

Don't let it be just this day's hashtag bandwagon

Samantha Malott/Moscow-Pullman Daily News editorial board

As more athletes continue to kneel during the playing of the national anthem before games - a move started by San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick and Seahawks cornerback Jeremy Lane to bring awareness to the mistreatment of African Americans in the U.S. - another of Seattle's players is worried the message behind such protests is getting lost.

In a statement to media two weeks ago, the Seahawks' Richard Sherman said, "You have players that are trying to take a stand and trying to be aware of social issues and try to make a stand and increase people's awareness and put a spotlight on it and they're being ignored. Whether they're taking a knee or whether they're locking arms, they're trying to bring people together and unite them for a cause."

But, as with most things in today's world, trends, movements and stories get hyped up and become social media buzz words for a day or at their peak, a few weeks.

Then that spotlight begins to fade and all that's left is a faint memory of conversations around the water cooler and trending hashtags on Twitter.

Social media has made it easy for people to express their feelings and opinions on an issue, and connect with those who agree or disagree.

But the double-edged sword with such freedom is that something new is always waiting on the sideline to take over the No. 1 spot.

That seems to be what Sherman has realized. He wants the world to recognize that the problem for which these players are coming together can't be ignored.

"The last couple days a couple more guys have gotten shot and killed in the middle of the street. More videos have come out of guys getting killed, and I think people are still missing the point. The reason these guys are kneeling, the reason we're locking arms is to bring people together to make people aware that this is not right. It's not right for people to get killed in the street," Sherman said.

Whether you choose to post about it on social media, bring it up around the dinner table or spark a debate with colleagues, the important thing is to remember the reason behind it.

These are real people, real stories and real consequences, not just another bandwagon to jump on.