



PROTEST: ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY IN SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITIES



Imani Barbarin, Disability Rights
Pennsylvania
Sey In, Arizona Center for Disability Law

OBJECTIVES

**I. DEFINE SOCIAL JUSTICE
ACTIVITIES**

II. BRIEF HISTORY ON PROTESTS

**III. INTERSECTIONALITY OF RACE
AND DISABILITY**

**IV. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE
ACCESSIBILITY**

V. QUESTIONS

DEFINING SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITIES

- In-person activities
 - Protests/Rallies
 - Sit-Ins
 - Political events
 - Round table forums
 - Volunteer work
 - Boycott
- Virtual events
 - Protests
 - Political events
 - Fundraising events
 - Social media presence



BRIEF HISTORY ON PROTESTS

504 Protests and Black Panther Sit-Ins (1977)

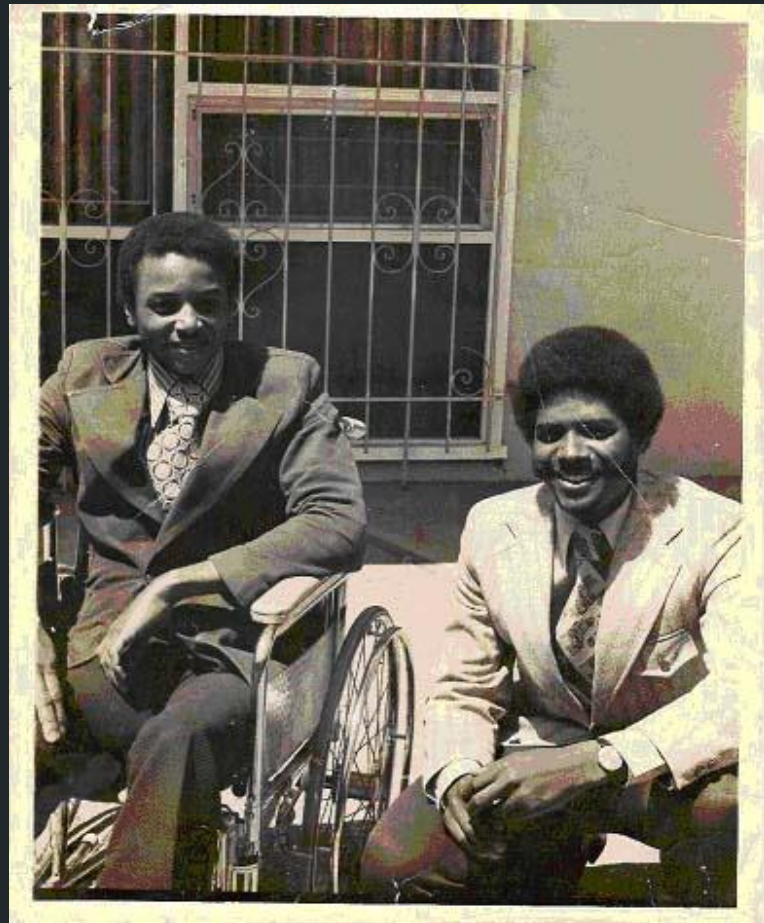
The Gang of 19 and ADAPT (1978)

Deaf President Now (1988)

Capitol Crawl (1990)

Women's March (2020)

BLM Protests (2020)





DISCUSSION OF RACE AND DISABILITY



All justice movements require the inclusion of disability and the disabled community as it is disability marks the bodies of other marginalized peoples. Racism, transphobia and queer-phobia in all its forms disable the people that experience it.

Inclusion of the disability community is a necessity, not a mere “ask.”

WHAT ARE THE STAKES?

- People with disabilities span every race, gender and sexual orientation and are erased in nearly every conversation—especially disabled people of color.
- Systemic oppression such as racism, police violence, systemic, environmental and medical racism all lead to disability.
- Ableism, or the interpersonal and structural bias that favors nondisabled bodies, has roots in every form of discrimination and unpacking how it affects your members and advocates can create a more inclusive environment.



**THE COMMUNICATIONS
OF INTERSECTIONALITY**





AFFIRMING THE DIVERSITY OF YOUR COMMUNITY AND ALLIES



- One of the simplest ways to show the breadth and power of your collective action is to affirm the other identities of those you are collaborating with. Understanding the language of intersectionality is just as important as understanding the intention behind it.

PREPPING INTERSECTIONAL COMMS

01 Ask for pronouns and how your collaborators identify socially.

01

03 Treat each person involved like an influencer who can speak to the unique experience of their community.

03

02 Ask for stories about how your mission interacts with their other identities.

02

04 Make sure leaders give collaborators the space to correct them when leaders are wrong.

04

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY (PHYSICAL SPACES)

- Communications plan
 - Avoid ableist language
 - Plan for effective communication (ASL, CART)
 - Schedule intermittent breaks
 - Peacekeeper training
- Site Design
 - Survey the spaces
 - Plan around transportation
- Offer accommodations
 - Loaner wheelchairs
 - Designated rest spaces
 - Setup First Aid Stations

Planning events

- Include individuals who are disabled in the event planning
- Think of accessibility like a menu that individuals can choose from rather than one or two options.
 - Quiet spaces
 - Accessible entrances
 - ASL/BASL
 - Image descriptions
 - Captions
 - Transcripts
 - Accessible evacuation plans



TIPS FOR INDIVIDUALS



- Plan for breaks if needed
- Bring a friend
- Go at your own pace
- Plan in case you have a medical emergency
- Bring masks, eyewear
- Bring a bag of essentials

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY (VIRTUAL SPACES)

Creating a virtual arm of an in-person collective action is an excellent way to allow those unable to attend personally to become involved in your action and mission.

People can participate in an awareness and boosting campaign from home and aid in the visibility of your activism.

It is important to plan ahead to make the most of your activism on the ground. A hashtag campaign is an excellent avenue for such participation.



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN—

LAUNCHING A HASHTAG

Launching a hashtag for a collective action is an effective way to consolidate communications and draw attention to your mission

Recognizing an opportunity and crafting messaging: A hashtag should generally be under 40 characters and be specific enough to be applicable to the community you're hoping to engage but general enough that others feel invited to engage and tell their own stories. The first letter of every word in your hashtag should be capitalized. (Example: #BlackLivesMatter)

Hopefully the hashtag you create will be original enough to have never been used before.

Schedule tweets that model your ideal format ahead of time for the launch of your hashtag. You will want to use Hootsuite and schedule tweets for 10 minutes apart during the first 2 hours of your launch. Schedule at least 15-20 posts for that time period. The first post should be a call for others to participate.

VIRTUAL SPACES: VISUAL ASSETS



- Visual assets are important, not only because they draw people into the movement, but because they are favored by social media algorithms. Likewise, utilizing new functions like Reels on Instagram or Fleets on Twitter can bump the visibility of your content as the platform advertises new features heavily as they are being launched.
- With that in mind, alt text, image descriptions and captions should be curated for content created before any in-person activity.
- These should be succinct and accurately portray the media to be shared.



TIMING OF DIGITAL ACTION



Launch hashtags during a slow news cycle. That can be difficult to do in today's 24-hour news cycle. I choose weekends in the morning because rarely does political news happen over the weekend and when journalists pitch stories in their Monday meetings, they generally choose things that have trended over social media over the weekend.

RESOURCES TO MAKE CONTENT ACCESSIBLE



- [W3C Accessibility Standards Overview](#)
- [University Of Rochester Social Media Guide](#)
- [Rooted in Rights Accessibility Guide](#)

KEY TAKE-AWAYS



1. We need each other! Disability and racial advocacy requires collaboration across marginalization and historically this has led to gains in civil rights.
2. All justice movements must be intersectional and as such require accessibility.
3. Creating a robust social media arm of any in-person action allows for inclusivity and the sharing of a movement's goal and mission.

QUESTIONS



THANKS!

For more information,
please contact

Sey In, ACDL,
sin@azdisabilitylaw.org

Imani Barbarin, DRP,
[ibarbarin@disabilityrights
pa.org](mailto:ibarbarin@disabilityrights
pa.org)