

SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA POP CULTURES

Case Studies And Reading Resources
On Influencers And TikTok



A TIKTOK CULTURES RESEARCH NETWORK INITIATIVE

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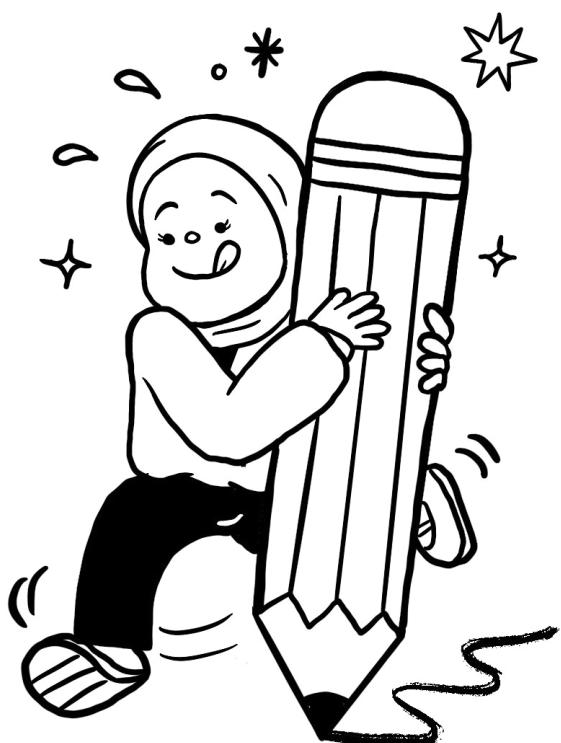
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About

'Social Justice Through Social Media Pop Cultures' is a public scholarship project launched by the TikTok Cultures Research Network, and Social Media Pop Cultures Programme at CCAT, Curtin University. In continuation of TCRN's 4th event, TikTok and Social Movements, held in September 2021, we have identified and curated ways of thinking about public scholarship to aid our understanding of the key themes, genres, and features of various movements for social (in)justice on social media. This resource is currently limited to English language sources, though we have extended our efforts to consider a myriad of case studies and resources especially focused on the Asia Pacific region, where we are based.



Acknowledgements

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We also wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live and work, and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of our communities and their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

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TikTok Cultures Research Network

The TikTok Cultures Research Network is a research portal founded in October 2020 by A/Prof Crystal Abidin and a group of Asia Pacific-based interdisciplinary scholars who are studying TikTok cultures from a variety of qualitative research methodologies. We provide and facilitate the production of scholarly resources, research projects, and events that connect networks of qualitative scholars of various disciplines from around the world. Our ethos is rooted in providing opportunities to junior, under-represented, and under-privileged scholars; in committing to a decolonizing approach that prioritises research from and by the margins/marginalised in the Asia Pacific and Global South; and in fostering meaningful and impactful collaboration and networking opportunities that will result in innovative research perspectives. Visit us at <https://TikTokCultures.com/> or on Twitter at [@TikTokCultures](#).

The TikTok Cultures Research Network is housed under the Social Media Pop Cultures Programme at the Centre for Culture and Technology (CCAT), Curtin University. The Programme is CCAT's newest node, led by A/Prof Crystal Abidin, dedicated to critically assessing the history, function, and design of popular culture in social media spaces and pop culture vernacular native to social media, and to scrutinise academic approaches to the phenomenon, paying special attention to digital media in the Asia Pacific region. Find out more at <https://ccat.curtin.edu.au/>.

Preface

The open access to and networked feelings fostered on social media has facilitated recent trends of users sharing personal stories of witnessing ethos and ethics, calling out others for matters of social justice, joining collective movements for social change, contemplating civic virtues, and pursuing various initiatives for social good. As social media serve as a field where different social actors raise their voices with easy accessibility and creativity, a plethora of movements for the ‘right things’ are launched, organised, and spread across cultures, regions, and languages on social media. Thus, how social justice is advocated, challenged, and observed in the field of social media pop cultures illuminates the complicated power dynamics between various actors, the social positions they occupy, and how they mobilise conversations in networked communities.

As some of the most visible and active users on social media, influencers often spearhead or lend their reputation to specific movements, at times popularising hashtags or even provoking witch-hunts. As one of the most popular social media platforms for youth engagement at the moment, TikTok is often the site where awareness and education, solidarity and community, activism and advocacy are being pursued. At the confluence of the figure of the influencer and the platform features of TikTok are the myriad of forms in which social justice can be communicated. This resource focuses especially on one form: ‘social media pop cultures’.

We consider social media pop cultures as the repertoire of communicative, visual, textual, and (these days even) aural artefacts that are popularised by the grassroots, that become instituted as vocabulary and parlance among users, that become critical gateways and entry points for talking about difficult issues. Memes (visual, textual, aural), emoji, emoticons, hashtags, and the creative possibilities of online slang being used worldwide, in a bid to maximise

entertainment value to encourage audience engagement, strategically deploy refracted publics to circumvent government and/or platform censorship, and multiply social steganography and code-switching to speak to multiple audiences at once.

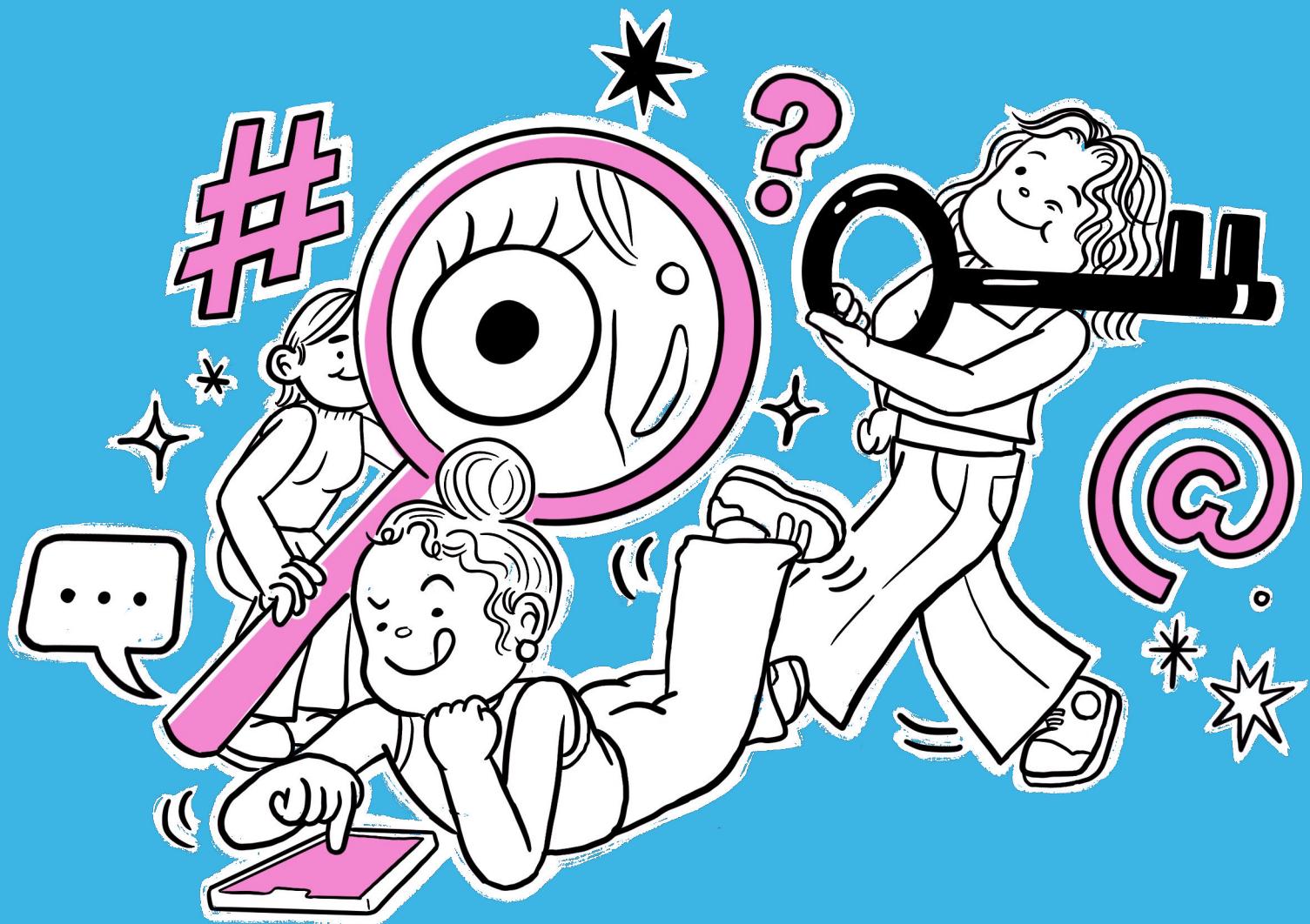
However, despite their potentials, these very same forms and formats can be mobilised for an agenda other than a semblance of justice and righteousness. The allure of virality and online fame entices users to bandwagon on social justice issues for clickbait; lukewarm interest in human rights issues is often virtue-signalled to serve as status-boosting markers; and identity justice and politics around ableism, gender, race, sexuality, and nationality have been decontextualised, commodified, and at times even paraded for ‘views’ online. In tandem with the complexities of algorithmic digital cultures, the virality generated from collective online movements can attract pile-ons that consequently sensationalise issues and misrepresent motives, or even transit on the slippery slope from righteous call-outs to out right witch-hunts, cyber bullying, and trolling.

Along these lines, this resource seeks to consider the various aspects, angles, and conceptual synonyms to better understand social justice pursuits on social media.

This resource comprises two parts:
(1) Conceptual glossary and
(2) Readings & resources. Our aim is that this resource can serve as a gateway for scholars wanting to explore research angles on the topic, and as a suggested guide for educators wanting to teach on the topic through a combination of scholarly material and popular media examples.



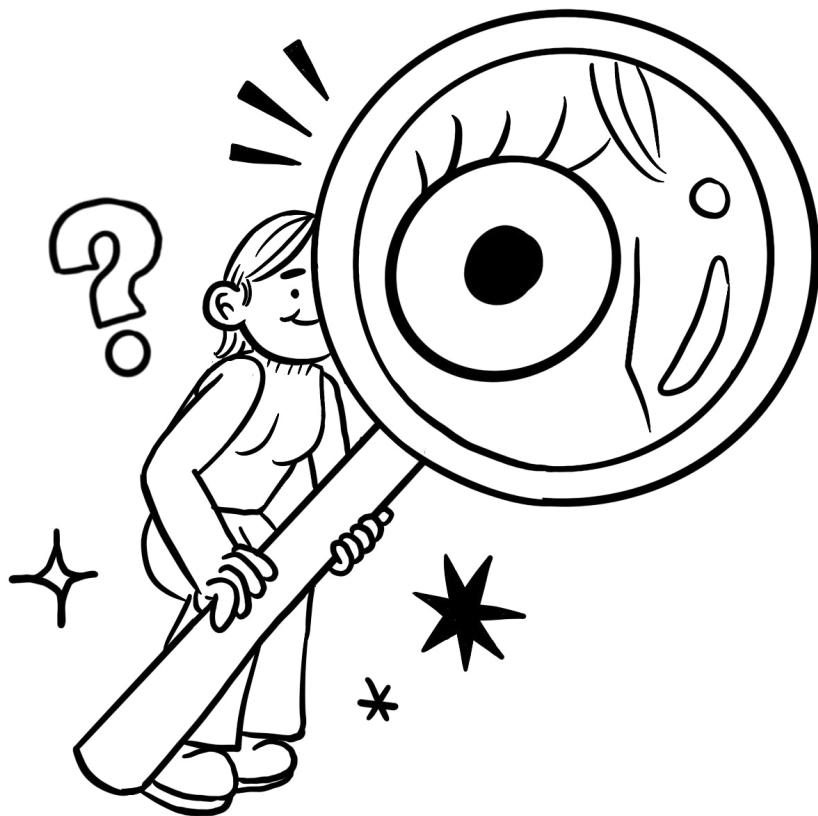
PART ONE



CONCEPTUAL GLOSSARY

BACKGROUND

The affordances and features of social media have changed cultures and practices of social movements worldwide. The easy access of social media have lowered the barriers for people to join various movements across media platforms, regions, and cultures, and to advocate for social justice and beliefs in their daily use of media. However, each movement approaches the idea of social justice differently, and the forms and attributes of each movement can also differ depending on what is being advocated, where the movement develops, how the movement engages with other users, and so on. Focusing on the unique aspects of social media movements, this section offers an overview of the relationships and connections between social justice, social movements, and social media pop cultures.



CONCEPTUALISING 'SOCIAL JUSTICE'



What is 'social justice'?

Although many movements on social media advocate the notion of social justice as the way that we generally understand as fairness, equality, and democracy, the idea of social justice in social media movements does not always refer to the same civic virtue. Rather, the idea of social justice in social media pop cultures has been often used as an overarching concept to criticise and call out various things that are perceived as moral wrongness, misdemeanour, as well as inequality and injustice. For example, internet celebrities and influencers are often publicly criticised after being embroiled in scandals where the authenticity of their social media personae are questioned, as seen in cancel culture and call out culture. Thus, the idea of social justice in social media cultures needs to expand to include what has been generously understood as social justice, such as inequality and fairness, and what is now understood and being discussed as social justice in social media, such as authenticity. We here define social justice as:

SOCIAL JUSTICE:

The fairness and political/moral correctness of a society or a media environment in its divisions, redistributions, and awareness of rewards and burdens.



Approaches to understanding 'social justice'

Social justice in social media pop cultures can be approached in three manners:



AS MEDIA MESSAGE & DISCOURSE:

This approach focuses on what messages about justice are delivered, shared, and spread on and across media. Topics can include social inequalities around gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, ableism, and so on, and advocacy for social actions, such as climate activism.



AS MEDIA ATTRIBUTES:

This approach focuses on how social justice is achieved in social media pop cultures. Topics can include media environments and features that spread and reinforce social (in)justice, such as media algorithms, affordances, and platform technological features.



AS MEDIA CULTURE:

This approach focuses on how issues around social justice mobilise publics and shape media cultures. For instance, cancel culture and call out culture can be examined through this approach, looking at cultural aspects on how media users articulate and assess social justice and what types of media practices and cultural and media resources they employ for their understandings of social justice.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

APPROACH	Media message & discourse	Media attribute	Media culture
FOCUS	What messages about social justice are <i>delivered</i> and <i>spread</i>	How social justice is <i>achieved</i> in social media	How social justice <i>mobilises</i> publics and <i>shapes</i> culture
SAMPLE TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Anti-racism◆ LGBTQIA+ movements◆ Climate activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Social media algorithms◆ and decision making◆ Curbing dis/misinformation◆ Media affordances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Hashtag publics◆ Cancel culture◆ Call out culture



Readings on 'social justice'

Fraser, N. (1999). [Social justice in the age of identity politics: redistribution, recognition, and participation](#). In L. Ray, & A. Sayer (Eds.), *Culture and economy after the cultural turn* (pp. 25–52). Thousand Oaks: SAGE. ISBN: 9780761958178.

Sandel, M. J. (2011). [Justice: What's the right thing to do](#). *Boston University Law Review*, 91(4), 1303–1310. DOI: n/a.

Walzer, M. (2020). [A defense of pluralism and equality](#). In S. Seidman & J. C. Alexander (Eds) *The new social theory reader* 2nd ed. (pp. 112–122). New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9781003060963.



CONCEPTUALISING 'SOCIAL MOVEMENTS'

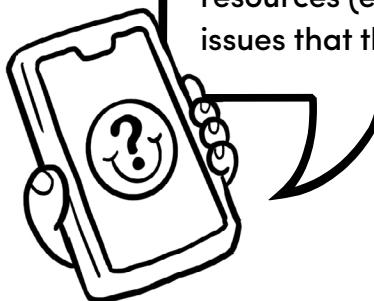


What is 'Social movements'?

In various movements on social media, it can sometimes feel like several terminologies are often interchangeably used – civic advocacy, activism, grassroots, political action, protest, etc. Among these terms, the term 'social movement' is an overarching concept that includes a myriad of different actions and movements.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS:

Online and offline networks of (in)formal relationships between individuals, groups, and/or organisations, who share mutual interest or collective identities and mobilise various types of resources (e.g. affect, attention, action, material capital) on the issues that they are advocating.



Approaches for understanding 'social movements'

Since networks and interactions between participants in movements are not always clearly identified on social media, social movements on social media can appear in various forms, often with no specific rules. One enduring quality, though, is that social movements appear to be collective, in that a multiplicity of individuals and sometimes organisations *en masse* attend to specific issues and conflicts through social media technological features, such as hashtags, and ask for social change.

Yet social movements are also individually practised as the participation, organisation, and creation of the movements is determined on an ad hoc basis in relation to social media user behaviours and platform vernaculars. When the movements are channelled and spread through the networked features of social media platforms, the forms and messages of the movements raise civic awareness, alter and formulate vernacular cultures on social media, and provide an opportunity to reexamine and resituate the notion of social justice within the very circumstances we are facing.

Social movements on social media are, thus, reflections of the people (who are the participants?), the relational (how do the participants forge affinities in the movements?), the sociocultural (why do the movements emerge and what beliefs and messages do people advocate?), and the technological (where do the movements emerge and how?) in the era of digital media.

Readings on ‘social movements’

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Diani, M. (2000). [Social movement networks virtual and real](#). *Information, Communication & Society*, 3(3), 386–401. DOI: 10.1080/13691180051033333.

Tufekci, Z. (2014). [The medium and the movement: Digital tools, social movement politics, and the end of the free rider problem](#). *Policy & Internet*, 6(2), 202–208. DOI: 10.1002/1944-2866.POI362.

Van Laer, J., & Van Aelst, P. (2010). [Internet and social movement action repertoires: Opportunities and limitations](#). *Information, Communication & Society*, 13(8), 1146–1171. DOI: 10.1080/13691181003628307.



Glossary of key concepts

In exploring social movements and social media, we consider several key concepts together. The list below is non-exhaustive but provides brief definitions of concepts that are essential for the shaping and evolution of discourses and concepts of social justice in social media pop cultures.



ACTIVISM:

Collective efforts by ordinary people to achieve goals, including social, political, behavioral, structural changes, by generating collective enunciations and investigations.
E.g. Judicial activism, consumer activism, human right activism.



ADVOCACY:

Activities by individuals or groups of people to promote certain beliefs, interests, and virtues. E.g. Political advocacy, belief advocacy, civic advocacy.



ALGORITHM:

Encoded processes implemented by social media to generate, afford, and restrict media visibility by transforming input data into certain outputs through specified calculations.



CALL OUTS & CALL OUT CULTURE:

Practices of publicly naming and criticizing instances, people, or brands for violating behavioral standards, or such culture. The concept 'cancel culture' is often interchangeably used, but cancel culture refers to the last step of boycotting, by withdrawing any kind of support (viewership, social media purchase, etc.) for those who are called out.



HASHTAG:

A discursive space and indexical signifier of (in)formal networks of individuals for advocacy and actions. Hashtag activism refers to discursive uprisings and communities on social media united through a hashtagged phrase.



GRASSROOTS:

Bottom-up movements and actions that emerge from at the local level of politics, society, and cultures, to effect change at the upper level.



MOVEMENTS:

A specific form of collective actions or behaviors organised and mobilised by a group of people or mass publics with some degree of continuity, to advance their mutual interests.



POLITICAL ACTION:

Actions taken by individuals or groups of people to support or oppose political authorities or structures.



PUBLIC:

A collection of people who are mobilised, formed, connected, or disconnected through shared interests, identities, and affects, based on networked technologies of communication



VISIBILITY:

Media capital around one's visual features that can amass attention, ensuring their media presence.

Readings on concepts relating to ‘social movements’

Abidin, C. (2016). [Visibility labour: Engaging with Influencers' fashion brands and# OOTD advertorial campaigns on Instagram.](#) *Media International Australia*, 161(1), 86–100. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X16665177.

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boyd, d. (2010). [Social network sites as networked publics: Affordances, dynamics, and implications.](#) In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), ***Networked self: Identity, community, and culture on social network sites*** (pp. 39–58). New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9780203876527.

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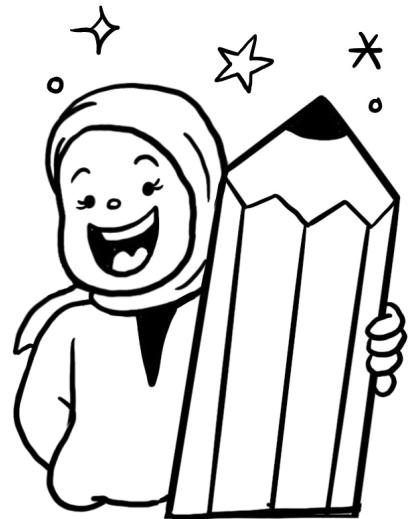
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CONCEPTUALISING 'SOCIAL MEDIA POP CULTURES'



What are 'social media pop cultures'?

On social media, various actors take part in the shaping, evolution, and demise of pop cultures, reflecting their interests, identities, beliefs, and values. Social media pop cultures, thus, should be approached not as a monolithic entity but as a field where individual and collective actors interact and compete with each other to take up social positions through or against systematic structures.

SOCIAL MEDIA POP CULTURES:

The repertoire of communicative, visual, textual, and (these days even) aural artefacts that are popularised by the grassroots, that become instituted as vocabulary and parlance among users, that become critical gateways and entry points for talking about difficult issues. They comprise a set of practices, norms, beliefs, values, and objects that are shared, (re)appropriated, and (re)produced through social media affordances among users online. They function to maximise entertainment value to encourage audience engagement, strategically deploy refracted publics to circumvent government and/or platform censorship, and multiply social steganography and code-switching to speak to multiple audiences at once.



Approaches to understanding 'social media pop cultures'

Studying social media pop cultures as a field involves the following three approaches:

- ◆ How popular culture theories, logics, structures, and industries have mapped onto social media spaces;
- ◆ How the ubiquity of social media sensibilities, systems, practices, and trends have impacted pop cultures around the world;
- ◆ How social media pop culture artefacts (such as memes, folklore, chain mail, viral videos, internet celebrities, and influencers), and in various formats (such as texts, images, gifs, and videos) allow for a layer of plausible deniability wherein users can disperse and dispel organised efforts as mere entertainment or humour, in an act of subversive frivolity.

Readings on concepts relating to 'social media pop cultures'

Abidin, C. (2021). From "[Networked publics](#)" to "[refracted publics](#)": [A companion framework for researching "below the radar" studies](#). *Social Media + Society*. DOI: 10.1177/2056305120984458.

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Miller, V. (2017). [Phatic culture and the status quo: Reconsidering the purpose of social media activism](#). *Convergence*, 23(3), 251–269. DOI: 10.1177/1354856515592512.

Glossary of key terms

In exploring social movements and social media, we consider several key concepts together. The list below is non-exhaustive but provides brief definitions of concepts that are essential for the shaping and evolution of discourses and concepts of social justice in social media pop cultures.



EMOJI/EMOTICONS:

Ubiquitous digital images that are used to signify and convey affects, emotions, and feelings, on digital devices and platforms. They are sometimes in the form of 'pictorial icons' created via an assortment of punctuation marks, letters, and numbers; 'pictograms' made available by various operating systems (e.g. iOS, Android); or 'stickers' on specific social media and messaging platforms (e.g. KakaoTalk, Line, WeChat).



INFLUENCERS:

Everyday, ordinary internet users who accumulate a relatively large following on blogs and social media through the textual and visual narration of their personal lives and lifestyles, engage with their following in digital and physical spaces, and monetise their following by integrating 'advertisements' into their blog or social media posts (Abidin, 2015). Influencers are both cultural objects and subjects of social media pop cultures simultaneously. They are objects in that their social media personae are the crystallized form of what publics like, believe, consume, and follow. They are also cultural subjects in that their social media activities affect and direct the public to a particular norm, practice, and interest.



INTERNET CELEBRITIES:

All media formats that attain prominence and popularity native to the internet. They are mainly known for their high visibility on the internet, across various social media platforms. Their celebrity status can be sustained or transient, depending on how their fame or infamy is received, watched, and acknowledged by social media users. (Abidin, 2018)



MEMES:

Units of cultural items that people can potentially imitate and spread on the internet, whether it be a content, a cultural form (genre), or a stance.



PLATFORMS:

Computing architectures where social networking services are provided, or the vernacular and discursive spaces that are shaped mostly around such architectures, uniquely identifiable with cultures and norms of interactions which are native to the platform service.



VIRAL/VIRALITY:

Media content's attribute that is widely shared, acknowledged, received, and spread through word-of-mouth among people on the internet, or a value system to measure such attributes of media texts.



SOCIAL MEDIA:

Internet-based services and sites designed to facilitate and monetise social interaction among the service users through text or audiovisual content that the users create and publish.



TIKTOK:

TikTok as a social media platform is one of many territories where social media pop cultures emerge and evolve. Among many social media, such as Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and so on, TikTok is a notable place where social media pop cultures develop in a unique way, in relation to its affordances, technological features, and user demographics. This short-form video app also consists of social media pop cultures, by introducing a new cultural grammar to advance cultures (e.g. meme templates, audio functions) and by leading its own vernacular culture within the platform space.



TRENDS:

A wealth of topics that are suggested on social media by algorithms, reflecting real-time results of collective attention, either in search or watch-time, given by users, or social media algorithms that create such topics.

Readings on concepts relating to ‘social media pop cultures’

- Abidin, C. (2015). [Communicative heart intimacies: Influencers and perceived interconnectedness](#). *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media & Technology*, 8. DOI n/a.
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REFLECTIONS

This resource is developed from TCRN's 4th event TikTok and Social Movements that took place in September 2021, which we invite you to peruse: <https://tiktokcultures.com/tiktok-and-social-movements/>. The authors of this resource designed the event as a critical forum to showcase emergent research on the potentials, promises, pitfalls, and parameters of various social movements specifically on TikTok. While the event was useful to explore the emerging cultures on the relatively new platform TikTok, we also felt an urgent need to expand the realm and scope of the forum to identify how social justice is understood, challenged, and achieved in the broader social media spaces and how the idea(s) of social justice constitute(s) and develop(s) social media pop cultures in novel, dogmatic, frivolous, and serious manners.

Our research journey through explorations of social justice in digital spaces was led by observations of the (in)visibility experienced by various minority groups, and their innovative mobilisations of social media pop cultures. For instance, social media platforms have served as a relatively safe and convenient locus where those who are marginalised in societies – like sexual minorities in less queer-friendly societies like South Korea (studied by Lee) or racial minorities in multicultural countries like Singapore (studied by Abidin) – can develop grassroots networks and resources and engage with others, even if it is ad hoc and virtual.

At the same time, such voices can be easily dismissed or their presence beings can be threatened by competing voices in the name of 'fairness' and 'morality', or simply for the purpose of 'fun' and 'pleasure', as seen in the uprisings of alt-right movements and emergence of toxic hate cultures on worldwide social media. Focusing on the various forms and aspects of movements in the era of social media, we use this section to reflect on how we can frame research projects on social justice issues that are pervasive on social media. This includes how people construct a civic imaginary of society; how a process of such construction is mediated from platforms to societies, from people to people, from culture to culture; and how this yields new iterations of 'social justice' as pursued through the language and vehicles of social media pop cultures. As such, we were prompted to reflect on the key themes, topics, and approaches covered in our event as well as the scholarship that we are pursuing at the TCRN.

TCRN PRIORITY THEMES

At the TikTok Cultures Research Network, our scholarship and research activities are guided by six priority themes. Through these, we offer our interest in current and future scholarly inquiries into how social justice can be interrogated in these spaces.



DIGITAL PRODUCTION & ECONOMIES

Making content on TikTok is made easy through the platform's wide array of video creation features, but turning such content into profitable streams and returns can be much more challenging. This research theme looks at the production cultures and economies of TikTok, from small businesses and influencer marketing, to the Creator Fund and incentive programs designed to support specific groups of users.

SCHOLARLY ANGLES INCLUDE:

- Which users do TikTok's Creator Fund and various platform partnerships prioritise?
- What values are embedded in TikTok's corporate ethos?
- How are value chains formed, and how does value flow in TikTok's network of users?



THE SUBALTERN & SUBCULTURES

TikTok is home to a kaleidoscope of communities from around the world who congregate in silos and form niches, but also connect with other groups through various practices. This research theme focuses on how subaltern cultures and subcultures come into being on TikTok, and critically investigates the dynamics of marginalised groups and peoples especially in the Global South.

SCHOLARLY ANGLES INCLUDE:

- Which groups of users are featured on TikTok's corporate campaigns, and what can be said about the over or under representation of specific groups?

- How are social movements structured on TikTok, and how are they mobilised in tandem with TikTok's features?
- How are social movements structured on TikTok, and how are they mobilised in tandem with TikTok's features?



RACE & ETHNICITY

TikTok creates opportunities for important dialogues about race and ethnicity to take place. However, it also has the potential to allow the festering of racial violence and harm through the use of stereotypical filters and trends that promote stereotypes, downplay platformed racism, or allow online abuse to flourish. This research theme explores the intersections of technology, race, and ethnicity to understand how these issues emerge and evolve on TikTok.

SCHOLARLY ANGLES INCLUDE:

- What markers do racial and ethnic groups use to make themselves legible to each other on TikTok?
- How has the hyper-visuality of TikTok impacted the ways we talk about race and ethnicity?
- Can filters and trends that depict ethnic groups in stereotypical ways be a space for productive conversation about platformed racism?



GENDER & SEXUALITY

TikTok is a space for identity discovery and negotiation, where groups can come together and share expressions and experiences of their gender and sexuality. This research theme seeks to understand how we present our gender identities, how we navigate relationships, and how sexuality is mediated on TikTok.

SCHOLARLY ANGLES INCLUDE:

- How has TikTok and its affordances facilitated the genesis of emergent, and often micro-minority, gender and sexuality identities?
- How has TikTok's localised approach to moderating LGBT-related hashtags in specific countries challenged the notion of online community formation?
- What does the rising popularity of 'TikTok' couples, especially same-sex couples, tell us about intimacy in digital spaces?



GOVERNANCE & POLITICS

Since its debut, TikTok has undergone widespread scrutiny regarding the optics and politics of governance and policies on the platform. This has included threats of firmer regulation, inquiries by governments, and even outright bans in some parts of the world. As a 'political football' being tossed back and forth in ideological debates, this research theme considers the history, evolution, and future of TikTok's political, platformed, lateral, and vernacular governance.

SCHOLARLY ANGLES INCLUDE:

- How have conversations about the geopolitics and ownership of TikTok impacted scholarly and vernacular perception of the platform?
- What do user folklore and concerns about shadowbanning tell us about the politics of visibility on the FYP?
- How do users police each other's practices on TikTok, and what circumvention strategies are used alongside grassroots understandings of the platform's algorithm?



METHODOLOGIES & PEDAGOGIES

An important starting point for anyone interested in doing TikTok research is to determine how best to approach the platform, given its innovative features and challenging backend interface. This research theme tackles practical questions of TikTok research by exploring and pioneering novel methods used to study TikTok developed by leading researchers, including many members of the TikTok Cultures Research Network.

SCHOLARLY ANGLES INCLUDE:

- How do we develop careful approaches to studying the lesser known and 'hidden' user groups, or minority user groups, or user groups engaging with sensitive issues on TikTok?
- How can we interrogate the textual, visual, and aural cues on TikTok in a holistic manner that prioritises context and nuance?
- What do approaches for studying TikTok tell us about the state of short video app cultures at large?

PART TWO



READINGS & RESOURCES

RESOURCE THEMES

In part two, we offer six themes for interrogating social justice through social media pop cultures, each recommending readings and resources in the categories of: Conceptual Readings, TikTok/and or Influencer Readings, Case Studies, and Multimedia Resources.

The themes are structured for educators and researchers to utilise various types of resources into their research and course syllabi, whether for theoretical development, contextual understandings of social media movements, case studies to explore cultural phenomena related to social media movements, including TikTok and social movements, or examples as springboards for research and class discussion. The resource is also intended for researchers and related stakeholders who seek a broad overview to understand the growing landscape of social media movement research. While the themes are not exhaustive, this first iteration scopes the current state of the field.





01 RACE & ETHNICITY

Social movements around race and ethnicity on social media have included cultural practices for Indigenous identities, individual and collective campaigns pursuing racial and ethnic justice, online hate against racial and ethnic minorities, and diasporic community building. In this theme, we curate readings and case studies in three subcategories: (a) First Nations & Indigenous communities; (b) People of Colour, including Black, Latin American & Asian communities; and (c) Diaspora & Migrant communities.

◆ **First Nations & Indigenous Communities**

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Carlson, B. (2013). [The 'new frontier': Emergent Indigenous identities and social media](#). In M. Harris, M. Nakata & B. Carlson (Eds.), ***The Politics of Identity: Emerging Indigeneity*** (pp. 147-168). Sydney: University of Technology Sydney E-Press. DOI: 10.5130/978-0-9872369-2-0.

Fredericks, B., Bradfield, A., Nguyen, J., & Ansell, S. (2021). [Disrupting the colonial algorithm: Indigenous Australia and social media](#). ***Media International Australia***. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X211038286.

Lupien, P. (2020). [Indigenous movements, collective Action, and social media: New opportunities or new threats? Social Media + Society](#). DOI: 10.1177/2056305120926487.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Carlson, B., & Frazer, R. (2021). [Fun.](#) In *Indigenous digital life* (pp. 121-139). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9783030847951.

Strangelove, M. (2010). [Women of the 'Tube.](#) In *Watching YouTube*, pp. 84-102. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. ISBN: 9781442641457.

CASE STUDIES

Carlson, B. (2016, October 17). [12 deadly Indigenous Australian social media users to follow.](#) *The Conversation*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

Cole, K. (2021, October 1). [How Indigenous creators are nurturing a space on TikTok to educate and entertain.](#) *PBS*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

Jaime, A. (2021, October 13). [6 Native TikTok creators to follow right now.](#) *Teen Vogue*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

Johnson, M. (2021, February 25). [How Indigenous social media influencers inspired podcast host on journey of self-discovery.](#) *CBC*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] DW News. (2021, April 24). [Meet Brazil's Indigenous influencers.](#) *DW News*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

[video] Watego, L. (2016, August 26). [Even the activist's gotta eat: Taking ownership, building platforms.](#) Research Online Videos. *YouTube*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

◆ Black, Latin American & Asian Communities

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Kuo, R. (2018). [Visible solidarities:# Asians4BlackLives and affective racial counterpublics. Studies of Transition States and Societies](#), 10(2), 40-54.

Mundt, M., Ross, K., & Burnett, C. M. (2018). [Scaling social movements through social media: The case of Black Lives Matter. Social Media + Society](#). DOI: 10.1177/2056305118807911.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Guo, L., & Lee, L. (2013). [The critique of YouTube-based vernacular discourse: A case study of YouTube's Asian community. Critical Studies in Media Communication](#), 30(5), 391-406. DOI: 10.1080/15295036.2012.755048

Lim, R. (2020). [Racial transmittances: Hemispheric viralities of anti-Asian racism and resistance in Mexico. Journal of Asian American Studies](#), 23(3), 441-457. DOI: 10.1353/jaas.2020.0034

Stevens, W. E. (2021). [Blackfishing on Instagram: Influencing and the commodification of Black urban aesthetics. Social Media + Society](#). DOI: 10.1177/20563051211038236

CASE STUDIES

Ferreira, J. (2020, September 18). [These Afro-Latinx beauty industry players are battling anti-blackness.](#) *Allure*. Last accessed: 15 January 2022.

Paul, K. (2020, June 11). ['Stop treating protests like Coachella': influencers criticized for capitalizing on movement.](#) *The Guardian*. Last accessed: 15 January 2022.

Rennex, M. (2021, January 27). [A bunch of influencers are getting dragged for their performative activism on Invasion day.](#) *Junkee*. Last accessed: 15 January 2022.

Shacknai, G. (2021, February 27). [12 Asian-American founders on why the beauty industry needs to take a stand against Asian hate.](#) *Forbes*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] CNN. (2021, February 03). [TikTok is home to the next generation of BLM activists.](#) *CNN*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

[podcast] Lee, G. (2019, April 26). [I got racially abused on a livestream.](#) *BBC OS*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

[video] Xiran Jay Zhao. (2021, March 22). [On anti-Asian hate crimes - And how you can help.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 16 December 2021.

◆ Diaspora & Migrant Communities

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Al-Rawi, A., & Fahmy, S. (2018). [Social media use in the diaspora: The case of Syrians in Italy.](#) In *Diaspora and media in Europe* (pp. 71–96). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9783319654485.

Lim, M. (2017). [Freedom to hate: social media, algorithmic enclaves, and the rise of tribal nationalism in Indonesia.](#) *Critical Asian Studies*, 49(3), 411–427. DOI: 10.1080/14672715.2017.1341188

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Cabalquinto, E. C., & Soriano, C. R. R. (2020). ['Hey, I like ur videos. Super relate!' Locating sisterhood in a postcolonial intimate public on YouTube.](#) *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(6), 892–907. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2020.1751864.

Khiun, L. K. (2014). [Rewind and recollect: Activating dormant memories and politics in Teresa Teng's music videos uploaded on YouTube.](#) *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 17(5), 503–515. 10.1177/1367877913505175.

Weimann, G., & Masri, N. (2021). [TikTok's Spiral of Antisemitism.](#) *Journalism and Media*, 2(4), 697–708. DOI: 10.3390/journalmedia2040041.

Zhang, L. T., & Zhao, S. (2020). [Diaspora micro-influencers and COVID-19 communication on social media: The case of Chinese-speaking YouTube vloggers.](#) *Multilingua*, 39(5), 553–563. DOI: 10.1515/multi-2020-0099.

CASE STUDIES

Asher, S. & Pandey, V. (2021, February 19). [**'Pawri girl': A five-second video brings India and Pakistan together.**](#) BBC. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

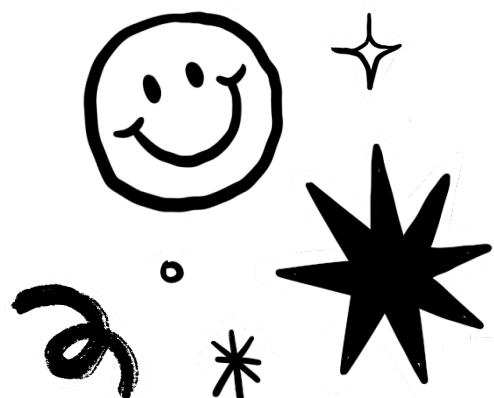
Ray, N. (2020, June 18). [**The Diaspora on Brown TikTok. The Juggernaut.**](#) Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

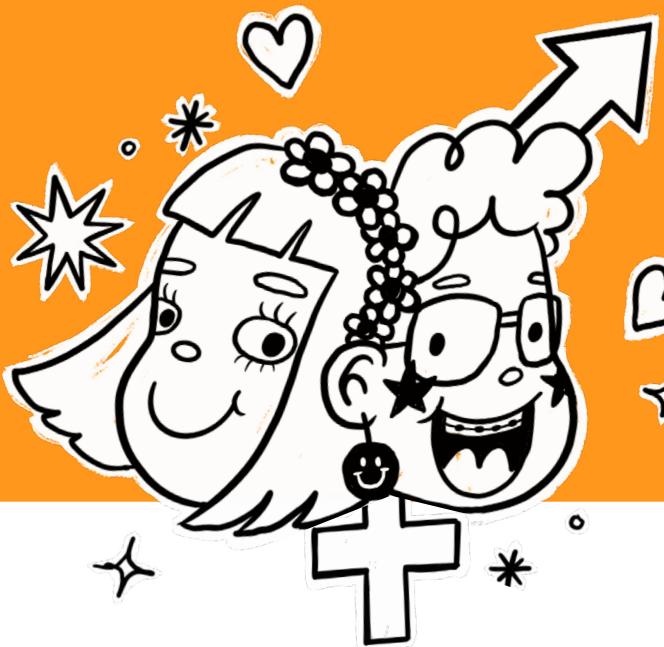
Wong, T. (2021, October 20). [**China: The patriotic 'ziganwu' bloggers who attack the West.**](#) BBC. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Global News. (2021, February 3). [**Anti-Semitic video posted then deleted online stirs anger.**](#) Global News. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

[video] Utrecht University Graduate Gender Programme. (2021, September 2). [**Earvin Cabalquinto - NOISE - Locked out / locked in? Examining gendered im-mobility in the digital.**](#) YouTube. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.





02 GENDER & SEXUALITY

Gender and sexual inequality is widely discussed in social media, as evidenced in the #MeToo movements across various platforms and the increasing presence of LGBTQIA+ voices. While feminism and queer movements are crucial representations from the grassroots, they have also encountered backlash and opposition, such as from men's rights activism and homophobia. Online platforms like Reddit and 4chan.org have also been known to house the manosphere where misogynist and homophobic discourses often proliferate. In this theme, we curate readings and case studies in three subcategories: (a) Digital feminism; (b) Online misogyny; and (c) LGBTQIA+ communities.

◆ Digital Feminism

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Chen, G. M., Pain, P., & Barner, B. (2018). ["Hashtag Feminism": Activism or Slacktivism?](#). In D. Harp, J. Loke and I. Bachmann (Eds.) **Feminist approaches to media theory and research** (pp. 197-218). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9783319908380.

Mendes, K., Ringrose, J., & Keller, J. (2018). [# MeToo and the promise and pitfalls of challenging rape culture through digital feminist activism](#). *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 25(2), 236-246. DOI: 10.1177/1350506818765318.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Askanius, T. (2021). [Women in the Nordic Resistance Movement and their online media practices: between internalised misogyny and “embedded feminism”.](#) *Feminist Media Studies*, 1–18. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2021.1916772.

Hirji, F. (2021). [Claiming our space: Muslim women, activism, and social media.](#) *Islamophobia Studies Journal*, 6(1), 78–92. DOI: 10.13169/islastudj.6.1.0078.

Kennedy, M. (2020). ['If the rise of the TikTok dance and e-girl aesthetic has taught us anything, it's that teenage girls rule the internet right now': TikTok celebrity, girls and the Coronavirus crisis.](#) *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23(6), 1069–1076. DOI: 10.1177/1367549420945341.

Sued, G. E., Castillo-González, M. C., Pedraza, C., Flores-Márquez, D., Álamo, S., Ortiz, M., Lugo, N., & Arroyo, R. E. (2021). [Vernacular visibility and algorithmic resistance in the public expression of Latin American feminism.](#) *Media International Australia*. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X211067571.

CASE STUDIES

Higgins, B. (2021, April 26). [Digital feminism: How women are re-defining the movement.](#) *Medium*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

Lee, J. (2021, August 13). [#PopVultures Podcast: Kris Wu implodes and the #MeToo movement in Chinese entertainment.](#) *The Straits Times*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

Zabludovsky, K. (2021, February 3). [Mexican influencers are getting called out for promoting abuse. Has the country's #MeToo movement finally turned a corner?](#) *BuzzFeed*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[podcast] Development Policy Centre. (2018). [Navigating feminism and amplifying women’s voices in Vanuatu: in conversation with Yasmine Bjornum.](#) *SoundCloud*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

[video] Kat Blaque. (2016, January 10). [WHAT IS GENDER??](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

◆ Online misogyny

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Banet-Weiser, S., & Miltner, K. M. (2016). [**#MasculinitySoFragile: Culture, structure, and networked misogyny**](#). *Feminist Media Studies*, 16(1), 171–174. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2016.1120490.

Farrell, T., Fernandez, M., Novotny, J., & Alani, H. (2019, June). [**Exploring misogyny across the manosphere in reddit**](#). In *Proceedings of the 10th ACM Conference on Web Science* (pp. 87–96). DOI: 10.1145/3292522.3326045.

Marwick, A. E. (2021). [**Morally motivated networked harassment as normative reinforcement**](#). *Social Media + Society*. 10.1177/20563051211021378.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Incubate, H. Y. I., & Males, M. (2022). [**New media masculinities**](#). In Pompper, D. (Ed.) *Rhetoric of masculinity: Male body Image, media, and gender role stress/conflict* (pp. 287–306). Lanham: Lexington Books. ISBN: 9781793626882.

Lewis, R., Marwick, A. E., & Partin, W. C. (2021). [**"We dissect stupidity and respond to it": Response videos and networked harassment on YouTube**](#). *American Behavioral Scientist*, 65(5), 735–756. DOI: 10.1177/0002764221989781.

Song, H. (2018). [**The making of microcelebrity: AfreecaTV and the younger generation in neoliberal South Korea**](#). *Social Media + Society*, 4(4). DOI: 10.1177/205630518814906.

Yelin, H. (2020). [**The gendered authenticity contract: Exposure without insulation in the YouTuber memoirs of Zoella, iJustine and JennxPenn**](#). In *Celebrity Memoir* (pp. 153–201). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9783030446215.

CASE STUDIES

Adams, E. (2021, September 1). [Twitch streamers participate in #ADayOffTwitch boycott to protest rise of 'hate raids'.](#) *USA Today*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

Katzowitz, J. (2019, July 26). [How the women of Twitch put up with the bullsh*t.](#) *Daily Dot*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Channel 4 News. (2013, July 30). [Is the internet a haven for misogyny?](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

[video] WION. (2021, August 13). [Gravitas: Anti-feminism backlash in South Korea.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 17 December 2021.



◆ LGBTQIA+ communities

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Cho, A. (2018). [Default publicness: Queer youth of color, social media, and being outed by the machine.](#) *New Media & Society*, 20(9), 3183–3200. DOI: 10.1177/1461444817744784.

Hanckel, B., Vivienne, S., Byron, P., Robards, B., & Churchill, B. (2019). ['That's not necessarily for them': LGBTIQ+ young people, social media platform affordances and identity curation.](#) *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(8), 1261-1278. DOI: 10.1177/0163443719846612.

Cooper, M., & Dzara, K. (2010). [The Facebook revolution: LGBT identity and activism.](#) In *LGBT Identity and Online New Media*. In Pullen, C. & Cooper, M. (Eds.) *LGBT Identity and Online New Media* (pp. 114–126). New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9780203855430.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Abidin, C. & Cover, R. (2018). [Gay, famous and working hard on YouTube: Influencers, queer microcelebrity publics and discursive activism.](#) In Aggleton, P., Cover, R., Leahy, D., Marshall, D., & Rasmussen, M. (Eds.) *Youth, sexuality and sexual citizenship* (pp. 217-231). New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9781351214742.

Lee, J. (2021). ["I don't understand what you're saying now, but you are cute, I love you": Global communication between South Korean gay male YouTubers and fans from overseas.](#) *Feminist Media Studies*, 21(6), 1044-1049. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2021.1959372.

Lovelock, M. (2017). ['Is every YouTuber going to make a coming out video eventually?': YouTube celebrity video bloggers and lesbian and gay identity.](#) *Celebrity studies*, 8(1), 87-103. DOI: 10.1080/19392397.2016.1214608.

Simpson, E., & Semaan, B. (2021). [For You, or For "You"? Everyday LGBTQ+ Encounters with TikTok.](#) *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 4(CSCW3), 1-34. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1145/3432951>.

CASE STUDIES

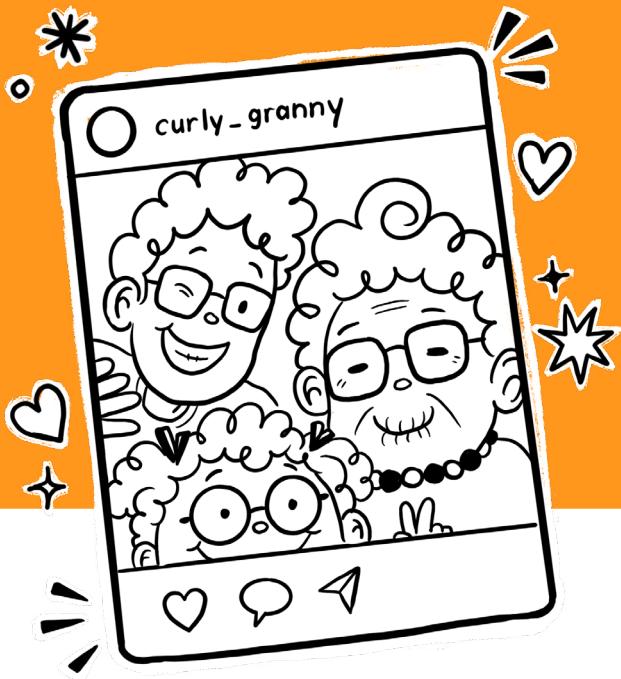
Eyck, M. T. (2020, January 23). [43 LGBTQ Influencers that are Changing the Internet. Every Queer.](#) Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

Jennings, R. (2021, August 3). [How TikTok became a haven for queer and questioning kids. Vox.](#) Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Academic Medical Education. (2021, March 12). [Social media platforms for LGBT inclusion | Laurindo Garcia. YouTube.](#) Last accessed: 17 December 2021.

[video] NowThisNews. (2020, September 08). [Why Influencers Need to Advocate for BIPOC & LGBTQIA+ Communities, With Amber Whittington | NowThis. YouTube.](#) Last accessed: 17 December 2021.



03 AGE & GENERATIONS

Social media spaces have long served as a playground for youths. Creative social media skillsets can enable young people to advocate for their beliefs and values, and to organise their politics and movements, as seen in cultural trends like #OkBoomer phenomenon. In a similar vein, users across the generations, including the very young and the very old, can also mobilise representations of their cultures in creative ways. In this theme, we curate readings and case studies in three subcategories: (a) Children's rights; (b) Youth politics; and (c) Eldery on social media.

◆ Children's rights

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Chassiakos, Y. L. R., Radesky, J., Christakis, D., Moreno, M. A., & Cross, C. (2016). [Children and adolescents and digital media](#). *Pediatrics*, 138(5). DOI: 10.1542/peds.2016-2593.

Livingstone, S. (2006). [Children's privacy online: Experimenting with boundaries within and beyond the family](#). In R. Kraut, M. Brynin and S. Kiesler (Eds.) *Computers, phones, and the internet: Domesticating information technology* (pp. 128–44). Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780195312805.

Livingstone, S., Lemish, D., Lim, S. S., Bulger, M., Cabello, P., Claro, M., ... & Wei, B. (2017). [Global perspectives on children's digital opportunities: An emerging research and policy agenda](#). *Pediatrics*, 140(Supplement 2), S137-S141. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2016-1758S.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Blum-Ross, A., & Livingstone, S. (2017). ["Sharenting," parent blogging, and the boundaries of the digital self.](#) *Popular Communication*, 15(2), 110–125. DOI: 10.1080/15405702.2016.1223300.

Ruiz-Gomez, A., Leaver, T., & Abidin, C. (2022). [Playing YouTube: How the Nancy YouTuber doll and app position children as aspiring YouTube influencers.](#) *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 25(2), 121–140. DOI: 10.1177/13678779211063222.

Tur-Viñes V, Nuñez-Gómez, P. and González-Río, M. J. (2018) [Kid influencers on YouTube: A space for responsibility.](#) Revista Latina de Comunicación Social 73: 1211–1230. DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-2018-1303en.

CASE STUDIES

Clark, L. (2021, June 9). [A storm is brewing over children's data privacy rights on social media.](#) *Tech Monitor*. Last accessed: 17 January 2022.

Cordeiro, V. C. (2021, January 26). [Children's rights and digital technologies: Children's privacy in the age of social media – The perils of "Sharenting".](#) *Humanium*. Last accessed: 17 January 2022.

Leaver, T. & Abidin, C. (2017, May 2). [When exploiting kids for cash goes wrong on YouTube: the lessons of DaddyOFive.](#) *The Conversation*. Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] CBS Morning. (2019, August 23). [Kid influencers: Few rules, big money | Full Documentary.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 17 January 2022.

[video] Real Stories. (2017, December 22). [Mini Me Me Me: Kids Who Want It All \(Celebrity Children Documentary\) | Real Stories.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 17 January 2022.

◆ Youth politics

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Collin, P. (2015). [Introduction: Young people, participation and digital media.](#) In *Young citizens and political participation in a digital society: Addressing the democratic disconnect* (pp.1-17). New York: Springer. ISBN: 9781137348838.

Östman, J. (2012). [Information, expression, participation: How involvement in user-generated content relates to democratic engagement among young people.](#) *New Media & Society*, 14(6), 1004-1021. DOI: 10.1177/1461444812438212

Pilkington, H., & Pollock, G. (2015). ['Politics are bollocks': Youth, politics and activism in contemporary Europe.](#) *The Sociological Review*, 63, 1-35. DOI: 10.1111/1467-954X.12260.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Nisa, E. F. (2018). [Creative and lucrative Da'wa: The visual culture of Instagram amongst female Muslim youth in Indonesia.](#) *Asiascape: Digital Asia*, 5(1-2), 68-99. DOI: 10.1163/22142312-12340085.

Liew, K. K., & Abidin, C. (2019). ["Si Geena" \(Brat\): Un-social digital juveniles' episodic resistance in Singapore.](#) *Asiascape: Digital Asia*, 7(1-2), 122-144. DOI: 10.1163/22142312-12340118.

Literat, I., Abdelbagi, A., Law, N.Y.L., Cheung, M. Y-Y., & Tang, R. (2021). [Likes, sarcasm and politics: Youth responses to a platform-initiated media literacy campaign on social media.](#) *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review*. DOI: 10.37016/mr-2020-67.

Vickery, J. R. (2020, October 28-31). [The memeification of #schoolshootings in the U.S.: Youth, TikTok, and the playful mediated body.](#) Paper presented at Internet Research 21: The 21st Annual Meeting of the Association of Internet Researchers. Online. Retrieved from <http://spir.aoir.org>.

CASE STUDIES

Citarella, J. (2020, September 12). [Marxist memes for TikTok teens: can the internet radicalize teenagers for the left? The Guardian.](#)

Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Jalli, N. (2021, February 24). [How TikTok can be the new platform for political activism. The Conversation.](#) Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

Jerald, M. (2021). [Instagram activism: Using slideshows to promote social justice. Action Teaching.](#) Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

Price, H. (2019, November 7). [TikTok activism: 'We're changing the world in 15 seconds'. BBC.](#) Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] ABC News. (2019, September 19). [Students are fighting climate change, one TikTok video at a time | ABC News. YouTube.](#)

Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

[video] Geneva Peace Week. (2020, November 2). [Youth engagement in politics in the hashtag age. YouTube.](#) Last accessed: 18 January 2022.



◆ Elderly on social media

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

McCosker, A., Critchley, C., Walshe, J., Tucker, J., & Suchowerska, R. (2021). [Accounting for diversity in older adults' digital inclusion and literacy: The impact of a national intervention.](#) *Ageing and Society*, 1-21. DOI: 10.1017/S0144686X21001550.

Prensky, M. (2001). [Digital natives, digital immigrants part 2: Do they really think differently?](#) *On the Horizon*. DOI: 10.1108/10748120110424843.

Quan-Haase, A., Martin, K., & Schreurs, K. (2016). [Interviews with digital seniors: ICT use in the context of everyday life.](#) *Information, Communication & Society*, 19(5), 691-707. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2016.1140217.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Bossio, D., & McCosker, A. (2021). [Reluctant selfies: older people, social media sharing and digital inclusion.](#) *Continuum*, 1-14. DOI: 10.1080/10304312.2021.1937941.

Farinosi, M., & Fortunati, L. (2020, July). [Young and elderly fashion influencers.](#) In Gao, Q. and Zhou, J. (Eds). *International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 42-57). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9783030502317.

Moon, J., & Abidin, C. (2020). [Online ajumma: Self-presentations of contemporary elderly women via digital media in Korea.](#) In K. Warfield, C. Abidin & C. Cambre (Eds.) *Mediated Interfaces: The Body on Social Media* (pp. 175-187). New York: Bloomsbury. ISBN: 9781501356193.

CASE STUDIES

- Abidin, C. (2018, February 7). [Elderly influencers in East Asia. Cyborgology. The Society Pages.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.\
- Pires, C. (2018, August 5). ['This is what 70 looks like': the new generation of beauty influencers. The Guardian.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.
- Veresiu, E. (2021, April 19). [The #advancedstyle movement celebrates and empowers stylish older women. The Conversation.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.
- Yoon, H. (2021, June 1). [In Korea, you don't have to explain TikTok to your grandma. The New York Times.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

- [video] CNA Insider. (2018, August 3). [8 Old Folks Learn To Take On Social Media For St John's Home | Don't Forget Me | CNA Insider. YouTube.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.
- [video] The Telegraph. (2019, July 6). [We're the #INSTAGRANs – the over-50s influencers defying stereotypes. YouTube.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

04 HEALTH & WELLBEING



The spreadability and easy access of social media content allows people to share and follow health and wellbeing-related information and lifestyles. People with disabilities also use social media to challenge social perception of 'normative' depictions of health and educate the public about physical diversity. Influencers often serve as lifestyle role-models by sharing their tips for wellbeing and aspiring others. While such health and wellbeing information spreads across social media, it is not always scientifically accurate, and can also result in disinformation movements like anti-vax protests and the spread of pro-ana as a consequence of beauty-obsessed lifestyle trends. In this theme, we curate readings and case studies in three subcategories: (a) Disability & Ableism; (b) Wellness & Self-care; and (c) Health information & Misinformation.

◆ **Disability & Ableism**

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Ellis, K., & Goggin, G. (2015). [Disability media participation: Opportunities, obstacles and politics](#). *Media International Australia*, 154(1), 78-88. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X1515400111.

Ginsburg, F. (2020). [Disability in the digital age](#). In Horst, H. & Miller, D. (Eds), *Digital anthropology* (pp. 101-126). New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9781003085201.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Cocq, C., & Ljuslinder, K. (2020). [Self-representations on social media. Reproducing and challenging discourses on disability.](#) *Alter*, 14(2), 71-84. DOI: 10.1016/j.alter.2020.02.001.

Ellis, K. (2016). [Digital disability media disclosure: The business of blogging and web series diversity.](#) In *Disability media work* (pp. 91-110). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Goggin, G., & Ellis, K. (2020). [Privacy and digital data of children with disabilities: scenes from social media sharing.](#) *Media and Communication*, 8(4), 218-228. DOI: 10.17645/mac.v8i4.3350.

Ineland, J., Gelfgren, S., & Cocq, C. (2019). [Negotiating authority: Disability, interactions and power relations on twitter.](#) *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 21(1), 238-249. DOI: 10.16993/sjdr.591.

CASE STUDIES

Ashley, B. (2021, July 23). [Is the algorithm ableist? Adaptive brands say Facebook and Google have a problem.](#) *Vogue Business*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Robertson, A. (2019, December 2). [TikTok prevented disabled users' videos from showing up in feeds.](#) *The Verge*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Casey, C. (2020, September 14). [Is the social media generation transforming disability representation?](#) *Forbes*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] BBC News. (2021, August 5). [Chronic illness influencers accused of faking it - BBC News.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

[video] Kellgren-Fozard, J. (2021, April 3). [I was misdiagnosed \[CC\].](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

◆ Wellness & Self-care

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Gill, R., & Elias, A. S. (2014). '[Awaken your incredible': Love your body discourses and postfeminist contradictions.](#) *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics*, 10(2), 179–188. DOI: 10.1386/macp.10.2.179_1.

McGee, M. (2012). [From makeover media to remaking culture: Four directions for the critical study of self-help culture.](#) *Sociology Compass*, 6(9), 685–693. DOI: 10.1111/j.1751-9020.2012.00485.x.

O'Neill, R. (2020). [Pursuing "wellness": Considerations for Media Studies.](#) *Television & New Media*, 21(6), 628–634. DOI: 10.1177/1527476420919703

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Herrick, S. S., Hallward, L., & Duncan, L. R. (2021). '[This is just how I cope": An inductive thematic analysis of eating disorder recovery content created and shared on TikTok using #EDrecovery.](#) *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 54(4), 516–526. DOI: 10.1002/eat.23463.

Limatius, H. (2020). '[I think she's truly beautiful': Celebrity, gender and body positivity in plus-size fashion blogs.](#) *Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies*, 17(2), 372–392.

Mondé, G. C. (2018). [#BlackDontCrack: A content analysis of the aging Black woman in social media.](#) *Feminist Media Studies*, 18(1), 47–60. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2018.1409972.

Reade, J. (2021). [Keeping it raw on the 'gram: Authenticity, relatability and digital intimacy in fitness cultures on Instagram.](#) *New Media & Society*, 23(3), 535–553. DOI: 10.1177/1461444819891699.

CASE STUDIES

Baker, S. A., & Rojek, C. (2020, February 20). [The online wellness industry: why it's so difficult to regulate.](#) *The Conversation*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Hobbs, T., Barry, R., & Koh, Y. (2021, December 17). ['The Corpse Bride Diet': How TikTok inundates teens with eating-disorder videos.](#) *Wall Street Journal*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Jennings, R. (2021, January 13). [Body positivity on Instagram and TikTok is a paradox.](#) *Vox*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Khandelwal, S. (2021, February 5). [12 personalities you need to follow to bring body positivity and self-love to your Instagram feed.](#) *Vogue India*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] BBC News. (2020, July 7). [Body positivity movement: 'Why is my body not important?' - BBC News.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

[video] Berkowitz, B. & Linendoll, W. (2021, July 2). [This influencer is changing the face of social media.](#) *Good Morning America*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

[video] TEDx Talks (2019, December 10). [Our Body Image and Social Media: Live Life Unfiltered | Keisha & Teagan Simpson Simpson | TEDxOttawa.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

◆ Health information & Misinformation

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Evers, C. W., Albury, K., Byron, P., & Crawford, K. (2013). [Young people, social media, social network sites and sexual health communication in Australia: "This is funny, you should watch it".](#) *International Journal of Communication*, 7, 18. DOI n/a.

Lupton, D. (2022). [Digital Health](#). In Monaghan, L. & Gabe J., (Eds.) *Key concepts in medical sociology* (3rd ed.) (pp. 241–246). ISBN: 9781526465887.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Abidin, C., Lee, J., Barbetta, T., & Miao, W. S. (2021). [Influencers and COVID-19: Reviewing key issues in press coverage across Australia, China, Japan, and South Korea. Media International Australia](#), 178(1), 114–135. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X20959838.

Baker, S. A. (2022). [Alt. Health influencers: How wellness culture and web culture have been weaponised to promote conspiracy theories and far-right extremism during the COVID-19 pandemic. European Journal of Cultural Studies](#), 25(1), 3–24. DOI: 10.1177/13675494211062623.

Basch, C. H., Mohlman, J., Fera, J., Tang, H., Pellicane, A., & Basch, C. E. (2021). [Community mitigation of COVID-19 and portrayal of testing on TikTok: Descriptive study. JMIR public health and surveillance](#), 7(6), e29528. DOI: 10.2196/29528.

Hendry, N. A., Hartung, C., & Welch, R. (2021). [Health education, social media, and tensions of authenticity in the 'influencer pedagogy' of health influencer Ashy Bines. Learning, Media and Technology](#), 1-13. DOI: 10.1080/17439884.2021.2006691.

Li, Y., Guan, M., Hammond, P., & Berrey, L. E. (2021). [Communicating COVID-19 information on TikTok: A content analysis of TikTok videos from official accounts featured in the COVID-19 information hub. Health education research](#), 36(3), 261–271. DOI: 10.1093/her/cyab010.

CASE STUDIES

Maloy, A. F. & Vynck, G. D. (2021, September 12). [How wellness influencers are fueling the anti-vaccine movement.](#) *Washington Post*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Michael, E. (2021, January 29). [TikTok docs use app to provide reliable medical information.](#) *Healio*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Taylor, L. (2021, August 1). [To fight vaccine lies, authorities recruit an 'Influencer Army'.](#) *The New York Times*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Bloomberg Technology (2021, April 2). [Covid-19 Vaccine Misinformation Spread on Social Media.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

[video] TikTok Cultures Research Network. (2021, March 29). [TikTok & Youth Cultures in the Age of COVID-19.](#) *TikTok Cultures Research Network*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.



05 SUBALTERN & SUBCULTURES

Users on social media develop subcultural communities and practices, reflecting their cultural tastes, identities, beliefs, and regional characteristics. Often, these vernacular cultures preserve unique characteristics that are distinctive to the mainstream, in terms of practices, subjects, themes, languages, and also norms, values, and mores.

These reflect how social media are used to uphold cultural diversity, counteract the mainstream cultures and values, and protect regional values, while also holding potential to advocate for socially undesirable beliefs, such as white supremacy. In this theme, we curate readings and case studies in three subcategories: (a) Online fandom; (b) Consumption & Consumerism; and (c) Regional cultures.

◆ **Online fandom**

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Bennett, L. (2012). [Fan activism for social mobilization: A critical review of the literature](#). *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 10. DOI: 10.3983/twc.2012.0346.

Evans, A., & Stasi, M. (2014). [Desperately seeking methods: new directions in fan studies research](#). *Participations*, 11(2), 4-23. DOI n/a.

Jenkins, H. (2014). [Rethinking 'rethinking convergence/culture'](#). *Cultural Studies*, 28(2), 267-297. DOI: 10.1080/09502386.2013.801579.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Jenkins, H. (2014). [Fan activism as participatory politics: The case of the Harry Potter alliance.](#) In Ratto, M. & Boler, M. (Eds.) *DIY Citizenship: Critical making and social media* (pp. 65–73). Cambridge: MIT Press. ISBN: 9780262525527.

Maher, T. V. (2020). [Fans and Fan Activism.](#) In Rohlinger, D. A. & Sobieraj, S. (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Sociology and Digital Media.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197510636.013.36.

Reinhard, C. D., Stanley, D., & Howell, L. (2021). [Fans of Q: The stakes of QAnon's functioning as political fandom.](#) *American Behavioral Scientist.* DOI: 10.1177/00027642211042294

CASE STUDIES

Abidin, C. & Baudinette, T. (2020, July 1). [The civic hijinks of K-pop's super fans.](#) *Data & Society.* DOI n/a.

Spanos, B. (2021, February 8). [#FreeBritney: Understanding the fan-led Britney Spears movement.](#) *Rolling Stone.* Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Vyse, G. (2020, March 3). [Why these Harry Potter fans are standing with the LGBTQ community against a J.K. Rowling tweet.](#) *Washington Post.* Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Asian Media and Cultural Studies Network. (2020, September 3). [K-pop fandom, race and activism: Educating from within: Fan-led Education and Activism in BTS Fandom.](#) *YouTube.* Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

[video] South China Morning Post. (2020, June 22). [K-pop fans and TikTok teens troll Trump with fake registrations for first campaign rally in months.](#) *YouTube.* Last accessed: 18 January 2022.

◆ Consumption & Consumerism

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Health, J. (2001). [The structure of hip consumerism. Philosophy & Social Criticism](#), 27(6), 1–17. DOI: 10.1177/019145370102700601.

Tatarchevskiy, T. (2011). [The ‘popular’ culture of internet activism. New Media & Society](#), 13(2), 297–313. DOI: 10.1177/1461444810372785

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Lee, J., & Abidin, C. (2021). [Backdoor advertising scandals, Yingyeo culture, and cancel culture among YouTube Influencers in South Korea. New Media & Society](#). DOI: 10.1177/14614448211061829.

Legocki, K. V., Walker, K. L., & Kiesler, T. (2020). [Sound and fury: Digital vigilantism as a form of consumer voice. Journal of Public Policy & Marketing](#), 39(2), 169–187. DOI: 10.1177/0743915620902403.

Schmitt, B., Brakus, J. J., & Biraglia, A. (2021). [Consumption ideology. Journal of Consumer Research](#). DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucab044

Treré, E., & Yu, Z. (2021). [The evolution and power of online consumer activism: Illustrating the hybrid dynamics of “Consumer Video Activism” in China through two case studies. Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media](#), 1–25. DOI: 10.1080/08838151.2021.1965143.

CASE STUDIES

Bonyhady, N. (2022, January 30). [‘TikTok is basically in control’: How clothing ‘hauls’ run teen fashion. Sydney Morning Herald](#). Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Guynn, J. (2021, September 21). [Would you take a Facebook or Instagram break? Why civil rights groups want you to log out. USA Today](#). Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Lad, M. (2020, November 26). [Boycott culture: How brands tackle aggressive social media dissent. Campaignindia](#). Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Al Jazeera English. (2021, October 15). [Is the activist economy good for social change? | The Stream. YouTube](#). Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

[video] BBC. (2022, February 10). [How 'buy nothing' social media groups help off set code of living crisis - BBC News. YouTube](#). Last accessed: 17 March 2022.

[video] CNBC. (2020, August 5). [Brand boycott: What's the future of ads on social? | CNBC Reports. YouTube](#). Last accessed: 20 January 2022.



❖ Regional cultures

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Chenou, J.-M., & Cepeda-Másmela, C. (2019). [**#NiUnaMenos: Data activism from the Global South.**](#) *Television & New Media*, 20(4), 396–411. DOI: 10.1177/1527476419828995.

Postill, J. (2018). [**Populism and social media: A global perspective.**](#) *Media, Culture & Society*, 40(5), 754–765. DOI: 10.1177/0163443718772186.

Wu, A. X., & Taneja, H. (2016). [**Reimagining internet geographies: A user-centric ethnological mapping of the world wide web.**](#) *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 21(3), 230–246. DOI: 10.1111/jcc4.12157

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Verma, T. (2021). [**Cultural cringe: How caste and class affect the idea of culture in social media.**](#) *Feminist Media Studies*, 21(1), 159–161. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2021.1864879.

Van Eldik, A. K., Kneer, J., Lutkenhaus, R. O., & Jansz, J. (2019). [**Urban influencers: An analysis of urban identity in YouTube content of local social media influencers in a super-diverse city.**](#) *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1–17. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02876.

Vijay, D., & Gekker, A. (2021). [**Playing politics: How Sabarimala played out on TikTok.**](#) *American Behavioral Scientist*, 65(5), 712–734. DOI: 10.1177/0002764221989769.

CASE STUDIES

Gallardo, C. (2021, June 29). [How one Toronto foodie is using TikTok to highlight diverse local eats.](#) *Toronto Star*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Hollander, K. (2021, November 12). [At this Latin American fiesta, Afro-Colombian culture thrives.](#) *Dazed*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Trombly, M. (2017, July 26). [Local 'resistance' groups on the rise: a field guide.](#) *Cincinnati*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] Bucay, M. (2021). [Bankrolled](#). Available on Netflix.

[video] Korea Now. (2020, August 11). [Famous Mukbang YouTubers under fire for deceiving viewers with advertisement.](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.



06 POLiTICS & MOVEMENTS

As social media have often been equated with public spheres, various issues around electoral politics and civic movements are widely discussed and evolving. While ordinary citizens have long been known to take arms to social media to speak out on their political beliefs or commentate on political conflicts, more recently, politicians have also begun to adopt influencer praxis by using social media for self-branding, drum up electoral support, and promote various campaigns. Political movements can sometimes be elevated to discourse on a more 'global' level, in the form of transnational movements or internet wars around geographical politics. In this theme, we curate readings and case studies in three subcategories: (a) Nationhood & Identity; (b) Transnational movements; and (c) War & Conflict.

◆ Nationhood & Civic Engagement

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Edensor, T., & Sumartojo, S. (2018). [Geographies of everyday nationhood: experiencing multiculturalism in Melbourne](#). *Nations and Nationalism*, 24(3), 553-578. DOI: 10.1111/nana.12421.

Gil de Zúñiga, H., Jung, N., & Valenzuela, S. (2012). [Social media use for news and individuals' social capital, civic engagement and political participation](#). *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 319-336. DOI: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01574.x.

Tufekci, Z. (2014). [Social movements and governments in the digital age: Evaluating a complex landscape](#). *Journal of International Affairs*, 1-18. DOI n/a.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Aziz, F. (2017). [Performing citizenship: Freedom march selfies by Pakistani instagrammers](#). In Kuntsman, A. (Ed). *Selfie Citizenship* (pp. 21-28). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9783319452708.

Cervi, L., & Marín-Lladó, C. (2021). [What are political parties doing on TikTok? The Spanish case](#). *Profesional de la información*, 30(4). DOI: 10.3145/epi.2021.jul.03.

Chen, X., Kaye, D.B.V., & Zeng, J. (2021). [#PositiveEnergy Douyin: Constructing “playful patriotism” in a Chinese short-video application](#). *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 14(1) 97-117. DOI: 10.1080/17544750.2020.1761848.

Treré, E. (2015). [Reclaiming, proclaiming, and maintaining collective identity in the #YoSoy132 movement in Mexico: An examination of digital frontstage and backstage activism through social media and instant messaging platforms](#). *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8), 901-915. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043744.

CASE STUDIES

Elemia, C. (2021, February 27). [Stars, influencers get paid to boost Duterte propaganda, fake news](#). *Rappler*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Prater, E. (2021, March 13). [Biden is using TikTok to fight back against Russia’s reported use of influencers to spread propaganda](#). *Fortune*. Last accessed: 17 March 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

Australian Institute of International Affairs (2020, May 7). [China’s Digital Nationalism, Hong Kong protests, and the Challenge of COVID](#): Dr Florian Schneider. *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

BBC. (2020, November 3). [US Election: Do celebrities influence your vote?](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

CBC News: The national. (2019, October 19). [Can influencers get young people to vote?](#) *YouTube*. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

◆ Transnational movements

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Bruns, A., Highfield, T., & Burgess, J. (2013). [The Arab Spring and social media audiences: English and Arabic Twitter users and their networks.](#) *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(7), 871-898. DOI: 10.1177/0002764213479374.

Gerbaudo, P., & Treré, E. (2015). [In search of the 'we' of social media activism: introduction to the special issue on social media and protest identities.](#) *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8), 865-871. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043319.

Sobré-Denton, M. (2016). [Virtual intercultural bridework: Social media, virtual cosmopolitanism, and activist community-building.](#) *New Media & Society*, 18(8), 1715–1731. DOI: 10.1177/1461444814567988.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Gerbaudo, P. (2015). [Protest avatars as memetic signifiers: political profile pictures and the construction of collective identity on social media in the 2011 protest wave.](#) *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8), 916-929. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043316.

Hurley, Z. (2022). [Middle Eastern women influencers' interdependent/independent subjectification on TikTok: Feminist postdigital transnational inquiry.](#) *Information, Communication & Society*, 1-18. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2022.2044500.

Schaffar, W., & Praphakorn, W. (2021). [The #MilkTeaAlliance: A New Transnational Pro-Democracy Movement Against Chinese-Centered Globalization?](#) *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 14(1), 5-36. DOI: 10.14764/10.ASEAS-0052.

CASE STUDIES

Lehnen, C. (2021, August 24). [Afghan influencers living in fear – even in exile. DW.](#) Last accessed: 27 January 2022.

Strangio, S. (2020, October 22). [Thai protests inspire online calls for change next door in Laos. The Diplomat.](#) Last accessed: 27 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] UChicago Educator Outreach. (2020, November 20). [Networked Protests and Democracy in the 21st Century - Zeynep Tufekci. YouTube.](#) Last accessed: 20 January 2022.



❖ War & Conflict

CONCEPTUAL READINGS

Aro, J. (2016). [The cyberspace war: Propaganda and trolling as warfare tools.](#) *European View*, 15(1), 121–132. DOI: 10.1007/s12290-016-0395-5.

Lev-On, A. (2018). [The anti-social network? Framing social media in wartime.](#) *Social Media + Society*. DOI: 10.1177/2056305118800311.

Shim, D., & Stengel, F. A. (2017). [Social media, gender and the mediatization of war: Exploring the German armed forces' visual representation of the Afghanistan operation on Facebook.](#) *Global Discourse*, 7(2-3), 330–347. DOI: 10.1080/23269995.2017.1337982.

INFLUENCER AND/OR TIKTOK READINGS

Davidjants, J., & Tiidenberg, K. (2021). [Activist memory narration on social media: Armenian genocide on Instagram.](#) *New Media & Society*. DOI: 10.1177/1461444821989634.

De Lissovoy, N., Ramaprasad, V., Cedillo, S., & Cook, C. B. (2017). [Scripted Fantasies and Innovative Orientalisms: Media, Youth, and Ideology in the Age of the “War on Terror.”](#) *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 17(6), 442–456. DOI: 10.1177/1532708616673653.

Mishra, M., Yan, P., & Schroeder, R. (2022). [TikTok Politics: Tit for Tat on the India–China cyberspace frontier.](#) *International Journal of Communication*, 16, 814–839. DOI n/a.

Smith, C. M., & McDonald, K. M. (2011). [The mundane to the memorial: Circulating and deliberating the war in Iraq through vernacular soldier-produced videos.](#) *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 28(4), 292–313. DOI: 10.1080/15295036.2011.589031.

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BBC. (2021, January 27). [Navalny protests: Russia threatens TikTok with fines over.](#) BBC. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Luckhurst, T. (2021, May 15). [TikTok: How Israeli-Palestinian conflict plays out on social media.](#) BBC. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

Sato, M. (2022, March 16). [Ukrainian influencers bring the frontlines to TikTok.](#) The Verge. Last accessed: 17 March 2022.

Stangarone, T. (2020, December 24). [At war online: South Korea and China.](#) The Diplomat. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

[video] ABC News. (2019, November 29). [US teenager's TikTok video on Uighur 'concentration camps' in China goes viral | The World.](#) YouTube. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

[video] Reuters. (2022, March 9). [How TikTok users are covering Russia's invasion of Ukraine.](#) YouTube. Last accessed: 17 March 2022.

[video] South China Morning Post. (2019, June 14). [Hong Kong protests on Chinese social media.](#) YouTube. Last accessed: 20 January 2022.

