



**Understanding and Stopping Anti-Asian Hate: Article #18**

## **UNDERSTANDING AND STOPPING ANTI-ASIAN HATE: SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM**

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Information spreads quickly on social media. This is a fact. Whether or not the information is accurate or relevant may depend on context, but human innovation has led us to an era where information can be quickly received and shared with many different people. This makes social media a prime place for activism. Before anything can be done about a problem, there needs to be general knowledge and awareness that there is a problem in the community.

Two examples of the quick spread of social media can be seen in the Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements. Both movements, originally from America, spread around the globe within hours through hashtags on social media. Protests sprang up in multiple cities across America and gained a lot of ground in other places around the world. Since technology is such a prominent part of modern life, and social media is so accessible, activist movements spread rapidly. Hashtags from popular activist movements have gained millions of tags and shares, and most people who are online are aware of the power and cause of these movements.



Clearly, social media can be a great platform for spreading awareness on a specific topic. In short, it's a great method for activists to use. However, there are definitely drawbacks to using social media. False information spreads quickly, and ideas and words may become warped or distorted. When someone is scrolling on Twitter or Instagram, they rarely check the sources or validity of the statements they may see. Also, social media is so popular that many have now started using it for clout, instead of actually caring about social topics and activism. It is simple to repost or share a hashtag, but doing something more to become involved takes so much more. Activism means much more than simply looking like you care about an issue. Nothing can be done without action. Social media rarely encourages more motion on an issue; rather, it may lead to a bunch of reposts and awareness but no action.

#StopAsianHate became a popular hashtag after outrage over racially motivated hate crimes and discriminatory practices spread across America. Especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts to reduce the amount of hate Asian Americans were receiving resulted in social media activism. Spreading awareness through Twitter resulted in increased support for Asian Americans fighting for representation and respect. Organizations created hate report sites and legislation was passed in favor of Asian Americans, so social media activism had a largely positive effect on the cause Asian Americans were fighting for.

Even though there are some drawbacks to using social media for activism, it can be helpful, especially in spreading awareness on an issue. Using it for actual activism may have varied results, because it can lead to less meaningful actions and few results, but it can be a great way to gain popularity for a just cause.

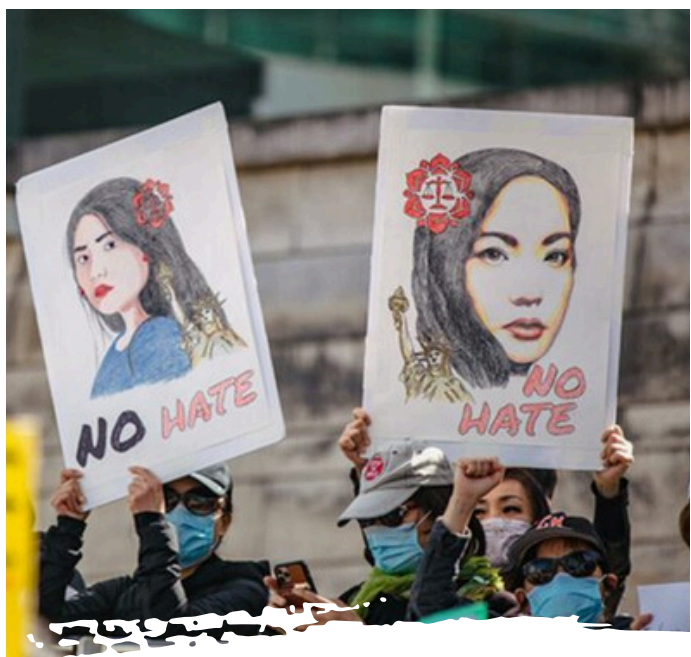


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