



*Social  
Movements*  
FOR GOOD

How Companies and Causes  
Create Viral Change

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DERRICK FELDMANN

WILEY





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To Paige and Blair, I can't wait to see how you will change this world for  
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# Preface

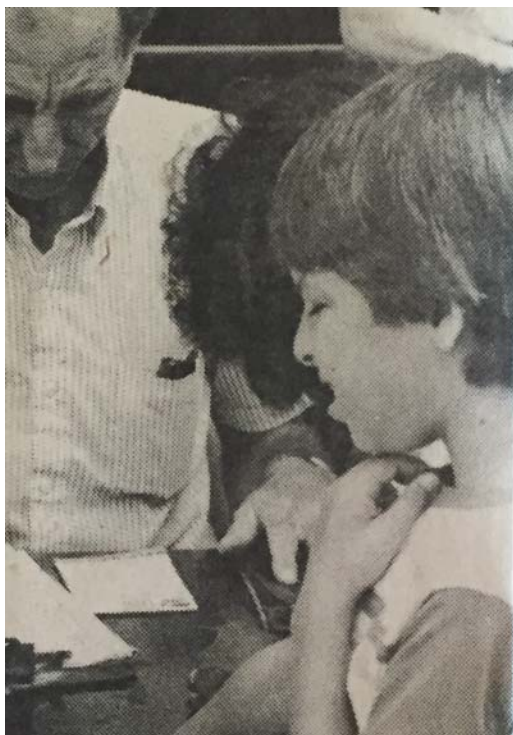
The date was May 25, 1986. I was eight years old. My mom and dad came into my room to take our family to Springfield, Illinois, for something called Hands Across America. Traveling 100 miles in the family car, I knew nothing about what we were going to do, be a part of, or even what it was for.

That day, for 15 minutes, my dad, mom, sister, and I joined hands with more than 6.5 million other Americans across the country. We donated \$10 to reserve our spot in line, and our donation, combined with others, raised more than \$34 million to alleviate famine in Africa and fight hunger and homelessness in the United States.

This was my first social movement for good.

Looking back, I'm extremely thankful to my mom and dad for bringing me there. That experience influenced how I look at cause work and helped make me who I am today.

Social movements are very much a part of our culture. At some point, we have all participated in one of these movements—as donors, as activists, and as promoters of these important events that make



**FIGURE P.1 Registering for Hands Across America with my Mother—Annette Feldmann**

change happen. It's hard to ignore the many movements happening in our society. They enthrall us. Our friends and family care passionately about something and by virtue of our relationship, so do you. These movements matter.

From that summer day in 1986 when I joined hands with 6.5 million other individuals for Hands Across America to 2014's ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, I can't fully recall the number of movements that I have been part of or have touched my life.

Looking back and examining the movements I've participated in, I started to ask myself some questions. Why did I get so excited about that particular cause at that specific time? Why did I do something or take an action then that I would never think of doing now? Why did I donate money during that movement, and did it make a difference?

All of these questions that I started pondering combined with the questions about social movements I hear daily from fundraisers,



nonprofit leaders, corporate executives, activists, and public servants have become the impetus for this book.

My team and I have spent the past six years researching how Millennials (individuals born from 1980 to 2000) get involved with causes and what factors trigger and influence their behavior. I realized it was time to look at social movements today to try to answer some of these questions. Rather than focus on one generation over another, I wanted to learn how and why these movements start and inspire so many people to participate in them.

This book examines social movements that have occurred in the past 10 years—movements that have inspired so many people to act for good, champion a cause, and build awareness for an issue. The goal of the book is to help organizations and companies, social movement builders, and entrepreneurs who share a common goal of inspiring others to act for good by providing them with the stories, people, approaches, and strategies for successful social movement building. My hope is to provide the real context to the movements of today so that those who read this book can be compelled to change their methods and cultivate successful movements of their own.

Of course, the first thing you should know is that every social movement is unique. No relevant social movement can fully mirror one from the past. Because movements are about people and not a theory and approach, it's the people who drive the agenda, outcome, and success. Therefore, this book is not intended to be an outline of a path but rather a descriptor of what has been proven to work for so many leaders who have forged the road ahead to create social movements that address important issues in our communities, our country, and our world.

You may be wondering *why*.

*Why* study movements at all?

Social movements represent a pure opportunity for change. Movements unite us. And sometimes movements even divide us. But the movements that are built by a community of people who believe in the same thing have one goal/serve a purpose: to help themselves and others like them, or to help those they may never meet but want to ensure they have opportunities like them. These movements represent the causes shaping our society and what we describe as “good.”

Every organization in the world wants to create a movement behind their brand, cause, or product. But not everyone will get the

opportunity—or, quite honestly, should—if they aren’t willing to embed within their movement building the common characteristics of social movements for good. Essentially, understanding how the social movement builders of today have been successful will help those that aspire to lead people from cause enthusiasts to cause activists and beyond.

This book opens with a review of what constitutes a “social movement for good.” I compare “movements for good” to other movements to clarify the types of movements discussed throughout the book. I also want to talk about empathy and the role it plays in our society and individual response to social movements.

Following each chapter you will see a “viewpoint” from a social movement builder who I spent some time with. The purpose of each viewpoint is to see how one person was able to create and ignite the movement he or she built, what he or she learned, and what advice he or she would offer individuals interested in creating a movement on their own. The viewpoints are also based on the time we (myself and my research team at Achieve) spent looking at social movements objectively. This research enabled us to approach each social movement builder with a series of in-depth questions that led to the viewpoint and profile in this book.

As you’ll see, the third chapter is focused on the challenges most social movement builders have with this kind of work to let the community own the movement and move to the side to allow the people the course and opportunity to make it their own. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the marketing, narrative, and symbolism that are often tied to social movements in an effort to inspire action.

It is hard to ignore what companies are doing today to inspire social movements of their own. The companies profiled in this book go beyond checkbook philanthropy and focus on being part of the community that affects their customers and employees. Through business approaches focused on products and cause marketing to creating some of the unique programs for employees, Chapter 6 highlights the people who were the real pioneers of social movements for good through business.

Chapter 7 focuses on international social movements and why and how they have received so much traction in the United States, especially with younger demographics. The chapter also explores the international NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) that have been

able to effectively show stories of inequality throughout the world to inspire action.

Chapter 8 highlights the creative approaches to some social movements. In this chapter, successful campaigns that have had successful responses from the public are highlighted in addition to their approach and strategy to reaching so many people through imagery, video, and other creative assets. The chapter also details the concepts and ideas behind the creative so as to reach movement status.

Chapter 9 focuses on collegiate-level social movements. More than 20 million young people attended college in 2015. Because of the sheer size of the population in college today, a great opportunity exists for organizations looking to build momentum around an issue. From dance marathons to on-campus organizing, this chapter covers how campus leaders are raising support and awareness for some of the biggest causes in the country.

Chapter 10 examines how most of the causes and companies highlighted in this book leverage peer engagement. From initial introductions to the resources offered, social movements use peers effectively to garner financial support for an issue.

Peer engagement also plays a huge role in how we share information, which led to the final chapter, Chapter 11, on hashtag activism. Using social networks to share concepts, ideas, and actions while attaching them to a common thread and network allows a social movement to build. However, we also cover in this chapter how hashtag activism needs certain components to be effective in tipping the network of people into a true movement.

As you embark upon your own personal journey of social movement building for good, remember a few of things:

First, social movement building is never about you and your personal achievements. Rather, it is always about the people who desire to create change for something bigger than what they are.

Second, social movement building requires resources, and not the ones you may be thinking about. Today's social movement builders often start with humble budgets, but an abundance of passion, drive, and an unquenchable thirst to enact change and solve a problem.

Third, social movement building is not equal to social networking. Social media is an opportunity for social movements to connect and

grow, but it takes people involving with each other to maintain and build a real social movement for good.

Finally, social movement building for good isn't easy. There are a lot of causes, ideas, and marketing schemes that are vying for attention. And in all of that information out there for every regular person to see, hear, and feel, your movement for good could be buried. But don't give up. A movement needs people to spread it, and it will take every network and contact you have to be willing to share it with every network and contact they have. You may never get the viral traction you desire, but in the end, if any cause or company is able to bring anyone together for good, I think that is a noble idea and one worth celebrating.

So here's to social movements for good. People are waiting, so let's get started.

# Acknowledgments

One of the truest statements I've heard came from Marc Roberge, frontman for the band O.A.R., at MCON 2015. During his onstage interview, he said that a friend of his has a tattoo that says “**I get to.**” That statement pretty much sums up the journey I have been on for the last seven years—a journey that has been truly remarkable. And I owe this journey to so many people.

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## About the Author

Derrick Feldmann is a sought-after speaker, researcher, and adviser in cause engagement. He founded Achieve to help organizations address their most pressing issues through research and data-driven, strategically designed fundraising and awareness campaigns.

Derrick is the lead researcher and creator of the Millennial Impact Project, a multiyear study of how the next generation supports causes. This ongoing study has been cited in hundreds of publications, including *Forbes*, *TIME*, *Fast Company*, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Times*. Through this research, as well as in his role at Achieve, Derrick has worked with companies and organizations such as AT&T, Facebook, BMW, PBS, and the Case Foundation to understand how the next generation of donors, activists, and employees are redefining cause work.

He is the founder of MCON, the nation's premier conference on Millennials and social good, which draws speakers from for- and non-profit organizations across the world. MCON explores the question of