# Design is ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Artivism Talk — June 3rd, 2020 — Virtual Conference from NYC
during COVID19 Pandemic and Protests against police and state violence because #BlackLivesMatter
Ange Tran, Visual-Communications Strategist + Graphic Designer
Email: design@angetran.me

Design is an accomplice to social movements

MAKE STUFF FOR THE STRUGGLE.

by Molly Crabapple

HOUSING = HEALTHCARE
Cancel Rent Now!
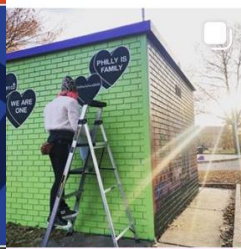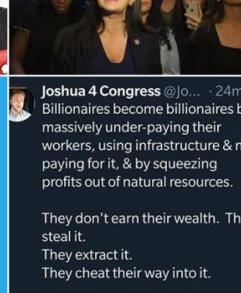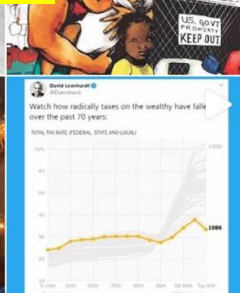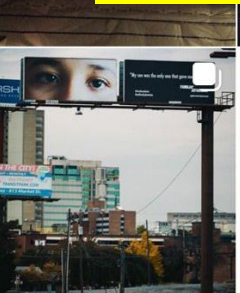
Molly Crabapple 🇵🇷 ✓
@mollycrabapple

It's been amazing seeing my work used to support the movement to #CancelRent @housing4allNY

1:59 PM · May 22, 2020 · Twitter Web App

8 Retweets 63 Likes

#CANCELRENT H... · May 22
Replying to @mollycrabapple
❤️⚫

♥ 1

🌈👍 New York In... · May 22
Replying to @mollycrabapple and @housing4allNY
:)

UMD ~ unnikrishn... · May 22
Replying to @mollycrabapple and @housing4allNY

#CANCEL THE RENT NOW

RENT STRIKE
CANCEL RENT

THE RENT

VOTER SUPPRESSIO
PLAYBOOK
GERRYMANDERING
(PACK & CRACK)

THE WORST
IS YET
TO COME

VOTING
RIGHTS ARE
HUMAN
RIGHTS

FREEDOM
NOW!

I AM A MAN

obeygiant ✓ · Following

Simply put, voting rights are human rights, and we need to make every effort to give equal voting access to everyone of voting age regardless of race or economic circumstance. Civil rights are still threatened and need to be supported vigorously. Proceeds from this print will benefit Bryan Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative @eji_org, which provides legal representation to people who have been illegally convicted, unfairly sentenced, or abused in state jails and prisons, the same organization that brought Steve Schapiro and me together. Thank you for caring! -Shepard

Voting Rights Are Human Rights. 18 x 24 inches. Screen print on Cream

10,765 likes

FEBRUARY 22

Add a comment...   Post

by Molly Crabapple

HOUSING = HEALTHCARE
CANCEL RENT NOW!

#CANCEL THE RENT NOW!
RENT STRIKE CANCEL RENT

Context: **Crabapple** = build digital awareness for policy failures of states = mass unemployment & lack of public safety net during covid that forecasts a homelessness spike and what will happen to a massive percentage of Americans unable to stay in their homes (evictions) and as a result unable to quarantine or socially distance during a global pandemic. **Fairy** = collaboration with photographer Steve Schapiro who documented many of the important civil rights protests in the 1960s & Shepard Fairy, a contemporary and widely known artist for his art and fashion brand, street artist and graphic designer.

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- Design isn't posters, isn't making sure a logo exists on everything, or swag like pins... What those things are, are types of assets... some of which may be more relevant to the broader strategy and its tactical goals than others

TWO SIDES TO A COIN

There are two sides to the "visual" as a concept, coin:

Visual communication is the conveyance of ideas and information in forms that can be seen.

Visual literacy is the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image.

"…[we must] consider early on what can be visually represented, online and off, and prioritize those approaches/messages over others.

It can't be an afterthought – visual communications should be at the senior strategy table from the beginning.

…To be clear, I'm an organizer, not a designer, but I've come to realize how central "representation" is to our efforts to communicate messages, galvanize our base, influence people's thinking and the media coverage we get. "

Beka Economopoulos

beka@notanalternative.net

Brooklyn, New York

Co-founder & Director at Not An Alternative, Inc.

What is the role that **strategic design** can play in **dismantling systems** that produce and reinforce both oppression and inequality?

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➡ **Discussion**

"...Don't just think about the subject matter; think also about, and in fact, primarily about, the job that your content is doing for the reader or the viewer. "

—Dao Nguyen

BuzzFeed's Publisher

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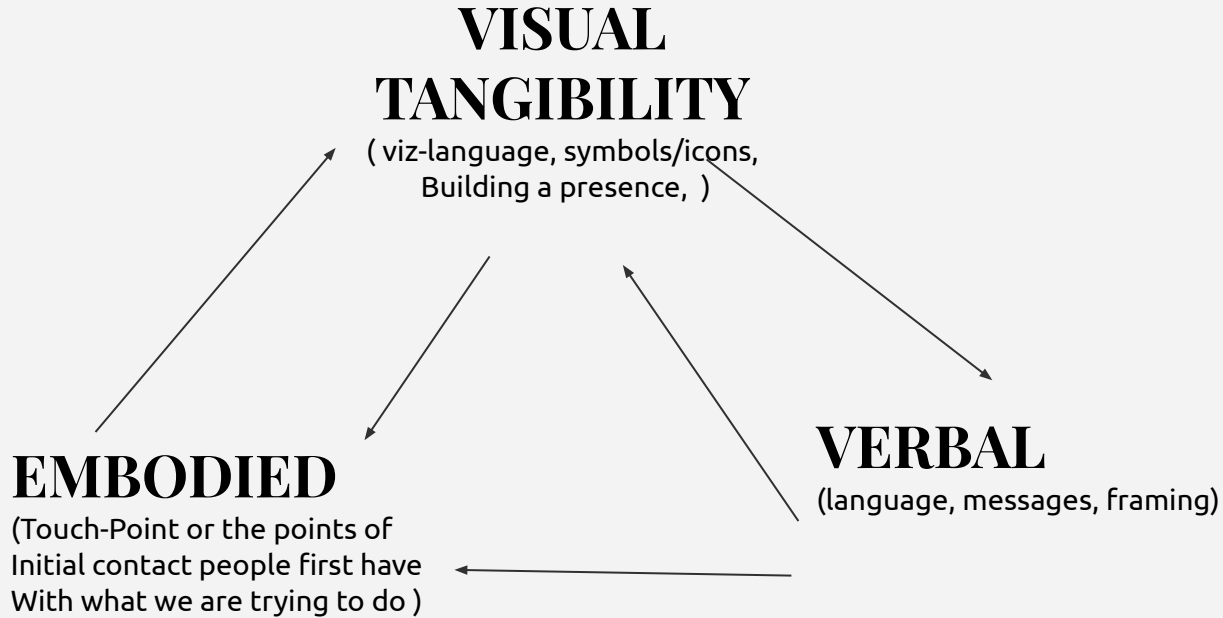
BuzzFeed's Publisher

THE OBJECTS WE CREATE THROUGH STRATEGIC DESIGN

VISUAL TANGIBILITY
(viz-language, symbols/icons,
Building a presence,)

EMBODIED
(Touch-Point or the points of
Initial contact people first have
With what we are trying to do)

VERBAL
(language, messages, framing)

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POINT BACK TO MESSAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN

DIGITAL
ENVIRONMENT
(Footprint)

VIEWER
EXPERIENCE
(Touch-Point)

CONSISTENT
INTENT
(Development)

The Role of Design is to be strategic about the constituent parts of many visuals that will be created,

So... *what _is_* the role that strategic design can play in dismantling systems that produce, reproduce and reinforce both oppression and inequality?

For those designers doing that role-work, (creating elements of objects or objects in their entirety,) try to consider and raise questions around how all of that created STUFF should function. What purpose its intended to serve in the broader strategy as well as how it satisfies smaller goals within organizing activity, direct-actions, or movement signification.

So... *what is* the role that strategic design can play in dismantling systems that produce, reproduce and reinforce both oppression and inequality?

Designers come from many origins: they can be self-taught, institutionally trained and committed to change (VS mainstream commercial practices), or people who are pretty good at doing stuff that simply got stuck with yet another hat to wear on top of other, more primary roles.

— MAY 20, 2013 | WASHINGTON, DC —

AT THE

DEPARTMENT *of* JUSTICE

Showdown: Homeowners VS Banking Execs

Bring Justice to Justice

Rally and Week of Action

OCCUPY HOMES

MORE INFO: WWW.OCCUPYHOMES.ORG

OCCUPY HOMES

**STAND TOGETHER
STOP FORECLOSURES
EVICTIONS**

FORECLOSE ON BANKS NOT PEOPLE

5PM, THE SHOWDOWN CONTINUES
17 arrested, 4 tasered so far.

— MAY 20, 2013 | WASHINGTON, DC —
AT THE
DEPARTMENT *of* JUSTICE

STRIKE DEBT **Strike Debt**
May 20, 2013

5pm and the showdown continues. 17 arrested, 4 tasered. Streets and all building exits are blocked. Arrest bankers, not home defenders! #M20 #j2j #occupyhomes

👍 Dona Griner, Mario Echeverria, Christopher Prince and 173 others like this.

📝 119 shares

Callie Lockwood So, I guess we don't really have freedom of speech and the right to peaceful assembly. Yes, arrest the bankers, not the People.
👍 9 · May 20, 2013 at 2:56pm
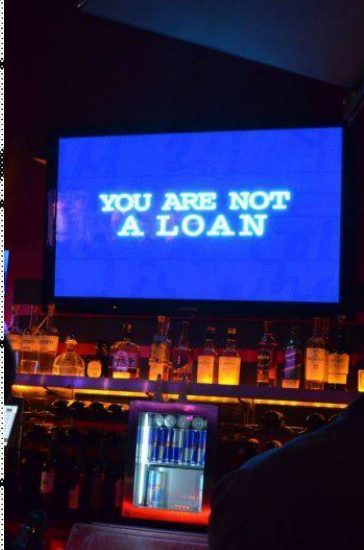
John Jackson Fascist Pigs!
👍 1 · May 20, 2013 at 2:44pm

Rebecca Glenn The media is completely on a massive storm ripping through the midwest. The timing couldn't be worse.
👍 1 · May 20, 2013 at 3:10pm

Ellen Jaggers Just buy more debt. That's why I donated.

Top Comments ▾

(VIDEO)

We Won't PAY OUR DEBT from Everest COLLEGES, INSTITUTES AND UNIVERSITIES

(VIDEO)

FOURTEEN
TAX-THE-RICH
REVENUE PROPOSALS
2020

Today, big corporations and billionaires are writing the rules in our state. The super rich lobbied hard for the Trump tax cuts and are now reaping its rewards. Our economy should work for all of us, not just the greedy few.

Our state leaders have a basic responsibility to stop the greed and excess of the billionaire class by passing policy to make them pay their fair share. We each do better when we all do better.

We can invest where it matters and keep wealth where it belongs. For that to happen, we need to tax corporations and the very rich. These times call for us to have the courage to demand the wealthiest New Yorkers return what was taken from our communities.

To do that, we need new taxes to claw back the ridiculous gains from decades of rigged tax policy—like the Trump tax scam. Now is the time to #MakeBillionairesPay

> These measures can raise over
> $35 billion per year for New York

1.
### BILLIONAIRE WEALTH TAX

- **Wealth tax to attack inequality** — new proposal being drafted now
- **Yearly assessment on the speculative wealth of billionaires**— no one else pays
- Tax wealth-in-speculation including unrealized capital gains which almost never get taxed under current federal and state law
- Ten-year lookback period with new, stronger definitions of personal and corporate residency
- **Legislation under development**

» Raises **$10 billion per year** or more

2.
ULTRAMILLIONAIRES INCOME TAX

- **Higher income tax brackets for income above $5M** (9.32%), **$10M** (9.82%) and **$100M** (10.32%) a year
- **Current top rate of 8.82% is for** $1M/yr individuals and $2M/yr households
- **New Jersey** raised their marginal tax rate on each dollar earned over $5 million from 8.97 percent to 10.75 percent and the sky didn't fall —
  California has a top rate of 13.3 percent
- Proposed as Part P of the Assembly 2019 budget bill **A.2009B**
- Additional bills from Senators Salazar and Gianaris and Jackson — some include "Tax the 1%" options

» Raises **$2.2 billion per year** or more

3.
PIED-À-TERRE TAX

- **Assessment of the mostly-vacant extra homes of the rich**
- Updated by Senator Hoylman and A.M. Glick — totally do-able, politically popular
- 2019 version was **Senate Bill S.44** and **Assembly Bill A.4540**

» Raises **$650 million per year** or more

Panel 1: The Old College Try
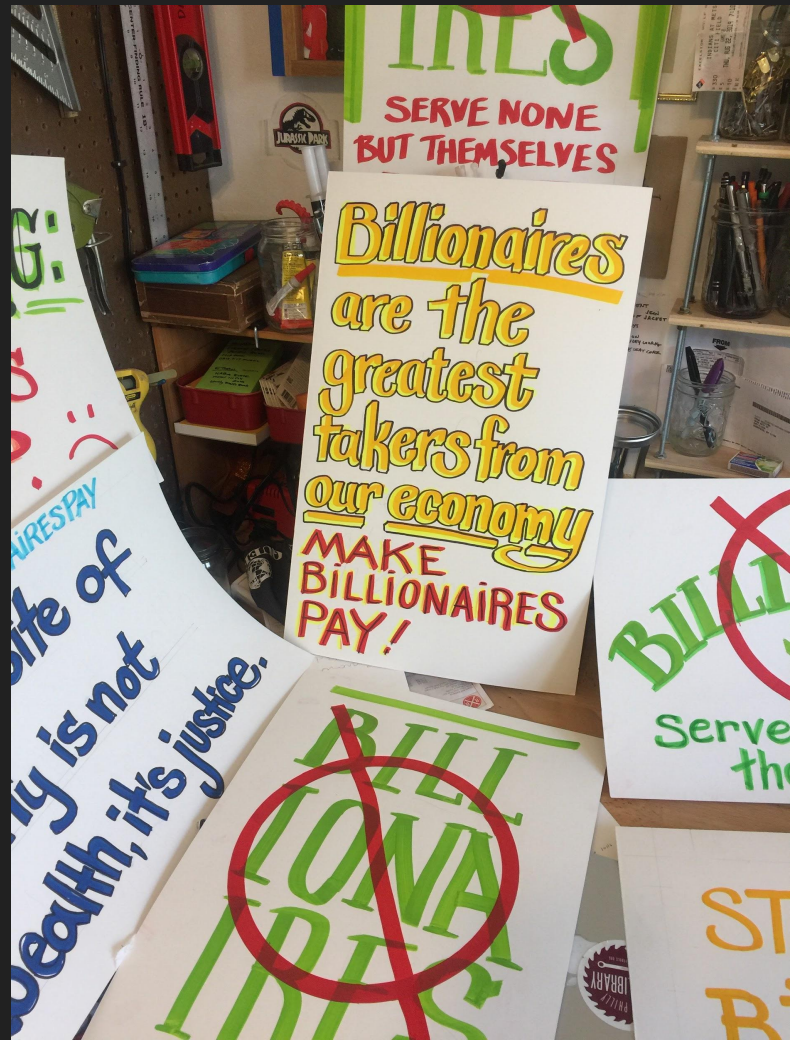
THE OLD COLLEGE TRY

STUDENT LOAN DEBT IN THE U.S. IS NOW AT $1 TRILLION AND CONTINUES TO GROW RAPIDLY: CURRENTLY $2,853.88 A SECOND
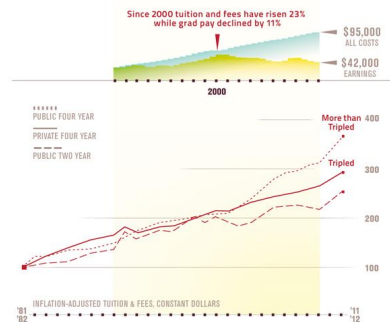
SOURCE: CONSUMER PROTECTION BUREAU

COLLEGE COSTS AND EARNINGS
SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Since 2000 tuition and fees have risen 23% while grad pay declined by 11%

$95,000 ALL COSTS
$42,000 EARNINGS

2000

PUBLIC FOUR YEAR
PRIVATE FOUR YEAR
PUBLIC TWO YEAR

More than Tripled — 400
Tripled — 300
— 200
— 100

'81 '82 ... '11 '12
INFLATION-ADJUSTED TUITION & FEES, CONSTANT DOLLARS

FROM 2000 TO 2012
SOURCE: FEDERAL RESERVE

STUDENT LOAN DEBT GROWTH, MORE THAN **400% MORE THAN**

HOUSEHOLD DEBT MINUS STUDENT LOAN DEBT **95% GROWTH**

"Like housing, there's a bubble in higher education, and the only ones paying are recent entrants into the higher end labor market, which is evaporating faster than their entry."
–JOSEPH BECKMANN, SOMERVILLE SCHOOLS
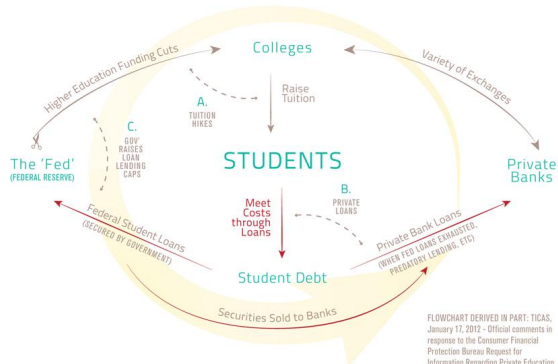
THE DOWNWARD SPRIAL OF RISING DEBT

A.
STATES AND THE FEDERAL RESERVE CUT PUBLIC PROGRAM BUDGETS. COLLEGES RAISE STUDENT TUITION TO SUPPLEMENT EVAPORATING SUPPORT: AN INSTITUTIONAL FAUX PAS.

2 million seniors aged 60+ in the US still owe student loan debt, totalling $36 bil.

B.
LENDERS ARE POPULARIZED AS SOLITARY SHARKS, BUT FOR BUBBLES TO FORM BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC COLLEGES, AS WELL AS FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT MUST PARTICIPATE.

A lender such as Sallie Mae profits more from students who can't make timely payments than from those who do.

C.
STUDENTS RECEIVE LOANS DIRECTLY FROM THE GOVERNMENT, THOSE LOAN SECURITIES ARE SOLD TO LARGE BANKS BASED ON A MARKET MODEL.

The intended purpose of student loans was to give lower income students access to higher education, increasing the amount of graduates in the US.
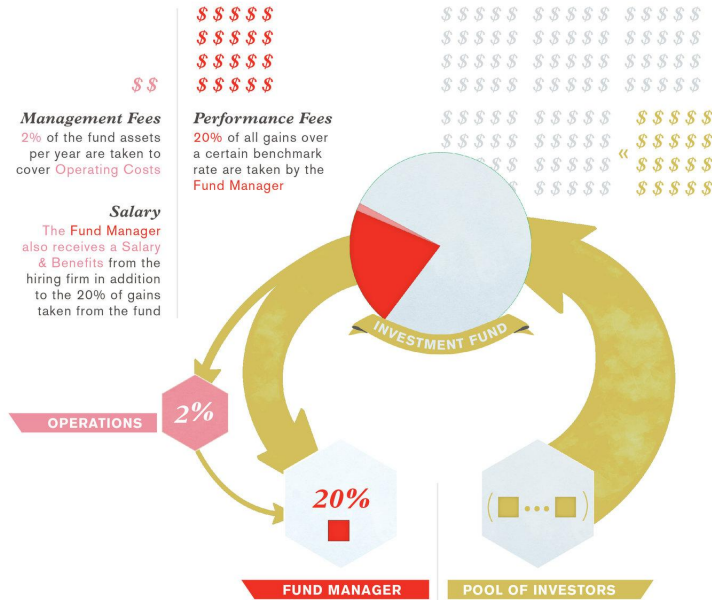
SOURCE: FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF NEW YORK

Colleges
Higher Education Funding Cuts
Raise Tuition
Variety of Exchanges
A. TUITION HIKES
C. GOV' RAISES LOAN LENDING CAPS
The 'Fed' (FEDERAL RESERVE)
STUDENTS
Meet Costs through Loans
B. PRIVATE LOANS
Private Banks
Federal Student Loans (SECURED BY GOVERNMENT)
Student Debt
Private Bank Loans (WHEN FED LOANS EXHAUSTED, PREDATORY LENDING, ETC)
Securities Sold to Banks

FLOWCHART DERIVED IN PART: TICAS, January 17, 2012 – Official comments in response to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Request for Information Regarding Private Education Loans and Private Educational Lenders

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Panel 2: The Carried Interest Loophole

THE CARRIED INTEREST LOOPHOLE

Simply stated, the carried interest loophole is the mistreatment of hedge fund and private equity fees as capital gains, rather than ordinary income.

Management Fees
2% of the fund assets per year are taken to cover Operating Costs

Performance Fees
20% of all gains over a certain benchmark rate are taken by the Fund Manager

Salary
The Fund Manager also receives a Salary & Benefits from the hiring firm in addition to the 20% of gains taken from the fund

INVESTMENT FUND

OPERATIONS **2%**

20%

FUND MANAGER

POOL OF INVESTORS

Ordinary income is taxed at a rate of up to 37%
Labeling fees as capital gains is a stretch, partly because the partners earn their fees by managing other people's money, not investing their own.

Investors Pay Fees
20% of annual gains are taken by the hedge fund's manager

Supply Capital
Investors supply the majority of capital that builds the investment fund

The difference of 17%…
The tax revenue loss from the carried interest loophole (which only benefits a handful of the ultra-rich) is estimated to be a whopping $18 billion per year.

TAX REVENUE LOSS FROM THE CARRIED INTEREST LOOPHOLE = $18 BILLION PER YEAR

(TEMPERATURE CHECK)

www.michaeljimage.com ©

OCCUPY SANDY

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- **The digital tactics you use and posts you create need to stand on their own and lift-up the work previously done with in-person tactics**

- **Visual design is an integral part of the digital environment. Visual/attention fatigue is a consistent challenge to overcome**

"...Don't just think about the subject matter; think also about, and in fact, primarily about, **the job that your content is doing for the reader or the viewer.** "

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SOCIAL PLATFORM REFRESHER

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<u>Facebook</u>
avg post half-life: **90 minutes**
(newsfeed)
- 68% of online Americans across all demographics
- 43% of US adults gain news here
- Algorithms play a significant role in post half-life & organic reach

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<u>Instagram</u>
avg post half-life: **24 hours**

- Most who use Ig daily also view stories
- ⅔ of users are 18–34
- Algorithms = least significant limiting factor
- 66.6% of Instagram posts include a hashtag

Org 2.0 presentations w/more Ig & other platform depth: Instagram, Do You Need It and What Should You Do With It? (Cabrera,) Intro to Tiktok (Wanjuki,) Whats App? What Works! (Miranda,) *and more!*

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Twitter

avg post half-life: **18 minutes**
- 24% of online adults in US
- Twitter = popular for politicians
- 40% of tweets include a hashtag
- Account engagement & follows = larger indicator than a hashtag for reach

Org 2.0 presentations w/more Tw depth: Twitter for Absolute Beginners (Huey,) Intermediate Twitter (Escalante, Levin,) Public Policy and Pop Culture on Social Media Without Being Boring (Periyasamy, O'Toole…) *and more!*

" **Organizing is leadership that enables people to turn <u>the resources they have</u> into the power they need to make the change they want.** "

—A Definition of Organizing

Source: Shea Sinnott and Peter Gibbs (2014), Organizing: People, Power, Change*

SOCIAL PLATFORM REFRESHER

- **Consider the central job** of your content is intended to do for the viewer. Limit each post to a single communication goal
- **Iterate, iterate, iterate posts:** iterate text, your quality visuals, etc. and always point back to the same central messages of your campaign
- **Publish your content to multiple platforms**—you've already made it, it'd be a shame not to do so

- **Visuals leave more of an imprint:** We're 65% more likely to remember info if it includes an image
- **Visual content in the forms** of infographics, follower photos & memes, promo of news coverage/ public awareness, etc. are among the most shared types
- **Tweets** w/visual content are 3 times more likely to get engagement; **Facebook** posts get more likes and comments; **Instagram** is widely popular w/youths and adults up to 34

- **Strategy:** without purpose, narrative, timing, and other strategic elements, you'll be doing your art a disservice.
- **Be realistic:** foreground the job your content is trying to do, concepts it represents, and reinforce the main messages of the campaign authentically
- **Think small, iterate, get feedback** on artwork before posting + incorporate it; use a common vocabulary across posts and platforms to help build presence & clarity

POINT BACK TO MESSAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN

DIGITAL
ENVIRONMENT

(Footprint)

CONSISTENT
INTENT

(Development)

VIEWER
EXPERIENCE

(Touch-Point)