

## **BEGINNER GUIDE TO PHONE FILMING AT A PROTEST**

### **Preparation:**

1. **RESEARCH** and understand the issue before you go. Know the route of the protest, organizations involved, when and where there will be speeches, what are the key issues are and why. Try to connect with organizers to get more info, setup interviews and have them share your video afterwards. Know the impact of the video you're looking to create, why you are creating it, who you are looking to reach, so you can be more focused throughout the process.
2. **WRITE DOWN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS** and have them with you when filming. For example: (A) Please introduce yourself; name, where you're from, organization you're with. (B) What's going on here today and why? (C) Tell me more about why this issue is important to you and share any personal or moving stories. (D) what you'd like to be the outcome. (E) How can people find out more and get involved? (F) Anything else you'd like to share?
3. **PACK YOUR BAG:** Fully charged cellphone / camera, charger cable, charged battery pack / extra batteries, headphones, snacks, water, notebook and pens.
4. **SAFETY:** Tell trusted friends/family what you'll be doing if it seems like an arrestable action and make sure they know your full name and date of birth and when to start searching the jails for you if they don't hear from you, write down their phone number on your skin with permanent marker so if you get arrested you can call them from jail. **LOCK YOUR PHONE!** Have a pin or pattern style lock to your phone, **DO NOT USE** fingerprint, face unlock or other biometrics, the police can force you to put your finger on your phone to unlock and then gain access to your videos in jail. Setup your security settings so your phone locks automatically after 30 seconds and when you turn off your screen.
5. **Optional Cloud Video Backup:** Use an online storage app like Google Drive or Dropbox or pCloud and go into the settings so your photos and videos are automatically backed up using mobile data. If you have limited data you may want to use the 'wifi only' option.

### **During:**

1. **SETTINGS:** Filming and having your screen on will drain your battery quick, turn down brightness as much as you can so you can still see what's going on and consider putting your phone on airplane mode (or power saving mode) to make your battery last longer, or at least to silent so calls or vibrations don't interrupt your interviews audio.
2. **ETHICS:** Ask permission before filming someone personally, tell them about what you're doing and why to gain trust. Be aware of state repression and police will try to use your footage against you. Don't film illegal activity that can get people in trouble, focus on the cause and what will inspire others to act.
3. **FILMING:** Keep phone horizontal/landscape when filming. 2 hands on the phone and keep the shot stable and your movement smooth.
4. **AUDIO:** Sound is more important than the video, be aware that the microphone is on the bottom of your phone, don't rub or tap it with your fingers, when recording an interview get close to the person and far away from any other loud noises. When recording a presenter that is using a microphone, try to be close to the speaker to get highest quality sound.
5. **REVIEW:** When you have breaks during an action, review the most important videos you've recorded and make sure it looks and sounds good, plug in your headphones and check to make sure the sound from your interviews is good. Try to make improvements as you go.
6. **COVERAGE:** Make sure to get wide shots of the action showing the largest # of people. Close ups on signs and banners to help convey the messaging. Medium shots of friendly participants.

**www.Witness.org/Resources** - great website to learn the basics to protest documentation

**www.NoFilmSchool.com** - more advanced filmmaking website but search for beginner articles

**www.NLG.org/know-your-rights** – National Lawyers Guild, know your rights. Don't talk to the police, let them know you have the right to remain silent and that you don't consent to a search. Your phone and data is your property and they have no right to it. They gray area begins when you livestream or post videos publicly, then they can subpoena for your footage as evidence in court.

Workshop provided by: **www.LiberatedLens.org** & **www.FreemanSullivan.com**  
*join us every Monday at 7pm in the basement of the Omni for our open film collective meetup*