Monarchy is a Feminist Issue: Andrew, Meghan and #MeToo Era Monarchy
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Abstract
For a brief period, discourses of feminism were brought into discussions of the British royal family through the figure of Meghan Markle. Such a conjuncture demands a closer look at the monarchy's relationship to feminism. This article considers the figure of a 'feminist princess' in the context of an inherently antifeminist institution and alongside the deeply antifeminist figure of the 'wayward prince' - both specifically in the case of sexual abuse accusations against Prince Andrew, and historically in mythic stock representations from history and folklore. In so doing, we reveal the limits to the feminist discourses possible 'from within' the monarchical institution. We argue that monarchy relies upon interwoven structures of colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and racism, and as such is incompatible with feminism's work towards dismantling intersecting systems of oppression. No amount of royal campaigns for 'women's issues' can elide the fact that the very existence of the monarchy is a feminist issue.

Keywords: Meghan Markle, Prince Andrew, #MeToo, Celebrity Feminism, Patriarchy, Monarchy, Neoliberalism

Introduction
In May 2018, Meghan Markle's entry into the British monarchy was celebrated in the popular media as 'modernising' the historic institution, owing to her status as a divorced, biracial, self-identified feminist, American actor (Clancy and Yelin, 2018). During her time within the British monarchy, Meghan's royal philanthropic 'work' focused on women's issues, from panels on Gender Equality to visits to women's charities (Friel, 2019). This occurred as part of a zeitgeist of 'celebrity feminism', where high profile women have played roles in cultural moments such as the Time's Up and #MeToo campaigns to highlight gendered inequalities.

Representations of Meghan's interest in women's issues have, therefore, brought discourses of gender and feminism into discussions of the British monarchy. This demands a closer look at the monarchy's relationship to feminism. We discuss Meghan not as an individual but as a 'star image' (Dyer, 1979) containing multiple, sometimes conflicting layers of representation. Monarchy we understand as an institution, with its own cultures, processes, infrastructures, and systems for maintaining power (Clancy, forthcoming). Thus, Meghan as an individual has been 'co-opted' (Clancy and Yelin, 2018) as a litmus for progressive change within monarchy as an institution, and within British society more widely. We therefore examine the feminist discussions made possible by Meghan's entry into the monarchy, and consider the figure of a 'feminist princess' (Urwin, 2017) in response to what we describe as an inherently antifeminist institution.

Representations of Meghan's feminist royal 'duties' are contrasted with Prince Andrew's depiction following allegations of sexual exploitation of a minor trafficked by Jeffrey Epstein. The concurrence of these two news strands offers a heavily gendered juxtaposition in which the monarchy is simultaneously seen to be co-opting the appearance of feminist activism and modernisation while in reality—as seen in their management of the scandal around Prince Andrew—continuing to exist as a profoundly patriarchal institution. The discourses in coverage of Andrew – of royal exploitation, misogyny and power - have drawn (temporary) attention to the patriarchal nature of monarchical sexual politics. This article uses the example of the 'wayward prince' - both specifically in Prince Andrew and in mythic stock representations from history and folklore - in order to consider the possibilities for a 'feminist princess' (Urwin, 2017) in an antifeminist institution, built upon the subjugation of women's

bodies. Monarchy is by its very nature patriarchal and oppressive. Resting upon core ideas of dominance - over subjects, over women's bodies, over other races and nations, and over wealth distribution - royal power is incompatible with feminism's work towards dismantling intersecting systems of oppression. Therefore, to uncritically celebrate the modernisation of monarchy through Meghan as a feminist woman of colour obscures royal histories of inequality, misogyny, colonial and patriarchal violence. Ultimately, no amount of royal campaigns for 'women's issues' can elide the fact that the very existence of the monarchy is a feminist issue.

In reading representations of Meghan's feminism through longer histories of women, feminism and patriarchy in the monarchy, this article reveals the limitations to feminist discourses possible 'from within' the institution. It proposes that popular, neoliberal and celebrity feminisms enable the generalised, reassuring appearance of progress, without demanding structural change and can therefore be not only tolerable but useful to an institution looking to maintain its power in a changing world, to protect those within it who would use their privilege to harm and exploit others, and indeed, to reproduce the very inequalities that intersectional feminism seeks to address.

We should note that we began writing this article prior to Harry and Meghan's announcement that they were 'stepping down as senior royals' in January 2020 (sussexroyal, 2020). However, as we consider towards the end of the article, these events reinforce our theorisation of the place of royal brides in relation to the reproduction of patriarchal, institutional royal power. We start this article by situating Meghan, Andrew and the British monarchy in relation to the contemporary moment known as #MeToo, connecting the movement's exposure of sexual exploitation to the exploitation of women's bodies that underpins monarchical reproduction of power. We then offer an analysis of Meghan's monarchical feminist campaigns undertaken during her time within the institution, and describe how the characteristics of these as celebrating neoliberal, individualist notions of 'empowerment' are befitting of both the contemporary zeitgeist of celebrity feminism, and a feminist agenda within the context of a monarchy which relies on the reproduction of institutional power and not disrupting the status quo. Following this, we juxtapose representations of Meghan's feminism with media coverage of Andrew's alleged sexual offences, contextualising contemporary light-hearted responses to the latter which smooth over narratives of harm within a wider royal history that normalises the sexual exploitation of women through the stock figure of the 'wayward prince'. The final section ties together the intersecting implications of the inequalities represented by Meghan and Andrew through, for example, unbalanced sexist and racist media coverage, a lack of institutional accountability, Meghan's exit from the monarchy, and the possibilities of Meghan's post-royal activism. We thus explain these two case-studies in terms of what they show us about the irreconcilability of narratives of intersectional feminist progress and monarchical institutional power, hinging as it does upon gendered and colonial exploitation, and the feudal exploitation of women's bodies.

#MeToo and monarchic histories of subjugating women's bodies

We theorise Meghan, Andrew, and monarchy within the framing of #MeToo era monarchy. #MeToo offers a cultural backdrop against which these stories have unfolded. Moreover, #MeToo offers ways to understand both Meghan's feminist royal duties as a form of celebrity feminism, and Andrew's alleged abuses of power and exploitation of women. #MeToo explicitly frames alleged victim Virginia Giuffre (formerly Roberts)'s disclosure, online campaigning and collaboration with other victims of sexual abuse. Meghan has been directly associated with #MeToo by Right-wing journalist Sarah Vine, who wished Meghan would 'be a little less #MeToo about' her feminism (Vine, 2018). This statement uses #MeToo as a shorthand for popularised forms of celebrity feminism that are simultaneously,

contradictorily, dismissed as a mere bandwagon *and* criticised for going 'too far' in their disruption of the status quo. #MeToo has also been referenced in accounts of Epstein's trial: in headlines such as 'Virginia Giuffre and the proliferation of the #MeToo movement' (Kelly, 2019). Meanwhile, Alan Dershowitz, Epstein's lawyer who was also accused of abusing Giuffre, claimed 'I am a victim of the #MeToo movement' (Hussain, 2019).

The #MeToo movement is a flashpoint for celebrity feminism. The phrase was coined in 2006 by African-American activist Tarana Burke, and popularised in 2017 after numerous actors made sexual abuse allegations against film producer Harvey Weinstein (Ohlheiser, 2017). The #MeToo hashtag subsequently circulated in 85 countries as a space for women to share experiences of sexual assault. Some scholars argue that #MeToo 'represent[s] a challenge to the highly individualised nature' (Gill and Orgad, 2018: 1317) of celebrity feminism, because its broad appeal 'forc[es] people to deal with the collectivity of it' (Banet-Weiser, 2018b). Others argue that 'naming and shaming' individuals ignores 'larger power structures that allow men – be they "powerful" or not – to treat women as their sex objects' as visibility and exposure will be taken as a solution to the problem of sexual violence' (Zarkov and Davis, 2018: 6). The movement has been criticised for centring white, middle-class, cis-gendered, able-bodied women's experiences (Hemmings, 2018), with already visible women - celebrities or political elites - remaining privileged (Zarkov and Davis, 2018).

One primary purpose of #MeToo is to give survivors of sexual assault a platform for their voice. As 'a subjective form of evidence, not externally verifiable' but 'asserted on the subject's authority' (Smith and Watson, 2001: 6), personal testimony can be a space in which existing social invalidations are only compounded in the inability to advocate for one's own experience (Yelin, 2020). For example, the case of hotel maid Nafissatou Diallo, who accused French politician Dominique Strauss-Kahn of attempted rape, reveals the classed, gendered, and racialised disparities in 'whose evidence counts' (Fine, 2012:1). The case collapsed due to perceived 'holes in the credibility of the housekeeper' despite forensic evidence including Strauss-Kahn's DNA and semen (Dwyer et al, 2011). Responses to this case invoked the French term, 'droit du seigneur': the lord's right to sexual access to female subjects (Sherwell et al, 2011; Clarke, 2011). This case highlights both how the power of personal testimony is contingent upon who is speaking, and feudal histories of sexual access that (continue to) place women (especially poor, immigrant, women of colour) at risk of exploitation by powerful men. Prince Andrew's behaviour can be seen, not as a 'black sheep' bringing shame upon the family (Kilby, 2019), but as consistent with a feudal history that presumes sexual access for aristocratic men.

In discussions of royal women, discourses of feudal exploitation persist. The history of the monarchy is a history of the subjugation of women's bodies. As Hilary Mantel argues of royal women, 'a royal lady is a royal vagina' (2013). Where feminists have long worked to disrupt the idea that a woman's reproductive capacities are her destiny (Carter, 1979), this remains inscribed in the role of royal women due to the requirement that they reproduce an heir to maintain institutional power. Thus, sexual hierarchy and exploitation is fundamental to the treatment of women entering the institution. Concurrently, 'norms' of royal femininity are specifically traditionalist. Both Kate Middleton and Princess Diana have been subject to conservative discourses of femininity and maternal respectability (Allen et al, 2015; Shome 2014). This is despite Kate and Diana - like Meghan – being represented as 'modernising' the monarchy through their unroyal backgrounds (Repo and Yrjölä, 2015). These contradictions of royal femininity are always already in place, as they occupy simultaneous roles as 'ordinary' women who have married princes; celebrities; 'fashion icons' in keeping with contemporary fashion trends; and 'traditional' wives and mothers heading a nuclear family. These roles work together to uphold both a historical institution and the role of femininity within it (Clancy, forthcoming). The very concept of monarchical feminism exemplifies these contradictions of 'modernisation' and re-traditionalisation.

'As women, it is 100 percent our responsibility [to] uplift each other': Meghan and neoliberal feminism

We understand the feminist campaigns spearheaded by Meghan during her time within the British monarchy as royal 'work'. That is, they are part of an ongoing, carefully orchestrated campaign to position the royal institution as 'deserving' of its privileges (Yelin and Paule, this issue). All senior royals undertake such duties, and they are 'strategic, timetabled and managed forms of self-presentation' which act as symbolic markers of value for the institution (Clancy, forthcoming). Representations of Meghan's royal feminist campaigns are therefore not accidental, nor are they her individual responsibility. Rather, they capitalise upon existing strands of her celebrity 'star image' in ways that enable the monarchy to pursue a favourable reception from new audiences (Dyer, 1979).

What, then, are the characteristics of monarchical feminism as represented by Meghan's royal 'work'? She has promoted International Women's Day (Friel, 2019), Commonwealth organisation One Young World (Barr, 2019) and charity mothers2mothers in South Africa (Perry, 2019). Weeks after Kate Middleton was criticised for rejecting the all-black dress code for Time's Up (a movement addressing sexual assault in Hollywood) at the 2018 BAFTA Awards (Ledbetter, 2018), Meghan supported the campaign during a panel for The Royal Foundation alongside Kate and Princes Harry and William, stating, 'there is no better time to really continue to shine a light on women feeling empowered and people really helping to support them – men included' (Gonzales, 2018).

However, this stance was hardly controversial and the call for things to 'really continue' was *not* a demand for change. The neoliberal language of 'women feeling empowered' emphasises individuals and overlooks structural inequalities (Rottenberg, 2018). Meghan proclaimed 'women don't need to find a voice; they have a voice. They need to feel empowered to use it, and people need to be encouraged to listen' (Gonzales, 2018). The idea of 'encouragement' towards equality states any desire for social change in the gentlest, most non-confrontational terms possible. Her statement erases the intersectional inequalities in institutional and social structures which disbelieve and deny women's authority when describing sexual assault. It places emphasis on how women feel, not how abusers act.

The characteristics of Meghan's feminist royal 'duties' frequently reflect the qualities of popular, celebrity and neoliberal feminisms (Rottenberg, 2018; Banet-Weiser, 2018a). Contemporary 'celebrity feminism' has increased the visibility of feminist declarations in popular culture (Hamad and Taylor, 2015). Scholarly responses range from claims that this makes feminism more accessible to audiences, particularly young women (Keller and Ringrose, 2015); to viewing celebrity feminisms as depoliticised, neoliberalised, and defanged in their emphasis on vague ideas of 'empowerment' (Hamad and Taylor, 2015; Banet-Weiser, 2018). Wider capitalist industries commoditise and compromise feminist goals: 'how much can celebrity feminists do if their prominent voices emanate from within systems' where gendered inequality goes unquestioned (Zeisler, 2016: 132-133). Neoliberal structures profit from celebrities' feminist campaigning, while also upholding systems that reproduce gender inequality (ibid.).

Discourses of neoliberal 'empowerment' are a trend across representations of Meghan's royal campaigns. Two strategic royal appearances early in Meghan's royal career were as a Smart Works patron, and at the sex workers charity One25. As part of Smart Works, she launched a 'capsule collection' named 'The Smart Set' (a pun on elites of class and fashion) providing unemployed women with clothing for job interviews (Clark, 2019). Their website uses neoliberal feminist language: 'Harness the power of clothes and confidence to allow a woman to be her best… giving her the confidence, the self-belief and the practical tools required to succeed' (Smart Works, 2019). When visiting One25 - providers of 'food bags' to

sex workers - Meghan wrote messages on bananas including 'you are strong', 'you are special', and 'you are brave' (Petty, 2019). This speaks to Rosalind Gill and Shani Orgad's concept of a 'confidence cult(ure)', whereby women are 'hailed as enterprising and self-managing subjects' (2016: 332) in order to encourage individual responsibility. Neither of these projects reference structural inequalities that led to these womens' unemployment or their reliance on private charity to feed and clothe themselves. Rather, for the Smart Set, being one's 'best' is about appearance and how one feels, not material circumstances. Likewise, the banana press story suggests sex workers merely need affirmations, wilfully ignoring economic, social and security issues, and suggesting that their dissatisfaction comes from a failure to 'think positive'. As commentator Glosswitch writes, 'disempowerment is not just a feeling, but a social and economic reality' (2019). Neoliberal feminism also reinforces stigmas and upholds individualist doctrines that remove would-be solutions. 'Not a handout, a hand held', shoppers are reassured on the Smart Works website (2019), stigmatising the state welfare that could actually address structural problems facing unemployed, unsafely employed, and poorly paid women, had its provision not been eroded under Conservative-led austerity (Tyler, 2013). Meghan's speech launching the collection drew on this discourse of responsibilization: 'as women it is one hundred percent our responsibility [to] uplift each other' (Bailey, 2019). Placing responsibility with women exculpates the powerful, and 'mollifies' patriarchal institutions that might reject demands for fairer deals for vulnerable women (Yelin, 2020). Indeed, the idea that Smart Works is 'not a handout' is precisely the issue in the context of a monarchy which upholds social inequalities by hoarding wealth. Should the institution's wealth and power be dissolved and redistributed, more money could be invested in public services that would facilitate a more equal society.

In the press, Meghan's royal initiatives were largely reported favourably (Barcelona, 2019; Furness, 2019). Glamour magazine listed 'Every Single Item from Meghan Markle's New 'Smart Set' Fashion Collection for Charity' (Marinelli and Gardner, 2019), while The Independent printed positive Twitter responses to the banana affirmations, including praise for Meghan's 'simple act of kindness that anyone can do, even if they only have little' (Petter, 2019). There was also, however, some critique. One local sex worker pointed out, 'she has the means to help us more than that. It's offensive' (Wilford and Kerr, 2019). That this response ran in a national newspaper is significant in a culture which often erases firsthand experiences of sex work (Mac and Smith, 2018). Meghan's press response was an explanation that her idea came from an American 'school lunch programme. On each of the bananas she wrote an affirmation, to make the kids feel really… empowered. It was the most incredible idea – this small gesture' (Barcelona, 2019). That a strategy for cheering children constitutes support for sex workers is problematically infantilising, ignoring sex workers' agency (Mac and Smith, 2018). While some applauded the smallness of the gesture, this is precisely what offended others: '"You are special," says the banana, "but nowhere near as special as the woman who wrote on me. That's why her words matter and yours don't"' (Glosswitch, 2019).

Where celebrities are concerned, we can only make inferences and can never concretely discuss their agency, only representations of celebrity agency (or its lack) (Yelin, 2020). Accordingly, representations of Meghan's celebrity agency contain inherent tensions and contradictions. As we have explained, feminist initiatives undertaken while in a royal role cannot solely be hers, rather they are part of strategic royal 'work'. While feminist activism is always acting within wider antifeminist structures, and Meghan can be credited with raising awareness of women's issues, this takes on particular purchase in the context of the capitalist patriarchy of monarchy.

Neoliberal feminism and monarchical feminism can co-exist because neither invites criticism of systemic oppression or the status quo. As 'royal duties', philanthropic projects are key to 'producing consent' for the monarchy through values of patronage and morality (Clancy,

forthcoming). Hence, Meghan's self-identified feminism is 'co-opted' (Clancy and Yelin, 2018) by the monarchy as part of its political-ideological repositioning. Monarchy is a feminist issue because the voices of women like Meghan are appropriated to further institutional agendas.

'The problem… is social media': Prince Andrew, 'bad apples' and the exploitation of women's bodies
It is unsurprising that monarchical feminism is often compromised or conflicted. Monarchy is not feminist. Indeed, compared to the wider structures of systematic, patriarchal exploitation of women's bodies foundational to monarchy (Mantel, 2013), attempts to centre women's issues through Meghan represent a significant departure from existing royal discourses.

One contemporary royal whose behaviour is more in keeping with histories of monarchical gender relations is Prince Andrew. In particular, he has received scrutiny for his longstanding friendship with convicted paedophile Jeffrey Epstein, who was pronounced dead by suicide while awaiting trial for sex trafficking in August 2019. Detectives searching Epstein's home found thirteen phone numbers for Andrew (Sawer, 2019). Photographs depict Andrew with Epstein, inside Epstein's home, and with his arm around Virginia Roberts, a key witness who testified that Epstein forced her to have sex with Andrew (and other male celebrities, politicians, and businessmen) at the age of seventeen. She called Andrew 'an abuser [and] participant' in Epstein's trafficking of minors (Tahir, 2019).

At the time of writing, US attorney Audrey Strauss had said the US Justice Department would 'welcome Prince Andrew coming in to talk with us', suggesting he had not yet given formal evidence (Mills, 2020). Meanwhile, the Metropolitan Police have been criticised for dropping their investigation into Andrew (Wells, 2019), and rejecting Freedom of Information requests that could help establish his whereabouts on the night that Virginia Giuffre accused him of assault (Burke, 2020). Rather than giving formal evidence, in November 2019 Andrew was interviewed by BBC's Newsnight, staged within Buckingham Palace after six months of negotiations (BBC, 2019a). Despite the intention to 'prove' his innocence, he evaded accountability, with his assertions becoming increasingly far-fetched - including a Pizza Express alibi and an invented medical condition that prevents sweating. When interviewer Emily Maitlis noted the unprecedented nature of the interview, Andrew replied, 'I think the problem that… we face in the twenty-first century is social media. There is a whole range of things that you face now that you didn't face 25 years ago because it was just the print media'. This suggests that the accountability created by social media movements like #MeToo is a 'problem' (which, of course, it is for famous, powerful men wishing to sexually exploit women with impunity). Asked if he remembered having sex with women in Epstein's residences, he claimed he would not forget because 'if you're a man it is a positive act to have sex', implying that women are necessarily sexually passive. This reinforces victim blaming discourses where women are 'asking for' sexual assault because men's sexual desires are valorised over women's agency, as well as binaries of royal femininity, where women exist for the (sexual) reproduction of male power. Andrew showed neither sympathy towards Epstein's victims nor regret for his friendship with Epstein, because 'the people that I met and the opportunities that I was given to learn either by him or because of him were actually very useful', reasserting that his (masculine) power and business deals take priority over female victims.

The interview received widespread derision (Maltby, 2019; Rawlinson, 2019). He eventually resigned from public 'duties' for the 'foreseeable future' in a public letter where he claimed he 'deeply sympathise[d] with everyone who has been affected'- sympathy which extends as much to himself and those prosecuted as to any of the women subject to exploitation (Johnson, 2019). In July 2020, he was missing from official photographs of his daughter Princess Beatrice's wedding, suggesting deliberate impression management to remove the

problematic individual from official royal representations (Osborne, 2020). At the time of writing, however, much of his public funding remains.

Andrew is far from an exceptional 'black sheep' (Kilby, 2019) in the monarchy. Indeed, what is monarchy if not institutionalised (and publicly funded) exploitation of women's bodies? Monarchical history is a patriarchal history of sexual scandals (Clark, 2004; Samuelian, 2010) and women's 'bodies, their reproductive capacities… are central to the story' (Mantel, 2013). Mantel uses the example of Henry VIII to illustrate her arguments about the centrality of heterosex to the reproduction of monarchical patriarchy. For our purposes here, representations of Henry VIII are worth considering to examine how the figure of the 'wayward' prince (Campbell, 1988) long precedes Prince Andrew. Representations of Henry VIII and his six wives are uncritically recounted in British History Curriculums, including the beheading of two when they failed to birth a male heir, as a juvenile rhyme: 'Divorced, Beheaded, Died: Divorced, Beheaded, Survived'. This history is devoid of any engagement with ideas of violence against women, patriarchy, misogyny or male entitlement. Rather, it is narrated as a quirk of historic custom; a fairytale-telling of the eccentric private lives of royalty.

These fairytale and folklore discourses are also reflected in media coverage of Andrew's alleged sex crimes, further situating him within this historical tradition of royal 'sexual scandals'. A Channel 5 documentary about Andrew described 'controversies that engulfed the Yorks through the centuries' (dir. Budd and Johnstone, 2019). Channel 4's documentary 'The Prince and The Paedophile' (dir. Sanders, 2019) uses a jokey pun on children's fairytale *The Princess and the Pea* which, like the viral hashtag about the programme #nonceuponatime, invokes the comforting fictions of historic folklore and childish fairytale while erasing the human trauma contained within. This backdrop of discourses trivialising paedophilia is a form of rape culture enabling the continuation of sexual exploitation, such as that which Andrew stands accused of in the present day.

As these histories show, exploiting women's bodies is the royal norm. Importantly, Andrew is not the only contemporary prince found to be consorting with notorious sexual abusers. Prince Charles had a thirty-year friendship with Sir Jimmy Saville, who has 214 confirmed sexual offenses (Brady, 2013). Despite multiple public allegations before Saville died (Casciani, 2013), Charles 'led tributes' sending public condolences after his death (Booth, 2012). Saville's OBE, bestowed by the monarchy for 'charitable services', has not been revoked (ibid.). That two contemporary princes have been revealed as close friends with notorious paedophiles shows how the institution continues unscathed after such revelations. Accounts positioning Andrew as a 'black sheep' (Kilby, 2019), giving an otherwise respectable family a bad name, erases the structural patriarchy upholding monarchical power.

The individualising of Andrew's behaviour reflects some of the criticisms of #MeToo, and its focus on multiple, individual perpetrators. As Tarana Burke has lamented of the contemporary movement, 'no matter how much I keep talking about power and privilege, they keep bringing it back to individuals' (in Adetiba and Burke, 2018: 27). Likewise, Rosalind Gill and Shani Orgad argue that focusing on individuals ignores 'the monstrous capitalist, patriarchal and sexist system that has produced, sustained and rewarded these "bad apples" over decades' (2018: 1320); an argument that directly applies to how the monarchy's institutional power remains secure despite its history of sexual exploitation.

A key difference between historical accounts of wayward princes and Andrew's present association with Epstein is that, in the present #MeToo era of dispersed media power, survivor testimony has a public outlet for revealing sexual abuse (as Andrew said the 'problem that [he] face[s] in the twenty-first century is social media' (BBC, 2019a)). While

Andrew has not yet been held legally accountable, #MeToo makes Andrew's alleged abuse harder to ignore. #MeToo's social media methods have given Virginia Giuffre's testimony a public platform, for example, her 'Victims Refuse Silence' Twitter account and charity (2019).

However, women who do speak out are still often attacked and discredited (Kay, 2020). Giuffre has been called a 'serial liar' and a 'fake #MeToo victim' (Ashford and Roundtree, 2019). She has been required to produce flight details as evidence that she and Andrew were in the same place, despite photographic evidence. Buckingham Palace claimed her 'testimony does not stand up to scrutiny' (Adams, 2019), showing how survivor reliability in women's sexual testimony is constantly pitted against an 'impossible benchmark' of proof (Yelin, 2020). What matters then, in a polyvalent landscape of disputed 'truth', is who has authority (ibid.) and how some accounts are (de)legitimised. As we have argued, autobiographical testimony is a subjective form of evidence whose authority depends upon whom is speaking in which existing social invalidations are compounded if the subject is denied authority to begin with (Yelin, 2020). This is further evidenced by #MeToo only gaining traction when espoused by wealthy, white celebrities, rather than when launched by Tarana Burke, a woman of colour, twelve years previously. In Andrew's case, despite his lack of credibility in interview (BBC, 2019a), he has authority as part of a powerful state institution, while his victims are in/directly silenced and delegitimised. If monarchy were feminist, these accusations would be heard and addressed.

Monarchy is an intersectional feminist issue

In August 2020, Welsh rugby player Ashton Hewitt asked on Twitter 'how is it Meghan Markle has had more bad press than Prince Andrew?' At the time of writing, the tweet had over 43,000 retweets and 256,000 likes (@ashton_hewitt, 2020). Indeed, as a woman of colour joining the monarchy, Meghan has received vicious criticism for 'crimes' remarkable only for how tiny they are, compared to Andrew. As such, the questions of authority outlined above play out in media treatment of individual royals. In order to understand monarchy as a feminist issue, it is useful to compare the media treatment of Meghan and Andrew considering they occurred at the same conjuncture.

Criticism of Meghan has included a Daily Mail headline asking 'is Meghan's favourite snack fuelling drought and murder?' because she eats avocados, the farming of which has been linked to human rights abuses (Leonard, 2019). Similarly, a Sun headline claims that she 'is related to Jack the Ripper serial killer suspect H H Holmes' (Vonow, 2018). As we have argued elsewhere, 'Markle is a figure who has sparked such a proliferation of discourse around her that she has proved a useful tool for those wishing to' attract audiences and generate media views (Yelin and Clancy, 2020). In the 48 hours following the release of Epstein papers naming Andrew in August 2019, The Mirror's royal correspondent posted eleven negative stories about Meghan and just one story about Andrew and Epstein (@MirrorRoyal, 2019), revealing the exponential generation of (often negative) content around Meghan compared to others. We have shown that coverage of Andrew's sex crimes often uses humour, making Andrew a figure of fun, rather than threat. However, in a society offering no legal, processual checks on the royals, media scandals are the closest we come to holding royals to account. It was only after Andrew's BBC interview where he inadvertently incriminated himself that he resigned from public 'duties', and he still retains his titles and the majority of his royal income. Whilst Andrew's associations with Epstein have been documented by the press since 2007, and would not have been revealed without investigative journalists, he was born into his royal privileges and all that he is afforded by his position at the top of a hegemonic, colonial patriarchy. Post-interview he was photographed horse riding with the Queen in Windsor, which could be read as a public show of support from the monarch to her son (Hallemann, 2019). In earlier years, when Andrew was misusing royal capital by taking private jets so he could visit golf courses on the way to public appearances, the Queen redrafted internal policy to curtail him (Allen, 2005). This kind

of procedural intervention is reserved for financial misdemeanours to protect royal wealth. By contrast, the monarchy's response to allegations of sexual abuse has been attempts to silence these stories through injunctions and threats of legal action, and closing down comments on Andrew's personal Instagram page @hrhthedukeofyork. The emphasis here is on controlling the story rather than legally proving innocence (indeed, the Maitlis interview only occurred because it was designed as an intervention in Andrew's reputation management).

In January 2020, Harry and Meghan announced they were 'stepping back' from the monarchy, and pursuing a life in Canada and the USA (sussexroyal, 2020). The British royal family continues with Andrew, but without Meghan, revealing the continuation of its institutional power to be compatible with a white, male figure accused of sexual abuse, but not an American woman of colour and self-proclaimed feminist. We have argued in this paper that Meghan's feminist interventions were depoliticised and 'co-opted' by the monarchy as part of broader projects of institutional reproduction through philanthropy. Projects of women's empowerment became part of her 'work' as a member of the royal family, and as such were shorn of their radical or emancipatory potential. This meant that it was not Meghan's individual voice that was being platformed in her work, but rather an institutional standpoint on vague, defanged, neoliberal issues of 'empowerment'.

Since her departure from the monarchy, Meghan has made more politicised statements, including a speech about Black Lives Matter in which she identified by name some of the Black people killed by white police officers, and recalled her experiences as a child of anti-racist protests in LA (Roberts, 2020). In comparison, the monarchy has made no direct statement on Black Lives Matter, instead discussing such issues only through oblique inference and indirect implication (Royston, 2020). Significantly, in the 2020 US election, Markle encouraged people to vote against incumbent President Donald Trump in a call to 'reject hate speech, misinformation and online negativity' - a partisan political statement widely understood to be impossible within British institutional monarchy (Davies, 2020). This suggests that being outside of the institution, and its structures of power, are enabling Meghan to participate in a wider range of public discourses. We demonstrated that celebrity feminism's commodification of feminist ideas poses limitations for its capacity for social change. However, Meghan has already shown in a short time how her new position as a celebrity feminist outside of the royal institution represents more opportunity for contribution to progressive popular debate. This reveals how intersectional feminism's goals of collective equality exist in diametric opposition to the structures which reproduce monarchical power. The very existence of the monarchy is a feminist issue when Meghan, a woman of colour and self-identified feminist, has to leave, while Andrew, a white man accused of criminal sexual exploitation, continues to quietly exist within. Where Meghan and Harry have worked 'to become financially independent', Andrew has not (sussexroyal, 2020)

Raka Shome has undertaken an analysis of royal femininity and celebrity in relation to whiteness (2014). Meghan requires us to consider royal femininity in relation to Blackness. Elsewhere in this issue, Kehinde Andrews argues that to use Meghan to describe both the monarchy and wider British society as 'post-racial' fundamentally ignores ongoing structural racisms and discrimination. Nicole Willson (this issue) argues that Meghan reveals the failure of the colonial imagination to conceive of the very existence of Black royalty. Rachael McLennan (this issue) sees Meghan as a liminal figure who destabilises multiple boundaries of class, race, gender and age, while Olivia Woldemikael and Eve Woldemikael (this issue) read Meghan as destabilising racial binarism through her self-identified 'bi-racial' identity. Representations of Meghan's feminism are always already intersectional because she exists at intersections of class, race and gender. Likewise, the monarchy's engagement with issues of gender demands an intersectional analysis because they epitomise colonial, white-supremacist domination and feudal hierarchy. In hook's terms patriarchy must be understood

as an 'imperialist, whitesupremacist, capitalist patriarchy' (hooks, 2013: 143) because 'those things are all linked — an interlocking system' (in Yancy and hooks, 2015). Monarchy is uniquely imbricated in all of these systems; especially those 'of class, of empire, of capitalism, of racism' (ibid.) and their relationship to patriarchy.

Conclusion

Meghan's celebrity image and it's associations with women's causes brought discourses of feminism into contact with discourses of monarchy. These discourses of gender politics expanded to include her husband, Prince Harry. On his tour of South Africa in 2019, Harry stated 'it's time to redefine masculinity' (Said-Moorhouse, 2019). Representations of Harry's masculinity have been recalibrated because of his wife's feminist status, in headlines such as 'Meghan orders Prince Harry to wear a papoose 24/7 to "expunge the last toxins of masculinity" from his poor emasculated soul' (Kindon, 2018) and 'Prince Harry feels "emasculated" that he cannot help his wife to "feel happy"' (Weston, 2019). While the latter was a story about Meghan's adjustment to royal life, the phrasing gestures towards phallocentric ideas of masculinity and sexual failure. Elsewhere, Clancy (forthcoming) has described how representations of Harry enact a narrative of redemptive masculinity, from 'playboy prince' to 'philanthropic prince', via 'soldier prince'. The headlines above denote the limits of this redemption, whereby any shifts away from hegemonic masculinity mean Harry is 'emasculated'. As we have shown throughout this article, monarchy is built on patriarchy, misogyny and colonialism. As such, Harry cannot redefine masculinity while benefiting from the patriarchal, colonial domination that underpins his continuing royal privileges. At the time of writing, Meghan and Harry do not receive money from royal funds (HRH the Duchess of Sussex vs. Associated Newspapers Limited, 2020) and have dropped their HRH titles. However, they keep and trade upon their royal titles The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and it is important to remember how royal connections and branding open doors to other commercial opportunities. In the UK, they reside in Frogmore cottage within the grounds of the Windsor Estate. Their official website retains a section called 'serving the monarchy', where they state 'The Duke and Duchess of Sussex deeply believe in the role of The Monarchy, and their commitment to Her Majesty The Queen is unwavering' (Sussex Royal, 2020). Hence, their 'departure' does not constitute a full renunciation of monarchical values.

This paper has analysed representations of Meghan's feminism, given her symbolic role within (and now adjacent to) the British monarchy. This is, as we have shown, an institution built on the patriarchal subjugation of women's bodies and structures of colonialism, whiteness, and exploitation. Although this is best exemplified in Andrew's recent sexual abuse accusations, it is a history spanning centuries, etched into the stories that Britain tells about itself. If princess cultures negotiate norms of femininity, with royal women subject to regressive traditions of purity, etiquette and heterosexual chattel (Orenstein, 2011), royal brides will always fail against an 'impossible benchmark' (Yelin, 2020). Meanwhile, royal histories constructing masculinity through sex, power and entitlement to women's bodies mean royal princes can sidestep even basic benchmarks such as human rights and sexual consent. This is one reason why monarchy is, and always has been, a feminist issue. Monarchy cannot be feminist because the stories it tells, and its very existence, depend on the subjugation of women and their bodies.

If it is essential to unpick the difference between representations of Meghan as an individual, and her symbolic function as deployed by the British monarchy as an institution, this is because the interplay of structure versus individual is a fundamental tension in #MeToo and the ongoing debates about the individualisation of neoliberal and celebrity feminism (Rottenberg, 2018; Gill and Orgad, 2018). It is precisely because Meghan's royal feminism sits within the conventions of neoliberal and celebrity feminism, that it could (for a time at least) be tolerated and even utilised by the monarchy in an effort to be seen as 'modernising'

the institution, because it did not address power at a structural level and the need for structural reform.

Representations of both Meghan and Andrew's royal personas in the period of #MeToo reproduce narratives of individualisation rather than identifying structural inequalities. The role of individual risk, however plays out very differently for Meghan and Andrew. Meghan as an individual is singled out for attention, criticism, and racist abuse, ultimately leading to her departure, while the institution of monarchy remains relatively unscathed. In coverage of Andrew as the 'wayward prince' (Campbell, 1988) or the 'black sheep' (Kilby, 2019), he is also the anomalous outsider, but one which the monarchy can absorb and shield, precisely because there has always been a place for the systematic exploitation of women in a structure built upon 'imperialist, white-supremacist, capitalist patriarchy' (hooks, 2013: 143). We have shown how, in the treatment of Andrew's alleged exploitation of women, the monarchy (and often the media) disavow the structural misogyny upon which the institution has historically been built.

Monarchy in a #MeToo era is antithetical to structural change. Indeed, even if Andrew were held appropriately to account, this does not erase the histories of systemic misogyny in elite circles which enabled him. While #MeToo is beginning to expose these misogynist histories, Andrew highlights the monarchy's current role in this, as well as its reliance upon other forms of exploitation, expropriation, enclosure, and theft. Until the abolishment of monarchy and the redistribution of its stolen wealth to pay reparations and redress inequality, monarchy can never be described as feminist.

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