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## A Theory of Hashtag Hijacking

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This article presents the theoretical framework for hashtag hijacking, a subversive communicative strategy that disrupts and challenges dominant discourses of hashtag activism on social media sites. Drawing from the literature on new media, digital activism, and persuasion, our theory shows how hashtag hijacking can reroute and reappropriate efforts made by media activists and sources who occupy positions of power. Tracking the evolution of #MyNYPD as a working exemplar, we explicate how hashtag activism and hijacking develop and foster two parallel, yet disparate discourses in the new media landscape.

*Key words: Communication theory, new media, hashtag hijacking, hashtag activism, social media activism*