groups, partners or as a large group.

- What activist movements have you seen on social media? How were they advocating activism?
- Have you been in activist movements? Where do you get information about them?
- How does the internet support activism? Is activism easier online?
- How impactful are social movements on social media?

Share reflections with the class or in small groups for 10 minutes.

Text– Glenn, Cerise L.: “Activism or ‘Slacktivism?’: Digital Media and Organizing for Social Change”

Understanding Key Concepts

Purpose: To understand the definitions of activism and how this differs from Slacktivism now that the internet has become an integral part of our everyday activities.

It is important for students to conduct research about the negative aspects of social media activism as less people emotionally follow the movements and do more than just like or share information. They learn the difference between activism and slacktivism, and how these

influence social change.

Activity 2: Pre-reading Activity

Students will be provided with a worksheet that asks them to describe an activist movement they've witnessed (in person or online) and provide examples of activism and examples of Slacktivism. They will also hypothesize on what slacktivism is and how it affects social media movements.

Activity 3: Read

Students will form small groups and read the provided article on Slacktivism. The article will guide the students on the way social media makes a lazy audience by just sharing, resharing and liking content on media platforms. It explains the disconnection there is with the audience and the different social movements. Creates a "pat in the back" society that doesn't go beyond the surface of the movement, instead, people see movements, like and move on with their lives. The key theme of the article is slacking in activism due to the easy hands on experience that media platforms provide. Finally, they will synthesize their knowledge with real world examples they have seen or experienced themselves.

Comparing Features of Digital Media

Day 3; Time Allotted 1 hour 10 minutes

Purpose: to understand the role of media platforms that were used in the late 19th century as a support for activism and how they compare to social media usage for social movements in the 21st century.

Students will compare the effectiveness that television had on social movement activism during the civil rights movement and the effectiveness of the internet in racial justice movements. Students will understand the difference in activism through the historical context of how television recruited people into action and how the internet allows audiences to be activists through social media platforms. Students will use the book by Carty, Victoria. *Social Movements and New Technology*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csumb/detail.action?docID=1771955>. and Acham, Christine. *Revolution Televised : Prime Time and the Struggle for Black Power*, University of Minnesota Press, 2004. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csumb/detail.action?docID=310673>. To contrast the different uses of media in the late 19th century and the ones from now.

It is important for students to understand that as we keep moving forward, different platforms are

used for a common goal. That innovations are created according to the need or facility for our everyday lifestyles.

Activity 1: Writing Prompt

Write for 10 minutes in response to one or more of the following questions, be prepared to share in small groups, partners or as a large group.

- How does television differ from the internet?
- What are some other forms of media?
- What are social movements?

Share reflections with the class or in small groups for 10 minutes.

Texts– Carty, Victoria. *Social Movements and New Technology* and Acham, Christine. *Revolution Televised : Prime Time and the Struggle for Black Power*

Understanding Key Concepts

Purpose: The purpose of these two books is to show their audiences how overtime media has been reshaped in a way that is more convenient to everyday lifestyle. Also the importance of accessibility within communities of public information to be aware of all changes made in social movements.

It is important for students to see the evolving differences in activism as new innovations are created. Students will get a better image of how television was used as a tool to gain rights for minority groups that were being oppressed and silenced by racial prejudices. In regards to the internet students will be able to identify key patterns that allow for movements to be trending at a global level and how this aids change.

Activity 2: Read and Fill Out Worksheet

Students will be provided with a fill out worksheet on comparing and contrasting television and the internet in regards to activism. They will read some pages from each book and complete the worksheet accordingly.

After the worksheet, students will work on a short paragraph about the main things that stuck out to them in the readings.

Activity 3: Share Knowledge

Students will have the opportunity to present to the class their main focuses in their short paragraphs.

Learning about Research Strategies

Day 4; Time Allotted 1 hour 10 minutes

Purpose: to lead students through an effective pre-research to demonstrate resources available online.

Students will get to do some pre-research on a topic on any chosen social movement they would like to learn more about. This will help them start thinking of questions to initiate their research and develop critical thinking skills. Not only will this help them get an idea of different social movements but also where these are most present and what has been done to aid activism

Activity 1: Writing Prompt

Write for 10 minutes in response to one or more of the following questions, be prepared to share in small groups, partners or as a large group.

- What do you find most difficult when conducting research?
- Where do you first go to search for information?
- How do you plan for conducting research?

Share reflections with the class or in small groups for 10 minutes.

Activity 2: Presentation

Students will take notes on a presentation about places to conduct research. This includes google scholar, NYTs, Jstor, Ebsco, ProQuest, etc, they will also take notes as the presentation is given and be asked to make questions about uncertainties. As a class we will then discuss the information learned.

Activity 3 : Graphic Organizer

Students will receive a graphic organizer where they will have an outline to initiate their

pre-research. The outline will include the following sections:

- Name of topic
- Questions about topic
- Keywords for research
- Starting: Databases

Students will work on this outline for 15- 20 minutes.

Students will turn in the worksheet and be graded on compilation.

Impact of Media on Society

Day 5; Time Allotted 1 hour 10 minutes

Purpose: students will learn about the impact that social media has on swaying audiences' opinion on different topics. They also see the ways in which propaganda is designed to influence communities based on ethos, pathos or logos, and overall personal beliefs. They will research different media platforms and the impacts these have on social movement activism.

Students will use previous learning about research and about media and social movements to craft a research essay on the impacts media have on social change. Students will see the connection from different sources to match their thesis statements and backup their claims.

Activity 1: Writing Prompt

Write for 10 minutes in response to one or more of the following questions, be prepared to share in small groups, partners or as a large group.

- How does the media influence audiences?
- What forms of activism did you see the most this past 2020?
- What media platforms do you see as most effective for activism?

Share reflections with the class or in small groups for 10 minutes.

Activity 2: Planning

Using previous lessons and worksheets students will conduct their own research paper on the impacts of social media on social media activism. Students will receive sticky notes where they will reflect on main points or key concepts of their research topic. They will have 15 minutes to work on the sticky notes then another 10 minutes to share with a partner what they came up with.

Activity 3: Researching

Students will do online research on their key concepts and start drafting their essays. They will work on this for the remaining class time and will be encouraged to ask questions of any uncertainties. This will be used as a form to assess student mastery of the module.

Activity 4: Concluding

Students will share findings and personal opinions about the topic and share some takeaways.