

# #MeToo – Just Another Symptom of Neoliberal Feminism?

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*This article critically examines the wider context of the popular social media campaign known as #MeToo, focusing in particular on the relationship between #MeToo and neoliberal feminism. The author argues that conceiving of #MeToo exclusively as a product of neoliberal feminism is too simplistic: although neoliberal feminism was an important precursor for the movement and can partly help to explain its existence and success, the desired outcome is exactly the opposite of what the neoliberal feminism agenda seeks to achieve. While #MeToo demands structural changes in society, neoliberal feminism lays the burden for change on each individual.*

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, the feminist campaign #MeToo has gained widespread attention. Even the most radical opponents of feminist ideas could not avoid the movement and have felt a need to respond.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the movement has faced criticisms from feminist scholars who have dismissed it as just another product of neoliberal feminism. In a 2018 article, CATHERINE ROTTENBERG wrote: «#MeToo was able to gain such widespread traction at this particular moment in history [...] because feminism had already been rendered popular and desirable by Sandberg, Beyonce, and Emma Watson, to name just a few.»<sup>2</sup>

Based on these considerations, this article critically engages with ROTTENBERG's assertion. I argue that neoliberal feminism was indeed one of the background motivations for the #MeToo movement and can help to explain why it met with so much approval. However, depicting #MeToo simply as the result of neoliberal feminism falls short. I argue that feminists' criticisms of neoliberal feminism do not apply to #MeToo. Additionally, the desired outcome of #MeToo is exactly the opposite of what the neoliberal fem-

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1 GOLTERMANN SVENJA, Macht und Gewalt: #MeToo jenseits einer Position der Schwäche, in: Geschichte der Gegenwart of May 9, 2018.

2 ROTTENBERG CATHERINE, How neoliberalism colonised feminism – and what you can do about it, in: The Conversation of May 23, 2018.

inist agenda seeks to achieve: #MeToo seeks to promote structural changes in society, whereas neoliberal feminism lays the burden for change on each individual. Thus, this article claims that even if #MeToo builds on neoliberal feminism, the movement's effects and goals are entirely different.

To this end, the article poses the following research question: Is #MeToo exclusively a product of neoliberal feminism? This research question is relevant because if the answer is 'Yes', the criticisms of neoliberal feminism will also apply to #MeToo. To answer this question, an analytical rather than a normative point of view is taken. First, this article outlines the origins and evolution of #MeToo, drawing on newspaper articles and academic papers. In this context, the role of social media and the challenges that #MeToo poses to criminal law are examined. To arrive at a detailed understanding of #MeToo, its downsides must also be highlighted – especially as otherwise, the impression might be given that #MeToo, in comparison to neoliberal feminism, has no negative aspects associated with it. Accordingly, this article does not argue that #MeToo cannot be criticised at all, but rather that the grounds for criticism differ from those applicable to neoliberal feminism.

Second, in order to understand why the question of whether #MeToo is merely a product of neoliberal feminism is important, it is essential to analyse the critique of neoliberal feminism. Hence, I analyse neoliberal feminism and study the role of famous women (e.g., SHERYL SANDBERG) in shaping it, as well as outlining a critique of neoliberal feminism. To conclude and answer the research question, the article examines whether #MeToo is merely a product of, or more an opposition to, neoliberal feminism.

## 2 A Brief Synopsis of the #MeToo Movement

In Autumn 2017, the #MeToo movement gained widespread attention worldwide when actress Alyssa Milano responded to allegations of sexual assaults against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein revealed by the New York Times.<sup>3</sup> Milano encouraged women to use the hashtag #MeToo, in order to demonstrate the severity and omnipresence of sexual violence and harassment.<sup>4</sup> Overnight, thousands of women (and men) responded to Milano's tweet,<sup>5</sup> declaring that they too had experienced sexual assault and harassment. #MeToo could be considered broad insofar as it included women's experiences from all around the world in all areas of their lives.<sup>6</sup>

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- 3 The story first unfolded after the publication of KANTOR JODY/TWOHEY MEGHAN, Harvey Weinstein Paid Off Sexual Harassment Accusers for Decades, in: New York Times of October 5, 2017.
  - 4 ASKANUS TINA/HARTLEY JANNIE, Framing Gender Justice: A comparative analysis of the media coverage of #metoo in Denmark and Sweden, in: Nordicom Review 2019/40(2), p. 19 et seq., p. 19.
  - 5 COSSMAN BRENDA, #MeToo, ex Wars 2.0 and the Power of Law, in: Rehman Javaid/Shahid Ayesha/Foster Steve (eds.), Asian Yearbook of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Leiden/Boston 2018, p. 18 et seq.
  - 6 GHADERY FARNUSH, #MeToo – Has the 'sisterhood' finally become global or just another product of neoliberal feminism?, in: Transnational Legal Theory 2019/10(2), p. 252 et seq., p. 256.

However, over a decade ago, another campaign with the same name (albeit without the hashtag) emerged as part of a grassroots movement led by African-American activist TARANA BURKE.<sup>7</sup> BURKE adopted 'Me Too' to stress the importance of empathy in the process of healing wounds resulting from sexual violence.<sup>8</sup> This more localised movement focused on less privileged African-American women who had experienced sexual assault.<sup>9</sup> The idea was to symbolise the concept of «empowerment through empathy» by creating a forum for survivors and building a community of healing and trust.<sup>10</sup> Today, the website of the #MeToo movement explicitly refers to the #MeToo campaign and its evolution from this local grassroots movement to a worldwide campaign.<sup>11</sup> Critics have argued that the development of #MeToo shows once again how feminism is demographically and politically dominated by white women, who have often ignored or co-opted the experiences and contributions of women of colour.<sup>12</sup>

## 2.1 Writing a Tweet – the Role of Social Media

It is essential here to mention another potentially critical aspect of #MeToo: its possible conflict with criminal law. This critique can only be understood by briefly outlining the role that social media has played in the evolution of the #MeToo movement.<sup>13</sup>

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, there was an explosion of feminist hashtag activism, from #bringbackourgirls to #solidarityisforwhitewomen, #yesallwomen, #NotOkay and, finally, #MeToo. Today, social and digital media serve as the most visible platforms for feminist concerns.<sup>14</sup> #MeToo is an example of feminist digital activism aimed at awareness raising.<sup>15</sup> Its phenomenal success can be at least partly explained by the use of social media, which enabled the movement to spread fast and reach a wide range of people.<sup>16</sup> It also perhaps was easier for victims to come forward on a virtual platform rather than in person, as they may have felt less ashamed. Some scholars see the lightning-fast expansion of #MeToo with the help of social media as a manifestation of what ROBIN

7 FILEBORN BIANCA/LONEY-HOWES RACHEL, Introduction: Mapping the Emergence of #MeToo, in: Fileborn Bianca/Loney-Howes Rachel (eds.), #MeToo and the Politics of Social Change, Cham 2019, p. 1 et seq., p. 6.

8 BURKE TARANA, Me Too Is a Movement, Not a Moment, Opening talk at TedWomen, 2018.

9 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 256.

10 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 256 et seq.

11 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 257.

12 See, for example, PHIPPS ALISON, Every Woman Knows a Weinstein: Political Whiteness and White Woundedness in #MeToo and Public Feminisms around Sexual Violence, in: Feminist Formations 2019/31(2), p. 1 et seq., p. 2.

13 HÖRNLE TATJANA, Evaluating #MeToo: The Perspective of Criminal Law Theory, in: German Law Journal 2021/22(5), p. 833 et seq.

14 BANET-WEISER SARAH/GILL ROSALIND/ROTTENBERG CATHERINE, Postfeminism, Popular Feminism and Neoliberal Feminism? Sarah Banet-Weiser, Rosalind Gill and Catherine Rottenberg in Conversation, in: Feminist Theory 2020/21(1), p. 3 et seq., p. 11.

15 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 260.

16 BERGER ANNE-EMMANUELLE, Subject of Desire/Subject of Feminism: Some notes on the split subject(s) of #MeToo, in: Chandra Giti/Erlingsdóttir Irma (eds.), The Routledge Handbook of the Politics of the #MeToo Movement, Abingdon/New York 2021, p. 57.

MORGAN once called «global sisterhood».<sup>17</sup> According to MORGAN, women all around the world should unite to fight the common enemy, namely patriarchy.<sup>18</sup> What could be understood as an indicator of MORGAN's «global sisterhood» is referred to as the «collective aspect» of the #MeToo movement in this article.

## 2.2 Implications for Criminal Law

Some of the criticisms that #MeToo has faced can be traced back to general scepticism of social media. To name one example, the movement has been criticised for not complying with standards of procedural fairness.<sup>19</sup> The argument goes as follows: as #MeToo utilises social media to convey its message, the principles of criminal law are challenged. The crux lies in the fact that sanctions and accusations are inseparable. This challenges the general principle of the assumption of innocence in criminal law: as soon as a wrongdoer is exposed on social media, that person is not only blamed, but also sanctioned. Thus, naming and shaming on social media has grave consequences for the wrongdoer's life and reputation. Even if the accused can defend themselves successfully in a criminal court, the public denunciation persists.<sup>20</sup> In a state governed by the rule of law, just because several people point to a person and label them a criminal does not necessarily make them one according to legal standards. #MeToo has been criticised for acting under the assumption that allegations by several complainants make the accusations necessarily more trustworthy and lend them greater evidential weight. Generally, this might often be true; but it is not always the case.<sup>21</sup> However, this argument falls short because sanctioning through social media cannot be equated to criminal sanctioning by independent courts. This is not to say that sanctioning through social media cannot have dire consequences in itself; but these are different types of sanctions.

## 3 Neoliberal Feminism

In order to analyse whether #MeToo is exclusively a product of neoliberal feminism, the latter must first be analysed.

Neoliberalism can be understood by outlining the ways in which it differs from liberalism. Whereas neoliberalism focuses on free and self-regulating markets and greater mobility of capital, liberalism is associated with notions of freedom, democracy and the rule of law (besides a free market economy).<sup>22</sup> Neoliberalism suggests that human well-

17 HARMAN HARRIET, *Women Have Changed the Mood, Now We Need to Change Policy*, in: *The Guardian* of February 20, 2018.

18 MORGAN ROBIN, *Sisterhood is Global*, New York 1984, p. 4.

19 HÖRNLE TATJANA, *#MeToo – Implications for Criminal Law?*, in: *Bergen Journal of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice* 2019/6(2), p. 115 et seq., p. 119.

20 HÖRNLE (Fn. 19), p. 119.

21 HÖRNLE (Fn. 19), p. 120.

22 LEBARON GENEVIEVE/ROBERTS ADRIENNE, *Toward a Feminist Political Economy of Capitalism and Carcerality*, in: *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2010/36(1), p. 19 et seq., p. 19, p. 24; PECK JAMIE/TICKELL ADAM, *Neoliberalizing Space*, in: *Antipode* 2002/34(3), p. 380 et seq., p. 385–386;

being is best achieved by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade.<sup>23</sup> Today, however, neoliberalism is more than an economic theory; its «free market mentality» has also pervaded social and political life.<sup>24</sup> Neoliberalism is increasingly understood – at least in feminist circles – not simply as a political and economic rationality, but as a theory that is profoundly connected to intimate life and subjectivity.<sup>25</sup>

In seeking to understand neoliberal feminism, this transposition of economic values to society and politics is essential. Neoliberal feminism is an effect of the shift from an originally economic focus to the extension of the neoliberalist body of thought to all areas of life.<sup>26</sup>

At the heart of neoliberal feminism lies the individual woman and her potential for success, if equipped with sufficient skills and freedom. Hence, the focus lies on the economic identity of each woman. Equality is achieved if women use their (economic) freedom wisely to succeed in the market.<sup>27</sup> Supporters of neoliberal feminism stress the importance and effectiveness of acting within a given neoliberal framework to push the feminist agenda.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, gender equality becomes the responsibility of each woman: it is an individual struggle; she alone has to make the choice and effort to change her situation. Thus, structural inequalities and patriarchy as reasons for gender inequality are overlooked. As ROTTENBERG puts it, each woman is «mobilized to convert continued gender inequality from a structural problem into an individual affair».<sup>29</sup> In this way, neoliberal feminism effectively depoliticises gender inequality and sex discrimination.<sup>30</sup> The struggle for equality is shifted from the political and public sphere to an individual level.

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BOAS TAYLOR C./GANS-MORSE JORDAN, Neoliberalism: From New Liberal Philosophy to Anti-Liberal Slogan, in: *Studies in Comparative International Development* 2009/44(2), p. 137 et seq.

23 HARVEY DAVID, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford 2005, p. 2.

24 BROWN WENDY, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*, New York 2015, p. 9–10; SPRINGER SIMON/BIRCH KEAN/MACLEAVY JULIE, *The Handbook of Neoliberalism*, New York/London 2016, p. 2; GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 257.

25 BROWN WENDY, Neoliberalism and the end of liberal democracy, in: *Theory & Event* 2005/7(1), p. 37 et seq., p. 37; GILL ROSALIND/ORGADSHANI, The Shifting Terrain of Sex and Power: From the 'Sexualization of Culture' to #MeToo, in: *Sexualities* 2018/21(8), p. 1313 et seq., p. 1315.

26 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 258.

27 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 258.

28 WILSON KALPANA, Towards a Radical Re-appropriation: Gender, Development and Neoliberal Feminism, in: *Development and Change* 2015/46(4), p. 803 et seq., p. 825.

29 ROTTENBERG CATHERINE, The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism, in: *Cultural Studies* 2014/28(3), p. 418 et seq., p. 420.

30 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 258.

### 3.1 Individualistic Approach and Criticism

Unsurprisingly, neoliberal feminism has been heavily criticised by many feminist scholars.<sup>31</sup> Neoliberal feminism pursues an individual approach by arguing that it is down to the energies and ambitions of each individual girl and woman to overcome the obstacles they might face because of their gender. Thus, neoliberal feminism fails to examine the ways in which capitalism might lead to gendered inequality.<sup>32</sup>

As neoliberal feminism encourages individual women to focus more on themselves and their aspirations, feminism can more easily be popularised, circulated and capitalised in the marketplace. Furthermore, neoliberal feminism is highly exclusive, as it addresses only aspirational, highly privileged women.<sup>33</sup> The vision of equality that neoliberal feminism portrays works for people who can reliably purchase care for their children. Thus, feminism in a neoliberal context depends to a large extent on wealth and power.<sup>34</sup> Women's agency is highly dependent on economic wealth, even though neoliberal feminism depicts it as a choice.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, neoliberal feminism has shifted the focus from the powerful actors who are the reasons for structural inequalities to the victims of the system – namely, the individual women.<sup>36</sup> Women are required to work on and transform themselves to a greater extent than men. This means that they must take responsibility for themselves and present their actions as freely chosen.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, through the arguments of neoliberal feminists, the neoliberal framework can extend its reach by asking women to change in order to fit in with a rationality that has permeated the economic, social and political spheres.<sup>38</sup> The neoliberal structures are not questioned; rather, each individual woman who is unsuccessful within this economic framework is depicted as the problem.<sup>39</sup>

Essentially, neoliberal feminism fails to push forward (or even acts against) what has lain at the very heart of feminist agendas for decades: opposing the dominant patriarchal power structures that perpetuate, contribute to or fail to address existing gender inequalities. By ignoring structural inequalities, neoliberal feminism removes accountability for gender inequalities from the most powerful and the actors at the centre of

31 See, for example, KANTOR JODI, A Titan's How-To on Breaking the Glass Ceiling, in: *New York Times* of February 22, 2013; HUFFER LYNNE, It's the economy, sister, in: *Al Jazeera* of March 18, 2013; EISENSTEIN ZILLAH, «Leaning in» in Iraq: Women's rights and war, in: *Al Jazeera* of March 23, 2013; MAHDAMI ARWA, Sheryl Sandberg saga shows it's time to lean out of corporate feminism, in: *The Guardian* of December 1, 2018.

32 BANET-WEISER/GILL/ROTTENBERG (Fn. 14), p. 9.

33 BANET-WEISER/GILL/ROTTENBERG (Fn. 14), p. 15.

34 RESTREPO SANÍN JULIANA, #MeToo What Kind of Politics?, in: *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 2019/40(1), p. 122 et seq., p. 127.

35 PHIPPS (Fn. 12), p. 7.

36 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 258.

37 GILL ROSALIND, Postfeminist Media Culture: elements of a sensibility, in: *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 2007/10(2), p. 147 et seq., p. 164.

38 See, for example, FRASER NANCY, *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*, London 2013.

39 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 258 et seq.

decision making.<sup>40</sup> Hence, neoliberal feminism fails to address questions of social and collective justice.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, it has often been argued that gender inequalities have been intensified by neoliberalism as wages stagnated and more women were brought into the workplace, but in precarious positions.<sup>42</sup> Some critics have gone so far as to suggest that neoliberal feminism not only does not help to progress feminist agendas, but actively works against feminism: feminism is instrumentalised to meet the demand of women's labour as central to sustaining neoliberal capital accumulation.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.2 Famous People as Catalysts for the #MeToo Movement

Neoliberal feminism reflects a new trend, whereby famous, high-powered women – such as SHERYL SANDBERG, Emma Watson and Beyoncé – publicly champion feminist ideas and goals.<sup>44</sup> In March 2013, SANDBERG's book *Lean In* was published and quickly became a bestseller.<sup>45</sup> In her book, SANDBERG describes her own experiences with gender inequality throughout her journey to executive leadership in a male-dominated profession.<sup>46</sup> The book can be read as a guide to how women can succeed in their careers and overcome patriarchal stereotypes. But the book was also widely criticised, as having privileged women as feminist role models can perpetuate the assumption that equality has already been achieved, since they have managed to succeed in their careers. Most women are not as privileged and will never work in managerial roles. These women might be unable to fight for themselves in the same way as their famous counterparts, as they lack the resources and security to do so. Thus, the success of privileged women may stifle a dialogue on the underlying causes of how inequality is sustained.<sup>47</sup> Feminism is depoliticised, becoming less a radical movement seeking social change and more a portrayal of individual empowerment on the part of exceptional women.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, in this view, success is framed exclusively in economic terms; other non-economic successes are not adequately taken into account.

40 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 259.

41 ROTTENBERG (Fn. 29), p. 419.

42 RESTREPO (Fn. 34), p. 127.

43 WILSON (Fn. 28), p. 808.

44 ROTTENBERG (Fn. 29), p. 418; see further TZEMACH LEMMON GAYLE, Emma Watson gives feminism new life, in: CNN of September 24, 2014.

45 SANDBERG SHERYL, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*, London 2013.

46 BLEDSOE CHRISTIE, Encouragement to Take the Risk: A Review of Sandberg's *Lean In*, in: The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin 2014/80(2), p. 58 et seq., p. 58.

47 FOSTER DAWN, Sheryl Sandberg and Christine Lagarde have done nothing to advance feminism, in: The Guardian of February 2, 2016.

48 CADDELL APRIL AMANDA, *From Center to Margin: Feminism in an Era of mainstream Co-Optation*, Master of Arts Thesis, University of Alabama 2015, p. 14 et seq.

## 4 #MeToo – An Outgrowth of Neoliberal Feminism?

ROTTENBERG argues that mass feminist movements such as #MeToo could draw from neoliberal feminism, as famous, high-powered women such as SANDBERG and Hollywood stars such as Watson have already made feminism popular. Additionally, she sees the election of Donald Trump and the reappearance of shameless sexism in the public sphere as catalysts for the phenomenal success of #MeToo.<sup>49</sup> For ROTTENBERG, the focus on the «me» in #MeToo stresses once again the individual responsibility of each woman to come forward and thus is just another manifestation of neoliberal feminism.<sup>50</sup> Here again, the responsibility rests on each victim to come forward and tell her story of sexual harassment and violence. Thus, rather than targeting patriarchal structures, the burden for change lies once more – and only too aptly within the framework of neoliberal feminism – on the individual.<sup>51</sup> If #MeToo were really exclusively a product of neoliberal feminism, some would question whether it can be called feminist at all – which highlights the importance of examining this relationship.<sup>52</sup>

## 5 #MeToo – An Opposition to Neoliberal Feminism?

Having outlined and examined both #MeToo and neoliberal feminism, as well as the associated criticisms, we can now consider whether #MeToo is exclusively a product of neoliberal feminism.

Neoliberal feminism and the actions of famous women in speaking out have served as a basis for the emergence of #MeToo. The movement has indeed encouraged each woman to come forward and can thus be said to place a focus on the individual, reminding us of neoliberal feminism. A key term in understanding neoliberal feminism is «agency»: women are empowered in the sense that they are no longer victims, but rather agents who can claim to ascend to key positions and have a say.<sup>53</sup> Thus, by enabling each woman to speak out, #MeToo empowers women and gives them agency. Nevertheless, the crux lies in the fact that this agency itself is linked to external circumstances, such as wealth, power and education<sup>54</sup> – both in #MeToo and in neoliberal feminism. Nonetheless, neoliberal feminism has surely encouraged the existence of #MeToo and this is where its merit lies.

However, as SARAH BANET-WEISER correctly notes, «one of the most hopeful manifestations of #metoo has been the focus on the sheer numbers of women coming forward,

49 BANET-WEISER/GILL/ROTTENBERG (Fn. 14), p. 16.

50 ROTTENBERG CATHERINE, Can #MeToo go beyond white neoliberal feminism? Who can say #MeToo and who will be heard?, in: Al Jazeera of December 13, 2017.

51 ROTTENBERG (Fn. 50), *passim*.

52 ROTTENBERG CATHERINE, *The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism*, Oxford 2018, p. 74 et seq. She claims that it is too simple not to acknowledge neoliberal feminism as «true» feminism.

53 GHADERY (Fn. 6), p. 272.

54 See further WILSON KALPANA, Agency as «Smart Economics»: Neoliberalism, Gender and Development, in: MADHOK, SUMI/PHILLIPS, ANNE/WILSON, KALPANA (eds.), *Gender, Agency and Coercion*, London 2013, p. 84 et seq.



forcing people to deal with the collectivity of it all». <sup>55</sup> So, even if #MeToo evolved from an individual neoliberal feminist starting point, the movement as a whole is collective, with common aims. <sup>56</sup> The campaign has provided space for a wide range of women to tell their stories and debate on sexual harassment, sexism and rape culture. <sup>57</sup> The role of social media further emphasises this collective aspect of #MeToo. The success of #MeToo can be explained by its broad reach and the intense public pressure it has brought to bear – which was only possible thanks to social media. So, the collective aspect of #MeToo is much more important than the starting point of an individual coming forward to tell her story.

Also, the critique of neoliberal feminism outlined above cannot be extended to #MeToo. In fact, the goals of neoliberal feminists and #MeToo are contradictory. #MeToo essentially challenges and threatens neoliberalism by demanding dramatic economic, social and cultural transformation. <sup>58</sup> Hence, #MeToo contests the system which neoliberal feminists seek to sustain. Moreover, #MeToo has led to legislative reforms – for example, on the issue of consent for sexual interactions in Spain and anti-street harassment in France. Thus, #MeToo has had a practical impact. <sup>59</sup> Therefore, the critique that neoliberal feminism does not push for structural change does not apply to #MeToo.

## 6 Conclusion

Understanding #MeToo merely as a product of neoliberal feminism is overly simplistic. <sup>60</sup> Admittedly, neoliberal feminism was an important precursor for #MeToo and can help to explain both its existence and its success. But although #MeToo pushes each individual to come forward (which could be seen as a neoliberal feminist conception), it draws its power from the collective. Also, #MeToo challenges the system which neoliberal feminism seeks to sustain: it demands structural change which means the focus lies on society as a whole, and not on each woman. The individual woman is just the starting point to achieve something bigger. Hence, not only are the aims of the two movements contradictory, but the criticisms that neoliberal feminism faces do not apply to #MeToo, as its aim is to exert collective force and pressure – with the help of social media – to change the collective system.

55 BANET-WEISER SARAH, Popular feminism: Structural rage, in: Los Angeles Review of Books of March 30, 2018.

56 SUNSTEIN CASS R., #MeToo as a Revolutionary Cascade, in: Chandra Giti/Erlingsdóttir Irma (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of the Politics of the #MeToo Movement*, Abingdon/New York 2021, p. 50 et seq.

57 See further: KELLER JESSALYNN/MENDES KAITLYNN/RINGROSE JESSICA, Speaking <unspeakable things>: Documenting digital feminist responses to rape culture, in: *Journal of Gender Studies* 2018/27(1), p. 22 et seq.

58 BANET-WEISER/GILL/ROTTENBERG (Fn. 14), p. 16.

59 LONEY-HOWES RACHEL, The Politics of the Personal: The Evolution of Anti-rape Activism: From Second-Wave Feminism to #MeToo, in: Fileborn Bianca/Loney-Howes Rachel (eds.), *#MeToo and the Politics of Social Change*, Cham 2019, p. 32 et seq.

60 See Section 4.

