

MALALA AND THE MEDIA*



“
I SPEAK NOT FOR MYSELF,
but so that those without a voice can be heard.

—MALALA YOUSAFZAI

BACKGROUND



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The term media refers to methods of communication used to distribute the news to the public. It is necessary to realize that news stories are written, edited, and produced by men and women with differing points of view on certain topics and that no person is truly neutral. The more we are able to understand how stories turn into news events, the better able we will be to form intelligent and accurate opinions of what is going on around the world.

Malala could be considered a “news icon.” She has captured the media’s attention on issues such as children’s education, Pakistan, violence, extremism, war, and gender equality. Her remarkable story speaks to many social movements, including women and children’s rights, education equality, and conflict resolution (particularly in Pakistan and South Asia). However, it is important to note that in some countries Malala is seen as a terrorist and in others as a hero. Be an informed and critical thinker when it comes to mainstream media. Remember that our knowledge of Malala and the multiple issues she represents is filtered through news and images provided by all kinds of different media.

ACTIVITY

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

The purpose of this activity is to think of ways you can use your own media presence to spread Malala’s message and become an icon for social issues within your community. The idea is to engage your friends, family, and community members in conversations on issues about which you are passionate. With social media you can shape any message using your voice. For example, the Communications X-Change is an online website where you can use your social media sites to view, download, and share resources aimed at ending violence worldwide against women and girls.

Malala has used social media and other media resources to shape her own image and highlight important issues. For example, on her 18th birthday Malala launched a #BooksNotBullets social media campaign to encourage world leaders to invest in education over military budgets. Similarly, alongside the release of the documentary film *He Named Me Malala*, she launched a Stand #withMalala social media and advocacy campaign to raise mass awareness, funding, and policy change by activating millions of people worldwide as newfound champions for girls’ education globally. Though Malala grew up lacking power, she found her strength and used it to create positive, lasting change.

*Adapted from resource guide material written by Sean Aday and Silvio Waisbord



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Now it's time to post! Choose your own social media outlet or use one from the list below to post about an issue from this toolkit that matters to you. Develop a calendar and make your posts consistent. You might want to post every day for one week showing that you Stand #withMalala. Or, you may find better results by posting every Monday for an entire month. Be sure to mention The Global Women's Institute, Malala Fund, and/or Girl Up in your posts so that we can share your messages!

Sample tweet one:

"I stand #withMalala because every girl has a right to a quality education! Learn more at malala.org. @MalalaFund @GWUGlobalWomen"

Sample tweet two:

"Learn about how our @GirlUp club stands #withMalala to empower girls everywhere. @MalalaFund @GWUGlobalWomen"

Get creative and remember to use consistent hashtags across each post! Don't forget to check the comments and likes on your posts and reply to comments if it helps move the conversation forward. Encourage all club members to post on their personal pages and handles, too.

Social media outlets include:



Facebook



Twitter



Tumblr



Instagram



Vine



Youtube



Google Plus



Snapchat



Pinterest

TAKE IT FURTHER!

As a group, identify which social media campaigns have really caught your attention. For instance, the #icebucketchallenge took us all by storm in 2014 and raised \$100 million for ALS while #ilooklikeanengineer battled stereotypes by showcasing women and people of color as engineers. What other social media campaigns have stood out to you? How have these social media campaigns filtered and framed certain issues and images? How can you use these real life examples to improve upon your initial social media campaign?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WATCH:

“IT’S ON US” OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN VIDEO AND THE “IT’S ON US” CAMPAIGN VIDEO AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

<https://youtu.be/wNMZo31LziM>

<https://youtu.be/m1UVPQ39GLM?list=UU-KMXs2GnVdm7vO2q6C1n3A>

“It’s On Us” is a social media awareness campaign committed to ending sexual assault on college campuses. “It’s On Us” asks men and women to make a personal commitment to take a stand against campus sexual assault.

Discuss:

1. What role did the White House play in this campaign? Why are influencers important in amplifying the impact of social media campaigns?
2. What makes the specific GW “It’s On Us” video unique? Why was making a specialized video important for the GW community?
3. Visit [ItsOnUs.org](https://www.ItsOnUs.org). Beyond spreading awareness, how does this campaign spur action?

EXPLORE:

BOOKSNOTBULLETS CAMPAIGN

For Malala’s 18th birthday, she had one wish: access to education for everyone. She launched the #BooksNotBullets campaign where people could express their support for investing in education. Participants post a photo of themselves holding up their favorite books and sharing why they choose #BooksNotBullets.

Discuss:

1. Why are images an important element of social media campaigns?
2. How much money is invested in military globally each year? How much is invested in education?

EXPLORE:

#NOTBUYINGIT #MEDIAWELIKE

#NotBuyingIt and #MediaWeLike is a social media campaign by The Representation Project that inspires people to join together in celebrating good representations of women in media and bringing attention to the bad—from advertising to merchandising. ads.

Discuss:

1. What was #MediaWeLike’s strategy during the Super Bowl? See: <https://storify.com/RepresentPledge/notbuyingit-mediawelike-at-sb50>
2. Why do you think their tactics have been effective?

Don’t forget to connect with The Global Women’s Institute, the Malala Fund, and Girl Up on our social media sites!

The Global Women’s Institute

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-  facebook.com/GlobalWomensInstitute
-  [@GWUGlobalWomen](https://twitter.com/GWUGlobalWomen)
-  flickr.com/photos/130125055@N03
-  youtube.com/channel/UCwOZLMibleDxybWWf85Pilw

Malala Fund

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