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DECONSTRUCTING THE LANGUAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS

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Abstract

This paper aims at applying theory of deconstruction as given by Jacques Derrida to the language of social media hashtags. In this context, the researcher tries to explore the role of social media hashtags in transforming, shaping, destabilizing, and commercializing meaning within online social media discourse. Social media platforms are open to everyone across the globe and people not only use it to get connected with others but also have started raising their voices and to do so they have started using hashtags. Hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, and #SocialMediaDetox are widely used as dynamic signifiers that construct personal and collective identities while also highlighting their instability and ambiguity. Through Derridean theoretical framework, the researcher for this study interrogates how hashtags simultaneously enable empowerment and vulnerability by encouraging collectiveness while also remaining prone to appropriation and commercialization.

The analysis of the study highlights recurring themes prevalent in the case studies under investigation, including the instability of language, the duality of acceptance and rebellion, and the affective power of hashtags to call collective support across the globe. The present study by deconstructing the language of hashtags through Derridean's lens reveals the complex interaction of language, identity, and digital activism. Besides, it highlights the need for sensible engagement surrounding social media discourse.

This study aims at contributing to a deeper level of understanding regarding how such digital symbols bring about social and political realities that align with Derrida's notion – meaning is an ongoing process of interpretation and reinterpretation. The study also highlights the transformative potential of social media hashtags, while also foregrounding their vulnerability.

INTRODUCTION:

In the contemporary world social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Reddit and others are growing at a massive rate. Von Abrams (2019) argues that Global social network users are expected to reach 4.74 billion by the end of 2024, marking a growth of nearly 4% from the previous year. In this day and age social media has become a major part of one's life from messaging to shopping and from business partner to educational mentor (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). Now a day's social media has transformed the landscape of protests and activism by giving a voice to the less privileged and marginalized communities, enabling them to challenge the dominant narratives present in the society. Social media for this purpose has surfaced as a key groundbreaker for social change

by providing a platform for the oppressed voices to express their challenges, experiences and emotions. For this purpose, Hashtags have emerged as a concise and powerful form of web-based expression that capture complex issues and present them in single digital form. Hashtags are used on digital platforms to point out all words or phrases that it precedes by, which then become a searchable link that refers to a specific hashtag. The hashtags allow various social users to associate with a specific incident or event. Therefore, the formation of hashtags is not limited to a specific few individuals who can control its initiation and effectiveness, rather it can be formed by anyone who has access to a stable internet connection and any social media application. Hashtags were created to unite people by platforms that promote freedom of speech and expression (Saxton et al., 2015). Due to the universal and inexpensive nature of hashtags, the need to be physically present to be heard is long gone (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015).

This analysis focuses on the roles of three significant hashtags: #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, and the hashtags surrounding social media disconnection. For this purpose, the articles *"Evaluating Hashtag Activism: Examining the Theoretical Challenges and Opportunities of #BlackLivesMatter"*, *"Vernacular Practices in Digital Feminist Activism on Twitter: Deconstructing Affect and Emotion in the #MeToo Movement"*, and *"Social Media, Interrupted: Users Recounting Temporary Disconnection on Instagram"* will be used to explore the roles of these hashtags in contemporary online social movements and how they disrupt traditional power hierarchies. The following hashtag: #BlackLivesMatter surfaced as a response to police violence and racism against black individuals, exemplifying the power of hashtags in need for justice and social awareness. Likewise, the hashtag #MeToo reshaped the discourse surrounding gender-based violence and sexual harassment, providing a virtual platform for individuals and survivors to share their experiences and demand justice. In contrast, the third article introduces a critical perspective on the psychological implications of social media usage by examining user's experiences with social media and how hashtags are used by individuals to demonstrate their voluntary disconnection.

The theory of Deconstruction given by Derrida provides a valuable framework for examining the ambivalence of hashtags as instruments of empowerment and commodification, revealing the complexities inherent in their use. While the following hashtags #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo serve as a vital digital tool for highlighting marginalized voices and calling for collective action, they also raise critical questions about validity, representation and potential of its commercialization. Besides, the exploration of hashtags related to disconnection presents an opportunity to re-evaluate the standards surrounding digital engagement and the emotional toll of being connected constantly to social media.

The main objective of this study is to explore how hashtags function as tools for both social activism and empowerment, while also examining their inherent limitations. The following are the key questions that guide this analysis:

1. How do hashtags shape public discourse and foster a sense of community among marginalized groups?
2. In what way do hashtags function as tools of counter-narratives against mainstream media portrayals?
3. What are the challenges posed by the commodification of hashtags by commercial and corporate entities?
4. How the practices of digital disconnection, as seen in movements like #SocialMediaDetox and #switchoffsaturday, reflect a growing outlook between individual well-being and digital engagement?

By addressing these questions, the analysis of this study will provide a foundation for understanding both the strengths and limitations of online activism. The answers to these questions will not only provide insights about the effectiveness of hashtags in online activism but will also provide critical evaluation of the potential risks associated with online movements in today's highly digitalized world.

Literature review

The use of social media across the globe has transformed the way people participated in political activism and cultural movements. Users have started using hashtags not only to raise their personal voices against the injustices they face but also show solidarity with others, express harmony and call for collective action. Academics have sought to understand the implication of digital mediums on the nature of these movements and how activism is experienced, performed, and perceived digitally in the globalized world.

For this study, the following three articles are examined to provide a deeper insight on the challenges, emergence and commodification of digital activism:

Zulli's (2020) exploration of #BlackLivesMatter

Nau et al.'s (2022) analysis of feminist activism and emotional aspects of #MeToo

Jorge's (2019) research on the disconnection practices on social media networks

Hashtag Activism and #BlackLivesMatter

Diana Zulli's (2020) article, *Evaluating Hashtag Activism: Examining the Theoretical Challenges and Opportunities of #BlackLivesMatter*, explores how hashtags, especially #BlackLivesMatter, plays a role in digital activism. Zulli's research highlights the duality of hashtags as they not only gather a global support but also are at a constant risk of being reduced to mere digital tags and forgotten in history. According to Zulli's (2020) hashtags being a contemporary phenomenon are used as a method to create "liveness" in the digital protests and movements, because of their ability to rapidly draw attention towards themselves. However, this nature of hashtags also forms a limitation in their approach to digital movements, as they are usually forgotten in the same pace in which they gain momentum.

Hashtags not only are limited in their approach, but also there is always a tendency for opposition narratives to take place and gather a more widespread support instead of the actual issue. Zulli's main concern is with the mechanism in which hashtag activism interacts with deeper structural issues that is seeks to reinforce. For this, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter has become a symbol of digital activism, but still its dependency on social media makes it vulnerable to competing narratives. Social media algorithm prioritizes hashtags that gathers instant interactions such as likes, shares, and comments (Chaturvedi & Chaturvedi, 2024). Zulli critiques this and views this as a form of obstacle in the progression of such significant movements.

In a wider perspective, Zulli's research points out the flaws in such digital activism, which is often termed as *"slacktivism"*, suggesting that the world of online engagement is often superficial and symbolic. Narayanan (2022) argues that while such movements can become the voice of the oppressed and foreground specific trends and social movements, however, these movements and trends on the other hand all so sometimes fail to translate such digital momentum and pace into the real world. This can be due to the social satisfaction that many people get when they use such hashtags and become prominent that they fail to distinguish that the cause they supported was just online and not present in the real world (Smith, 2024).

In this regard Zulli in her article draws attention towards the politicization of such digital platforms and how they can be used to mediate subtle political ideologies among the masses by making them use such digital platforms for protests rather than the real world. For the study of such impacts scholars like Akpinar and Fazelpour (2024) used agent-based simulations to show how specific algorithms can be used to suppress the public into conforming to the greater narratives. By using strategies that are digitally propagated, instead of using old school strategies that tend to be more physical such as by using banners and flyers, the word can be spread to more people. This can tend to create a line between truly motivated digital activism and *"slacktivism"*, Zulli builds on these arguments showing that the digital world cannot be cut off from the real world, as one impacts the other and vice versa. This shows that even though hashtags are a powerful way to communicate but still they are not without flaws. This provides a useful insight for analyzing other such digital movements such as the #MeToo hashtag.

Emotions and Affect in #MeToo

The second article, *Vernacular practices in digital feminist activism on Twitter: deconstructing affect and emotion in the #MeToo movement*, written by Charlotte Nau, Jinman Zhang, Anabel Quan-Haase & Kaitlynn Mendes (2022), delves deeper into the digital landscape by showing how it becomes the voice of the voiceless. This hashtag in particular discusses the more underlying abuses present in the society by showing posts around gender-based violence and sexual harassment showing how individuals come forward and express themselves through such platforms by using hashtags. This not only shows how such platforms serve as a means for people to share their experiences, fear and anger, but also serve for them to demand accountability from the preparators as well as the authorities. To analyze this, the authors have used the emotional language used in the first 570 tweets posted within the first 24 hours of the #MeToo movement's resurgence in 2017, by using Robert Plutchik's (2000) structural model of emotion to classify the reactions, responses and emotions circulating around the hashtag.

While Zulli (2020) research analyzed the individual and social dimensions of the #blacklivesmatter, Nau et al. (2022) focusses more on the emotional and effective implication of such hashtag movements and how it drives attention, interaction and compensation for the victims. By using Robert Plutchik's (2000) structural model of emotion, the study highlights four types of practices involved in the consumption and interaction of the #Metoo hashtag. The first practice they noticed was participation by the individuals without sharing their own personal story. This showed that the users sympathized with the victims of such acts but were themselves not involved in any such incidents or were too afraid to speak of them digitally. The second practice they observed was linking of an indirect reference towards the perpetrators, in which they were not pointed out directly but were instead made clear by the audience. The third they found out was how people from across the globe, irrespective of their culture, national identity, race or biases, not only supported the victims but also told them ways to heal from the act. This highlighted a deeper connection and shared sense of feelings and remorse that people towards them acted with. In the last, they noticed how people shared their own personal experiences to indicate that they are not alone in the healing process and that they too could stand up and fight for justice. This highlighted a deeper level of understanding driven by mutual sufferings. This article in this way provides a more balanced understanding towards such digital functions and movements.

The tension between individual expression and public visibility is a recurring theme in both articles showing how one's feelings are often mediated through such platforms instead of real-life dialogues. The #Metoo hashtag provides a deeper analysis of such personal feelings, showing how much powerful force, a digital world can be when it comes to expressing such private affairs. According to Van Dijck and Poell (2015) people find such digital spaces as a safe place to express themselves to others. Even though there are mechanisms for feedback and engagement, yet it is not as such as the outer world. Digital platforms share a sense of community where the user does not seem to be alone, such places provide with a platform to openly disclose oneself and one can feel a sense of belonging (Miño-Puigcercós et al., 2019).

This research also shows that such digital spaces not only foster a sense of belonging among victims but also highlights the emotional traumas and complexities involves in confronting such acts. This makes analysis of affect and emotion in the #Metoo movement makes it important for understanding the role of such digital movements and how they shape identities. This examination not only shows the role of #Metoo as a call for help but also shows its impact in bringing people together to share their feelings and share their solutions, by looking at this the digital spaces could be called as a space for empowerment and social change. Through this way, the research seeks to light up the ways in which hashtags can serve as means of both personal and collective expressions of pain, solidarity and expression.

Disconnection and the Commodification of Digital Detox

The final article, *Social Media, Interrupted: Users Recounting Temporary Disconnection on Instagram* by Ana Jorge (2019), discusses a different angle to such social media movements and their impacts on personal life and health. This article focusses on disconnection rather than connection from social media and such online movements. The main focus however is on Instagram and how its continuous usage can have diverse effects on one's life and mental health. The study describes the experiences of users related to the hashtag #socialmediadetox, #offline, #Switchoffsaturday, and #disconnecttoreconnect, and shows how constant availability and participation in digital movements and usage, one disconnects from his own personal self.

Digital detox is defined as timeouts from using electronic devices such as smartphones, laptops, tablets, etc., either completely or for specific time periods (Radtke et al., 2021). In this article Jorge (2019) points out three major themes regarding such hashtags: disconnection to regain control over one's own personal life and well-being, usage of such hashtags to motivate others to participate and do the same, and the commodification of such hashtags to promote a healthy life style and how they are marketed. Pontes (2022) also highlights this in his book *Behavioral Addictions* as how social media and constant internet use causes dependence of the subject on such tools. These application act like a drug and their unavailability can cause alike symptoms. This article however focusses on the use of such hashtags in foregrounding and promoting the diverse effects of such constant digital media usage.

This article draws on the works of scholars such as Hesselberth (2018) and Karppi (2018), to argue that while the practice such acts of digital disconnection may provide some temporary relief or resistance, they ultimately reinforce the same structures that they tend to repulse. Jorge (2019) analysis shows that how such acts of escapism also benefit he applications on which they are used, especially Instagram, where such practices are adopted to fuel the platforms economy and business, turning it into a commodity. The continuous usage of such platforms to promote the very thing the users of such application try to avoid, further sells its reach and acceptability among users who want to disengage. Disconnection from digital life is a decision marked by a person's own commitment to his goals (Bergen & Bressler, 2019), so a person who is deciding to quit or spend some time off is motivated by the very such medium which he is trying to leave. This can be seen as something positive as the applications that capture someone's attention also help him to spend some time off, but in its depth according to Jorge (2019) this is just a tactic to market it and sell it to its desired consumers. This analysis shows the paradox inherent in the consumption of such hashtags and social media movements, as while users frame disconnection as a form of self-discipline and personal empowerment, these movements and practices are increasingly co-opted by businesses, transforming disconnection into a marketable commodity.

Conclusion

The three articles examined in this review provide a comprehensive view of the intricacies surrounding digital activism and engagement relating to hashtags. One common idea revolving across these articles is the empowerment and limitations regarding social media hashtags and how the idea can be commodified by cooperations for their own economic gain. The idea that social media provides an independent space is also challenged, as according to Jorge (2019) it is a place where different ideas are incorporated to be shown as a factor promoting a singular motif, however, cooperations and such organizations use this idea to gain sympathy as well as economic gain for their outlets.

All online hashtag activism needs a digital space for its propagation but despite that the very same space also declares the limitation of its distribution. For this, social media algorithms play a crucial role in determining which content should be spread or not, as in the end the main goal of such applications remains to hook their users to the screen. Some posts using a similar

hashtag are highlighted and some are backgrounded, this shows that a leading factor in play remains economics and engagement. In these articles digital movements are shown to be a replacement for real-life movements, however, the same articles also portray the limitations for such actions. The fact that people who want to take some time off social media, also use social media to show their actions shows how dependent users have become on such applications. The users knowing that the online world is not the real world still engage with it as a place that exists and is alive.

But nonetheless, the impact of such digital movements cannot be ignored. Social media is a powerful tool for communication, spreading ideas and connecting users from around the globe. Digital spaces provide users with opportunities that are not available in the real world. The movements such as #Blacklivesmatter and #Metoo, spread because of this, and the influence of them is seen everywhere and especially in shaping new government policies. No place is perfect and so is the digital space which has its pros and cons, but still its influence in the 21st century can never be ignored.

Analysis

Introduction to Derridean Framework

Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction exposes the instability and multiplicity of meaning in language, furthermore it provides a critical lens to examine the contradictions and uncertainty present in the usage of such symbols. In the context of social media hashtags, this idea is particularly relevant as it shows how these digital symbols destabilize meanings. Hashtags when looked from this lens function as digital signifiers that bring to forth certain issues, call for collective action, and establish emotional relationship, but their meanings are not stable and often shift because of context, individual perspective or user's intentions.

This analysis applies deconstruction to three case studies: #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, and hashtags related to disconnection such as #SocialMediaDetox, #Switchoffsaturday, and #DisconnectToReconnect, etc. These hashtags foreground the conflict between clarity and ambiguity, unity and disunity, empowerment and commodification, and collective identity in contrast to individual interpretation.

Case Study 1: #BlackLivesMatter

Semantic Instability and Contestation

Black Lives Matter was a movement that was formed as a response to African American racism and police brutality against them. This gave origin to the hashtag *#BlackLivesMatter*, which gained prominence after the acquittal of George Michael Zimmerman in the killing of Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African-American, in Sanford, Florida. At the time it conveyed a clear and urgent message in order to raise the matter to a more global level, but with the passage of time its meaning has been frequently challenged. This resulted in oppositional hashtags to surface over the web such as #AllLivesMatter and #BlueLivesMatter, which highlight Derrida's concept of "*iterability*", meaning that repetition introduces variation which further opens the terms to reinterpretation. The introduction of such counter hashtags attempts to neutralize the relevance of #BlackLivesMatter by challenging its focus on African American racism and by limiting its influence.

Zulli (2020) research further shows the dependence of #BlackLivesMatter, by showing how this hashtag is time-specific, and needs some certain acts of violence against the black community for its propagation. This shows the temporality of digital activism and its dependability on such actions. The hashtag is not mainstream and often used in online discourse, its fluctuations show the episodic nature regarding its use. By looking it from a Derridean lens, this interplay of appearance and disappearance shows the destabilization its meaning which aligns with Derrida's notion of "*differance,*" assertion that meaning is always deferred, highlighting the idea that meaning is never absolute and is in a constant process of change.

Appropriation and Contestation

The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter plays a very vital role in uniting people from across the globe and fostering solidarity among activists. But a major factor in its acceptability among different users is its openness or its lack of a fixed signified and because of this it is able to collect support from different groups and diverse audiences. But nonetheless, this lack of a fixed signified also makes it vulnerable and open to misinterpretation, as it does not contain a constant universal meaning. Oppositional hashtags such as #AllLivesMatter or #BlueLivesMatter serve as oppositional reframes, where they try to challenge or critique the original idea or message that the hashtag initially tried to convey. This lack of a fixed signified may seem as a positive aspect in the role of hashtags to convey a message globally, but on the other hand the same openness also makes it vulnerable to critique and misinterpretation. While some members of the online community may use it to unite different users for the specific cause of African American race, some on the other hand some see this as a weakness and try to dilute the actual cause or reason by introducing counter narratives, hence undermining the actual cause. In this context, Derrida's critique of metaphysical binaries becomes prominent, as the hashtag oscillates between its position as a fixed symbol and a site of contestation.

Case Study 2: #MeToo

Collective Identity and Individual Expression

The #MeToo hashtag serves a very powerful online tool for sharing personal experiences and calling for justice or collective action. This serves as a shared platform for all who have went through such acts or for those who want to help the victims out. But this hashtag also foregrounds one another aspect and that is the interplay between collective identity and individual expression. The use of hashtags like #MeToo to communicate the message in its true form to the other members of the digital community complicates the matter, as personal feelings can never be shared fully articulated through the use of such signs. Vernacular practices such as the use of euphemisms or indirect references to the perpetrators or to the act of violence itself complicates the matter. The linguistic choice of using hashtag as a tool for communication articulates the restrictions of such online platforms where trauma or alike feelings can never be fully expressed. Here Derrida's idea that language fails to fully communicate the experience or message comes to prominence. In the use of the hashtag #MeToo, it itself becomes a site contestation highlighting the *differance* in meanings, showing that by the use of such linguistic signs meaning cannot be fully expressed.

Contextuality of meaning

The #MeToo movement shows the power of collective action to portray diverse emotions, experiences and feelings. This article explores the usage of this hashtag and how it reflects a wide spectrum of emotions ranging from anger to sympathy, trust to fear, and optimism to pessimism. By looking it from a Derridean lens, it can be found that emotional representations can be seen as both constructing and deconstructing the meaning. For the analysis of this, the three factors presented by Nau et al. (2022) in his study can highlight this play of meaning, for examples his finding that some users show support for victims without sharing their own personal stories, shows the tension between presence and absence. This portrays that the meaning derived by the users is totally contextual, and the hashtags function as placeholders for untold narratives.

Through the use of Derridean lens, this tension between told and untold narratives becomes prominent in the use of #MeToo. In it some users participate fully and share detailed stories about their experience or feelings regarding a specific matter while some only restrict themselves to only showing support or giving some sort of feedback. The participation of users in the use of #MeToo hashtag makes their experiences present, while those who only use the #MeToo hashtag, without offering any kind of explanation, make their narrative questionable and open to the interpretation of the users. This

certain kind of usage makes the hashtag as a place for untold narratives, which emphasizes the limits of the contribution or representation. Even though, other users may get an idea, but their interpretation of the situation will vary and will involve the use of their own personal values or experiences which can sometimes lead them to misinterpret the hashtag fully, resulting in a subjective meaning of the situation. This absence of meaning further highlights Derrida's notion of "*differance*," where meaning emerges through deferral and difference.

Case Study 3: Digital Disconnection Hashtags

Commodification of Disconnection

These hashtags are surfaced on the digital application such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, etc., to support a healthy lifestyle by taking some time off of such mediums. These hashtags usually promote self-care and rebellion against such technological use by taking some time off of such web tools. However, in the analysis done by Jorge (2019) in her study, it is shown that such expressions are often exploited and commercialized by organizations and influencers. These businesses use it as an opportunity for profit and sell the narratives to who need them the most, often motivating them to buy certain schedule-based applications to monitor their internet use or encouraging them to follow a certain pattern that they recommend.

This commercialization of such hashtags exemplifies Derrida's critique of oppositional binaries and the instability of meaning within the digital platforms. From a Derridean perspective, the binaries between connection and disconnection collapses as the users use the very same platforms that they want to avoid. While hashtags such as #socialmediadetox, #offline, #Switchoffsaturday, and #disconnecttoreconnect, etc., may reflect a need for change, but their use within the same social media applications creates a paradoxical loop. The act of disconnection is reconsumed into the same system it wants to critique, undermining its transformative potential. This aligns with Derrida's observation that oppositional structures often reinforce the same systems they try to oppose.

Individual Agency and Collective Norms

The use of such hashtags to refrain from the use of social media also foregrounds the conflict between individual agency and collective norms, which highlights the societal expectation and self-authority present in the use of such disconnection hashtags. By the use of such hashtags across platforms users are depicted as an authority with full control over their actions, while on the other hand they are subconsciously aligned with a greater narrative regarding social media detoxification. This created dependence of users on such social media tools which they seek to avoid, as they become the instruments in promoting a healthy lifestyle. These themes reflect Derrida's critique of *metaphysical boundaries* such as connection and disconnection or presence or absence. These disconnection hashtags frame detoxification as an individual choice while these very same hashtags obscure the systemic forces that drive dependency.

Comparative Insights: Common Threads and Divergences

By analyzing the three case studies it is seen that several themes are repeated. First, all three hashtags show the instability of meaning present in the use of such methods in digital communication. It can be seen across all three hashtags, whether through appropriation in #BlackLivesMatter, emotional expressions in #MeToo or the commercialization as seen in hashtags surrounding the discourse of digital minimalism, that they resist any fixed meaning and are open to interpretations and reinterpretations. This points out the instability of language and Derrida's concept of *differance*, showing that meaning constantly deferred and contested.

The following three hashtags not only present instability of meaning, but also highlight the tension between empowerment and vulnerability. In this case the hashtags surrounding digital activism such as #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo play an important role, as they not only give a voice to the marginalized, but also call for collective support globally. However, these hashtags are themselves open to critique and

opposition because of the lack of a fixed signified. Similarly, hashtags relating to digital minimalism support a system that they tend to oppose, showing the duality present in digital activism, which can become both a tool for support and a site of exploitation.

In short, hashtags are an effective mechanism for digital activism and it serves as their common goal. They are not just a tool for communication but also dynamic site of meaning formation and critique. The power of hashtags lies in their openness and multiplicity, enabling interpretation and reinterpretation among different platforms and users. However, in short, this openness or fluidity may seem as a positive aspect of hashtags, but this also makes them prone to exploitation and misinterpretation.

Conclusion

The deconstruction of social media hashtags reveals the intricacies and contradictions of online movements. In the role of digital discourse, hashtags serve as a vital instrument in shaping the outcomes, raising awareness about such issues, and uniting people to support a specific cause, yet the meanings and interpretations of such tools remains ambiguous and unstable. This instability of meaning or a lack of a fixed signified may seem as an inherent vulnerability of such mediums but this also opens a window for adaptation and validation across diverse contexts and communities.

Through the use of Jacques Derrida's *Deconstruction* theory to #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, and hashtags surrounding digital disconnection, this analysis highlights the interplay of language, power and contexts in online spaces. In such online mediums, hashtags are limited to a very small space where they constantly negotiate meaning and try to reflect universal social problems around identity, individual authority, and resistance. But no matter how powerful they may seem in their critique of global power structures, their proneness to commodification and limitation to online applications underscores the need for critical engagement with social media usage regarding hashtags.

In conclusion, hashtags are not merely tools of communication but dynamic sites of meaning-making and contestation. Their power lies in their ambiguity and multiplicity which enables them to spread across diverse contexts and audiences. However, this same openness makes them vulnerable to exploitation and misinterpretation. By embracing their ambiguity and multiplicity, activists and scholars can harness the transformative potential of hashtags while remaining vigilant to their limitations. As himself in the words of Derrida, meaning is always *"to come"*, suggesting that meaning formation is a never-ending process of interpretation and reinterpretation. By using a Derridean perspective, scholars as well as activists can better answer to the complexities of discourse surrounding social media usage particularly the use of hashtags in promoting online movements while harnessing their transformative potential.

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