

# Is YouTube a driver for social movements like Occupy Wall Street?

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Social media such as YouTube videos provide a popular and flexible venue for online activism. How two different social protest movements—Occupy Wall Street and the Proposition 8 same sex marriage initiative—utilized YouTube, and their success in engaging activists are explored in an article in *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*.

Emily Vraga, PhD and coauthors from George Mason University (Fairfax, VA), Georgetown University (Washington, DC), University of Wisconsin-Madison, and University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA) emphasize an important advantage of YouTube videos for the purpose of social and political activism: they can be shared easily, quickly, and effectively through a variety of mechanisms, including other forms of social media, email, and print media.

The article "[The Rules of Engagement: Comparing Two Social Protest Movements on YouTube](#)" compares how two disparate political movements used YouTube to define and advance their goals. The study shows that [social media](#) activism resulted in differing degrees of popularity and engagement, perhaps related to the content of the videos and to the different online environments in which they appear.

"As YouTube matures, and additional [social networking](#) tools evolve, it is interesting to note how these tools may be used by individual citizens as well as political activists to advance their goals," says Brenda K. Wiederhold, PhD, MBA, BCIA, Editor-in-Chief of *Cyberpsychology*,

*Behavior, and Social Networking*, from the Interactive Media Institute, San Diego, CA.

**More information:** The article is available free on the [\*Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking\*](#) website.

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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