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# EnActivism

*"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not."*

- Dr. Seuss

## Introduction

Activism is something that plays a big role in our society today. From the Black Lives Matter movement to the Yemen crisis, activism has played a large role in 2020. But why do people partake in activism? It is because activism allows us to show our voice, it allows us to fight for our beliefs. Activism is something that is observed in the world today, and it will continue to be observed throughout history.

## Objectives

1. Students can comprehend modern forms of activism.
2. Students will be able to identify astroturfing and lobbying and compare them.

## Agenda

1. Defining Activism Intro Activity
2. Types of Social Movements
3. Methods of Activism
4. Astroturfing & Lobbying
5. Leadership & Taking Action
6. Activities

## Content

### Types of Social Movements

**Purpose:**

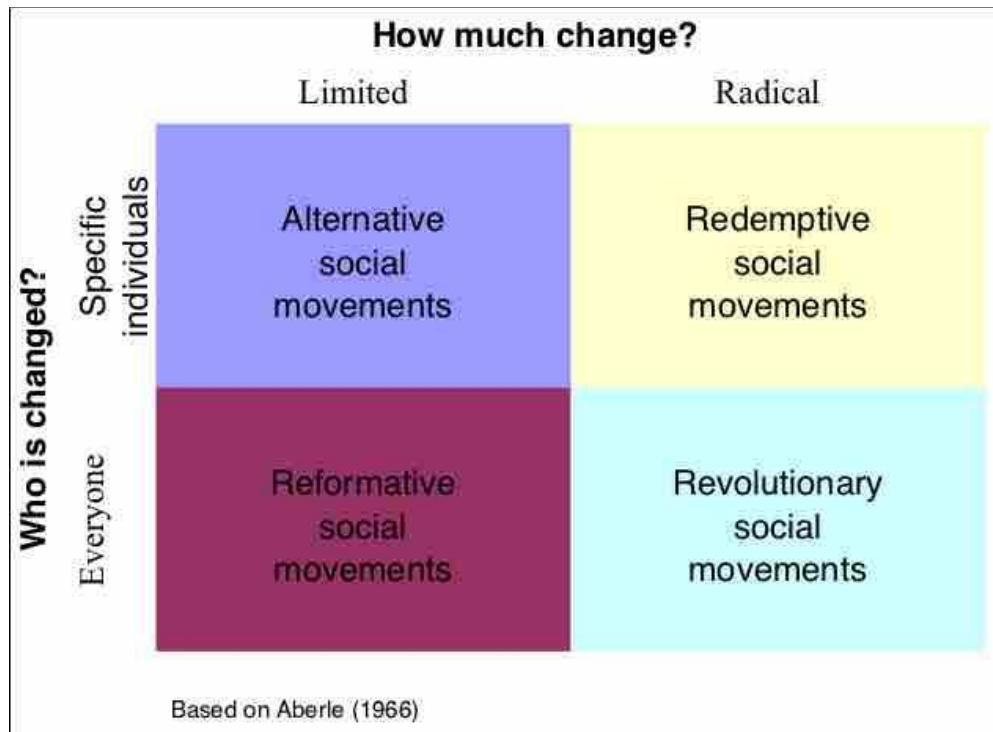
To understand and be able to identify different types of social movements.

**Sources:**

1. <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology/chapter/social-movements/>
2. <http://oer2go.org/mods/en-boundless/www.boundless.com/sociology/textbooks/boundless-sociology-textbook/social-change-21/social-movements-140/types-of-social-movements-768-4965/index.html>
3. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/social-movement-definitions-alternative-redemptive-reformative-revolutionary.html>
4. <https://sociologydictionary.org/r/resistance-movement/>

**Lecture Notes:**

- Five main types of social movements
  - Reform
    - *occurs at a broader group or societal level and advocate for minor changes*
  - Revolutionary
    - *Occurs at a broader group or societal level and advocate for radical changes*
  - Redemptive
    - *At the individual level and advocates for radical changes*
  - Alternative
    - *Occurs at a smaller group level and advocate for limited societal change*
  - Resistance
    - *Occurs within a portion of a civilised government that organize to prevent or reverse social, cultural, or economic structural change*
  - They can be differentiated by the scope of their target audience and how radical of a change they aim for. (The given graph shows four of them – resistance is not included)



#### Discussion Question:

1. What are some social movements that you can think of right now? (Leads into methods of activism)

#### Use as examples of social movements

- Black lives matter
  - Started roughly around 2013
    - #BlackLivesMatter was first used on social media after the acquittal of George Zimmerman, who killed Trayvon Martin, a 17 y/o unarmed African-American
    - Zimmerman was originally charged for murder, but he was acquitted at trial after claiming self-defense
  - The movement gained national fame around 2014, after the deaths of two African-Americans: Michael Brown, and Eric Garner
    - Eric Garner was killed in Staten Island by Daniel Pantaleo, a NYC police officer, on suspicion of selling cigarettes. He was killed by a banned choke hold after repeatedly saying he could not breathe
    - Micheal Brown was killed in Ferguson Missouri by white officer Darren Wilson. He was killed after being shot six times, all to the front of his body. Wilson stated that Brown charged him but his partner contradicted that statement.
    - Protests and unrest erupted in Ferguson and New York City
  - Black Lives Matter has no formal hierarchy; it is in reality a decentralized group of activists that organize their own protests in different cities.
  - In 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement returned to national headlines and gained further national attention with the death of George Floyd.
    - George Floyd was a 46-year-old Black American man who was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota for allegedly using a counterfeit bill.

- He was killed by Derek Chauvin, a white police officer who knelt on George Floyd's neck for nearly eight minutes. George repeatedly said "I can't breathe"
  - Chauvin was asked repeatedly to remove his knee from George Floyd's neck by onlookers
- Chauvin was also with 3 other police officers who all restrained George even though he was not resisting and he was on the ground
- Chauvin was charged with third-degree murder, second-degree murder, and manslaughter and his accomplices were charged with aiding and abetting second degree murder after protests erupted nationwide, most notably in Minneapolis
- The 2020 protests surrounding Black Lives Matter and the death of George Floyd have also led to the introduction of ACAB (All Cops are Bastards). This movement pushes for police to be defunded. The 2020 George Floyd protests have also led to the resurfacing of police-related deaths, including Elijah McClain
  - The Aurora Police Department later said that a 911 caller had reported a "suspicious person" in a ski mask, and that when officers confronted McClain – who was not armed and had not committed any kind of crime – he "resisted arrest." In the 15 minutes that followed, the officers tackled McClain to the ground, put him in a carotid hold, and called first responders, who injected him with ketamine. He had a heart attack on the way to the hospital, and died days later, after he was declared brain dead.

#### Justice for Mia Khalifa

- Mia Khalifa is a 27 year old Lebanese-American woman who was manipulated into the porn industry at 21. Pornhub has refused to remove her videos. With videos with almost 800 million views, she only received \$12,000 in profit from them. She is currently in therapy due to the vast negative impact that the existence of these videos has had on her mental health. She has repeatedly stated that the time in which those videos were taken was the worst part of her life. Pornhub has violated her. She is a successful sports commentator and is happily married. Her legacy is so much more than just a few months worth of out of character behavior. (Source: change.org)
- BangBros, which is the porn company she was manipulated by, came out stating she had actually made close to \$180,000 for being in the industry, and they also recirculated a video of her using the N-word and claiming that she had asked to wear the hijab in her pornography. This "defense" by BangBros caused Mia Khalifa to lose followers and supporters.
- Pro-life Movement
  - The United States pro-life movement contains elements opposing induced abortion on both moral and sectarian grounds and supports its legal prohibition or restriction. People who are pro-life also tend to be against the death penalty (euthanasia) and war.
  - They believe life starts at the moment of conception and ends with natural death.
  - While the pro-life movement is decentralized, there are several organizations that have a hierarchy.
    - These organizations can create events such as rallies, marches, and protests. However, there is no one organization that is the "center" of the pro-life movement.

## Methods of Activism

### **Purpose:**

To explain to students the different forms of activism

### **Sources:**

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slacktivism>
2. <https://searchsecurity.techtarget.com/definition/hacktivism>
3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hashtag\\_activism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hashtag_activism)

### **Lecture Notes:**

- Education
- Boycott / economic activism
- Demonstrations, protests, and strikes
- Media activism
- Petitioning
- Propaganda
- Hacktivism
  - The act of using technology to promote a political agenda or a social change
    - Anonymous: attacked Church of Scientology, uses Guy Fawkes mask, has been known to “declare war” on politicians
    - Clip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER5iwy8\\_mro](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER5iwy8_mro)
- Slacktivism
  - the practice of supporting a political or social cause by means such as social media or online petitions, characterized as involving very little effort or commitment
- Hashtactivism or Hashtag Activism
  - the act of showing support for a cause through a like, share, etc. on any social media platform, such as Facebook or Twitter
    - #MeToo
    - #BlackLivesMatter
    - #JusticeForSudan

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why do you think slacktivism is on the rise?
2. Is slacktivism inherently bad?
3. What is, in your opinion, the most effective method of activism?

## Astroturfing & Lobbying

- Astroturfing
  - Definition:

Astroturfing is the creation of a fake grassroots organization to lobby for a specific issue that doesn't have much support. These organizations can be publicized through social media and newspapers. This term was first coined in 1985 by Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas.
  - **Discussion Questions:**
    - Is astroturfing ethical? Why or why not? (*play devil's advocate*)
    - How do you reliably tell the difference between astroturfing and real



**Materials:** N/A

**Directions:** The facilitator will open the discussion by asking students to define activism. Whether the facilitators decide to create a definition as a class or ask students to create their own is up to them. At the end, compare the definition(s) to the following textbook definitions:

- *A doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue*
- *The policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.*
- *The use of direct and noticeable action to achieve a result, usually a political or social one*
- *An activist is a person who campaigns for some kind of social change.*

### Where do you Stand? (10 minutes?)

**Purpose:**

Students will be able to visibly see how their classmates' opinions align with current patterns of thinking in society.

**Materials:**

- Piece of paper for each student
- Pens

**Directions:**

Students will each write down an opinion on a post-it note, then pass it to their facilitators. The facilitators will then read out each statement, and then pick a side of a room that demonstrates each opinion and its extreme. (Left side of the room = strongly agree, right = strongly disagree) Students will then be prompted to justify their reasoning behind their answer.

Virtual learning note: Have students privately message their opinion through Zoom to the facilitators. Students can change their backgrounds to red for disagree and green for agree.

**Discussion:**

1. What was the biggest surprise to you in this activity?
2. How do people with different answers to opinions come together in a group and implement things? (How do activist groups form with so many people?)

### Pits of Activism (20 minutes)

**Purpose:** To prove the challenges of activism in a fun engaging way that is also possible even within a remote setting

**Materials:** N/A

**Directions:** Each student is messaged/given a certain movement they want to make happen. In addition to this movement, they have a certain resource that they must utilize to make it all happen assuming that this is the only resource available to them (examples: followers, money, office, etc). Once everyone is assigned a resource, they must develop for 10 minutes the best approach to make their specific movement be able to promote some change with their given resource. They will then share with the rest of the class.

**Discussion:**

1. Were there any other resources that you wish you had to make your plan more effective? How would you have utilized these resources?
2. What challenges did you come across trying to support your movement? How do the social movements we have talked about tackle these challenges?

## Social Movement Identification (10 minutes)

**Purpose:**

To help students become aware of social movements and understand what they are.

**Materials:**

- Phone
- Students

**Directions:**

Have each student pull out their phone and go to Instagram or any other popular social media platform and find social movements, mostly in the form of hashtags. They can be found by looking up the words 'social movements' in Instagram and then going to 'Tags'. After about five minutes, have the students discuss with the class different social movements and describe what each of them are. Also discuss what type of movement these are. If the students can't find many or they don't address some of the popular movements, they are listed below.

Some popular movements:

**#blacklivesmatter** – speaks for violence and racism towards black people

**#metoo** – helps survivors of sexual assault and harassment in underprivileged communities, specifically women of color, speak out

**#fridaysforfuture** - brings awareness to climate change run by students, calls for students to skip school on Fridays to make change

**#nobannowall** - calls for no Muslim ban and no border wall, stands against President Trump's immigration policies

**Discussion:**

1. Do you think that online activism is effective? If yes, is it more or less effective than tangible activism like marches and boycotts?
2. Are these movements examples of hashtactivism or slacktivism? If there is one, is the difference between hashtactivism and slacktivism significant?