Photo of the Day |



Students cut through the Student Union Mall on a chilly October morning. The weather has gotten colder as fall approaches. PHOTO BY MARCO DIAS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

MAKING A STATEMENT ISN'T "DOING SOMETHING"

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Actions speak louder than words. But even though scrawling a statement on your notes app and posting it on the Internet is technically an action, it amounts to little more than words.

If you've been active on social media, especially in these past few weeks, you've probably seen some variation of a notes app statement from a celebrity or organization — sometimes literally on the notes app, or sometimes in a small white box against a solid color background, with a very serious black Arial font. More than likely, you've at least seen one reposted on four out of five of your friends' stories, showcasing vague quotes alluding to the unmentioned offender's sinister nature.

I've come to hate these. On Pop Base's announcement of a celebrity's declaration, I see Twitter (X, I guess) quotes commending their bravery and roll my eyes. I can respect the intention and the undeniable ability of these statements to globalize a situation that deserves attention, but I ultimately can't get behind most of them because they're no more than virtue signaling — behavior that shows off one's "good character" for public approval rather than to actually serve a cause.

About two weeks ago, a flurry of these posts arrived after Ed Sheeran dropped Macklemore from his tour over a pro-Palestine speech Macklemore made on stage. Every music artist shared their two cents. Your favorite artist's favorite artist probably made a post. Some of them were informative, highlighting the suffering of the Palestinian people and ways to contribute to the fight against Israel's genocide; others merely condemned Sheeran, regurgitated insults about him and simply said "Free Palestine." The latter did not divulge into what Sheeran had done wrong or why talking about the situation was important; they just called him an ugly leprechaun and wished him to never find his pot of gold.

Statements like these don't actually serve the purpose of implicating the criticized individual — they just make the poster look good. I'm not advocating against sympathy or for silence, but consider why these people are speaking out when they have no relation to the situation: it's because they want you to think they're a good person! They want to publicly identify with the "good and moral" side without putting in any effort. Fans will make lists of artists who spoke out and tell you to listen to them purely on that basis. News articles will circulate their words and propel them into the limelight. In the eyes of the public, they gain morality points for doing nothing but emphasizing how moral they are.

Less significantly, most of these statements arrive before nuance. Situations develop and people change, but once a statement is released, it can't be edited. People want to appear right, so they stand ten toes down on what they posted, allowing nothing to progress past the initial condemnation phase. Luckily, their statements never need to be adapted because they only mention how they feel about a situation, not its facts, consequences or even its victims. And people will continue to engage with these statements because they like feeling as though they've chosen the right side of history.

Look, I get it — you, the common person who reposts these statements from the celebrities or quote accounts you follow, want your followers to know that you aren't racist. You won't stand for homophobia, you don't support genocide and you're firmly for women's rights. You don't even really notice who posted the statement you're putting on your story, only that the quote you've picked from one of the seven slides with one sentence each on them represents how you, too, feel about this scandal.

I implore you to do more. Realistically, I don't expect you to donate to a hundred charities or go out and picket. I really don't expect you to even get up from your chair. Instead of reposting someone else's words, use your own — and don't spend them all making angry jokes and vague remarks about a broad issue. Channel your experiences. Write seriously and reflect on the news! Let your followers know you have morals and substance. I saw a friend repost a news article about the Cornell 7 case and offer a short paragraph of her own perspective, relating it to her experiences and knowledge, and that was the most informed, deliberate statement I'd seen thus far.

Is it better to speak up or to let issues die? Speak up. But when we mass-repost celebrity statements that don't match the gravity of the issue and intend only to bolster the image of the person who wrote them, we send issues into the "cancel culture" label and our efforts end up doing nothing. These statements make words ring hollow. They dilute the situation's seriousness and people forget what they're fighting for.



Ed Sheeran in front of the London Terrace apartment building in New York City. Sheeran shared a life update on Instagram on April 28, 2026.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @TEDDYSPHOTOS ON INSTAGRAM

Macklemore performing in Orange, France. The artist performed at Théâtre Antique d'Orange on Aug. 29, 2026

PHOTO COURTESY OF @MACKLEMORE ON INSTAGRAM

