

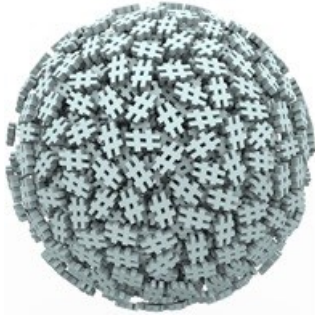
# Going beyond clicktivism with the #Baltimoreriots?

By Leigh Andrews

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NEWSWATCH: Hashtags are nothing more than armchair activism, some say. Lately, more attention is given to how the media reports on big news items that become nothing more than hashtags in our minds...

That's why the *Mail & Guardian Online* writes about ['#Baltimoreriots: How the media fuels the racist mindset'](#).



It's a hashtag world... © lqconcept – [123RF.com](#)

The article states that "the coverage of the protests following the death of Freddie Gray has irresponsibly perpetuated the 'angry black male' stereotype," with looting and rioting in the streets following the 25-year-old's funeral.

[AJR adds](#) even US President Obama has "questioned the intense media focus" on the negative (destruction of property) over the numerous peaceful protests in the calm before the violence erupted.

And it's not the first time citizens have taken a stand on social media based on how traditional media has covered an event.

The *Wall Street Journal* reports that "we've heard about the power of social media many times before-from the Arab Spring to the documentation of police brutality all over America." They dubbed their article [Baltimore Riots: Social media and the crisis on my doorstep](#), because when used correctly, "technology can provide context in a crisis" and make it that much more real, not just something you experience on a screen.

So real, in fact, that celebrities like comedian [Cedric the Entertainer](#) and [Rihanna](#) are now using social media to add their voice in reaction to the world's most trending hashtags at the moment [#Baltimoreriots](#) and [#prayforNepal](#), [reports EyeWitness News](#).

But is that enough to really make a difference? Click here for more on [how the media covered the Baltimore riots](#).

## ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh\_Andrews.

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