



How Social Media Propels Social Movements

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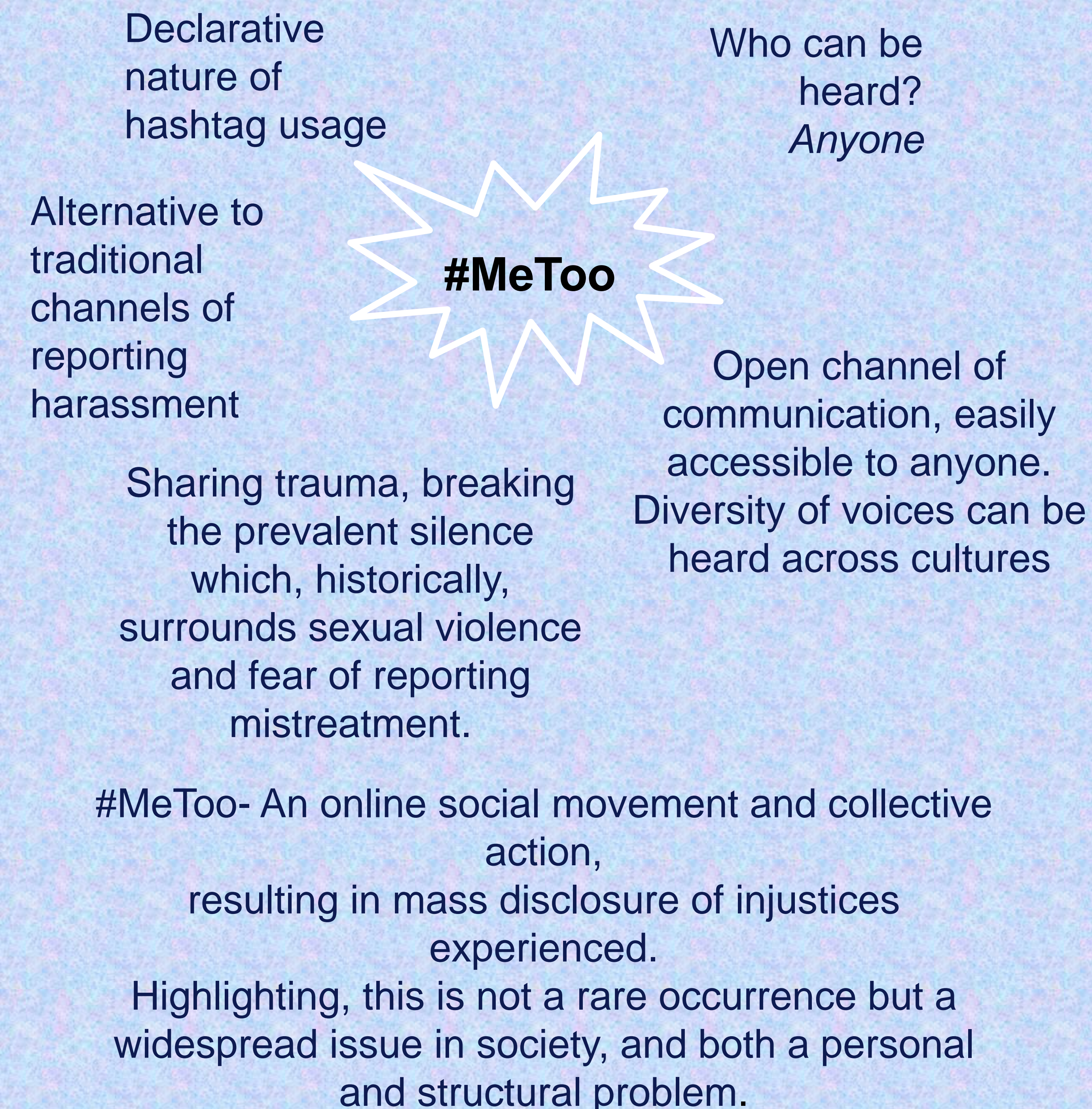
Introduction

- The history of humanity is one of growth, change and development through discovery and innovation in science and technology
- Social media allows for community-based input and content sharing. It has drastically changed social dynamics of how personal information is shared, how we engage socially online, how businesses function and even how we define community and activism.
 - Social media can assist social movements and collective action. Causes like #MeToo, have encouraged and facilitated important global conversations about power, sexual violence and cultural attitudes. While being a communicative, organizational tool, promoting positive social change, in pursuit of equity for all people.

Social Media and #MeToo

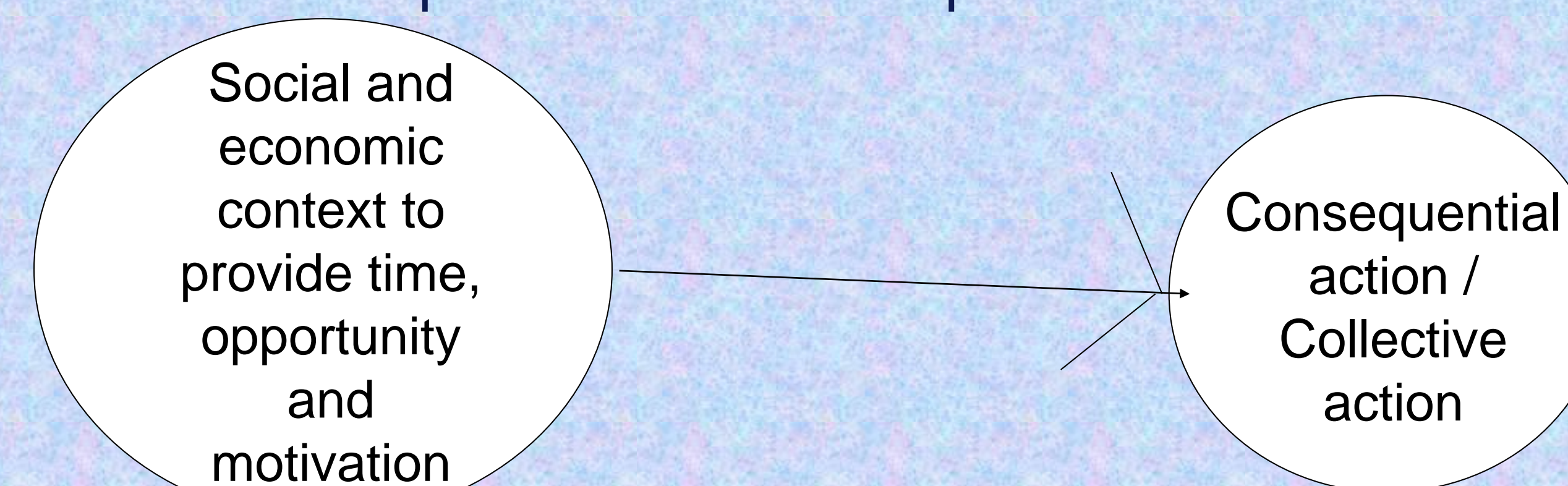
- 70% of Americans use at least one social media platform daily.
- 24 hours after Alyssa Milano's initial #MeToo post, #MeToo was posted over 12 million times.
- October 15, 2017- September 30, 2018, #MeToo and variations (e.g. #JeSuisCharlie) were used in 74 countries.
- 29% of tweets from these dates were in languages other than English. A message resonating across cultural and language divides, and a global concern (Bogen et al., 2019).

#MeToo as Social Protest



Why Use Social Media?

- Unfortunately, rational thought, grievances, sympathy or compassion are insufficient in themselves to promote lasting social changes. Context and planning are crucial.
- Social media can achieve 'popular mobilization' by
- Reaching maximum numbers of people
 - Sharing an evocative message to compel responses
 - Provide organization and resources to channel responses into consequential action.



Activism and Community

Using #MeToo has expanded understanding of activism from being confined to in-person, event related activity, to also encompass how we communicate on social media. Reinforcing the message that everyone can do something to raise awareness and support for an issue.

#MeToo is a collective identity existing primarily in the digital world, based on shared values and objectives.

- Strong predictor of participation= extent and strength of group identity. A person must recognize and embrace their membership in group identity
- #MeToo promoted awareness of an issue, providing information, a space to connect advocates, survivors to support and resources.
- Communication through social media has been vital to help people connect and reinforce this sense of group identity.
- Social media has allowed for alternative narratives to be heard rather than relying on traditional media. These dominant media frames typically reflect current social norms and systems, rather than challenging them.

References

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