Twitter Thread by Rebellion Baby



Rebellion Baby
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John Sullivan / “#ActivistJohn” / "#JaydenX" Update

Our first thread about John was intended to help protect leftist protest communities from his harmful behavior. Since John’s little stunt at the Capitol during the DC #Insurrection, we have more to talk about.

(1/43)

This is a hella long thread... TL;DR: While it’s still unclear if John's end goal is chaos and confusion or if this is simply a side effect of shameless grifting — it’s clear that he continues to be a threat to protester safety whether he’s on the ground or online.

(2/43)

Frantically cleaning up John’s messes continues to be a waste of time and energy in the nationwide movement for Black lives. So let’s continue to stay ahead of him, establish a national lockout, and wrap up this weird saga so we can get back to work, baby!

(3/43)

Covered in this thread:

1. General updates (since our 11/26 thread)
2. John’s harmful tactics/behaviors
3. What happened last week (DC, 1/6)
4. Next steps

If you haven’t read our 11/26 thread about John, we recommend doing so for full context.

https://t.co/eIyK0tr1oW

(4/43)

\U0001f6a8#SeattleProtests Community Alert:

We have reason to believe that a likely infiltrator/agent provocateur by the name of John Sullivan, or \u201cActivist John,\u201d is attempting to insert himself in the Seattle protest community.

(sorry babe, long thread)

(1/23) #seattleprotestcomms pic.twitter.com/MuxQ74XCJo

— Rebellion Baby (@RebellionBaby) November 26, 2020

1■General Updates:

Shortly after our 11/26 thread, Seattle protesters made it clear that John is not welcome at our actions or in our online spaces. He later changed his main account names from “Activist X” and “Activist John” to “Activist Jayden” and “Jayden X.”

(5/43)

One of John’s accounts gained over 10K (obviously purchased) Instagram followers almost overnight and began interacting with protesters in #LA, who turned him away as well. (John is still claiming on socials to be based in Seattle even though he was never here.)

(6/43)

While John has complained about accusations against him, he has been unable to answer for his reckless opsec, grifting/profiteering, self-promotion, sabotage/leaking of community actions, contradictory social media activity, or his involvement with the far-right.

(7/43)

Thanks to the numerous comrades in #SLC, #PDX, #DC, #Seattle, #NYC, and #LA who have reached out to tell us about their interactions with John, we have a better idea of his MO and how we can continue to keep him out of leftist protest scenes for everyone’s safety.

(8/43)

2■ John’s harmful tactics/behaviors that leftist protesters should be aware of:

1. Building mutuals as a form of credibility
2. Reckless group chats with poor opsec/infosec
3. Fixation on "spicy" actions, trauma porn
4. Grifting, mishandling of protester info

(9/43)

1. Building Mutuals:

John is continuing to burn through new accounts, shed and develop aliases, and is still recklessly putting leftist protesters at risk. (When we say “John” is doing this, we’re more than confident that a small team is helping him.)

(10/43)

John follows dozens of community members at once — including but not limited to local restaurants, protesters with small followings, protest supporters, streamers, and organizers.

(11/43)

This is intended to help cement “credibility” within communities and give the appearance of having many mutuals with anyone who comes across his profile.

(12/43)

2. Reckless Group Chats:

John has added people to signal/telegram chats — sometimes containing hundreds of people — with no vetting processes. Any serious protester will tell you that this behavior is suspicious and dangerous. Poor vetting allows fash, LE, and even …

(13/43)

… well-intentioned folks with poor judgement to have access to sensitive info — putting everyone in the group at risk. In secure group chats, there have been instances where John has leaked info about actions. A comrade from PDX shared their experiences with us:

(14/43)

And then there’s this bizarre situation where John fucks up in a Signal group chat and members discover that he is pretending to be another person to boost his own credibility. John plays dumb, specifically "baffled," when he's caught.

(15/43)

3. Fixation on "Spicy" Actions, Trauma Porn

This one’s tricky. For transparency, the Rebellion Baby team supports a broad diversity of protest tactics, including the smashy and spicy kind. We don’t peace-police, and we believe in people over property.

(16/43)

But John’s social media content is made almost ENTIRELY of footage of riots, destruction, violence, and most concerning — incriminating footage of protesters. There is barely any mention of mutual aid, ideology/theory, collaboration with other activists, …

(17/43)

… or community engagement. While this can be chalked up to clickbait and clout-chasing, it’s important to note that this bizarre emphasis on chaotic scenes supports scary narratives consistent with far-right fear mongering.

(18/43)

John has also pressed newly-acquainted protesters about their “radical” views or painted them as militant, inviting them to join “militias” or firearms trainings. This behavior strikes many protesters as an attempt to bait them into making incriminating statements.

(19/43)

The other overwhelming theme of John’s social media presence is self-promotion and monetary gain. Which brings us back to Insurgence USA, which is problematic in a few ways.

(20/43)

4. Grifting and Mishandling of Protester Info:

John’s “Insurgence USA" site is still thought to primarily be another desperate attempt for monetary gain and credibility. Most of his site content is ripped off from other online resources without credit attribution.

(21/43)

In early-December, the site had a shiny new page called “Bloc Gear Collective” that John promotes on Instagram. As if it wasn't weird and grifty enough to begin with, we also received reports of protesters being doxxed after visiting this site.

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At that point in time, while the shop and donate pages linked to secure external pages, the site itself was not secured with an SSL certificate. A certificate has since been purchased, probably for purpose of ass-covering.

(23/43)

This means that any private and personal info submitted through the contact and newsletter signup forms was at risk of interception by malicious third parties before the certificate was purchased. This includes names, emails, and phone numbers.

(24/43)

Any serious activist would know better than to collect private and personal information in such an unsafe way. And John should especially know all about that, considering that he likes to brag about his experience in cybersecurity.

(25/43)

So now that we've reacquainted ourselves with John and his bizarre behavior, let's talk about what he did in DC and the implications it has for protester safety.

(26/43)

3■ What Happened Last Week

CW: gun violence

On 1/6, John was present and enthusiastically participating in the DC Insurrection. He streamed himself breaking into the Capitol with Trump supporters, as well as the shooting of Ashli Babbitt.

https://t.co/1F6b7l5GuF

(27/43)

> Activist John storming the Capital maskless and standing over a woman and recording her bleed to death is weirdly unsurprising. pic.twitter.com/aAN5zzdANh
>
> — Dublin (@DublinPDX) January 7, 2021

Soon after, John made a shocking appearance on CNN's @AC360 with @AndersonCooper, where he introduced himself as a blm/antifascist activist — a claim that would obviously be denied by leftists from multiple cities who have met him.

https://t.co/GKtlldazV0

(28/43)

> Fucking shocked to see none other than grifter and opp John Sullivan AKA Activist John go on CNN and describe the death of the woman who was shot in the capitol. pic.twitter.com/rvJ04josEH
>
> — max curtis (@MaxGeopolitics) January 7, 2021