

The influence of social media on activism and revolution on the world stage

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



The Influence of Social Media on Activism and Revolution on the World Stage

The 21st century has witnessed an explosion of social media platforms.

While communication has long been a central component of the Internet, with the development of MySpace, and later Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, Internet communication took on a new level of significance. These platforms not only allowed communication, but also provided an outlet for the rapid sharing and expression of ideas. Subsequently, social media came to have a profound impact on activism and revolution on the world stage. This essay examines this impact and influence.

One of the most recent ways social media has influenced activism on the world stage is through the Occupy Wall Street movement. Occupy Wall Street was a protest movement where individuals conducted a large-scale sit-in at a park near Wall Street. The widespread popularity of this movement was made possible through social media, most notably Facebook. In these regards, it's noted that, " The best way to get people away from their computer is through the computer; you cant organize thousands of people in New York City without the web" (Kannally). Ultimately, then social media directed facilitated the Occupy Wall Street protest.

Social media has also had a profound impact on revolution. Undoubtedly the most prominent recent example of this is through the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring revolts emerged in Tunisia when an individual committed suicide after an injustice was committed against him by the government. Rapidly individuals over social media were able to share their experiences of oppression and organize widespread revolts throughout the Middle East. It's noted, " The movements throughout the Arab world appeared to have

imbued social media with an irrevocable sense of legitimacy as a tool for fomenting change” (Killinger). In this way social media allowed forms of organization to occur in this region that previously had not been possible under the stringent governmental oppression.

Still, other perspectives argue that social media’s influence on activism and revolution on the world stage is limited. Malcolm Gladwell states, “ The drawbacks of networks scarcely matter if the network isn’t interested in systemic change—if it just wants to frighten or humiliate or make a splash—or if it doesn’t need to think strategically” (Gladwell). In this way, Gladwell is arguing that social networks are built on weak ties and as such are only able to influence activism and revolution in limited ways. Ultimately then, social media may be able to contribute to small scale activism, but it takes more hierarchical leadership to enact deep-rooted social change.

In conclusion, this essay has examined social media’s influence on activism and revolution on the world stage. In this context of understanding, the facilitating influence social media had on the Occupy Wall Street Movement, as well as the Arab Spring are established. These insights, however, are contrasted with the contention that social media is only able to contribute to activism and revolution in limited ways. Ultimately, it seems that while social media has undeniably contributed to activist approaches, traditional methods of organizing remain central to significant social change.

References

Gladwell, Malcolm. " Twitter, facebook, and social activism." New Yorker. N. p., 2011. Web. 20 Sep 2012. .

Kannally, Craig. " Occupy Wall Street: Social Medias Role In Social Change ."

<https://assignbuster.com/the-influence-of-social-media-on-activism-and-revolution-on-the-world-stage/>

Huffington Post.

N. p., 2011. Web. 20 Sep 2012. .

Schillinger, Raymond. " Social Media and the Arab Spring: What Have We

Learned? ." Huffington Post. N. p., 2011. Web. 20 Sep 2012. .