

THE BIRTH OF A FEMPRENEUR: A NEOLIBERAL GUIDE TO GOING VIRAL AND MAKING MILLIONS

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DREW AFUALO: A CASE STUDY

- Drew Afualo is a popular Tik Toker who is famous for calling out and cancelling men on Tik Tok, a social media platform that allows users to share short videos online
- Drew Afualo gained rapid popularity for cancelling and calling out men who are openly misogynistic and sexist on the app, and encourages her followers to further call out these men
- Since the beginning of her Tik Tok career Afualo uses neoliberal tactics such as individualism and entrepreneurialism, and is one explanation to why she gained such notoriety on the app
- Using neoliberal and entrepreneurial tactics allowed her to gain a mass following and personally profit from her activism which is no longer her main priority, and instead focuses on her entrepreneurial side

FEMPRENEUR 101:



What is a Fempreneur?

An individual or collective who capitalize and commodify feminism through labour tasks such as creating and marketing material goods of feminist content.

Fempreneurs capitalize on the business and popularity of feminism

- Feminist clothing, symbols, products and services
 - Feminist clothing saying "Girl Power", Mugs saying "Dismantle the Patriarchy," or intersectional feminist education seminars
- Fempreneurs are blurring the lines between activism and entrepreneurialism in order to make social and political change, and personal gains

1) NEOLIBERAL IDEOLOGIES FROM THE BEGINNING



- Drew Afualo practices neoliberal feminism by promoting individualism, entrepreneurialism, market growth, and individual enterprises
- Neoliberal feminism aligns with popular feminism; a non-compromising easy to understand feminism that is highly mainstreamed
- Afualo's messaging has always been viable for commodity purposes, and has followed neoliberal ideologies, a contributing factor in her rise in popularity and financial gains
- Blaming the individual and promoting popular and 'cool' feminism



2) DIFFERING FROM OTHER FEMPRENEURS

- Many fempreneurs work for non-profit organizations as writers, editors, and content creators
- Although they too look for financial security, much of the money they make goes back to their organization
- Drew Afualo advocates online solely for personal economic profits
- Afualo does not openly state that her earnings go to any feminist organizations

3) COMMODYFING AND MATERIALIZING

- Afualo has capitalized on her brand, which is now very commercialized
- Irrelevant brand collaborations
- Meet and greets, gym membership plans, and feminist clothing
- Expanding her brand through merchandise, podcasts, and appearances



4) HAS HER MESSAGING CHANGED SINCE BECOMING A FAMOUS FEMPRENEUR?

Yes and No

- Drew Afualo's messaging has been rooted in neoliberal ideologies from the start but has exacerbated since fame
- Her messaging has remained constant- it's women's responsibility to call out 'bad men' in order to dismantle patriarchy and misogyny
- A major change in her messaging is the stark competition between her entrepreneurialism and activism
- Afualo combines her feminist messaging in her advertising, a common technique used in popular feminism that obscures viewers' ability to decipher the two and her authenticity

5) WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL ACTIVISM? QUESTIONS & CONCERNS SCHOLARS MAY HAVE



- Where does this leave radical feminism to advocate if social media platforms only promote neoliberal feminism and harshly critique radical feminism?
- Scholars may further analyze trends of who becomes famous and whose voices are allowed space on social media to be heard and legitimized
- Do fempreneurs like Drew Afualo inspire others to become activists on social media in hopes of financial gains and recognition first and activism second without realizing the precarity of this position?
- With the rise of technology and social media, feminist activism itself is changing. How will the future of feminism adapt to these changes, and will resorting to social media be the only way to advocate in a postfeminist era?

Works Cited

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