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In defense of "slacktivism": The Human Rights Campaign Facebook logo as digital activism

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Abstract

This paper examines the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Marriage Equality logo as an example of a meme to further understandings of memetic transmission in social media technologies. The HRC meme is an important example of how even seemingly insignificant moves such as adopting a logo and displaying it online can serve to combat microaggressions, or the damaging results of everyday bias and discrimination against marginalized groups. This article suggests that even small moves of support, such as changing one's Facebook status to a memetic image, assist by demonstrating a supportive environment for those who identify with marginalized groups and by drawing awareness to important causes. Often dismissed as "slacktivism," I argue instead that the digital activism made possible through social media memes can build awareness of crucial issues, which can then lead to action.

Keywords

Memetic theory; Internet memes; Human Rights Campaign; Facebook; social networks; memetic transmission; kairos; remix culture; microaggressions

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