



Political celebrities

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In the realm of social media and fast access to the internet, there are two major topics millennials often discuss daily: celebrities and politics. With people aligning their views to their favorite celebrities, people are often criticized for being followers.

There's nothing wrong to agree with celebrities. Just like any credible news source, people who are choosing to listen to their favorite actors or artists when it comes to politics should still conduct their own research on the topic.

Examples of successful celebrity activists are Angelina Jolie and Leonardo DiCaprio. Both have both successfully advocated for environmental and charitable organizations.

Jolie wrote in a New York Times opinion article that policies surrounding refugees should be based on facts, not fear. Not only has she been a human right's activist for most of her life, she has also served as a special envoy for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It might be safe to say that she is definitely a credible person to listen to when it comes to politics.

An example of someone not to listen to is Kim Kardashian. She is not expected to say anything of political importance. Although Kardashian has stayed away from politics, by recently tweeting an image in response to Donald Trump's refugee ban with a simple caption saying "Statistics," she entered herself into the fray.



Kim Kardashian West
@KimKardashian

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Statistics

Number of Americans killed annually by:	
Islamic jihadist immigrants ¹ :	2
Far right-wing terrorists ¹ :	5
All Islamic jihadist terrorists (including US citizens) ¹ :	9
Armed toddlers ² :	21
Lightning ³ :	31
Lawnmowers ⁴ :	69
Being hit by a bus ⁴ :	264
Falling out of bed ⁴ :	737
Being shot by another American ⁵ :	11,737

¹10-year average of terrorist attacks "Deadly Attacks Since 9/11," New America, <http://securitydata.newamerica.net/extremists/deadly-attacks.html>
²www.snopes.com/toddlers-killed-americans-terrorists/
³10-year average of deaths by lightning, NOAA, www.nws.noaa.gov/om/hazstats/resources/weather_fatalities.pdf
⁴10-year average, Underlying Cause of Death 2014, CDC, <http://wonder.cdc.gov/>
⁵10-year average 2005-2014, CDC, Injury Prevention & Control: Data & Statistics (WISQARS™) www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_injury_reports.html

RETWEETS: 203,166 LIKES: 384,178

The image came from a study performed by the Cato Institute. Many people began to respond to her tweet, praising and agreeing with her while also making it to the front page of Yahoo’s website that same day.

As simple as the tweet was, we now know where Kim’s thoughts are in regard to Trump and his refugee ban. But that’s it. Outside of the single page of statistics that she provided, we shouldn’t expect to rely on her political views.

Mark Wahlberg said that celebrities should keep their political opinions to themselves because they have no real understanding of the issues faced by others. But celebrities have a voice too. They might not completely understand the situations “everyday” people go through, but they are prominent figures with a voice.

Actors like Jesse Williams emphasize the importance of equality. Williams produced a documentary about Black Lives Matter and was awarded the humanitarian award. He is another great example of an actor-activist who can be viewed as a role model.

There are celebrities who are credible and others who have no reason to delve into politics. These people have their own thoughts, opinions and a right to freedom of speech.

Celebrities inform the uninformed on issues that matter. When we listen to the right ones, differences can be made.