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EDITORIAL: #METOO: A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE 'WHERE TO FOR #METOO' DEBATE

The #MeToo movement gained prominence in 2017 with the Harvey Weinstein sexual abuse case, which triggered many celebrities to accept the hashtag and tweet about their experiences of sexual harassment. Ultimately, this spread to the general public and many women started to openly tweet and talk about the harassment and abuse they endured during their lifetimes, which in some cases (Weinstein included) resulted in legal persecution and loss of jobs for the perpetrators of sexual harassment. The movement soon achieved international recognition and became a global movement of women talking about harassment and fighting the prejudice of the post-feminist argument of all battles being won. Whilst the movement started in the US, it soon spread around the globe and achieved prominence in countries such as France, Japan, Italy and South Korea to name but a few (Gardiner et al. 2020). However, the movement started much before 2017, when Alyssa Milano tweeted and asked for women to come out with their stories of abuse; before that it was Tarana Burke in 2006 who created the movement to share stories of suffering and build solidarity. Even before that, there are 5,000 to 7,000 years of patriarchy during which women suffered from toxic masculinity and masculine-induced violence against both women and nature (von Werlhof 2007).

While the importance of the movement and its positive impact is unquestionable in feminist circles, the movement has also attracted lots of criticism. It is known that historically women have always been challenged when asking for rights. For example, Suffragettes were challenged for asking for something as simple as the right to vote; however, the criticism of the #MeToo movement shows worrying signs of patriarchal expectation, slut-shaming and rape culture and the willingness of some members of the public to blame victims for the violence they experienced. At the same time, the movement has also empowered women to speak up about violence they experienced throughout their lives, which led to some successful persecutions; thus the movement can be seen as an unprecedented feminist achievement for empowering women to challenge the patriarchal culture of violence.

However, criticism has been raised about the context of the movement and the social locations of perpetrators and victims, as well as media visibility (Zarkov & Davis 2018). In other words, Zarkov and Davis (2018) argued that things have not changed much since the 1970s when it comes to the nature of our societies, still centred on voyeurism, sexism and misogyny. The authors, thus, raise the issue of the legal system, which still fails to punish all perpetrators of sexual violence; however, they also raise the issue of media persecution of alleged perpetrators who rarely have a chance to defend themselves. Therefore, the movement has created a paradoxical situation in which feminists have to criticise the legal system that fails to persecute enough, whilst also calling for more use of this same system because media persecutions are not only unjust but also create an

illusion that the problem has been solved (ibid), which is incorrect because structural issues of why women suffer from violence remain untackled. Besides, the issue has been raised of the movement being much too focused on celebrity women and women who have power. Zarkov and Davis (2018) thus say the movement is firstly for those who have access to social media, and secondly for those who can afford an opportunity to speak up, which many women cannot. Tambe (2018) also argued that the media portrayal of the movement is problematic because it is only white stories that are being heard, and she argues that Black women, for example, face pressure from the Black community not to speak up because they could damage the plight of the Black movement for racial equality. Nevertheless, the Black community generally refrains from participating in practices that accuse people and destroy their lives without evidence because this has been a reality for Black people in the US for too long (ibid). Gardiner et al. (2020) and Joyrich (2019) thus argue that it seems as if some bodies are more valuable than others, at least when media portrayal is at stake, because insufficient attention is paid to women who are not celebrities and in a highly powerful position, as well as women of diverse backgrounds.

While a copious number of studies have already been done since the global resurgence of the #MeToo movement (the most recent ones e.g., Clavenes et al. 2020; Ross & Bookchin 2020; Mendes et al. 2018), what seems to be common is for many authors to be asking 'where to for #MeToo' using a variety of approaches. However, when reading studies, one would expect to find lots of discussion of the movement in regards to patriarchy and the use of structural reasons, for example, radical feminism or ecofeminism. However, this is hardly the case and it often feels as if these theories have been forgotten despite their outstanding ability to explain why women up to today are facing inequality. Thus, while scholars problematising the movement recognise the need for structural changes, there is a sense that something is missing. For example, Tambe (2018) correctly argues that coercion is a major issue because many women (who often end up accused of 'wanting it') say yes because the person is too powerful, which presents coercion. Gardiner et al. (2020) also argued that some women feel unable to fight for their rights when the practice of discrimination is common in their organisations. In addition to that, studies show that there is an organisational bias and the risk of ostracism and punishment for those who self-report (Gardiner et al. 2020; Brown & Battle 2019). Thus, Tambe (2018) argues that we need to look at the "factors that generate cis-male dominance in the workplace: historical wage discrimination, childcare policies, and the way skills are defined and valued in masculinist ways. When men are systematically privileged by workplace policies and practices, they regularly ascend to powerful positions. This is why when we see the words "coach" or "boss" or "director" or "executive", we imagine male figures first" (Tambe 2018, 201). This is indeed the case, and many studies show this problem. In my work on women in communication industries in England (advertising, public relations and journalism), there is a tendency for women to describe masculine characteristics as desirable for the position, and it is often the case that women who can demonstrate blokishness (or a behaviour commonly associated with men) advance in their careers, whilst the office culture remains centred on masculine banter and social interactions controlled by men, which often contributes towards male bonding and forming boys clubs (Topić et al. 2019, 2020; Topić 2020, 2020a, 2020b). Therefore, Tambe (2018) proposes that instead of just looking to unseat senior men (e.g. bosses, directors and executives) for abusing their power, we need to "re-script misogynistic practices that make it difficult for women to inhabit these roles in the first place. And we need to create alternatives to a politics of retribution that only focuses on

punishment rather than transforming work-place hierarchies" (Tambe 2018, 202). Whilst this argument is brilliant and fits into all published works showing the position of women in the workplace, what I think is missing is consciousness-raising. This is necessary because many women do not recognise abusive, discriminatory and disadvantageous behaviour due to the fact that these practices are deeply incorporated in everyday life to the extent that they have become normal and expected (Bourdieu 2007; Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Chambers 2005). Nevertheless, consciousness-raising is necessary to identify all sexist practices and make women fight inequality. For example, in my research on women in journalism, an industry known for its masculinity and blokishness (North 2009, 2016; Ross 2001; Mills 2014), it appeared that women outlined exclusively stereotypical masculine characteristics as the ones women need to demonstrate to succeed, such as give as good as you give, lack of emotion, being tough, determined, keeping it together, etc. (Topić & Bruegmann 2020). In addition to that, across three industries, women identified long working hours as the industry standard and the way things are, and while they expressed dissatisfaction and said it is hard for them to combine a family life and career, the majority of women failed to realise that long working hours is a masculine practice because men historically worked whilst women stayed at home (Saval 2015; Topić 2020, 2020a, 2020b). Although things have changed to an extent and many more women work now than, for example, during the 1930s, women are still primary caregivers and thus face the double burden of home and work obligations where long hours and after-work networking is hard. The latter is then also problematic because it affects promotions; however, women do not always recognise this (Topić 2020, 2020a, 2020b). As Saval (2015) argued, "there was never a question that women would be able to move up the company ladder in the way men could, since it remained unfathomable for male executives to place women alongside them in managerial jobs (…) Men were allowed to think of themselves as middle-class so long as women, from their perspective, remained something like the office proletariat" (Saval 2015, 77–78).

This special issue does not claim to have all of the answers above. I opened the call initially looking for research on the movement tackling structural and cultural issues that lead towards the need for this movement and vividly portray issues that women still face. Therefore, in this special issue, the authors are tackling #MeToo from both a theoretical and empirical standpoint. But in all of these cases, they tackle structural and cultural reasons in which the need for a movement about sexual harassment arose.

Ana K. Diaz problematises the #MeToo movement in a way that challenges structural reasons for inequality and also sexual harassment. Whilst critics of the movement have said that the activism has gone too far, Diaz argues to the contrary, that it has not gone far enough because it did not tackle all the forms of abuse. Diaz thus argues that if sexual harassment is left outside, what remains is the problem of gender-based harassment that is not imbued with sexuality but nonetheless happens because of a person's sex. On the other hand, Batya Weinbaum discusses student feedback on teaching about the #MeToo movement, consciousness-raising and feminist theory. In that, Weinbaum acknowledges the importance of examining the movement in global, cross-cultural and international contexts as scholars, and also shows how the movement has to be taught within the historical context as growing out of other moments of women's liberation movement history in which women came together to tell their story, sharing their personal experience that led to political action. In other words, the movement did not just happen, it is a result of a long history of sexism and abuse, and Weinbaum correctly argues that it should be taught in the curricula about feminist movements. Monika Kwaśniewska-Mikuła discusses the #MeToo movement in

the Polish theatre showing how sexual harassment and violence against women in theatre is a part of a larger culture of misogyny and abuse of women, which is perpetuated by the right-wing politicians and religious institutions in Poland. In other words, this paper clearly shows that issues that the #MeToo movement addresses are part of a larger, structural problem of cultural masculinity, and in this case also machismo and misogynist culture, where Poland has recently abandoned the Istanbul convention on violence against women and has effectively banned abortion. Chris Y. H. Tsui analyses the #MeToo movement in Hong Kong as part of a larger debate on rape culture and slut-shaming, thus contributing towards analysing the culture that enables and empowers violence against women. In that, Tsui analyses how women who came out as victims of sexual assault were challenged by the general public on social media, thus showing that patriarchal culture is one in which women are blamed for the sexual violence that befalls them. Finally, Mirela Polić analyses the position of women in public relations in Croatia through the lenses of the role of the national media in promoting and enforcing the #MeToo movement. Like others, this paper also shows the structural problems that exist in Croatian society and that led, in this particular case, to a situation where the movement fighting violence against women hardly has any prominence in the media and then also the public.

In summary, the contributions show that the #MeToo movement happened in an age of violence, which has not only failed to disappear but has been perpetuated by the rise of social media where members of the public can now freely express their opinions and engage in slut-shaming and victim-blaming. Nevertheless, it is difficult not to agree with Zarkov and Davis (2018) that it does not feel as if much has changed since 1970 when the initial activism about violence against women increased, because women still suffer from violence, judgement, slut-shaming and most importantly, we still live in a patriarchal culture centred on masculine practices, which does not work for many women. Therefore, in answer to ‘where to for the #MeToo’, the solution seems to be in returning towards consciousness-raising first amongst women so they can speak up not just against obvious forms of discrimination and abuse such as sexual harassment and assaults, but also about less obvious discriminatory practices such as, for example, masculine office culture and work conditions, which actually lead towards the situation that certain people have the power to abuse and assault women. As argued by Anna K. Diaz in this issue, it does seem as if the #MeToo movement does not go far enough to include all women (Zarkov & Davis, 2018) but it also seems to have failed to grasp the underlying issue that pre-conditions sexual harassment, which is the patriarchal culture of masculine domination.

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