

GENDER EQUALITY?: A TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF THE UN
HEFORSHE CAMPAIGN AS A GLOBAL “SOLIDARITY” MOVEMENT FOR MEN

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

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“Wise shall be the bearers of light.” Hundreds have walked under the Journalism School archway at the University of Missouri and read this quote etched in its stone. I, too, have seen this quote hundreds of times while heading to the quad or rushing, yet again, late to class. But every time, it strikes a chord. This place and its people, who tirelessly work to train the journalists of tomorrow, epitomize wisdom. Professors here not only teach students to be storytellers. They teach us to be better human beings, to constantly evolve and to pursue the truth undeterred. They teach us to imagine, to fail, to live. I almost didn’t come here. But, somehow, I did. And how truly lucky I am.

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ABSTRACT

Through the lens of transnational feminist theory, this study examines the UN Women HeForShe campaign as a global solidarity movement for gender equality. Using a transnational feminist framework and critical discourses analysis methodology, the study analyzed the official campaign website homepage and more than 100 tweets on the day of and month following the public launch of the campaign on September 20, 2014. This study explored the campaign’s launch to its online audience, particularly on social media. In particular, it examined the HeForShe campaign discourse with attention to three primary areas: systemic problems of hegemonic masculinity, universal values and Western perceptions about gender politics.

The study found that the campaign challenged hegemonic masculinity through constructions of solidarity. However, the campaign largely reproduced male dominance through depictions of stereotypical male characteristics and the traditional man vs. woman gender binary system. As an effort on behalf of the United Nations, the campaign also employed a universal human rights framework to legitimize its gender equality goals, which in turn reinforced a westernized message despite the global nature of the campaign. As a result, this thesis is useful for scholarship on social media, particularly in social justice activist settings, and the role of discourse in shaping audience perceptions about issues of inequality.

Chapter 1: Introduction

UN Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, recently launched a solidarity campaign focused on harnessing global support for gender equality. Kicking off its mission on the eve of International Women's Day in March 2014, the campaign purports to gather one "half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity, for the benefit of all" (UN Women, 2015). The "solidarity movement for gender equality," entitled "HeForShe," focuses on bringing men into a conversation about gender inequality. The campaign's goal is "to mobilize one billion men by July 2015 to help communities around the world develop sustainable and transformative programs to promote gender equality" (HeForShe, 2014a). Taking a transnational feminist approach, this qualitative study examines whether the HeForShe campaign fulfills a transnational feminist agenda.

In September 2014, the recently appointed UN Women Goodwill Ambassador Emma Watson, a young, white British actor, launched the HeForShe campaign at a special event at UN Headquarters. During her speech at this launch event, she defined feminism and used a feminist framework to describe men's role in gender equality. She posed the question, "How can we affect change in the world when only half of it is invited or feel welcome to participate in the conversation?" (Watson, 2014a) She answered by extending a formal invitation to men to take up gender inequality as their issue too.

After Watson's speech, the campaign garnered significant media attention and audience participation, particularly through social media, as the speech video, speech

transcript and general HeForShe campaign information were shared online. In the first two weeks following the public launch event, the HeForShe campaign generated 1.1 million tweets from 750,000 different users, reaching a total of 1.2 billion unique Twitter users (Publicis Dallas, 2014). Watson's speech has been viewed more than 8 million times. As an awareness-raising campaign, this study is particularly interested in examining the discourse of the HeForShe campaign on the day off and the month after this public launch event.

The purpose of this research study is to examine how feminism and men's role in feminism is represented in the UN Women campaign and how this representation relates to gender equality globally. Through the lens of a transnational feminist theory and critical discourse analysis methodology, this research examines three primary areas: the hegemony of male power, universalization of values and Westernization of gender politics. To analyze these areas, this qualitative study employs a critical discourse analysis of the official HeForShe website homepage and a selected timeline of content published on the official Twitter account page. Through this multidimensional analysis, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- RQ 1: How does the social media and website discourse for the HeForShe campaign reflect or challenge the systemic problem of hegemonic masculinity?
- RQ 2: How are the United Nation's universal values reflected in the HeForShe campaign through its website and Twitter feed?
- RQ 3: To what extent does the social media and website discourse of the HeForShe campaign center on Western definitions and/or perceptions about gender politics?

These research questions examine how gender relationships are constructed through the HeForShe campaign, as well as what subsequent discourses about feminism are developed from these constructions. The first research question leads to a better understanding of the gendered framework of the campaign. The second question looks closely at the United Nations as an international entity for preserving universal human rights and how an undercurrent of universalism shapes the presentation and goals of this campaign. The third question delves deeper into the relationship between the United Nations and Western powers and how this relationship impacts global gender politics through a solidarity movement such as the HeForShe campaign.

The analyst discovered two main themes in the study's findings. The first theme reveals both a reflection of and challenge to hegemonic masculinity in the HeForShe campaign, as discussed in RQ 1. The second theme reveals reflections of both universal values and Western perceptions about gender politics in the campaign discourse, as discussed in RQ 2 and RQ 3. In the first theme of the findings, the HeForShe campaign discourse offers some challenges to hegemonic masculinity, primarily through constructions of solidarity. However, the campaign largely reproduces male hegemony. The reification of hegemonic masculinity occurs through the campaign's use of gender binaries and a heavy focus on men to the exclusion of both women and other gender identities. In the second theme of the findings, the HeForShe campaign, as a distinct United Nations effort, explicitly ties universal human rights to women's rights. This universalism is further linked to a privileging of Western politics and cultural values in the campaign discourse. While there are some elements of transnational solidarity in the campaign, Western narratives dominate the discourse. Overall, this study's findings argue

that the HeForShe campaign oversimplifies the complexity of transnational gender equality, dismisses gender identities outside of the traditional gender binary and ultimately fails to challenge male power by ignoring structural and cultural factors like male privilege.

Informed by Norman Fairclough's (2001, 2003) critical discourse analysis methodology, this study focuses on the role of discourse as the foundation for social reality. By focusing on the public launch of the HeForShe campaign, this thesis looks closely at how the campaign's discourse is constructed and how awareness about gender equality is conceptualized as a result. As an event that was widely viewed and discussed, the public launching period is a crucial moment for understanding how the campaign intended to first influence people to join and why people may have supported, ignored, criticized or rejected the campaign at this time. The role language plays in a campaign like HeforShe proves useful for individuals in the fields of public relations, journalism, sociology or international relations.

As an internationally recognized body that sets the standards for universal human rights, the United Nations plays a major role in shaping the conversation on women, girls and gender equality. The United Nations was created to ensure the dignity of all people in the world and remains a space for all voices to be heard. The organization, however, has often been criticized as a place of dialogue and often little action. From this viewpoint, the United Nations' voice is its most powerful tool. The intergovernmental makeup of the United Nations creates immense discursive power at the global level. Through an analysis of the conversation produced by the UN HeForShe campaign, this study offers an important glimpse into how social media shape conversations on global social justice.

Furthermore, this thesis expands the conversation for understanding feminism on the transnational level and what transnational feminist theory looks like in practice in an individual's daily life.

Chapter 2: Background

Advocating for gender inequality and connecting advocates across the globe has a long-standing narrative at the United Nations (Connell, 2005). Gender equality has been an established doctrine in international law since the creation and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, which contends that creating a gender-equal society requires both profound institutional change at the global level and changes in everyday life at the individual level (Connell, 2005). Article 1 of the Declaration declares human beings are born both equal and free; all people should treat each other in a “in a spirit of brotherhood” (United Nations, 1948). While human dignity is framed in masculine terms through “brotherhood,” the Preamble offers a gender-neutral recognition of the fundamental worth of all humans as the “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (United Nations, 1948). Additionally, in Article 1 of the UN Charter, achieving international cooperation is linked to the respect of human rights no matter “race, sex, language, or religion” (United Nations, 1945).

In addition to dialogues about gender equality, conversations about feminism can also be traced throughout UN history. Women’s movements began to particularly gain force and expand to transnational forums in the 1970s and 80s, during which the United Nations initiated the “Decade of Women” with a declaration of the International Women's Year in 1975. This led to a number of UN conferences on gender equality in Mexico City, Copenhagen, Nairobi and Beijing that helped to link feminist networks around the world (Quataert & Roth, 2012). Each of these conferences distinctly built upon each other through both bottom-up grassroots level and top-down institutional level

discussions, evaluations and critiques. The concept of feminism also evolved during this time. For example, during the Nairobi conference, thousands of women from Africa and across the globe worked together to conceive “‘alternative visions’ of development, formulated from women’s, not men’s, perspectives” and saw feminism manifest “itself as a demand for ‘sexual egalitarianism,’ for the fulfillment of ‘basic needs,’ or as a call to international lenders for a debt moratorium” and more (Zinsser, 2002, p. 166). Various forms of transnational feminism began to flourish during this decade, aided by gender and development theories, as women began to gain greater access to public life through education, the workforce and more (Dempsey, Parker & Krone, 2011).

Feminism at the UN further evolved through “women’s rights are human rights” initiatives (Stamatopoulou, 1995). This concept criticized the failure of the human rights framework in protecting the dignity of women as equally as men, as well as staunchly ignoring the abuses of women in the private sphere. Through a reframing of human rights, women fought against the subordination of women and girls as a matter of tradition, culture and the natural order of society (Stamatopoulou, 1995). The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna was a crucial historical moment in establishing women’s rights as human rights (Friedman, 2003). With women comprising more than half of 3,000 NGO conference participants, they advocated for the “regendering” of human rights. To make human rights inclusive of both men and women, “women’s rights advocates simultaneously drew upon the already established and highly legitimate frame of human rights protection and demanded a fundamental change in the nature of the issue” (Friedman, 2003, p. 320). Through Vienna as a catalyst, issues such as domestic abuse, mutilation and rape, previously deemed a private concern, became a formal,

codified human rights issue that concerned the state (Friedman, 2003, Stamatopoulou, 1995).

Today, UN Women serves as the primary entity for supporting intergovernmental bodies, member states and the United Nations system as a whole in creating and sustaining global standards for gender equality (UN Women, n.d.). In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women as a merger of previously separate areas of the UN system, such as the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). UN Women, guided by “landmark agreements” like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), focuses on gender discrimination, women’s empowerment and equality for men and women “as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security” (UN Women, n.d.). Despite the establishment of UN Women, the United Nations still remains male-dominated (Hawkesworth, 2012). None of the eight UN secretary generals have been women. According to 2011 figures, women head 10 percent of the permanent mission delegation to the United Nations, 9 percent of management jobs, 21 percent of senior management positions and 48 percent of the junior professional civil service slots (Hawkesworth 2012). Women are also underrepresented in bureaucracies that oversee aspects of life where women possess expertise globally, such as food and agriculture.

Including men in global gender equality discussions developed later at the United Nations. Starting in the 1990s, international public attention began to look at how gender inequality also affected men. Specifically, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 included a paragraph in the Beijing Declaration encouraging “men to

participate fully in all actions towards equality” (Connell, 2005, p. 1807). The conference’s Platform for Action specified ways to involve men and boys in gender equality, such as through education, socialization of children, childcare and housework, sexual health, gender-based violence prevention and the balance of work and family responsibilities (Connell, 2005). Five years later, the Beijing +5 Political Declaration further expanded on men’s shared accountability in gender equality by stating, “men must involve themselves and take joint responsibility with women for the promotion of gender equality” (United Nations, 2001 par. 6). The 1995 World Summit on Social Development and its 2000 review session, the 2011 special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS and the 1997 UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) expert group meeting about “Male Roles and Masculinities in the Perspective of a Culture of Peace” are recent examples of male inclusion in the gender equality issues at the United Nations (Connell, 2005).

In the past four decades, the work of profeminist men has assembled a global movement, spreading in North America, Central America, Scandinavia, India, African countries and more. Profeminist men have made unique contributions to the feminist movement, such as through the creation of antiviolenace men’s centers, support groups for men of color and LGBTQ men, father groups, boys programming, networks for male survivors of child abuse, batterer’s intervention programs and more. Recently, in 2009, about 500 men and women from 80 countries attended “Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality” symposium, part of the MenEngage alliance, in Rio de Janeiro. MenEngage represent one of many recent global conferences focusing on the same subject – aiming to bring men and women together for gender equality (Kimmel, 2014).

The HeForShe campaign narratives of men and women working together to eliminate gender inequalities, therefore, are not new at the United Nations or in other transnational arenas.

The HeForShe Campaign

What makes the HeForShe campaign stand out from prior UN Women initiatives is the nature of the campaign. First, the campaign is specifically geared toward men to inspire “half of humanity” to take up the fight for gender equality. A centerpiece of men’s social mobilization in the campaign is through the HeForShe commitment. On the HeForShe website, men can pledge to be a “man who is going to stand up for women’s rights” and submit a name, country and email to join the solidarity movement. Men who make this HeForShe commitment are then encouraged to share the message with other men in their lives through online social networks. Second, the campaign is heavily focused on its online presence, which includes an official website, Facebook page, Twitter page, Instagram account and YouTube channel. Third, under the guidance of UN Women country offices and through downloadable website materials, the campaign aims to mobilize men on the ground. The campaign focuses more on younger generations as the game-changers because “half of the work population is under 30” (Ravishly, 2014).

Elizabeth Nyamayaro, senior adviser for strategic partnerships and outreach at UN Women, originally conceived the idea for a men-focused gender equality campaign. Nyamayaro, who grew up in an impoverished village in Zimbabwe and later received her higher education in the United Kingdom, now heads the HeForShe campaign. She envisioned the campaign after meeting with UN Women Executive Director and UN Under Secretary General Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, a former South African freedom fighter and the first woman deputy president of South Africa (Ravishly, 2014, Speaker

Bio, n.d.). Nyamayaro then reached out to Publicis Hawkeye, an integrated advertising and digital agency based in Dallas, to develop a men-only campaign concept (Ravishly, 2014).

Brad Roseberry, chief creative officer at Publicis Hawkeye, and Natalie Lavery, an associate creative director and copywriter at Publicis Hawkeye, worked pro bono on the campaign. The Publicis Hawkeye team came up with the “HeForShe” campaign as a men’s solidarity movement to “end gender inequality by 2030” (UN Women, 2014a). UN Women approved the forward-movement of the campaign, and Nyamayaro later recruited actor Emma Watson to be the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador (Ravishly, 2014, Elliott, 2014). UN Women serves as the “facilitator, convener and implementer” of the campaign (HeForShe, 2014a).

The HeForShe strategy works on three platforms: awareness, advocacy and action (Ravishly, 2014). The awareness platform focuses on sensitizing men to the HeForShe concept, the advocacy platform focuses on legislation and policies and the action platform focuses on fundraising efforts and individual stories of impact. The campaign aspires to create transformative programs, multi-level collaborations and platforms for role models to inspire the world to end gender inequality (HeForShe, 2014a). The larger concept of the campaign concentrates on the uneven global “progress” in eliminating gender equality (HeForShe, 2014a). Empowering women is painted as essential to “inclusive economic growth,” “social cohesion,” “social justice,” “environmental balance” and, ultimately, “progress in all spheres of life” (HeForShe, 2014a). To accomplish this, men and boys must be involved, alongside women, in “crafting a shared

vision of human progress for all” (HeForShe, 2014a). The HeForShe campaign insists that humanity will reach its full potential only through united social efforts.

The campaign takes both a bottom-up approach and a top-down approach. The bottom-up approach refers to letting men develop “organic solutions” to gender equality (Ravishly, 2014). The top-down approach refers to men in power making changes, such as politicians, CEOs and university presidents. The campaign has an advisory council within the private sector, including CEOs from Coca-Cola, Unilever, Chanel and Goldman Sachs, and has JPMorgan Chase & Co. as the campaign title partner (Fairchild, 2014, UN Women, 2015). About 800 CEOs have been encouraged to work on women’s economic empowerment as part of the HeForShe movement (Into the Gloss, 2014).

The HeForShe campaign includes online and offline components. The online work revolves around the official HeForShe campaign website, while the offline work is detailed in the campaign’s Action Kit. The official website has three key sections, including the “Take Action” homepage, an “Action Kit” page and a “Donate” page to support UN Women’s worldwide efforts, as well as a “Shop” page to purchase HeForShe merchandise. In late January 2015, the campaign added a “Strategy” page. The “Take Action” homepage provides an interactive narrative about the women’s movement and men’s involvement in gender equality, as well as features the “HeForShe commitment” paired with a world map infographic detailing the movement’s growth. The “Action Kit” page offers a downloadable Action Kit PDF, available in English, Russian, French, Spanish and Chinese, as the only in-depth, action-based resource guide for the campaign. This “playbook,” created for UN Women, UN entities, country offices, civic

organizations, gender equality advocates and college students, offers general campaign information, implementation steps and resources.

The Action Kit constructs three different campaign implementation plans for UN Women and UN entities, for individuals and civil society organizations and for universities. The first plan, which sets the example for the other two plans, involves the “expert knowledge” of UN entities and country offices. This plan includes six steps: appoint someone as a HeForShe focal point, develop a localized implementation plan, allocate funds, launch an event in country, drive conversation and monitor any progress. Officially, the global HeForShe campaign runs from July 2014 – July 2015. Any regional, state, local and individual plans are encouraged to stick to this timeframe. During this timeline, there are five key phases of the campaign at the UN Women level: (1) a launch phase including the kick-off HeForShe event and mobilization of 200,000 men through the HeForShe website in 2014, (2) a period focusing on ending violence against women through the UNiTE campaign, (3) a period focusing on mobilizing support for women’s economic empowerment, (4) a period focusing on women’s roles in politics and peace-building and (5) a final fundraising event in 2015.

The launch phase is the primary focus of this study. In September 2014, UN Women hosted an event to publicly launch the HeForShe campaign at UN Headquarters. This event centered on unveiling a redesigned HeForShe website and activating the HeForShe world map. This map uses a geo locator to track men’s involvement in the campaign and to tally the progress of reaching the campaign goal of 1 billion men who have signed the HeForShe commitment (UN Women, 2014a). UN officials, celebrities and civil society representatives attended.

As UN Women Goodwill Ambassador, Watson gave a speech about gender equality. Labeling the HeForShe campaign the first of its kind at the United Nations, Watson discussed a lack of male inclusion in global gender discussions. Watson extended a formal invitation to men to join the HeForShe campaign and to take up the “mantle” of gender equality. She implored that men join the cause for their daughters, sisters, mothers and sons, arguing, “men don’t have the benefits of equality either” (Watson, 2014a). A large portion of the speech highlighted Watson’s experiences as a woman and her growth as a feminist. Watson described feminism as, “... the belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. It is the theory of the political, economic and social equality of the sexes” (Watson, 2014a). But, because “feminism” is a stigmatized word, she lifted up the HeForShe campaign as a movement to unite all people together.

Watson, an actor particularly known for her feminist role of Hermione Granger in the *Harry Potter* film series, is someone who garners a certain amount of immediate attention from her fan base, especially from the younger generations who know her characters well. According to the Publicis Dallas website, Watson’s speech helped to generate 1.1 million tweets from 750,000 different users in the two weeks following the launch event, reaching a total of 1.2 billion unique Twitter users (Publicis Dallas, 2014). The speech has been viewed online more than 8 million times.

As an attention-grabber for the HeForShe campaign, Watson’s speech received noticeable backlash from feminist bloggers, journalists and writers of various backgrounds. In the days following the public launch, one headline read, “Sorry Privileged White Ladies, But Emma Watson Isn’t A ‘Game Changer’ For Feminism,” followed by the subhead, “Positioning men as the saviors of oppressed women isn’t

productive, and devalues the work that feminists have been doing for decades” (McCarthy, 2014). Another headline subhead read, “It will take more than just waving a magic wand to enact real change to deeply engrained normative gender discourses” (Zulver, 2014). Many feminist writers praised Watson for her bravery, but pointed out how she represents mainstream feminism commonly acknowledged at the United Nations (Azeez, 2014, Chandrachud, 201, Deaver, 2014, McCarthy, 2014, McKenzie, 2014, Zulver, 2014). Watson’s speech presented a “very bubblegummy, hollywoody, male gaze catering, soft, liberal feminist ideal, one that was not challenging or threatening to the patriarchy” (Azeez, 2014).

Many of the blog posts, articles and opinion pieces denounced the exclusionary nature of the campaign itself and Watson’s speech (Azeez, 2014, Chandrachud, 201, Deaver, 2014, McCarthy, 2014, McKenzie, 2014, Zulver, 2014). These posts argue that the campaign simplifies feminism to allow the general male masses to take baby steps into gender equality rather than teach about feminism “as a complex, reflexive, and discursive system of power structures with the ability to both oppress and liberate” (Zulver, 2014). Because feminism serves as a critical space for women who face more than just gender oppression, women of color decried Watson as a leader for the HeForShe campaign (Azeez, 2014, McKenzie, 2014, Obadina, 2014). They argued Watson’s privilege separates her from the “deeply oppressed... who remain unseen and unheard” (Azeez, 2014). Many in the feminist online writing community also complained that men have not been listening and should not need the HeForShe invitation to join gender equality (Azeez, 2014, Chandrachud, 201, Deaver, 2014, McCarthy, 2014, McKenzie, 2014, Obadina, 2014, Zulver, 2014). More so, creating male allies is a precarious process,

yet the HeForShe campaign offers little guidance for men entering into feminism (Chandrachud, 201, Deaver, 2014, McCarthy, 2014, McKenzie, 2014, Zulver, 2014).

Overall, the HeForShe campaign's feminist media backlash depicts the campaign as starting a useful dialogue, despite its flaws (Azeez, 2014, Chandrachud, 201, Deaver, 2014, McCarthy, 2014, McKenzie, 2014, Zulver, 2014). The HeForShe campaign launch event proved beneficial for at least starting an online discussion about women's equality (Zulver, 2014). Many feminist writers expressed how encouraged they were by how many were inspired by Watson's speech, particularly those who have been unsure of feminism (Azeez, 2014). But as one feminist journalist writing about Watson's speech described:

When we have women carrying around the mattress on which they were raped in an effort to have their attacker expelled, women protesting outside jails for those incarcerated for miscarriages charged as aggravated homicides, women going to jail because they used their music to promote LGBTQ rights in an oppressive society, can we not think of better reasons for the UN to promote feminism than to prevent young girls from worrying that they are becoming "too muscly"? When we have a global stage and a voice that is dripping in discursive power, can we not think of a better reason to promote feminism to the masses? (Zulver, 2014)

This discursive power, in the setting of global gender equality efforts, is the ultimate focus of this study.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Queer Theory, Gender Binaries and Feminism

Understanding the dynamics of the HeForShe campaign means deconstructing definitions of gender and feminism. Queer theory offers an array of scholarship on the meaning of gender and the role of gender in identity formation and social practices. Queer theory, a postmodern and poststructural feminist approach, moves past the limitations of liberal and radical feminism into a more discursive space for all identities. Queer theorists pay attention to the intersectionalities of identities, such as sex, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability and nationality. But also queer theorists significantly problematize “woman” as a universally applied category opposite of “man” (Butler, 1990, Lorber, 1997). This positioning supports patriarchy and ultimately erases the particularity of gender and other oppressions in distinct times and places (Butler, 1990). “Patriarchy” is defined as the oppressing structure of “male domination” (Gunew, 2013, p. 273).

Radical feminism and liberal feminism, signature of first and second wave mainstream feminism, portray man as “all-powerful misogynist, oppressor – the enemy” and women as “the oppressed – the victims” (Hooks, 2000a, p. 68). This perspective supports biological essentialism, meaning the natural man is the opposite of the natural woman, in which rhetorically reinforces a “sexist ideology by positing in an inverted form the notion of a basic conflict between the sexes, the implication being that the empowerment of women would necessarily be at the expense of men” (p. 68). Such dualistic “either/or” thinking leaves behind those who do not fit into categories of “woman” and “man,” such as genderqueer individuals (Hooks, 2000a, Usher, 2006).

“Genderqueer” can be used as an umbrella term for people with any gender identity other than man and woman, such as transgender, genderfluid or gender non-conforming individuals (Usher, 2006). The term “cisgender” refers to people whose biological sex aligns with their gender identity, such an individual who is born male and identifies as a man, as is supported by the traditional gender binary. Queer theory attacks central assumptions of outdated feminist theories to deconstruct sex, gender and sexuality as distinct and separate categories embedded in social experiences (Lorber, 1997). At its foundation, queer theory advocates that sex is biological and separate from gender, which is culturally constructed (Butler, 1990).

Queer theory resists the tendency to simplify any identity in essentialist terms and instead supports “individual truth” and self-identification (Bromley, 2012, p. 99). The social self is a complicated combination of norms, roles and interests (Valocchi, 2005). Theorists argue that “the reality of sexed bodies and gender and sexual identities are fraught with incoherence and instability” (Valocchi, 2005, p. 753). It is dangerous to assume any binary, whether male/female or heterosexual/homosexual, is a naturally occurring phenomena (Butler, 1988, Valocchi, 2005). Nothing in a binary system is given, “regardless of the pervasive character of patriarchy and the prevalence of sexual difference as an operative cultural distinction” (Butler, 1988, p. 531).

Queer theorist Judith Butler’s (1990) terming of “gender performativity,” meaning that gender is a performative act that requires repeated performance, influenced how scholars voiced the distinct differences between sex and gender. Gender is an illusion of expressive acts meant to meet gender expectations; it is a costume worn for society, a fabrication and fantasy of social existence (Butler 1990). While biology

determines your physical sex, gender is a matter of “doing” rather than of “being.” Butler (1990) says, “Genders can be neither true nor false, neither real nor apparent, neither original nor derived” (p. 141). While queer theory is centered on inclusivity, the majority of its literature is in a Western context, creating a need for queer diasporic and transnational studies (Bromley, 2012). Queer theory informs the transnational feminist analysis at the center of this study.

According to feminist scholarship, the gender binary system, as deconstructed in queer theory, preserves patriarchy and is therefore the “the very ground of a masculine, heterosexual hegemony” (Knight & Kerfoot, 2004, p. 441). Hegemony refers to “relations of societal power, ideology and the domination of ‘commonsense’, the taken-for-granted, what appears ‘natural’ or ‘normal’” (Hearn, 2004, p. 590). Hegemony, which can be racial, cultural, religious, monetary and more, encompasses the social process of domination, subordination and marginalization through the “winning and holding of power” (Donaldson, 1993, p. 645). The hegemony of men refers to the dominance of men over women through control over existing social structures. It not only “concerns both hegemony promoted by men and men’s practices,” but also includes the “hegemony that forms ‘men’ as a social category of gender power” (Hearn, 2004, p. 604).

Male hegemony, a concept explored in this study as mentioned in the first research question regarding hegemonic masculinity, reinforces a dominant ideology of discourse, disguised as innate truths about gender, that permeate culture. A central component in the production of this discourse is “complicity” (Hearn, 2004). This complicity is a by-product of the “persuasion of the greater part of the population” through the media, the organization of social institutions and, especially, the state, which

negotiates and enforces “punishment for non-conformity” (Donaldson, 1993, p. 645). Influential agents in this persuasion-and-complicity process, such as religious leaders, journalists, psychiatrists, designers, film makers and coaches, “regulate and manage gender regimes” through the articulation of “experiences, fantasies, and perspectives” (p. 646). “Hegemonic masculinity” further alludes to the social practices of men that maintain this male dominance. Scholars use this term in varying, and sometimes contradictory, ways. Hegemonic masculinity can be framed as direct and interpersonal, as well indirect and institutional (Hearn, 2004). For this study, hegemonic masculinity describes “how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance” (Carrigan, Connell & Lee, 1985, p. 592).

Understanding the interrelations of gender, gender binaries and male hegemony helps to assess the use of feminism in the HeForShe campaign. Feminist scholars argue that feminism is a “discursively created movement” (Mansbridge, 1995, p. 28). Feminism can refer to a movement of women making sense of their lives and how to end male domination, with feminism as a “*goal*, a target for social change, a purpose informing activism, not a constituency or a strategy” (Ferre, 2006, p. 6). The feminist movement does not require and should not require definition by an overarching organization that facilitates and direct its activities, but rather must unite by “internal accountability to a discursively created, self-transforming, internally contested feminist movement” (Mansbridge, 1995, p. 32). The production of discourse is an essential element of the feminist movement (Mansbridge, 1995, Hooks, 2000a).

Although feminism branches into academic theory, feminism is just as much a “street theory” that develops “when feminists get together, act together, and read what other feminists have written” (Mansbridge, 1995, p. 29). At the core, feminism challenges the norms and processes of gender construction and oppression (Ferre, 2006). Interchanging “feminism” with “women’s movement” is problematic because not all “women’s movements” are working toward feminist goals (Ferre, 2006). Making feminism out to be a “women only” space also restricts men from understanding they, too, can be feminists (Hooks, 2000a). The HeForShe campaign revolves around this very argument. Feminism requires cooperation with the state, men and male-dominated institutions. Traditional mainstream feminist thought did not originally view men as a part of feminism.

Contemporary feminist scholars argue that the beginning of the mainstream feminist movement arose from “bourgeois white women” who were “college-educated, middle- and upper-class, married white women, housewives bored with leisure, with home, with children, with buying products, who wanted more out of life” (Hooks, 2000b, p. 1). These liberal and radical white feminists have routinely dominated the movement (Amos & Parmar, 1984, Hooks, 2000a, 2000b, Mohanty, 2003, Tripp, 2006). Liberal feminism advocates gender equality primarily through law, while radical feminism promotes further challenges to social and political norms through the differentiation of men and women (Graham, 1994).

White liberal and radical feminism has historically ignored the cultural basis of group oppression, lumping all women into a homogenously oppressed group, “stressing that no woman can walk down the street or even live in her home safely without fear of

violation by men” (Gunew, 2013, p. 272). Yet, not all women experience the same oppression. Radical white feminism, created by women and for women, relies on the concept of sisterhood through womanhood as a revolutionary tool (Gunew, 2013). But, this sisterhood by virtue of being a woman comes at a price of ignoring other oppressions outside of sexism (Gunew, 2013, Hooks, 2000a, 2000b). Oppression can be described as the “absence of choices” (Hooks, 2000b, p. 5). Women differ by race, class, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion and more, meaning that “the forms of sexism that different groups of women have to face, the options open to them in dealing with that sexism, and the costs they have to pay often differ greatly from one group to another” (Mansbridge, 1995, p. 32). A movement that biologically divides the world and views sexism as the primary oppression for all women dismisses other crucial factors of identity (Gunew, 2013, Hooks, 2000b).

A “men as the enemy” framework supported by liberal and radical feminism also stops women from reflecting on their own specific perpetuations of domination, such as through racial domination (Hook, 2000b). The voices of black feminists and womanists, Chicana feminists, Asian American feminists, Native American feminist and other minority feminist groups from around the world have historically, and continually, criticized this lack of self-reflection within mainstream feminism. These women of color offered crucial ideological challenges to the dominant hegemony of “superior” women by instigating counter-hegemony (Hook, 2000b). Any feminist narrative of “privileged-class white women swiftly [declaring] their ‘ownership’ of the movement, placing working-class white women, poor white women, and all women of color in the position of followers” (Hooks, 2000a, p. 44) fails to meet the needs of all women.

Feminism, thus, is more complicated than the “women good, men bad” worldview (Kimmel, 2013, p. 62). The current gender order also hurts men and boys (Connell, 2005, 2003, Hooks, 2000a). Effects of hegemonic masculinity on men include higher levels of drug abuse and premature death from accident, homicide and suicide (Connell, 2005). Men do not exist in isolation, but are part of communities and networks of social relationships. When men are able to move beyond boxes and binaries, their relationships with women, children and other men, whether family, friends, classmates or colleagues, improve (Connell, 2005, Kimmel, 2013). By including men as equal partners in the feminist movement, a “new ideological meeting ground for the sexes” is created as a “space for criticism, struggle, transformation” (Hooks, 2000b, p. 34). This meeting ground can “lead to the end of the war between the sexes,” so that “alienation, competition, and dehumanization that characterize human interaction can be replaced with feelings of intimacy, mutuality, and camaraderie” (p. 34). The contemporary feminist movement invites all people “to participate equally in revolutionary struggle” (Hooks, 2000b, p. 68).

Globalization, Universalism and the Westernization of Gender Politics

The focus of the UN HeForShe campaign is the global nature of gender equality. But globalization is a process that can both potentially empower and disempower individuals working through feminist strategies for social change (Ferre, 2006). The concept of globalization refers to “both the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness about the world as a whole” (Robertson, 1992 p. 8). This compression can be seen as both for the better of the world or for the worst, as either a consciousness that produces opportunities or further perpetuates vulnerabilities. Effects of globalization include increased trade and transnational economic activity, complex

communication systems and amplified cultural conflicts (Erkison, 2014). Particularly since the Cold War Era, changes in power structures and flow has created tighter global integration; the world has transitioned from a previously two-bloc system of world powers, made up of the U.S. vs. Soviet Union (and their allies), to a one-bloc system producing a single marketplace (Eriksen, 2014). Furthermore, the Internet has meant that the local can no longer exist in isolation in a world with faster communication processes that transcend physical boundaries (Eriksen, 2014). Globalization also has expanded international conversations on “identity politics,” including gender, nationalist, ethnic, religious and territorial identities (Erikson, 2014).

The literature on globalization is diverse and complicated with a variety of voices in disagreement about the consequences of globalization; some theorists advocate for globalization while others promote anti-globalization strategies (Dasgupta & Kivisto, 2014). For example, globalization is often used to legitimate capitalist transnationalism, supranational government institutions and economic and technological determinism, which can either be viewed as a positive road to prosperity for the world or a negative plunge toward disastrous inequality (Dasgupta & Kivisto, 2014). Globalization brings about dramatic transformations in today’s society, but the nature of these transformations are either viewed as successful new frontiers for unification or arenas that generate “disagreements, fragmentations and uncertainties” (Vargas, 2003, P. 906).

Transnational feminists argue that globalization has been “hijacked” to mean neo-liberal economics, rather than global interconnectedness (Mohanty, 2003, Vargas, 2003). This hijacking, used for hegemonic and partisan purposes, has created a type of globalization that is “highly unequal in reach and impact” and “divides at the same time

as it integrates” (Vargas, 2003, P. 906). This “hijacking” has caused some feminist movements to call for “global justice,” “anti-globalization” and “alternative globalization” movements as diverse and autonomous “places of intervention, connection and co-ordination of the collective will” (Vargas, 2003, p. 909-910).

Underlying globalization also is the tendency toward universalism. However, universalist positions are normative (Clarke, 2004). Depending on what is defined as the “center,” normative judgments assess how life should be, i.e. “the habits of thought and action that are desirable” (Clarke, 2004, p. 224). Anything that is outside this center, or contrasts this lifestyle is “marked as undesirable, or in need of ‘modernization’” (p. 224). This reproduction of the desirable center can be described as a twofold process of “the interpenetration of the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism” that allows for a dominant group to reproduce its habits as the norm for all to adapt (Robertson, 1992, p. 100). Universalist thinking tends to reproduce colonial and neocolonial assumptions that support a “West is Best!” mindset that reinforces white, Western, male power (Bromley, 2014). Telling unified narratives about power and gender, which tend to embody and reproduce the values of dominant cultures, provide a one-dimensional story in a multifaceted global and historical landscape (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994, Schutte, 2002). Universalist attitudes develop “us vs. them” narratives, in which the “us” is normatively determined to be the superior mark for the “them” to reach.

Within a global setting, the HeForShe campaign risks creating a unified narrative about gender equality through the use of predominantly Western celebrities as representatives for the movement. Through globalization, celebrities have gained “significant access to the halls of power and the ability to galvanize publicity on a global

scale” (Kapoor, 2012, p. 18). Celebrity humanitarianism tends to instrumentalize the developing world to be a nameless, faceless “blank recipient of their goodwill” in a way that “ventriloquizes the subaltern, produces a universal subject that matters only in relation to its capacity to serve the ventriloquist” (Bell, 2013, p. 7). It is not to say that celebrity power cannot be used beneficially, but this power must not universalize or generalize the “Other” to simplify complex structural problems (Bell, 2013). Celebrity activists risk assuming the performance of a real-life hero, “constructed as redeemer of distant Others,” and the role of the “White Saviour, a powerful brand of contemporary cultural authority” (Bell, 2013, p. 1). There is a tendency for celebrities to speak for groups of people in a way that does not “acknowledge a differentiated post-colonial subject. To speak *for* is to maintain the order of things” (Bell, 2013, p. 3).

Transnational feminism argues that universalism is not the answer, but rather, solidarity (Mohanty, 2003). The diversity of the global feminist movement calls for a recognition of women’s diversity of experiences, as well as the recognition that the perspective of Westerners, more specifically U.S. perspectives, should not be universally applied to the rest of the world (Mohanty, 2003, Robertson, 1992). Universalism is the medium through which the patriarchy survives as a universal value system that places male power above all else, creating domination over class, religion, race and culture (Gunew, 2013). Any claim “masquerading as universal truths” has an agenda and should be questioned (Bromley, 2014, p. 94).

Global Feminism and Transnational Feminist Theory

International feminist movements, or feminist internationalism, can be traced back to at least the early twentieth century (Moghadam, 2005). Global feminism, as an academic term, refers to the international spread of feminism in both a historical sense

and as a universal conceptualization of the feminist struggle. Global feminism, which can be exemplified by the networking that often takes place through the United Nations, conceives feminism as an experience of commonality between all women in the wake of male hegemony, gender discrimination and sexual violence. Global feminism can be equated to the idea of “universal sisterhood” (Bunch, 1995).

While international feminism is more of a historical account of global feminisms, transnational feminism has become an area of feminism that developed through the process of globalization and in response to globalization forces, such as through the intensification of the relationships and movements of people, capital and ideas (Moghadam, 2005). Scholars use transnational feminism, rather than international or global feminism, as a “term that signals attention to uneven and dissimilar circuits of culture and capital” (Grewal & Kaplan, 2000, p. 1). The term helps alleviate the rift between Western feminism and other feminisms, such as Third World feminism. Because white, Western women have largely dictated the feminist movement, the identities of non-Western women and how they have historically resisted inequality have largely been ignored (Hooks, 2000a, 2000b, Mohanty, 2003, Narayan, 1997). Western feminism has historically been seen as the only legitimate means of political feminism; this contributes to ethnocentric theories of women’s oppression and perpetuates white feminist supremacy (Amos & Parmar, 1984).

Transnational feminism both problematizes and offers an alternative to global feminism, a term that has “elided the diversity of women’s agency in favor of a universalized Western model of women’s liberation that celebrates individuality and modernity” (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994, p.17). Feminist scholars argue that global

feminism, which has been equated to “Western cultural imperialism,” works in insolation from a central location by universalizing oppression and failing to recognize the needs of non-Western women in their specific contexts (Mohanty, 2003). Only through “an analysis of transnational scattered hegemonies that reveal themselves in gender relations” can feminism movements create “an effective opposition to current economic and cultural hegemonies that are taking new global forms” (p. 17). Transnational feminism, as opposed to global feminism, requires comparative work that looks at “multiple, overlapping, and discrete oppressions” rather than offering a one-size-fits-all “theory of hegemonic oppression under a unified category of gender” (p. 17-18). Global feminism uses a “purely locational politics of global-local or center-periphery” that create “inadequate and inaccurate binary divisions” rather than moving across these divisions (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994, p. 13). Transnational feminism works to “destabilize rather than maintain boundaries” and critically examines the “links between patriarchies, colonialisms, racisms, and other forms of domination” (p. 1). For these reasons, this study chooses not to work under a global feminist framework but through a transnational feminist lens.

UN Women labels the HeForShe campaign as a “solidarity movement.” Foundationally, transnational feminist theory works to mitigate divisive and differing inter-feminist approaches to fighting gender inequalities through solidarity (Mohanty, 2003). Solidarity means crossing borders to create transnational advocacy networks that gather policymakers, experts, nongovernmental organizations, citizen-activists and more (Ferre & Pudrovska, 2006). Solidarity, rather than sisterhood, recognizes that all people come from multiple social locations, which can be described as “intersectionality.” This

concept explains, “No one has a gender but not a race, a nationality but not a gender, an education but not an age” (Ferre, 2006, p. 10). Both Western and non-Western women come from national, political and cultural contexts marked by plurality, dissension and change (Narayan, 1997).

The feminist movement must work across “lines of demarcation and division” that have very real consequences for women, divisions that arise from classifications such as nation, race, socioeconomic class, sexuality, religion, disability and more (Mohanty, 2003). Transnational feminist networks (TFNs), which can be both formal and informal, focus on consensus making rather than a hierarchy of power (Moghadam, 2005). Transnational feminists critique behaviors, attitudes, institutions and relational politics through an antiracist, anticapitalist framework that works against Eurocentrism and histories of colonization and imperialism (Mohanty, 2003). This interdisciplinary approach works to critically examine the “scripts” that dictate daily life (Mohanty, 2003). Reorienting feminism along the lines of solidarity, rather than global sisterhood, also means actively working to “demystify capitalism,” which is seen as incompatible with feminist goals for social and economic justice (Mohanty, 2003).

The “Americanization” of feminist theory has also created a neoliberal, consumerist and protocapitalist construction of feminism rooted in serving the individual through exclusionary, essentialist identity politics (Mohanty, 2003). Traditionally, feminist theory has followed “Feminist-as-Tourist,” or “add and stir,” and “Feminist-as-Explorer,” or “separate but equal,” models (Mohanty, 2003, p. 239-242), which orients U.S. women’s studies as the center with non-Western women as either added into the scholarship or incorporated as culturally separate. Transnational feminism offers a more

holistic direction for the feminist movement. All women should have access to public forums to achieve the right of self-representation, particularly the socially marginalized and powerless, so that they can articulate their own visions for justice rather than be spoken for by the dominant group (Narayan, 1997). But transnational feminism, like any feminism, cannot be completely free from “oppressive conditions” or “asymmetrical power relations” (p. 1). Despite this, transnational feminism offers an open-ended approach to gender equality solutions. These solutions allow for individuals and communities to work toward liberation from oppressive transnational structures, impacting the local to the global, by building social movements on their own terms.

Social Media, Media Activism and Social Movements

While transnational feminism addresses the “solidarity” of the HeForShe campaign, an analysis of the characteristics of the “social movement” component is also needed. All social movements, whether long-term or short-term, need resources to mobilize and survive (Tilly, 1978). Today’s technologies and availability of the Internet have changed the means in which social movement can harness resources. The HeForShe campaign uses the Internet and social media as the primary vehicle for creating solidarity. In social movement theory, scholars can be categorized as “techno-optimists,” or those who highlight the Internet’s potential for transcending geographic limits, or “techno-pessimists,” or those who stress the growing global digital divide (Ferre & Pudrovska, 2006).

Techno-optimists believe that the globalization of the mass media can work in favor of eliminating harmful inequalities and hierarchies by building solidarity through empathy, all at a low dissemination cost (Ferre & Pudrovska, 2006). The Internet exists as a “free space” to form identities and consciousness such as the HeForShe goal to

include men in gender equality. Techno-pessimists, on the other end, think the Web reinforces unequal power relations as seen in reality; technology is not neutral because not all have access to this so-called “free space” (Ferre & Pudrovskaya, 2006). Still, the explosion of new mobile technologies and the Internet have opened up a new means of networking by offering a worldwide common space (Kahn & Keller, 2004). The Internet can be used for emancipatory purposes “by a growing planetary citizenry” that employs “new media to become informed, to inform others, and to construct new social and political relations” (Kahn & Keller, 2004, p. 88).

The Internet is therefore a valuable resource for understanding the nature of social movements. Looking at online elements such as word choice or hyperlinks are ways of understanding how a group of activists want to be seen. The Internet generates a new experience of the public space and sequentially a testing of what works within this space (Gerbaudo, 2012). When activists, such as HeForShe supporters, develop an online presence, “they demonstrate their own collective identity, participate in spreading values and understandings that matter to them, and potentially create communities of discourse that share their norms” (Ferre & Pudrovskaya, 2006, p. 250). But despite the potential usefulness of the Internet, social movements still require offline, face-to-face relationships (Diani, 2000). Scholars argue that the virtual world is not enough to both mobilize and sustain a social movement (Diani, 2000). Although researchers have studied traditional offline social movements and how the Internet fits within these social movements, few have examined how social media can organize online activism that moves offline; even less is known about who is and is not using social media sites and why, especially outside the U.S. (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, Harlow, 2012). This is relevant

to the HeForShe campaign's goals of both online and offline engagement for the UN Women-led movement.

Activism, such as protests, petition campaigns or one-time events, can be defined as “the actions of a group of like-minded individuals coming together to change the status quo, advocating for a cause, whether local or global, and whether progressive or not” (Harlow, 2012, p. 228). Social networks sites (SNS) can be defined as:

Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 211).

Both definitions help to understand the “networked social movements” of the Information Age, in which the HeForShe campaign aims to achieve and foster (Harlow, 2012).

However, social media sites are first and foremost social enterprises and are not intended “to facilitate deliberative discourses on complex, difficult issues” (Lim, 2013, p. 654).

Social media face limitations within activism, particularly because SNS tend to reflect the interests, choices and preferences of its users (Lim, 2003). The HeForShe campaign, through its use of social media networks, is also therefore limited in this way.

A study by Summer Harlow (2012) reveals the limitations of social media activism. The author argues that the Internet has two roles in social movements: enhancing traditional offline activism through new communication technologies and creating new forms of resistance that are able to surpass traditional media gatekeepers (Harlow, 2012). In the study, a massive online-to-offline activist movement lost momentum within a few months after the peak event. This may be because SNS are not

enough to create lasting social change in developing countries with marginalized, poor populations lacking Internet access. Clicking “Sign Petition” can be an easy act of activism, but the level of dedication to a cause varies person-by-person (Harlow, 2012).

Any activism that ignites in the social media world adheres to a contemporary culture of consumption, which translates to light packaging that accommodates short attention spans (Lim, 2013). Social media activism can be “*fast, thin and many*” in that online campaigns quickly come and go; this means there are “*many clicks*, not equally distributed for each and every cause, but *little sticks* in the sense that very few causes make for mass activism in an online environment” (Lim, 2013, p. 637). Social media have a long way to go before they can both generate and support long-standing social change needed in social movements. This is telling for the global goals of the HeForShe campaign, which faces the challenges of forming a global reach via the Internet and then sustaining the attention of those Internet users. According to 2013 statistics, only about 38 percent of individuals worldwide were accessing the Internet, with about 76 percent accessing the Internet in the developed world compared to 30 percent accessing the Internet in the developing world (World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database, 2013).

Chapter 4: Methodology

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) serves as the foundation for the method of this research study. CDA is an interdisciplinary research approach that focuses on the relationship between discourse and power (Van Dijk, 2001). Foundationally, CDA analyzes how:

Social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality (Van Dijk 2001 p. 352).

The “explicit position” for this study is transnational feminism, which therefore informs all analysis of discourse in this study. Queer theory also distinctly supports elements of the transnational feminist analysis within this study through its analysis of sex, gender and sexuality. Transnational feminist theory and CDA are alike in that both academic areas openly take the “side of the dominated and oppressed groups and against the dominating groups” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 358). CDA looks at the micro levels of social order, such as language use, verbal interaction and communication, and macro levels of social order, such as power, dominance and inequality between social groups (Van Dijk, 2001). This method helps to analyze the social problems addressed in the HeForShe campaign by looking closely at the structure and implications of the HeForShe campaign discourse, specifically surrounding the public launch of the campaign.

This study distinguishes CDA as a separate methodology from text-based analysis. Researchers define the terms “text” and “discourse” differently. This study views text as “‘purely’ linguistic material,” while discourse is more broadly defined as “language in use, composed of text and context” (Juez, 2009 p. 18). Discourse, particularly as viewed in CDA, can refer to the semiosis of language, “encompassing words, pictures, symbols, design, colour, gesture, and so forth” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 358). Discourse encompasses the idea that language is more than just basic linguistics or texts, but a means of conceptualization; discourse is an integral part of social practices (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011).

Discourse produces ideology, which can “help produce or reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic groups, through the way in which they represent things and position people” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 358). CDA is viewed as a “problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement” that does not have a solidified set of research methods, but instead is united by the “shared interest in the semiotic dimensions of power, injustice, abuse, and political-economic or cultural change in society” (p. 357). CDA can be boiled down to three areas of social life: “representations of the world, social relations between people, and people’s social and personal identities” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 370) The HeForShe campaign deals with all three of these areas of discourse. Discourse can represent both “how things are and have been” as well as well as “how things might or could or should be” (Fairclough, 2011 p. 3). Discourse directly contributes to the social construction of reality. Therefore, this study highlights

how the HeForShe campaign's discourse also contributes to social constructions about gender equality.

CDA is centered on the notion of social power. Dominance, hegemony, ideology, class, gender, race, discrimination, interests, reproduction, institutions, social structure and social order are common terms in both CDA and feminist analysis (Van Dijk, 2001). CDA argues that people continually interpret and represent themselves and their actions through networks of social practices and through discourse, which particularly applies to a movement like HeForShe that is focused on developing dialogues about gender equality through the institutional structure of the United Nations. The campaign's online presence produces a self-defined discourse that is intended to present a desired image of the movement for the world to see and for people to interpret meaning in their own lives (Fairclough, 2001, Ferre & Pudrovskaja, 2006).

According to CDA, the more power a group has, the more they are able to control the acts of other groups; this control can influence people's worldviews (Van Dijk, 2001). In this way, the power of UN Women contributes to global mindsets on gender equality. Discourses coming from authoritative, trustworthy or credible sources can be especially effective in reproducing dominant, hegemonic attitudes (Van Dijk, 2001). Such discourses are likely to go unchallenged by those who lack access to knowledge and exposure. When looking at a trusted international entity like the United Nations that produces global discourses, "...*topics* may influence what people see as the most important information of text or talk, and thus correspond to the top levels of their mental models" (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 358).

Research Methods

Adopting a discourse analysis approach was deemed most fitting for a solidarity

campaign aimed at shifting the attitudes of men in gender equality through discourse. Discourse was analyzed with attention to the three areas of interest as expressed in the research questions: hegemonic masculinity, universal values and Western perceptions. A review of literature, with special attention to transnational feminist theory, served as the academic context for the data analysis. A CDA approach functions with a basic understanding that “our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations but, rather, play an active role in creating and changing them” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 1) This belief is also a fundamental principal of the HeForShe campaign, which hopes to ignite a global conversation on gender equality. As described in CDA, discourses are understood as “socially constructed meaning systems” that need to be examined for their “common sense understandings,” or statements that claim to be truth or naturalized information (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 21). To uncover the meaning systems of the HeForShe campaign, this study asked the following research questions:

- RQ 1: How does the social media and website discourse for the HeForShe campaign reflect or challenge the systemic problem of hegemonic masculinity?
- RQ 2: How are the United Nation’s universal values reflected in the HeForShe campaign through its website and Twitter feed?
- RQ 3: To what extent does the social media and website discourse of the HeForShe campaign center on Western definitions and/or perceptions about gender politics?

These questions focus on understanding how gender is defined in the campaign, what are the values and goals of the campaign and who is invited to be a part of the campaign’s

conversation on gender equality. Using discourse analysis to answer these questions is “to engage in a very important human task” of “[thinking] more deeply about the meanings we give people's words so as to make ourselves better, more humane people and the world a better, more humane place” (Gee, 2014, p. xii).

To answer these questions, this study conducted a critical discourse analysis of the (1) HeForShe campaign website homepage (heforshe.org) and (2) the official Twitter page (twitter.com/heforshe). Starting on September 20, 2014, the HeForShe campaign officially launched its website during a special launching event at the UN Headquarters. This event centered on a speech given by UN Women Goodwill Ambassador Emma Watson. This “launch” was more of a re-launch for the campaign, which was first introduced on March 7, 2014, a day before International Women’s Day, under a different logo and website design.

During this “relaunch” period, the campaign gained its highest audience interest to-date following Watson’s speech at the launching event. By looking at the evolution of the campaign through a preliminary online background search, a greater amount of online traffic came to the HeForShe campaign Twitter page than ever before. For example, a tweet on September 17, 2014, was retweeted 14 times and favorited 23 times compared to a tweet of the launch speech a few days later on September 21, 2014, which had more than 1,200 retweets and 600 favorites. With a higher amount of online traffic sparked by this particular event, this study’s 1-month timeframe is a key moment for analyzing the discourse produced by the UN Women organization as a means of rebranding the HeForShe campaign for the public.

Within a few days of Watson's speech going viral, the campaign reached its first goal of 100,000 pledges from men to join the solidarity movement, as tracked and displayed through the map infographic on the official website. About a month later, on October 23, 2014, the campaign nearly hit its second campaign goal of 200,000 pledges. The campaign's overall goal is to achieve 1 billion pledges within a 1-year period, ending in July 2015. With the first launch of the campaign in March 2014, the month of September is also a useful period of analysis as the 6-month mark for the campaign, particularly as the campaign rebooted and centered around Watson as the celebrity headliner during the September launch event.

The researcher focused on analyzing only the content first visible to an online user when arriving to either of these pages, which means any online content that does not take the viewer away to another page. By viewing only the main-page content, the first impressions of the campaign's discourse were closely analyzed. The first area of analysis, the HeForShe homepage, included all discourse in the form of text, visuals and designs visible on the "Take Action" homepage of the official HeForShe website. The other areas of the HeForShe website, namely the "Action Kit," "Donate," "Strategy" and "Shop" tabs, were excluded. The second area of analysis, the official Twitter account page, also included all text, visuals and designs visible on the page itself. This analysis excluded any hyperlinked material that takes the viewer away from the Twitter page itself, such as embedded video links or article clippings.

Visuals and designs refer to any photos, multi-medium images, infographics, symbols and colors used on the page to express discourse. All texts, including usernames, captions, video descriptions and link descriptions, were analyzed. Analyzing discourse

means studying any aspect of language in relation to social, political and cultural aspects, previously summarized as “the study of language in use” (Juez, 2009, p. 10). By looking closely at the interactions of all discursive elements on the website and Twitter pages, this study assembles standalone elements of the HeForShe campaign dialogue to see how language is specifically used to build a greater social, political and cultural dialogue on gender equality.

Focusing on the HeForShe website homepage and the Twitter page was a distinct choice for this study. The HeForShe website serves as the centerpiece for the HeForShe campaign as the location of all in-depth information about the campaign. It is the home base for the main HeForShe discourse. The Twitter page, as well as the other social media sites, is used to supplement the HeForShe campaign strategy as described on the HeForShe website. The official website is meant to be a fixed source of content for framing the campaign discourse, while the Twitter is meant to be an interactive forum for employing this discourse and fostering a conversation between the campaign and its audience. The campaign website lays the background setting of the campaign, while the Twitter promotes the day-to-day work of the campaign by starting new dialogues and sharing impact stories. The campaign Twitter tweets daily, ranging from a smaller minimum of about three tweets a day to up to more than ten tweets a day. This means the Twitter page undergoes consistent updates and therefore constantly creates new discourses and sources for interaction with the campaign audience. Although the official website is mostly composed of static material, its world map infographic does function as a live-tally of the number of men joining the HeForShe campaign.

While the campaign also has a Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, the Twitter page is the most active of the HeForShe social media accounts, proving its content to be most useful for a more comprehensive look at how the campaign employs SNS for creating discourse outside of its official website content. For example, during the time period of August 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014, the YouTube channel account posted 17 times, the Instagram account posted 22 times and the Facebook account posted 29 times, while the Twitter account posted hundreds of times. Each of these social media platforms has hundreds of thousands of views, followers, likes, etc. But of the four, the Twitter account produces the most campaign discourse on a daily basis. Given the large amount of content produced and shared through the Twitter account, this study limited the timeframe for the critical discourse analysis of the Twitter page from September 20, 2014 to October 23, 2014. During this month, the account tweeted 113 times, including retweets.

The two selected areas of discourse were analyzed via the online sites, while notes were taken simultaneously along the way in a Word document. First, the campaign website was analyzed from top to bottom. Second, the Twitter was analyzed starting with the first tweet on September 20, 2014, and ending on the last tweet on October 23, 2014. The data was coded by major themes, in accordance with the areas of interest in the research question, and were broken down with more specificity the more the discourse was analyzed from the campaign timeline. Notes were bulleted under these themed headings, and including descriptions of colors, quotes, words, etc. Examples of categories that developed included gender binaries, definitions of solidarity, celebrity influences and more. As CDA supports, all areas of discourse were analyzed for meaning, including

basic components of language, such as pronouns, to basic components of visual language, such as color. Once all of the data was analyzed and the notes were gathered, the author organized the results into two main themes in relation to the research questions with subsequent subcategories to distinguish the overall connections between the entire bodies of discourse.

Chapter 5: Findings

This study found that the HeForShe campaign discourse, as collected from the official website and Twitter, offers some challenges to hegemonic masculinity, but predominantly reinforces hegemonic masculinity, as well as universalist and Western cultural and political values. The first theme in the study's findings addresses the extent to which the HeForShe campaign reflects or challenges the systemic and cultural problems of male hegemony. The campaign, which works to create awareness about gender inequality, builds solidarity by promoting men's involvement as paramount to global equality efforts. However, the campaign's focus on men recycles traditional characteristics of masculinity in which men are to be the strong protectors of women. This theme, therefore, illustrates that the campaign centrally functions on the differentiation of men from women through a gender binary system, therefore maintaining male power and failing to encompass a spectrum of gender identity.

The second theme of the study's findings addresses the extent to which the campaign centers on the universal values of the United Nations and is influenced by Western definitions of achieving gender equality. As a UN Women-led campaign, the HeForShe movement concentrates on a universal human rights approach to achieving gender equality. This framework locates women as part of humanity and therefore deserving the same rights and opportunities as the rest of humanity, namely men. The campaign predominantly uses Western countries as examples on how to achieve universal women's human rights. This universalism also creates a false equivalency of the cost to men in joining the campaign instead of recognizing the different risks and

sacrifices that profeminist men face in certain locations around the globe. The needs of men and women differ according to their social contexts, but the universalist approach in the UN campaign ignores these differences. Instead, it employs a global perspective that highlights predominantly white, male, Western celebrities as representatives of the HeForShe campaign, assuming that the struggle for gender equality in the West is applicable to and ideal for the rest of the world. The Western world, specifically U.S. politics and cultural values, are featured more often than any other region of the globe in the campaign discourse. Because of this Westernization, the HeForShe campaign unevenly depicts transnational gender equality efforts.

Reflections of and Challenges to Hegemonic Masculinity

This section of the findings focuses on the HeForShe campaign as an awareness-raising venture. In response to the first research question, findings are organized into three main subthemes: (1) how the campaign constructs solidarity, (2) how this solidarity is fostered through an emphasis on men's involvement and (3) how the campaign's use of gender binaries ignores the specificities of identity. These findings first address the use of social media to build a networked social movement through the HeForShe campaign umbrella. The network is based upon language that represents men as primary actors in the HeForShe campaign and is reinforced through repetitive word usage. Emma Watson, as the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador, is purposely used to recruit men to become allies to women. However, the campaign does not depict allyship as rooted in raising consciousness about masculinity, which differs according to cultural, social and political contexts. The findings later address gender binaries as a foundational concept for the campaign. Gender stereotypes are visible through colors, graphic designs, campaign

descriptions and more. Finally, this theme addresses a lack of representation of all people, specifically genderqueer people and the LGBTQ community, in HeForShe efforts.

Building awareness through an emphasis on solidarity.

Creating a sense of solidarity is one of the most essential methods in which the HeForShe campaign fights against hegemonic masculinity, a term that alludes to the social and cultural practices of men that maintain male dominance. The HeForShe campaign rallies around one particular purpose: “A Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality” (UN Women, 2015). This descriptor is the first thing the audience sees when landing on both the HeForShe official website and Twitter account page. This notion of solidarity is reinforced by not only repeating this phrase when scrolling through the “Take Action” homepage of the website, in addition to textual and visual tweets and retweets, but also through such key words that describe the building blocks of “solidarity” as a concept – such as movement, struggle, inequalities and discrimination. These words are also signifiers of social organizations of power in critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Van Dijk, 2001).

As described in transnational feminist literature, solidarity is based not on common identity, but on shared commitments, enabling those who have privilege and those who do not to join together against injustice (Ferguson, 2009, Scholz, 2008). This particular UN Women campaign cultivates the idea of a “shared commitment” through its own established HeForShe commitment, a centerpiece of the official website. The HeForShe commitment reads, “Gender equality is not only a women’s issue, it is a human rights issue that requires my participation. I commit to take action against all forms of violence and discrimination faced by women and girls” (UN Women, 2015) The

majority of the campaign's discourse on its Twitter page directs traffic to the HeForShe homepage to sign this very pledge.

The campaign places utmost emphasis on men agreeing to the HeForShe commitment and then getting other men to agree to this commitment as an act of solidarity. The HeForShe commitment, as a discourse purposefully produced by UN Women, helps to answer key questions in CDA: "How do (more) powerful groups control public discourse?" and "How does such discourse control mind and action of (less) powerful groups, and what are the social consequences of such control, such as social inequality?" (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 355). The HeForShe commitment is a primary means in which the campaign controls and disseminates the social discourse of gender equality. However, it is important to note that the HeForShe commitment, intended to rally men for gender equality, may maintain and even enhances male privilege. Men who make the commitment are immediately encouraged to show off their allyship to other men without taking any other further actions to challenge their positions of male privilege. Men then show off this good deed of "allyship" to others like a badge of honor, all the while their privilege remains largely in tact after only signing the commitment.

The campaign's biggest strike against gender inequality, and therefore its greatest challenge to hegemonic masculinity, is through the reinforcement of a networked solidarity movement via social media. The campaign capitalizes on the use of the Internet, which some transnational feminists describe as the "preferred and certainly most efficient mode of communication and dissemination" (Moghadam, 2005, p. 91); the Internet offers the "potential to create new spaces" for individuals in various cultural settings "to access knowledge and to transform it and to network across political borders"

(p. 91). The HeForShe campaign emphasizes the importance of the idea of “solidarity” by often stating its main slogan in back-to-back ways, such as through design elements that place “A Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality” in big bold letters next to a more fleshed-out description of the campaign’s purpose. Frequently, the campaign features tweets that are nearly identical in content. The repetition of words and phrasing appears to be a key tactic to building solidarity. The repetitive use of “solidarity” in the campaign discourse serves as one of many “linguistic signs” which makes up the “material of ideology,” and therefore helps to understand the ideological intentions of the HeForShe campaign because “all language use is ideological” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 361). In this case, the ideology of the campaign contends that achieving gender equality is accomplished through a unification of men and women’s efforts, or “one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity” (UN Women, 2015).

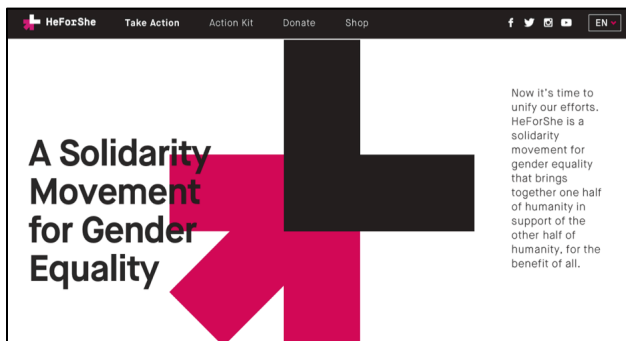


Figure 1. HeForShe Website Screenshot. This figure exemplifies common design tactics of the HeForShe campaign. Retrieved from HeForShe.org

The primary features of the HeForShe “Take Action” homepage is, first, the HeForShe commitment and, second, a world map detailing the number of men who have made this commitment around the globe. The only option on the homepage is to scroll through the campaign’s interactive narrative from top to bottom, like an unfolding storybook. At the top of the page, the website provides a brief history of the women’s

movement and how men fit into the issue of gender inequality. At the middle of the page, users reach the website's central focus, the HeForShe commitment, and are prompted to click "I agree." The website then reveals one clear question: "Are you a man who is going to stand up for women's rights?" The only option is to check this box and fill in the name, country and email slots, followed by clicking "join" to submit this information. Upon making this commitment, users are encouraged to further solidarity by spreading the word and sharing this pledge "with the men in your life" (UN Women, 2015). These components of the campaign distinctly showcase discourse as a social action that makes up social practices (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011). For example, by submitting personal information to join the campaign conversation or by sharing HeForShe information with others through social media, plain-and-simple visual discourse turns into discursive acts. Using discourse to become a part of the HeForShe conversation or to start new conversations to educate others about the HeForShe campaign increasingly contributes to the larger social practices of men regarding gender equality at large.

A prominent feature of the campaign's Twitter feed is the frequent use of images promoting Emma Watson as the campaign ambassador. These images are usually paired with a quote from her public launch speech to further reinforce ideas of HeForShe solidarity. For example, one tweet depicts Watson standing next to an out-of-focus UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, with the text: "I'm inviting you to step forward, to be seen, & to ask yourself... if not me, who? If not now, when?" (UN Women, 2014b). The campaign continually stresses this concept of "be public, speak up" through the medium of the HeForShe campaign. The rhetoric of this campaign argues that the more people are aware, the more who speak, the more a movement builds – especially when men sign the

official website commitment and interact on social media. On Oct. 9, the campaign tweeted an infographic that stated that between Sept. 20 and Oct. 2, there were 1.1 million “#HeForShe” tweets from 750,000 Twitter users reaching 1.2 billion unique Twitter views (HeForShe, 2014k). This tweet paints a picture of the impact of the solidarity movement, including the message, “People create movements & it is those movements that create impact” (HeForShe, 2014k).

The HeForShe campaign, therefore, creates its construction of solidarity almost entirely through raising awareness to attract the attention of men. Through tweets linking to outside articles, original campaign-produced tweets and retweets of celebrities, the HeForShe Twitter message is direct: men can be part of the solution of gender inequality rather than just a part of the problem. As profeminist men have addressed, telling men they can be part of the solution is essential for removing them from being a part of the problem. One tweet, again quoting Watson, summarizes this concept by stating, “We want to end gender inequality – and to do that we need everyone to participate” (HeForShe, 2014s).

While this particular tweet hints at including anyone and everyone to fight against gender equality, the campaign discourse largely fails to actually be inclusive to all people. The campaign deliberately tries to end mainstream synonymy of “women’s rights” with “man-hating,” (HeForShe, 2014t) but it does little to nothing to explain the expansiveness of gender equality beyond the traditional boxes of man and woman, which will be discussed later. The HeForShe campaign ideology essentially enforces a strict conceptualization of “solidarity” through the use of gender divisions, but this notion of “solidarity” contradicts the term as expressed in transnational feminist frameworks. In

transnational feminism, global solidarity moves across gender divisions and works to deconstruct the social institutions and cultural processes that create such divisions.

Fostering solidarity through masculinity.

In addition to these constructions of HeForShe “solidarity,” the campaign discourse faintly challenges hegemonic masculinity another way – through the building of alliances and relationships between men and women. As profeminist men have suggested, teaching men to listen to women, become allies to women and act as role models for other men is imperative for incorporating men into feminism without dominating and thus defeating a feminist space. The campaign addresses this concept of “listening” to women and their stories through a handful of tweets. One of the major means in which the campaign encourages men to listen to women is through Emma Watson.

During her speech at UN Headquarters, Watson describes her story of becoming a feminist. This speech is either linked to or referenced numerous times on the Twitter page, especially on the day of and the days following the public re-launch of the campaign. One tweet quoting Watson’s speech states, “I am reaching out to you, because I need your help” (HeForShe, 2014o). The use of the “I” pronoun vs. using “we” makes Watson’s plea a more direct message from an individual woman calling out for others to assist her personally. Watson further reaches out to men through the HeForShe Twitter page, which often retweets messages from her personal Twitter account. One retweet from Watson reads, “Wonderful men out there. I’m launching a campaign – #heforshe. Support the women in ur lives and sign up here now! ♥ heforshe.org” (Watson, 2014c). This tweet shows Watson asking for help again, but this time redirects men to support not just Watson in her HeForShe efforts, but to support the women in their own lives that

need assistance in fighting against the consequences of male hegemony. CDA looks at the means in which discourses “represent things and position people,” which means the positioning of Watson contributes to the overall meaning-making of the campaign ideology (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 358). This meaning-making largely refers to the messages the campaign sends out to men about how they should be involved in gender equality and what it means to be a “wonderful man” (HeForShe, 2014).

Only one tweet, coming from U.S. actor Forest Whitaker, actually directly names the need for men to foster the skill of listening to women. The actor’s photo is tinted in pink and black and paired with a quote (a common design for the campaign). The quote says, “The true wealth of a community is measured by how carefully it listens to its women and how sincerely it values their wisdom. Empowering women empowers us all” (Whitaker, 2014). The language of this tweet puts women first and centers the discussion of gender equality on women’s leadership and guidance. By giving women the authority to tell their truth and to lead the way towards change, men learn the first and most important lesson in challenging male domination and becoming a male ally to the feminist movement. But having one quote that directly centers women as the foremost leaders for achieving gender equality hardly reinforces this point. This quote becomes just one of more than a hundred during the study’s timeline.

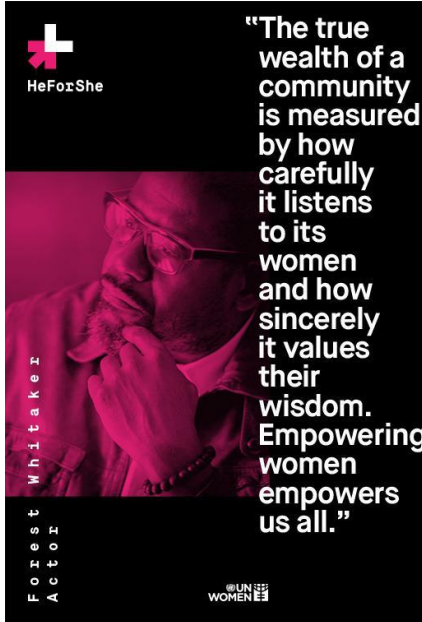


Figure 2. HeForShe Photo Example of Forest Whitaker. This figure exemplifies commonly used image layouts and designs of the HeForShe campaign. Retrieved from [Twitter.com/HeforShe](https://twitter.com/HeforShe)

Alongside the rare use of the “listening to women” narrative, the word “ally” is even rarer. In fact, the word itself is only mentioned once as profiled in a *Vanity Fair* link displayed on the Twitter, which highlights Ahmad Alhendawi, the United Nations Secretary General’s Envoy on Youth and a Jordanian man, and his display of support as an “ally” to the campaign (Alhendawi, 2014). These concepts of male allyship and listening to women, which lend to greater alliance-building and power-sharing signature of male profeminist activism, are barely touched upon in the campaign discourse. These strategies to creating and sustaining a transnational men’s movement are central to challenging the hegemony of men but are seemingly not central to the campaign’s discourse for creating solidarity. As described in CDA, what is overtly excluded from discourse is as telling about social power as what is explicitly included in discourse (Fairclough, 2003).

Historically, gay men have been among the first groups of male allies to join with feminists in contemporary struggles for justice (Kimmel, 2014). But in the HeForShe campaign discourse, there is a lack of space in the conversation for the needs of the LGBTQ community. The campaign does not include genderqueer issues or LGBTQ community issues that intersect with gender equality issues. In many cultural contexts, gay profeminist men openly joining the campaign as allies to women poses a threat to the hegemonic masculine status quo, which could cause the heteronormative majority to turn away from the campaign because of stigmas surrounding the LGBTQ community. The campaign likely made a distinct choice to separate women's rights from LGBTQ rights, as is separated through entities at the UN. But this separation comes at the price of forgoing challenges to gender oppressions that interact with other identity oppressions and building a wider, more inclusive net of allies across the globe.

What is central to the campaign is advocating for cisgender, heterosexual men to be “he” for “she.” This concept is the basic premise of the entire UN Women campaign. The campaign discourse accentuates men's relationships to women in their lives as a tactic for recruiting men to become a part of the gender equality movement. Nearly everything produced on both the online platforms is built around this idea of “men for women.” The Twitter especially hammers in this point through the constant flow of tweets from men who state they are, “#HeForShe,” typically paired with their personal photo. One tweet from British actor Simon Pegg exemplifies a typical HeForShe response: “Husband to a wife, father to a daughter, son to a mother. You bet I'm on board, @EmWatson! #heforshe” (Pegg, 2014). This tweet highlights the actor's close relationship to women in his life as the driving force for why he would support gender

equality. Here, a traditional heterosexual definition of a man who has a wife and children is lifted up as an example of a “wonderful man” in the eyes of the HeForShe campaign.

Another similar tweet shows a black and white photo of man holding a sign that states, “I am #HeForShe for my wife & daughters,” and asks the follow-up question, “Who are you #HeForShe for?” (HeForShe, 2014f) Here, “HeForShe” becomes an action verb for men. This direct emphasis on men valuing their relationship with women is infused throughout both online platforms. In reference to this male responsibility, a retweet from British actor Stephen Fry stresses, “We owe it to our mothers, sisters and all the dispossessed women of the world.” The HeForShe campaign messages center around the idea of men taking charge for the women in their lives.

But how men value their relationship with women and girls is a matter of cultural context. Working against hegemonic masculinity is not only a matter of challenging social structures, but also a matter of changing cultural consciousness and narratives surrounding masculinity. For example, a retweet from UN Women Africa displays a photo of a man and his daughter with a sign in different language declaring, “I am HeForShe,” followed by the statement, “We must take action now for our daughters future” (UN Women Africa, 2014). While this tweet first appears to have good intentions, the social location of this tweet should be taken into consideration. For example, in Africa, polygamy is a widespread practice where men are at the center of control in the family (Clignet, 1970). Men in polygamous relationships treat their daughters and wives differently. Polygamous men may encourage their daughters’ success while all the while disregarding the agency of their wives. The HeForShe campaign does not factor in this type of discrepancy in male minds as product of cultural ideology. As is the case of a

male practicing polygamy, helping his daughter does not cost him his gender privilege, but instead enhances his reputation (Clignet, 1970). But working to achieve greater rights for his wife would cost him his male power. The campaign fails to factor in the different costs to men, whether beneficial or detrimental to gender privilege, in joining the HeForShe campaign depending on their social locations, which will be expanded upon later.

During the public launching period of the campaign, the Twitter feed offers few examples of how men can help the women in their lives. The discourse seldom directly names any gender-based problems or solutions to gender inequalities, which leaves current male power structures and cultural constructions of masculinity barely challenged in a campaign aiming to end all global gender oppressions. The uniting HeForShe solidarity movement instead reinforces the homogenizing concept of “global sisterhood” to be now paired with a “global brotherhood.” The movement, intended to be an organically created people’s movement, risks ignoring the intersectionality of oppression at play in today’s various gender issues and reproducing the current structures of racism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, ethnocentrism and other religious and cultural oppressions.

The campaign also struggles to challenge the social practices that create hegemonic masculinity. For example, the idea of “challenging men to be real men” is expressed several times in the HeForShe discourse. While this rhetoric attempts to challenge hegemonic masculinity, it instead largely reinforces traditional male expectations. A tweeted photo and quote from Britain’s Prince Harry, proclaims, “This is not just about women, we men need to recognize the part we play, too. Real men treat

women with dignity and give them the respect they deserve” (HeForShe, 2014). In another tweet, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund Babatunde Osotimehin, a Nigerian man, offers a personal challenge to all men and boys “to fight discrimination & injustice vs women & girls everywhere!” (Osotimehin, 2014).

Yet, this concept of “real men” can be detrimental to men and boys. First, hegemonic masculinity paints the ideal man as one who is competitive, unafraid and strong. Men challenging other men to “be a man” fosters a similar rhetoric found in hegemonic masculinity that tells boys they must “man up” and not be weak. This man-to-man approach walks a thin line between benefitting gender equality and harmfully defeating men based on their lack of “manhood.” On top of this, the campaign only allows for the “real men” to be men who were biologically born male.

The HeForShe campaign aims to make men aware of their need to be a part of the global conversation and movement to eliminate gender inequalities. While this campaign focuses on including men, this attempt to challenge men’s roles in perpetuating hegemonic masculinity generally fails to expand upon the means in which to deconstruct male power. Inviting men to be “HeForShe” has innate problems. The concept of male privilege, or the idea that men currently benefit from the current gender system, is almost entirely absent from the campaign discourse. The campaign discourse predominantly creates male allies by locating the “she” in relation to the “he,” in a world where the “he’s” are in charge, instead of through men and women’s shared humanness.

Maintaining gender binaries by ignoring gender identity.

Male hegemony and heteronormativity thrives on a system that maintains the traditional gender binary. While the HeForShe campaign at least tries to create male allies and form global solidarity, there is no getting around the strict gender binary reinforced

in the campaign title: HeForShe. This part of the discourse dominates the entire campaign – through nearly every image, title, hashtag and textual explanation tweeted or included on the official website. All pieces of the campaign’s discourse are embedded in the concept of “HeForShe” as a uniting movement, as a logo, as a verb for men to use, as a personal title for self-identification and more. Having people support “HeForShe” or claim to be a “HeForShe” is paramount to the campaign discourse. While these three short words seem insignificant, critical discourse analysis works to “make more visible these opaque aspects of discourse as social practice” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 358). Discourse creates ideological effects that maintain the “social world,” which also can mean the “social relations that involve unequal relations of power” as seen in hegemonic masculinity (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 63). The campaign’s focus on having “he’s” for “she’s” reinforces societal conceptions of masculinity that places men as dominant to women, therefore maintaining male power and feeding into stereotypical masculine practices that enforce gender superiority, not gender equality.

The HeForShe campaign, intended to jumpstart a global gender equality movement, downplays the complexity of gender and employs an outdated framework of male vs. female that has fueled oppressive forces for centuries. The HeForShe solidarity campaign is about uniting the he’s and she’s, and no one else. Gender identities that fall outside the binary are left unsupported and abandoned. The primary oppressor, or men, is placed in the center of the discussion about the oppressed, or women. By creating men who are “he” for “she,” men take up a savior mantle towering over and erasing the historical hard work of feminists. As one tweet reads, “Happy #InternationalDayOfTheGirl #HeForShe men who will you stand-up for?” (HeForShe,

2014d) While this tweet marks the International Day of the Girl, only men are referenced in the question. Because the campaign is constructed as “men and women only,” genderqueer people continue to remain invisible. Women are indeed not the only ones who are critically vulnerable in patriarchal societies; the genderqueer community also faces extreme risks of violence and discrimination in the current gender order, which almost entirely denies their existence as human beings (Trans Student Educational Resources, n.d.). CDA points out that ideology conveys “particular representations of reality” and “particular construction(s) of identity” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 372). Thus, when the HeForShe campaign constructions of identity only encompass cisgender, heteronormative ideals of men and women, as dictated in hegemonic masculinity, the discourse represents a reality in which the genderqueer and LGBTQ communities are outcasts.

Visually, the gender binary system is further intensified by the campaign’s use of color and symbolism. The “HeForShe” campaign uses a color trio of white, black and pink for its materials. The most dominant of these colors is a bright and bold pink. Most HeForShe-produced photos, usually depicting a picture of a famous man’s face with a personal quote, are tinted in black and pink coloring. The main symbol for the HeForShe campaign pairs pink with black or white, and the map displaying how many men have signed up for the campaign on the official website is detailed in variations of pink. The color pink is distinctly connected to gender stereotyping and therefore not a neutral choice within the setting of this campaign. How elements of discourse, such as the color pink, are “interpreted and received” influences “what social effects they have” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 371).

Especially in materialistic and capitalistic Western contexts, pink has become a mainstream representation for women and girls, as well an emasculating reference to male homosexuality. Pink connotes femininity, romance, sweetness, softness, love, delicacy and gentleness (Koller, 2008). Although pink has recently emerged as a concept of “fun and confidence,” for the most part, “associations with pink still overwhelmingly make a connection between femininity and its stereotypical values, as well as with sexuality” (Koller, 2008, p. 418). Pink embodies a popular cultural status as a marker of femininity and adheres to the gender binary of pink for girls and blue for boys (Koller, 2008). The color serves as “a semiotic resource that draws on complex discourses and mental models of femininity to both reproduce and challenge gender ideology” (Koller, 2008, p. 418). Within the setting of HeForShe as a gendered campaign, this color only magnifies the stereotypical limits of the gender binary that assign women to acceptable feminine characteristics and men to masculine characteristics.

The HeForShe campaign symbol, which is always partially pink, additionally appears to combine the historical Venus astrological symbol (♀), as a signifier of female biology, with the Mars astrological symbol (♂), as a signifier of male biology (Stearn, 1962). The non-circular portions of these signs, namely the arrow of the Mars symbol and the cross of the Venus symbol, are seemingly brought together to make the HeForShe campaign icon. The arrow, or masculine portion, is pointed to the right-angle corner, or feminine portion, as if to encompass the idea of “he” being pointedly “for” the “she.” This use of male/female symbols subtly contributes the binary nature of the campaign.

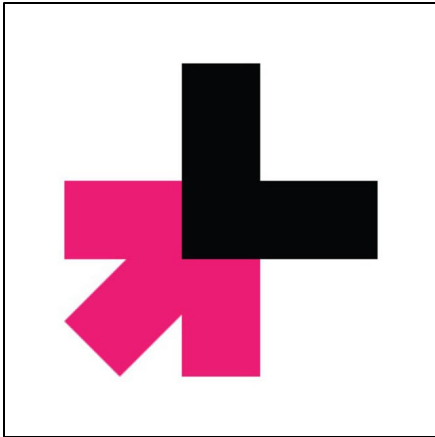


Figure 3. HeForShe Campaign Symbol. This figure illustrates the gendered design elements of the HeForShe campaign logo. Retrieved from [Twitter.com/HeforShe](https://twitter.com/HeforShe)

The feminization and masculinization of symbols shows up once more in the discourse via an infographic tweet. This particular tweet provides the visual queue of the male and female biological binary through the stick-figure symbol of a woman in a dress and the stick-figure symbol of a man without a dress, as is commonly used to distinguish men only and women only spaces, such as bathrooms (HeForShe, 2014b). These two symbols, separated by the equal sign symbol, reveal that only men and women are equal under the HeForShe gender equality movement. There is no room for any gender variance outside these stereotypical symbols and gender boxes, let alone the inclusion of other than sexualities other than heterosexuality.

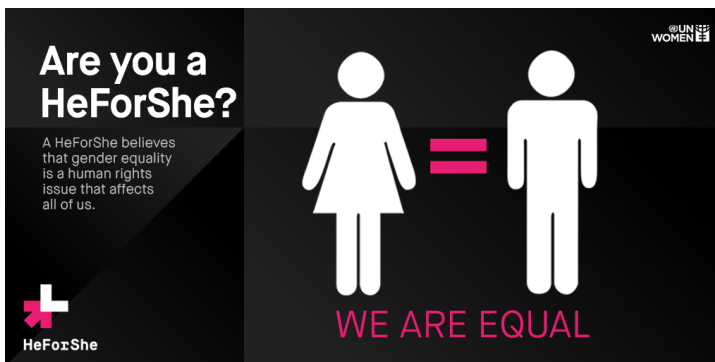


Figure 4. HeForShe Twitter Infographic. This figure illustrates the use of gender binaries in the HeForShe campaign. Retrieved from [Twitter.com/HeforShe](https://twitter.com/HeforShe)

Only during a few instances is inclusive, non-binary language produced in the campaign discourse. For example, the campaign highlights “society’s potential,” rather than just women’s potential, to create a sense of equality for everyone. A depiction of “togetherness” also fights against exclusion. A retweet from British-Canadian actor Kiefer Sutherland says, “The conscious effort to split our society’s potential in half makes no sense to me. We must fight for equality for all” (HeForShe, 2014m). But even though this particular tweet uses more inclusive language, there is an underlying implication that the half of “potential” mentioned is in direct reference to women alongside men, rather than all gender identities alongside each other.

Throughout the Twitter feed, the campaign discourse encourages cisgender men and cisgender women to be themselves, whether strong or sensitive. But such fluidity of expression is not acknowledged for those who do not fit into these acceptable gender categories. Only one tweet during the study’s timeline hints at the idea of a gender spectrum and the importance of self-expression and self-identification. Quoting Watson’s speech, this tweet reads, “If we stop defining each other by what we are not & start defining ourselves by what we just are – we can all be freer” (HeForShe, 2014g). This statement addresses the feminist principle of self-reflexivity (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994). But this quote is veiled by the campaign’s binary-based discourse. In a campaign that wants to challenge the “status quo” and “change the conversation,” (HeForShe, 2014a) little is done to foster a conversation on the fluidity of gender identities. Inviting only men, or what is seen to be real men, to join in the conversation historically reinforces cisnormative, heteronormative hegemonic masculinity that has negatively impacted gay

men, transgender men and any individual who does not fit neatly into the traditional gender binary.

As transnational feminism addresses, “adding and stirring” men into a solidarity movement is just as problematic as “adding and stirring” women into global equality solutions (Mohanty, 2003). Without recognizing their male privilege, men are only dominating a space that should be exclusively guided by women. This “add and stir” formula for men is reiterated when the Twitter states, “Looking for a few good men to get us to 200k” (HeForShe, 2014i). By just having more “good men” to sign the commitment and add to the numbers on the HeForShe world map, somehow a solidarity movement for gender equality is building without any women to be seen. The campaign seemingly assumes that these “good men” will be immediately altruistic, rather than in need of coaching on how to combat sexism in their lives, as well as how to combat oppressive forces that hold some men down and raise others up. Discourse, produced in this narrow context, does not take into the consideration the other contextual elements involved in today’s global gender equality issues (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011).

Hegemonic masculinity is maintained through the campaign discourse because there are no real challenges, besides inviting men to be a part of the conversation, to male power – whether individual or institutional. The campaign discourse states that gender equality is a “men’s issue” just as much as a “women’s issue.” But equating the two groups together as equal in the need to overcome gender ignores how gender oppression affects women and men differently, and furthermore ignores the intersectionality of oppressions other than gender. Developing the idea that humanity is not benefiting from gender inequality is not completely true because men do indeed benefit. The argument

that “men are no less gendered than women” or that “masculinity is no less a social construction or performative masquerade than is femininity” is untrue (Thomas, 2002, p. 61). This mentality creates a false reality that “men and women are equally installed into symmetrically gendered positions” (p. 61). The campaign, therefore, fails to discuss the structural and cultural forces affecting gender inequality.

In the HeForShe campaign, men are asked to help, but are not asked to face the truth of the matter: they have, by virtue of being men, benefitted from male hegemony. In all aspects of life, the patriarchy systematically prioritizes men over women. An image on the website, quoting U.S. actor and Water.org Co-Founder Matt Damon, reads, “It’s an objective fact, that if you want to solve some of these huge, kind of bigger problems of extreme poverty, you have to include the women. They are the ones who will get it done” (UN Women, 2015). This quote forgoes placing men as a part of the problem and instead showing women to be the solution. This quote, located next to HeForShe commitment on the website, reveals how the campaign wants to depict gender equality. HeForShe solidarity is portrayed as “coming together,” rather than an examination of the intricate and complicated structures that sustain global hegemonies and interact with masculine hegemony.

Reflections of Universal Values and Western Perceptions about Gender Politics

As mentioned earlier, the second theme focuses on the HeForShe campaign as a United Nations initiative for solving global gender inequality. In response to the second and third research questions of this study, the following findings are organized into two main subthemes: (1) how the campaign legitimizes gender equality through universal human rights frameworks and (2) how Western political, social and cultural values permeate the campaign’s discourse. This section of the findings first addresses the

campaign's depictions of human progress as intrinsically tied to women's progress. The oppression of women is painted as a universal moral concern. However, the universal arguments of the campaign lead to an oversimplification of social equality issues that ignores intersectional oppression. The campaign's universalism creates a false sense of equivalence of the social, cultural and political cost to men for supporting the campaign. The findings later address a lack of diversity in the campaign dialogue due to the dominance of Western celebrities and politicians. Lastly, this theme points out the competitive elements of the campaign that work against the alliance-based development of transnational feminist solidarity.

Universalism through United Nations Human Rights Framework.

The United Nation's universal values are most strongly reflected through the HeForShe dialogue surrounding universal human rights. While the campaign's construction of a solidarity movement through the "HeForShe" framework is problematic, these issues are somewhat combatted by the idea of "humanity" rooted in the campaign discourse. As the website declares, "Now it's time to unify our efforts. HeForShe is a solidarity movement for gender equality that brings together one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity, for the benefit of all" (UN Women, 2015). This statement, which introduces the HeForShe commitment, generates the idea that never before has the unification of men and women happened in gender equality efforts; according to this campaign discourse, men and women have always worked separately, which swiftly erases the historical collaborations of feminist women and men throughout the years. Yet, this statement of "one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity" raises up a universal human identity – a shared universal "we." The

HeForShe campaign is all about getting “everyone to participate” in gender equality (HeForShe, 2014s).

Building upon previous feminist efforts in UN forums, the HeForShe commitment portrays gender equality as not a women’s issue, but a human rights issue. This idea of women’s human rights is repeated in both the website and Twitter discourse. For example as British actor Toby Regbo’s retweet affirms, “‘Gender equality is not a women's issue, it's a human rights issue’. #proudtobeafeminist” (Regbo, 2014). This “women’s rights as human rights” outline depicts the world’s potential for humanity as equally rooted in women’s potential as members of society. As a twitter photo and quote from former U.S. President Bill Clinton says, “No society can truly flourish if it stifles the dreams and potentials of half its population. Empowering women is more than a moral imperative, it is essential for building a strong, prosperous, healthy future we all can share” (HeForShe, 2014j). The historical human rights framework functions on this very idea of a universal “moral imperative” for preventing global human rights atrocities (United Nations, 1948). Clinton’s description of a “future we all can share” is also rooted in the conceptualization of a universal human experience (Panikkar, 1982).

The use of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in the HeForShe discourse significantly instills UN universal values into the campaign. As the highest authority figure at the United Nations, Ki-Moon symbolizes the United Nations as an entity specifically designed to monitor human rights. Gender equality is labeled a human rights concern not only through his representation in the campaign, but also explicitly through his words. As one tweet quoting Ki-Moon explains, “Transformation is our goal. I can think of no better place to start than with opening doors and shattering ceilings for

women & girls... We cannot fulfill 100% of the world's potential by excluding 50% of the world's people" (United Nations, 2014). Ki-Moon's use of "our" and "we" lumps all the world's people together in a way that makes women's and girl's rights the responsibility of all. Another quote from Ki-Moon on the official website says, "Violence against women and girls is a global problem; it harms women, families, communities and societies. We can only stop it by working together" (UN Women, 2015). Through this depiction of a global problem from the family unit to society, Ki-Moon again shows the interconnectedness of universal human rights concerns.

But while the campaign aims to engage the human community in gender equality, the universalization of the campaign discourse threatens a "one size fits all" human rights approach to solving various gender issues. For example, on the website, a quote from Water.org Co-Founder and U.S. actor Matt Damon states, "It's an objective fact, that if you want to solve some of these huge, kind of bigger problems of extreme poverty, you have to include the women. They're the ones who will get it done" (UN Women, 2015). This mentality creates an "add women and stir" approach to the world's "bigger problems," which is both discouraged and critiqued in transnational feminist theory (Mohanty, 2003).

The HeForShe campaign's tendency to tie women's experiences to the universal human rights experience disregards the complex systems at play in issues such as extreme poverty, which involve an array of intersectional oppressions in women's and men's lives. Equating women's rights as human rights is crucial in maintaining the basic, but still radical, idea that women are people, too. But this universal mold should not forgo understanding the diversity of women's experiences and the specific needs of women in

their own social and cultural location. In gender politics, differences should be not be “seen as illegitimate deviations from the one true standard, but simply a part of the rich texture of human life and experience” (Knights & Kerfoot, 2004, p. 433).

Additionally, the differences in challenges men face in helping women in certain cultural contexts, such as in countries with conservative gender values, can be more arduous than in other places, such as countries with more progressive gender values. The HeForShe campaign’s universal narratives do not factor in these specific realities. Instead, all men’s efforts are seen as equivalent in the universal campaign’s goals. Each HeForShe commitment weighs the same as the next man who signs up. For example, the cost for men working to change the status of women in Iran is much different than men working to change the status of women in Sweden. The cost to men and women to fight their particular cultural systems and gender norms varies depending on the country. In some cases, as discussed earlier regarding the UN Women Africa tweet, the HeForShe campaign does not cost men anything, but rather benefits male power. Just as the social context of women matters in transnational feminism, so does the context of men in their efforts to support gender equality.

Western-centric narratives through celebrity and political representation.

Universalism has historically provided women the opportunity to sync women’s rights with human rights by producing “new spaces, institutions and rhetoric where the notion of universal human rights is a powerful justificatory principle” (Walby, 2002, p. 534). While human rights are a predominantly Western concept, these Western origins do not negate their necessity in today’s world (Panikkar, 1982). Despite the Western roots of human rights ideals, the majority of the HeForShe discourse is still westernized in other ways. The campaign structure, its use of role models and the textual discourse of the

campaign highlight the Western world more than anywhere else. However, under the UN Women umbrella, the HeForShe campaign is intended to be a worldwide solidarity campaign for gender equality. Through the use of the words “world” and “global,” the campaign hones this idea of the HeForShe movement building across the globe.

The HeForShe website, in particular, shows images of men from various racial and cultural backgrounds, which helps to diversify the campaign narrative. The world map at the end of the homepage, also republished on the Twitter feed, epitomizes the grand, multicultural scale of the HeForShe movement. Through these elements, the campaign appears transnational and seemingly values diversity and difference. But while Western influences are less obvious on the official website, the Twitter exists almost exclusively as a platform for white men and women to voice their support of the HeForShe campaign. It is important to note that the Twitter page, however, does seem to show a greater diversity of faces and voices from various cultural, religious and racial backgrounds both before and after this re-launching month of the campaign.

On the HeForShe homepage, users scroll downwards to unfold information about the campaign. One of the first images seen during this scrolling is a black and white image of white suffragist women carrying protest signs while walking down a city street. This image is paired with the explanation, “The movement for gender equality was originally conceived as a struggle led only by women for women” (UN Women, 2015). Despite the truth of this historical snippet, this image recycles the white narrative of early mainstream Western feminist movements and ignores the historical work of feminist movements in other areas of the world during this same time period. As told by the HeForShe website, the women’s movement begins with these white women.

As for the Twitter feed, Emma Watson's presence is most noticeable, more than any other man or woman featured on the page. She is the HeForShe campaign's personal brand. And as discussed in literature on celebrity humanitarianism, the campaign also helps to promote Emma's Watson's personal brand as a celebrity. The selection of Watson as the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador was clearly a calculated choice for the HeForShe campaign. As a famous young actor with a global fan base, Watson gathered a large worldwide audience within only a matter of days after the campaign's public launch. But the campaign overall appeals more to a Western and developed world audience – an audience that can identify with Watson as an actor and that has the ability to use the Internet as a source of information and agency. In CDA, this privileged ability to access “scarce social resources, such as force, money, status, fame, knowledge, information,” is referred to as “power base” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 355). With the presence of Watson, the HeForShe campaign preferences a voice with a greater power base than others within the current global structure of society. Watson's experiences are of a multimillionaire, white, thin-privileged, able-bodied, heterosexual, cisgender, feminine British woman.

The UN Women HeForShe campaign positions Watson as the representative of the campaign's ideals and a mouthpiece for the meaning of gender equality. As a famous celebrity, she represents a rare elite with enormous wealth compared to the majority of the world's population. While the characters she plays in film may be well known for those with access to popular movies, her identity as a white British woman distances her from much of the world. No woman could fully encompass all women, but as a white woman, Watson reemploys old narratives of mainstream feminism. This placement of a

white woman as representative of other women is reminiscent of historical problems within feminism because liberal and radical white feminists have routinely dominated the movement at the expense of other women (Amos & Parmar, 1984, Hooks, 2000a, 2000b, Mohanty, 2003, Tripp, 2006). Homogenizing all women under one particular feminist ideal “colonizes and appropriates the pluralities of the simultaneous location of different groups of women in social class and ethnic frameworks” in a way that “ultimately robs them of their historical and political agency” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 39).

During this study’s time period, Watson emerges as the only major female leader of the campaign, with no other women truly reaching her status level in the campaign. On the Twitter feed, her words aim to recruit men, but do not reach out to other women. One woman alone cannot speak for all, especially if this woman comes from a country that was once a major colonial powerhouse. While Watson’s voice is heard consistently throughout the Twitter, other women’s stories are less evident, particularly non-celebrity women. Women’s stories are largely absent from the campaign, which means a diversity of women’s stories is also missing. CDA aims to question arguments and prevailing ideas, which in the case of the HeForShe campaign means questioning this lack of diversity in women’s stories. This is because, as a methodical approach, CDA “openly and explicitly positions itself on the side of the dominated and oppressed groups and against the dominating groups” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 358).

Using Watson as a HeForShe role model westernizes the campaign’s discourse, but an overt interest in Watson on the HeForShe Twitter page even further perpetuates this Westernization. The majority of the tweets on the Twitter page include Watson by quoting her, retweeting her, tweeting at her, referencing her name and more. Retweets

oftentimes show more support for Watson as an individual than the campaign cause itself. One after another, celebrities, particularly white male celebrities, praise Watson for her HeForShe launching speech and efforts in the campaign. The HeForShe twitter itself repeatedly celebrates Watson as well, such as by congratulating her for making the “1000 most influential Londoners list for humanitarianism” (HeForShe, 2014c). The campaign recycles Watson’s “extraordinary speech” through images, quotes, video links and articles referencing the speech (HeForShe, 2014t). Watson is referred to as “game-changing” and labeled a “badass” (HeForShe, 2014p, Windsow, 2014). But while Watson is congratulated in various ways on the Twitter page, very few non-celebrities are given the space to share personal stories regarding gender equality. Ordinary stories, ones that could offer non-Western perspectives on gender equality, are sparse amongst the flood of celebrity tweets complimenting Watson, usually supplemented by “#HeForShe.”

The campaign is not entirely void of other women. For example, the Twitter highlights the voice of a domestic violence survivor who states, “I stand up for #GenderEquality. We are all #equal” (HeForShe, 2014n). Two women teachers are also retweeted, each discussing their specific successes in gender equality work with their students. But besides these three women, hardly any other non-celebrity women are featured. The three famous women of color who do stand out in the discourse are First Lady Michelle Obama, UN Women Executive Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and Pakistani girl’s rights activist Malala Yousafzai. One tweet displays a photo of Mlambo-Ngcuka posing with Malala, a HeForShe role model, with the words, “#Malala amplified girls’ unheard voices.” (UN Women, 2014c) Still, Watson’s voice is the primary one here.

The faces and voices of white male celebrities also are prevalent in the discourse. Nearly all photos on the page during this timeline show white men holding a “HeForShe” sign. The discourse is intensely celebrity-centric, which assumes that that audience will both be interested in these celebrities and also assumes the audience will recognize these celebrities. By the numbers, there are 25 well-known white Western men who appear in the Twitter discourse, whether through their image or through their words, as compared to eight famous men of color, both Western and non-Western, who appear in the discourse. However, the well-known women included in the discourse have less of a cultural and racial gap, with seven white Western women, including mostly U.S. women, and five famous women of color, including two U.S. women. On two different occasions on the Twitter page, a white male celebrity appears on the page only holding a “HeForShe” sign without any introduction as to who they are or why they are important. The tweets presume that the audience will recognize their faces to be white British actors Eddie Redmayne and David Tennant (TheFishDr, 2014, Watson, 2014b).

Displaying predominantly Western white men in the HeForShe discourse also propagates a “white man’s burden” narrative. Through the flow of images and words sourced to white men, the audience is encouraged to “follow the white man’s lead.” These men are created as role models to be followed simply because they are well-known white men who tweet “I am a #HeForShe.” This white male dominance risks maintaining the white Western world’s grip and ignores imperialist, colonialist and neoliberal forces that have negatively impacted the developing world and created policies of harm for women, as well as men, of multiple oppressions across the globe. Using these men as role

models, or “social actors” as described in CDA, feeds into “representations of social life” that inherently impact social reality (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2).

Though rare, the HeForShe solidarity discourse sometimes addresses intersectional oppressions. By linking a handful of stories about men and women working towards gender equality, the HeForShe Twitter provides a glimpse into the diversity of gender experiences. These experiences help to examine the role of culture, and subsequent national, religious and other social factors, at work in gender discrimination. These stories include: a Zimbabwean man who established a “husband school” to combat domestic violence in his village, a British teacher fostering a discussion about feminism in her class, a Dutch man biking throughout Africa to mobilize men and gather funding for gender equality, a teacher helping girls create an inclusive program for teaching gender equality to boys and a male women’s rights activist in Kenya working to end child marriage. These specific stories, some tweeted more than once on the Twitter page, are largely the extent of examples of transnational solidarity efforts visible in this study’s month-long collection of discourse.

Despite these transnational examples, Western politics are a more prominent part of the campaign, specifically U.S. politics. Although European political figures and male diplomats from Denmark, Britain and Liechtenstein are retweeted in the discourse, U.S. politics are given the most attention. President Barrack Obama, former President Bill Clinton and the White House all make appearances in the discourse. A retweet from the White House, showing a photo of Obama giving a speech in front of the UN General Assembly, quotes the current U.S. president as saying, “Where women are full participants in a country’s politics or economy, societies are more likely to succeed” (The

White House, 2014). Obama is seen twice again on both the campaign website and Twitter. In these occurrences, the campaign features the same photo of Obama, one with a better glimpse of the U.S. flag hanging in the background, with quotes overlying the image that link women's rights to the good of the country and economy.

The United States is the only political entity directly highlighted by the campaign, which posits one of the world's most powerful states as an exemplary HeForShe country (Eriksen, 2014). A spotlight on the United States, as a capitalist democracy, risks reproducing cultural imperialistic views on how gender equality should be handled by the rest of the world. The Americanization of the HeForShe discourse is also seen in a tweet featuring U.S. college men speaking up about feminism and a tweet targeting the National Football League (NFL) (HeForShe, 2014r). The NFL tweet addresses domestic violence issues connected to football, a sport that is played nowhere else in the world except the United States.

Masculine discourses include a sense of unlimited competition, control and conquest (Knights & Kerfoot, 2004). Western values, which include neoliberalism, consumerism and individualism, are also competition-based, especially as pertaining to profit and accumulation (Mohanty, 2003). Notions of competition are seen numerous times in both the HeForShe homepage and Twitter discourse, which contributes to male dominance and Western dominance within the campaign. The HeForShe world map on the website includes an introductory text, which states, "All over the world, men are taking a stand for gender equality. See how many men in your country have committed. Join them and move your country into the lead" (UN Women, 2015). While the first part of this text provides a feeling of solidarity, the later half instigates a competition for men

to place their country in the lead and show-up other men. One tweet featuring the HeForShe map uses the exact same logic, while another tweet reads, “#HeForShe Leader Board: #USA #Australia #UK #SouthAfrica. What will you do to get your country in the lead?” (HeForShe, 2014e) The leaderboard displayed in this particular tweet shows predominantly wealthy, Western developed countries leading the HeForShe charge. The hierarchy of success conveyed in the leaderboard creates a sense of superiority of certain countries over others. The tweet’s question of “What will you do?” generalizes the efforts of all men as if all gender efforts in each area of the world share equal challenges.

This idea of countries competing with one another suggests the struggle for gender equality is more about the ways a country can “do it better” than the rest. The campaign is made out to be a race to the top, rather than a bridge for growth and communication across borders. By nature of the online components of the campaign, the HeForShe movement privileges countries with citizens who have reliable Internet access and therefore the ability to regularly use Twitter, Instagram, Facebook or Youtube. Some countries entirely block or severely censor these very sites. One tweet shows a photo of the #HeForShe trending at Twitter Headquarters, but for those who have little to no Internet access, this tweet is insignificant and inapplicable to their lives (Stamatiou, 2014). In another tweet, the campaign appeals to an even higher elite of the world, one that values the profit-making, materialistic fashion world. This particular tweet, which links to a *New York Times* article, highlights the use of a “HeForShe” sign at a Chanel fashion event. But an event such as this, attended by the world’s upper class, appeals to a capitalistic, individualistic Western mentality and little else.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The purpose of this research study is not to examine the effectiveness of the HeForShe campaign, but to instead understand how the campaign comes across to its audience through the production of discourse. During its public launch, the HeForShe campaign succeeded in grabbing the world's attention through various shares on social media platforms. The campaign brings gender equality to the forefront of UN discussions and makes men aware of their ability to aid in eliminating gender inequalities. UN Women, through the structure of the United Nations and through social media, has the capacity, or the "power base," to disseminate information to a wide sphere. But feminism, which works toward a social, political and economic equality that is inclusive of all identities, seems to have too radical of a connotation to be used in the campaign title or its description. Feminists advocating for change at the United Nations have been a historical driving force in furthering global gender equality efforts. However, the word feminism, which only pops up a handful of times throughout the study's timeline of campaign discourse, seems to have no real space in the HeForShe movement.

Transnational feminism emphasizes the importance of allowing people to speak for themselves to voice their needs about their oppression from their specific social location. Informed by a critical discourse approach, the study argues that the HeForShe campaign's reinforcement of gender norms and male dominance outweighs the campaign's challenges to current global gender inequalities. Without any real challenge to gender binaries, colonial and imperialist legacies, intersectional oppression and the complexity of a neoliberal, Western-dominated world system, the campaign is left with

men at the charge of a gender equality movement at the expense of the world's most oppressed. The HeForShe campaign discourse distorts the problem of gender equality by negating any other oppressive dynamics at play, outside of sexism, in maintaining patriarchal systems. Gender oppression is primarily depicted as a solo oppression, one that does not interact with a person's race, class, religion, nationality, ethnicity, culture or ability that also affect a person's survival in the world. But gender does not exist in isolation. Colonial and imperial holds on power, lumped within a capitalist-dominated economic system that values profit over fairness, intensely impact social structures that shape gender and other oppressions. Furthermore, cultural constructions of masculinity distinctly shape gender relationships and norms in different cultural settings. The complexity of gender issues, within the context of the complexity of societal inequalities, is not addressed in the HeForShe campaign. Only the massiveness and pervasiveness of gender inequality is conveyed through the global nature of the campaign.

First, this study argues that the HeForShe campaign works against its very purpose of achieving gender equality by reproducing dominant narratives of hegemonic masculinity through a loosely guided sense of solidarity and an overpowering emphasis on the differentiation of men from women through traditional gender binary structures. Men gain entry into gender equality without truly understanding and forfeiting their privilege necessary to achieve such equality, which renders gendered power dynamics largely unchallenged. Second, this study argues that this HeForShe "solidarity movement for gender equality" thrives on a homogenizing notion of universalism that works to preserve the dignity of all people through human rights, but also abstains from probing deeper into the intricacy of the individual issues that make up the wider net of global

gender inequality problems. Lastly, this study argues that the Westernization of the campaign through celebrity involvement and spotlights on U.S. politics and culture perpetuates the historical dominance of the “West” vs. the “Rest.”

This study also highlights the means in which social media reproduce social justice discourse. The campaign produces discourse through social networks, particularly through the use of “#HeForShe” on Twitter. But the public also participates in this discourse and creates new social justice conversations through user-generated content such as blog posts, tweet, videos and more. In today’s world, social media play a major part in the dissemination of social discourse and the exchange of such discourses in various virtual communities and networks. Though social networking sites, media messages have the ability to spread much further than possible just a decade ago. With this in mind, the HeForShe campaign’s messaging becomes more pervasive the further these networks reach. How these messages are constructed impact how people think about gender equality. A good comparison to the “#HeForShe” social media messages are other feminist hashtags that emerged during the same year as the campaign. These include “#YesAllWomen,” “#BlackWomenMatter” and “#AllMenCan” (Conley, 2014). All of these hashtags address feminism and gender equality, but each distinctly varies in frame, tone and subject matter. Thus, social media can significantly influence how gender equality messages are received and perceived.

The significance of this study, therefore, is rooted in the power of language in shaping reality. Especially in a public relations-style campaign for gender equality, every piece of language is a calculated and crucial part of developing a fuller message. Language is a deliberate act that constitutes culture and society. Discourse creation is

central to the function and success of the HeForShe campaign. As explained in CDA theory, “every instance of language use makes its own small contribution to reproducing and/or transforming society and culture, including power relations. That is the power of discourse; that is why it is worth struggling over” (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 370). When the power of discourse is applied to a campaign that aims to achieve global gender equality by the year 2030, the importance of the discursive elements of the HeForShe campaign should not be underestimated. When women comprise 70 percent of the world’s poor, but own only 1 percent of the titled land, when 1 in 3 women worldwide will be sexually or otherwise abused in their lifetime and when 1 in 5 eligible girls are not enrolled in primary school, the discursive work needed to end gender equality is enormously complex (Reilly, 2014).

Examining and challenging discourse through a feminist perspective is not a “not merely a matter of semantics. It is about the lives and deaths of individual women everywhere, every day” (Bunch, 1995, p. 17). Using transnational feminist theory to analyze the HeForShe discourse and using the medium of CDA as a problem-orientated approach, the study uncovered dynamics of unequal social power in the HeForShe campaign. CDA explicitly sides with the oppressed and against the oppressors. In the case of the HeForShe discourse, the oppressors reveal to be men as a larger group, but more specifically, white, Western men with social mobility. CDA points out how discourse supports hegemony to form social order; through the use of this methodology, Western white men are reinforced as the dominant group in the HeForShe campaign which leads to the exclusion of other gender, racial and cultural identities.

This study offers a few recommendations for resolving some of the HeForShe campaign issues as pointed out in the findings of the study. First, the model of the campaign could be rethought and reorganized to achieve a better conceptualization of transnational feminist solidarity. The current campaign is more of a public relations campaign for promoting UN Women's efforts to men than an activist movement. UN Women could work to build solidarity by reversing the flow of the campaign. A campaign to improve gender equality could start at the local levels in countries and work its way up. Local people, through the organizational help of UN country offices, could pool together in various meetings to discuss relevant gender issues and possible solutions. The findings from these meetings could then be reported to UN Women, which could then work to supply support and resources. Task forces for each country, assembled from its local communities, could then work in conjunction with UN Women country offices. Countries could then create individualized campaigns aimed at resolving the most pressing local gender inequality concerns. This way, the voices of communities instruct a collectively built global movement, individualized to each country's needs, that work toward gender equality in pieces rather than in a universalized lump sum.

Second, if UN Women wanted to maintain the campaign structure and work to recruit men into feminism, this campaign could be displayed in a more inclusive, gender-neutral manner that would allow for all people, not simply men, to join gender equality efforts. The campaign could still target men but achieving this in more subtle ways by simply avoiding language, colors and designs stereotypical of the gender binary. For example, the campaign could replace "HeForShe" with "Grassroots to Global" to achieve a community-based idea of gender equality efforts rather than an individualized man vs.

woman approach. The colors of the campaign could simply avoid blue or pink as gendered colors and instead use a more neutral color, such as green. The campaign could even use a multitude of colors, which could allow for the use of pink and blue amongst many other colors, that could represent a more colorful spectrum of gender and cultural diversity. The design of the campaign could use the symbol of a circle to represent the overlapping of communities or waves to symbolize the ripple effects of global gender equality efforts. Role models for the campaign could avoid celebrity involvement entirely by raising up more ordinary, critically vulnerable voices to share their stories of hope, change and empowerment. These stories could represent a variety of people, communities and organizations showcasing different causes and goals.

The overarching motive of this study was to critically look at how sources of global power, as embodied by UN Women, can create discourses that impact the gendered reality of the world. Transnational feminism is as much a theory as it is a strategy for achieving gender equality. The UN Women HeForShe campaign is one of countless examples of global strategy-making. Looking at the basics of discourse, in which contributes to how people fundamentally represent themselves and interact with society, ultimately contributes to understanding productive and inclusive social change at the starting point of language. Social change is irrevocably tied to discourse.

Given the global nature of this campaign, this study met some limitations. The researcher faced a barrier with language and was therefore limited to English-only HeForShe content. Therefore, also given the methodological structure, this study was unable to examine discursive elements of the campaign, both from UN Women and its audience, occurring in languages other than English. This study was further limited to

one part of the total conversation of the HeForShe campaign. This study analyzes Twitter discourse from only a one-month period of a more than 12-month campaign timeline. While the official website consists of mostly unchanging content, the Twitter account is an online medium that provides the opportunity to retrace the development of the campaign over time through its archival elements and continual updates. This means that previous campaign discourse data, although limited, was not examined, and any future improvements in the campaign discourse were also left out. The findings are therefore influenced by this particular portion of the campaign timeline, despite any changes or differences in the campaign discourse that occurred in the before or after of the public launch. It is important to note that the Twitter does show a much greater diversity of faces and stories after the public launch of the campaign.

Because of the limitations of this study, no audience-produced discourses were analyzed. Toward the end of this study, the HeForShe campaign created more content for the official website by adding the “Strategy” page. This page was developed to help roll out the campaign’s IMPACT 10x10x10 pilot initiative, intended to offer “guidelines, criteria, and suggested implementation activities” for heads of state, corporations and universities (UN Women, 2015). Because of this, this study is limited to the content produced by the campaign before 2015. The study is also further limited by the choice of social media and its impact on worldwide audiences. While the Twitter feed produces content most often, the popularity and usability of social media varies depending on the country. While Twitter may be a primary social media medium in one country, Facebook may be the primary choice of social media in another. For these reasons, the study is only

analyzing a part of the discourse received by global audiences, not the entire social media discourse.

Because of the large amount of discourse offered by a campaign that is still a work-in-progress, data gathering was purposefully constricted and thus the interpretation of data might have been impacted. This study evaluates the realities of the campaign at its public introduction, as it was discursively created and made relevant to public forums, rather than at its conclusion. Another study focusing on a different part of the HeForShe campaign timeline might offer an alternative perspective and findings. Due to the timing of this study, interviews from both the UN campaign and its audience were unable to be conducted. For future research, it would be beneficial to use interviews as a way of uncovering both the decision-making behind campaign, as well as understanding audience reception. Another study could attempt to examine the specificities of the reception of the campaign for specific gender identity groups. For example, a quantitative study could create a survey for men involved in the HeForShe campaign to see how their male privilege was challenged, maintained or enhanced by the HeForShe campaign structure and dialogue. Another study could do qualitative in-depth interviews with genderqueer individuals to see how they received the campaign and what they believe could improve the campaign.

Examining how feminism is presented to the global UN audience not only enhances the conversations on how feminism is defined and manifests in transnational contexts, but this study's analysis also provides an opportunity for understanding how social media can be used for activating global citizen participation and sparking conversation on global inequalities. Focusing on the time period around Watson's speech,

which significantly peaked audience interest, also contributes to the discussion of the role of “celebrity” in humanitarian campaigns. Through a critical discourse analysis of the campaign website and Twitter, this study opens up further dialogue on the relationship between social media and activism. The methods and findings of this study have value in academia, but also are useful for practical social justice work. This study could offer useful material for a public relations awareness-building campaign using social media, sociological research focusing on the effects of social justice campaigns, media studies aimed at understanding audience reception or strategists for international policy development.

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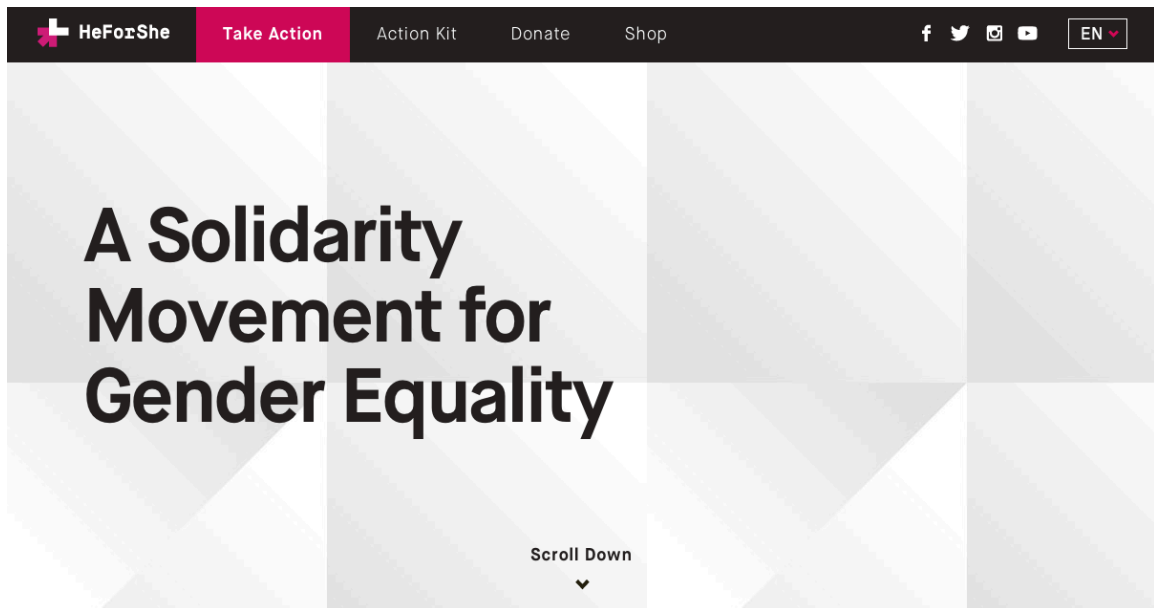
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Appendix A: Screenshots of HeForShe Website



A Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality

Now it's time to unify our efforts. HeForShe is a solidarity movement for gender equality that brings together one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity, for the benefit of all.

Scroll Down

The HeForShe Commitment

Gender equality is not only a women's issue, it is a human rights issue that requires my participation. I commit to take action against all forms of violence and discrimination faced by women and girls.

I agree

Join the solidarity movement and spread the word. Share this with the men in your life.

 Share  Tweet  Email



President Barack Obama

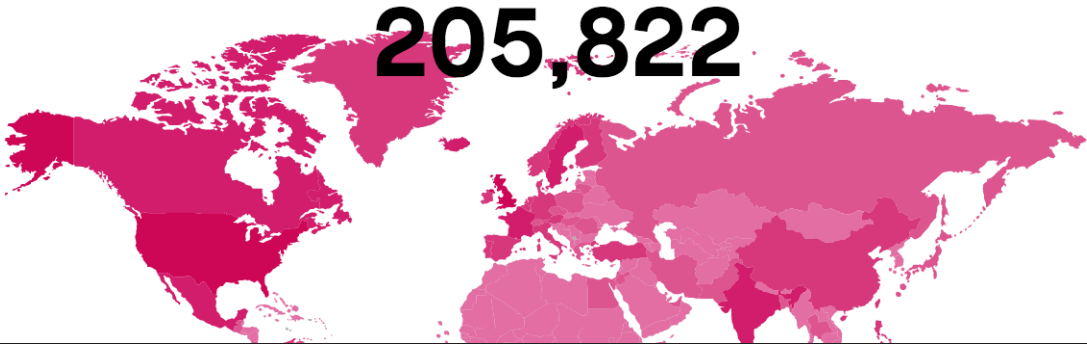
Are you a man who is going to stand up for women's rights?

Name	Country	Email	Join
------	---------	-------	------

A Movement is Building

All over the world, men are taking a stand for gender equality. See how many men in your country have committed. Join them and move your country into the lead.

- 20,001+
- 5,001 - 20,000
- 1,000 - 5,000
- 251 - 1,000
- 1 - 250
- 0



Thank You to Our Sponsors

Campaign Title Partner

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

Contact Us

heforshe@unwomen.org
<http://www.unwomen.org>



UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

Appendix B: Timeline of HeForShe Twitter Feed (PDF attached)



← ↻ 24 ★ 47 ... [View more photos and videos](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 29
Honored to be discussing #HeForShe at that @HolmesReport Summit today. How will you get the men in your life to join? bit.ly/1nQdeOQ

← ↻ 34 ★ 60 ...

HeForShe retweeted
Christopher Graves @CGraves · Oct 28
If you are one of the millions who saw @EmWatson @UN_Women speech come see the #HeForShe cause revealed by @e_nyamayo Wed 2p #PRSummit

← ↻ 9 ★ 12 ...

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 28
It will take 81 years to close the workplace gender gap at the current pace — @WEF. Change the course heforshe.org/#take-action #HeForShe

← ↻ 239 ★ 167 ...

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 27
Our team is expanding & looking for a passionate #HeForShe Content Writer. Apply @ jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cf...

← ↻ 74 ★ 92 ...

HeForShe retweeted
UN Women Australia @UNWomenAust · Oct 23
Thanks @Samantha_Wills for supporting @UN_Women #HeForShe gender equality campaign! heforshe.org



← ↻ 108 ★ 168 ... [View more photos and videos](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 23
Three Interns needed to #ChangeTheWorld. Join our #HeForShe team: jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cf...

← ↻ 59 ★ 61 ...

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 23

Almost there, 185K men and counting...Let's get to 200K. Make your **#HeForShe** Commitment today: HeForShe.org/#take-action



476 330 [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 21

5 practical things men can do for gender equality fastcompany.com/3037193/strong... via **@FastCompany** Share what you are doing as a **#HeForShe** to engage

229 170 [View summary](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 20

Congrats **@EmWatson** for making 1000 most influential Londoners list for humanitarianism. We are proud **@phumzileunwomen**



553 997 [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 19

How You Can Answer **@EmWatson's** Call for Equality in Your Workplace onforb.es/1sVuVgz via **@forbes** **#HeForShe**

← 82 ★ 120 ...

[View summary](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 18

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter" MLK Let's end [#gender Inequality](#) heforshes.org/#take-action

← 237 ★ 240 ...

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 18

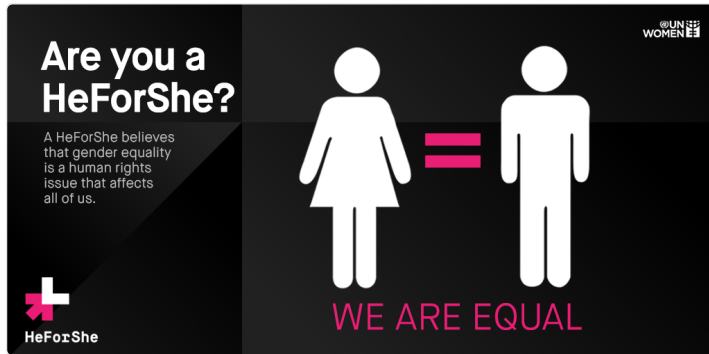
"Feminism does not mean feminine. It means equality." [@christineorgan](#) huffingtonpost.com/christine-orga... via [@HuffingtonPost](#)

← 355 ★ 408 ...

[View summary](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Oct 16

A [#HeForShe](#) believes that women and men are equal. RT if you agree & join the movement at HeForShe.org



← 1.6K ★ 815 ...

[View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted

John Jenkins @HMAJohnJenkins · Oct 16

Join me in the [#HeForShe](#) campaign and sign up here ow.ly/CR9e9T [@UN_Women](#)



← 33 ★ 86 ...

[View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 15

#HeForShe starts with awareness. See Wanjala work in Kenya to end #GenderBasedViolence @coexistkenya. What will u do? youtu.be/Nb--b4I_OZ8

 YouTube



  69  94  [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 15





Looking for an awesome Project Coordinator to join our awesome #HeForShe Team in NYC: jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cf...

  58  88 

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 14

Are you a #HeForShe? 6 Guys who think girls can change the world via @ONECampaign ow.ly/CKrj6



  203  239  [View more photos and videos](#)

 HeForShe retweeted

UN Women Africa @unwomenafrica · Oct 9

#HeForShe: “ We must take action now for our daughters future ”
Babacar & Ndeye @Heforshe ow.ly/CvX8n





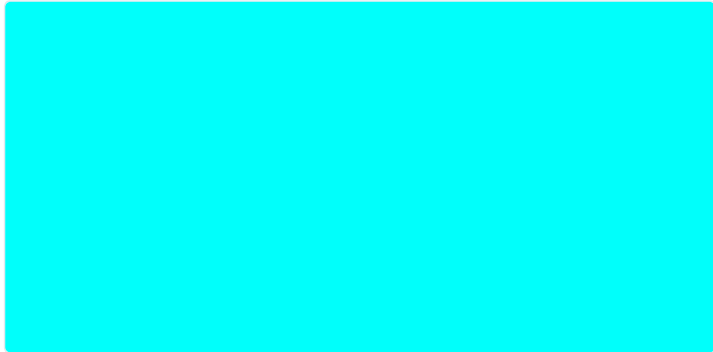
← ↻ 96 ★ 120 ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Pharrell Williams @Pharrell · Oct 11

Thank you @EmWatson for this campaign. It's so necessary. #HeForShe



← ↻ 5.9K ★ 9.2K ... [View more photos and videos](#)



HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 12

Looking for a few good men to get us to 200K. Be a #HeForShe stand-up guy: heforshe.org/#take-action

← ↻ 261 ★ 181 ...

HeForShe retweeted



Liechtenstein MFA @MFA_LI · Oct 3

Male diplomats of LI OFA support #heforshe. #GenderEquality is important priority of LI's foreign policy @heforshe



← ↻ 1.3K ★ 5.2K ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Outreach Programme @UNHOP · Oct 12

Take a stand for #genderequality & raise awareness of #HeForShe with this new @HeforShe Action Kit: heforshe.org/action-kit/ #dayofthegirl

← ↻ 30 ★ 60 ...

HeForShe retweeted

UN Women @UN_Women · Oct 10

" #Malala amplified girls' unheard voices"- @phumzileunwomen
owl.li/CzKeA #dayofthegirl #NobelPeacePrize



418 506 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 11

Happy #InternationalDayOfTheGirl #HeForShe men who will you stand-up for?

311 375

HeForShe retweeted

UN Women @UN_Women · Oct 10

Grameen Bank's Muhammad Yunus on putting women at the center of economic activity ow.ly/CzFLq @jakpost @yunus_centre #Beijing20

54 49 View summary

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 10

From #advocacy to #action. What does taking a #HeForShe commitment mean to you?
heforshe.org

<h2>Make your HeForShe Commitment</h2> <p>Visit HeForShe.org</p>	The HeForShe Commitment means you:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Express zero tolerance for discrimination and violence against women and girls2 Believe in equal access to social, political and economic opportunities3 Understand that taking a stand for women and girls is taking a stand for humanity4 Speak up when you see physical, emotional or sexual harassment

HeForShe | Actions

410 333 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 10

Congrats to #Malala @MalalaFund on #NobelPeacePrize #HeForShe #ZiauddinYousafzai cnn.com/2014/10/10/opi...

219 297

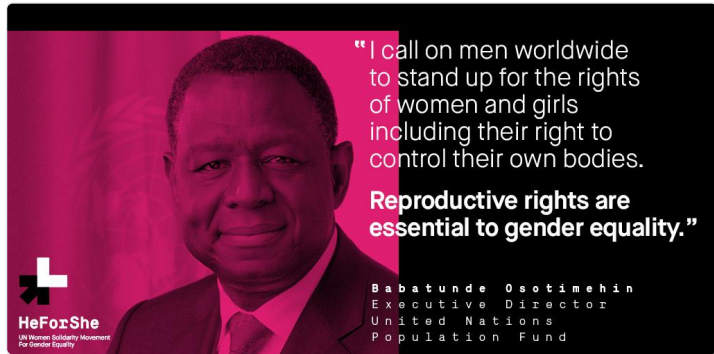
HeForShe retweeted
Emma Watson @EmWatson · Oct 8
I can't thank you all enough. #HeForShe
10K 26K

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 9
People create movements & it is those movements that create impact. We are truly grateful! #HeForShe



378 375 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted
Babatunde Osotimehin @BabatundeUNFPA · Oct 9
I challenge all men & boys to fight discrimination & injustice vs women & girls everywhere! RT! #heforshe @heforshe

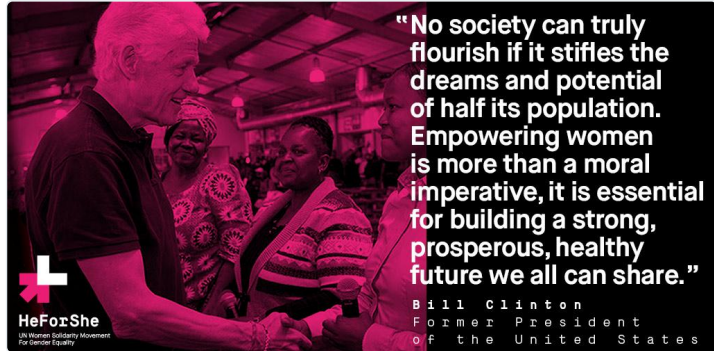


211 165 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 9
#HeForShe Leader Board: #USA #Australia #UK #SouthAfrica. What will do to get your country in the lead? heforshe.org
66 113

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 8
No society can flourish if it stifles the dreams & potential of half its population... -

@billclinton #HeForShe



452 416 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 8

Almost there, 173K men and counting..Let's get to 200K & help your country get in the lead: heforshe.org/#take-action

Building

All over the world, men are taking a stand for gender equality. See how many men in your country have committed. Join them and move your

325 268 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Mogens Jensen @MogensJensenS · Oct 7

Rigtige mænd er feminister. @manusareen og jeg bakker op om FN's #HeForShe kampagne for #ligestilling i verden #dkpol



67 98 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 7
A young woman teaching [#genderequality](#) created an inclusive program for boys for the 1st time. Take action [heforshe.org](#)

↩️ ↻️ 113 ⭐️ 208 ⋮

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 7
A Dutch man & his friend are biking to South Africa to mobilize men & funding for [#genderequality](#) Take action at: [heforshe.org/action-kit/](#)

↩️ ↻️ 62 ⭐️ 120 ⋮

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 7
Learn how you can take a stand for [#genderequality](#) and raise awareness of [#HeForShe](#) with our Action Kit: [heforshe.org/action-kit/](#)

↩️ ↻️ 143 ⭐️ 148 ⋮

HeForShe retweeted

Matt Juzenas @bfg · Oct 6

Follow [@HeforShe](#) and join the UN Women's Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality. [#HeForShe](#)



↩️ ↻️ 45 ⭐️ 159 ⋮

[View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 6
Great read for all [#HeForShe](#)'s fighting in solidarity for gender equality [@guardian theguardian.com/global-develop...](#)

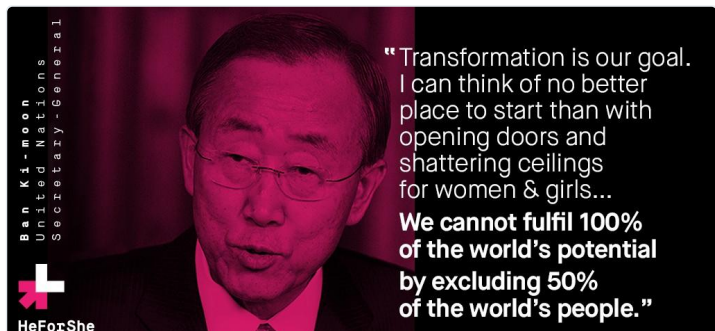
↩️ ↻️ 118 ⭐️ 152 ⋮

[View summary](#)

HeForShe retweeted

United Nations @UN · Oct 3

"We cannot fulfil 100% of world's potential by excluding 50% of world's people." [#HeforShe j.mp/1mTjaX9](#)



2.6K 1.8K View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 3
A good read for today! @EmWatson's UN gender equality campaign invites men too gu.com/p/424xk/tw via @guardian

180 177 View summary

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 2
A young woman teaching #genderequality to girls chose to create an inclusive program for boys for the first time. What will you do?

117 340

HeForShe retweeted

ELLEUK @ELLEUK · Oct 2
'Both men and women should feel free to be strong.' Emma Watson
#HeForShe #ELLEinspire on.elleuk.com/1nLoFaJ



257 332 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 2
A Dutch man & his friend are biking to South Africa to mobilize men & funding for #genderequality Take action: heforshe.org

81 146

HeForShe retweeted

Charlotte Harrison @BookWormCharl · Oct 2
Happy to say that my students watched @EmWatson on her UN #HeForShe talk today & then lead a 1hr long discussion on Feminism. #ProudTeacher.

62 275

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 2
Fill-in the blank: I am a #HeForShe because...

58 132

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 2

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 2
We're excited to share a few stories of #HeForShe heroes who've taken action to promote #genderequality. Tell us why you're a #HeForShe.

HeForShe retweeted
Paul Stamiou @Stammy · Oct 1
Now trending at Twitter HQ #HeForShe



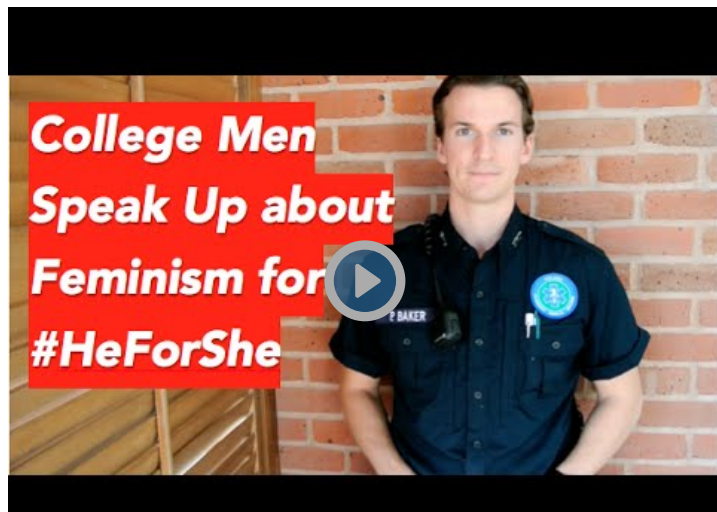
588 1.1K [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 1
#HeForShe In Action: A Zimbabwean man started a 'husband school' to educate the village's husbands abt #domesticabuse. What will you do?

HeForShe @HeforShe · Oct 1
Thanks for the support, @taylorswift13! 'Taylor Swift Supports Emma Watson's Speech on #Feminism' et.tv/1vudNxW via @etnow

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 30
Check out what these college guys had to say about #HeForShe
[youtube.com/watch?v=0CnDNI...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CnDNI...)

YouTube



146 204 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted



NYT Fashion @NYTFashion · Sep 30

At Chanel, Baptiste carried a #HeForShe sign, part of @EmWatson 's gender-equality campaign. nyti.ms/1tdSTQ7



350 385 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 30

Thanks 15-year-old @edholtom for speaking up on #GenderEquality in @Telegraph #HeForShe ow.ly/C7Joj v @CNN



735 847 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted



TheFishDr @dayoftheFishDr · Sep 29

#HeForShe





← ↻ 5.4K ★ 9.9K ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Toby Regbo @toby_regbo · Sep 26

'Gender equality is not a women's issue, it's a human rights issue'.

[#proudtobeafeminist](#) [@heforshe](#)



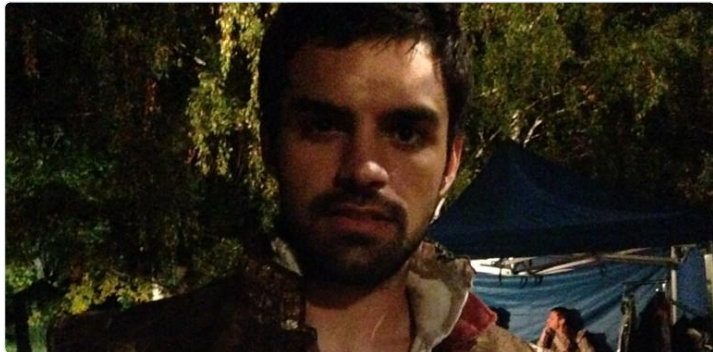
← ↻ 5.3K ★ 10K ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Sean Teale @seanjteale · Sep 25

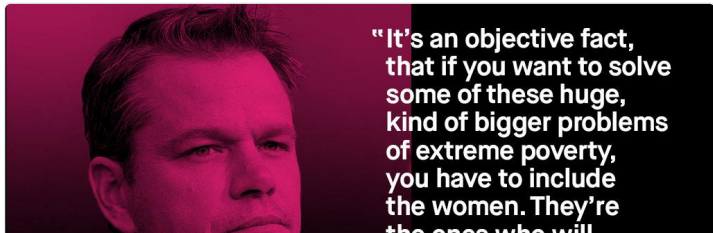
I like others am firmly committed to [#genderequality](#) - please pledge at bit.ly/1r1V2jA [@HeforShe](#) [@EmWatson](#)

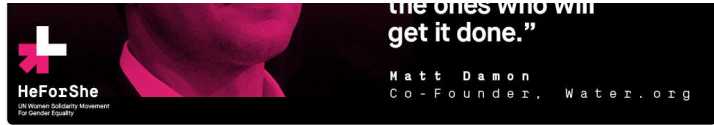


← ↻ 1.1K ★ 3.2K ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 29

"...if you want to solve...bigger problems of extreme poverty, you have to include the women..." - Matt Damon [#HeForShe](#)





747 840 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

UN Women @UN_Women · Sep 29
Voices rising for #genderequality cannot be silenced. We are #HeforShe-
@phumzileunwomen @EmWatson owl.li/C4iUI @LinkedInPulse

152 180

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 27
"I am #HeForShe for my wife & daughters." Who are you #HeForShe for?



238 515 View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 26
Yes, #GenderEquality is a Men's Issue via @FastCompany -
fastcompany.com/3036289/strong... - Great article with food for thought.
#HeForShe

229 313 View summary

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 26
Are you a #HeForShe? Watch our new video,
join at HeForShe.org & post a pic or video to
show your support! youtu.be/7ZptgM-jhZo

YouTube

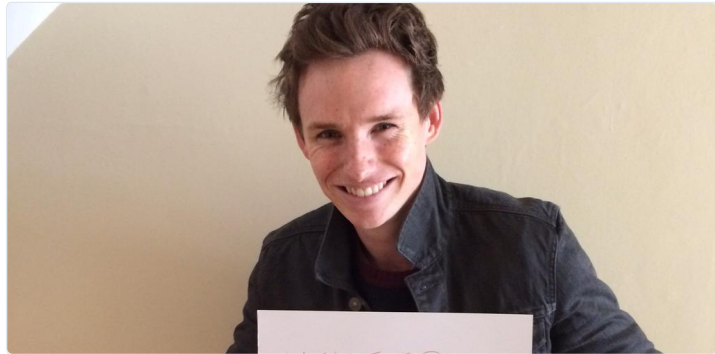




471 390 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Emma Watson @EmWatson · Sep 26
#HeforShe



12K 29K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Stephen Fry @stephenfry · Sep 25
Supporting @EmWatson and #HeforShe. We owe it to our mothers, sisters and all the dispossessed women of the world heforshe.org

3.2K 5.7K

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 25

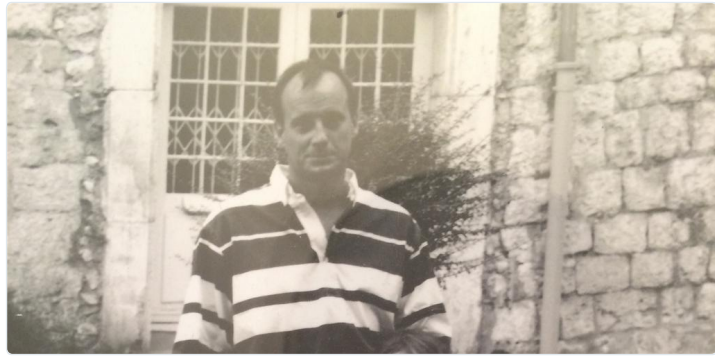
"Real men treat women with dignity and give them the respect they deserve."-Prince Harry
#HeforShe



12K 16K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Emma Watson @EmWatson · Sep 25
Daddy, Alex and Emma Watson. 'Two of my #HeforShe 's'.

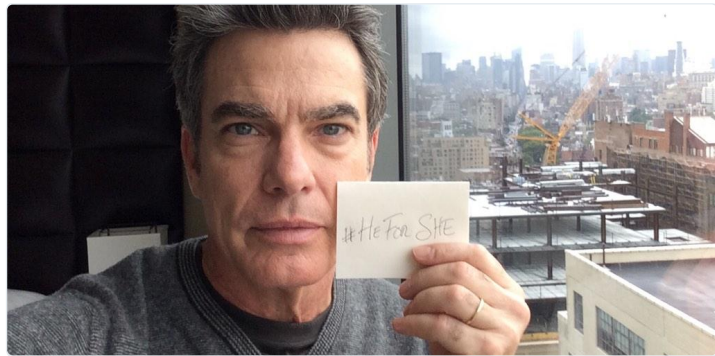


11K 29K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Peter Gallagher @petergallagher · Sep 25

Thank you @EmWatson , @kathryng , @GallagherMaw and Ma.
#HeForShe. It's the only way. #proudtobeafeminist



2.4K 7.1K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

The White House @WhiteHouse · Sep 25

When #WomenSucceed, we all succeed: heforshe.org/#take-action
#HeForShe



7.6K 9.1K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Harry Styles. @Harry_Styles · Sep 25

I'm supporting @UN_Women and @EmWatson in #HeForShe

As should you..



← ↻ 310K ★ 430K ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



UN Youth Envoy @AhmadAlhendawi · Sep 25

Happy to be considered an ally for #HeForShe in @VanityFair with @RealKiefer & @EmWatson vanityfair.com/vf-hollywood/2... @lenadunham

← ↻ 36 ★ 87 ...

+ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 25

"We've got to make sure that...somebody is standing up for [women]" Pres. @BarackObama Visit HeForShe.org



← ↻ 486 ★ 665 ... [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Kiefer Sutherland @RealKiefer · Sep 24

I am #HeForShe. Inviting all men to stand up for gender equality. @HeforShe heforshe.org/#take-action

← ↻ 2K ★ 4.5K ...

HeForShe retweeted



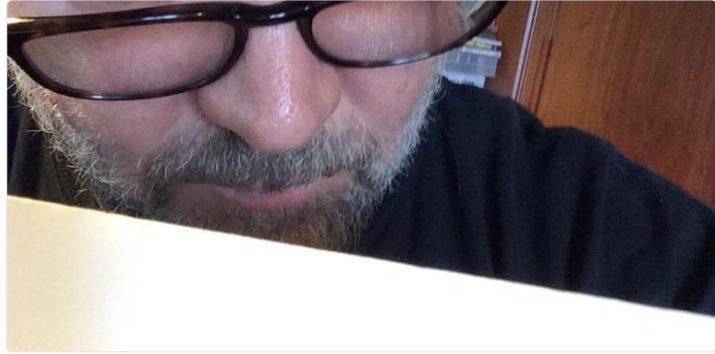
The First Lady @FLOTUS · Sep 24

"It's about whether fathers—and mothers—think their daughters are as worthy of an education as their sons." —The First Lady #HeForShe

← ↻ 4.1K ★ 7.4K ...

+ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 24

Thanks for your support!! “@russellcrowe: ”



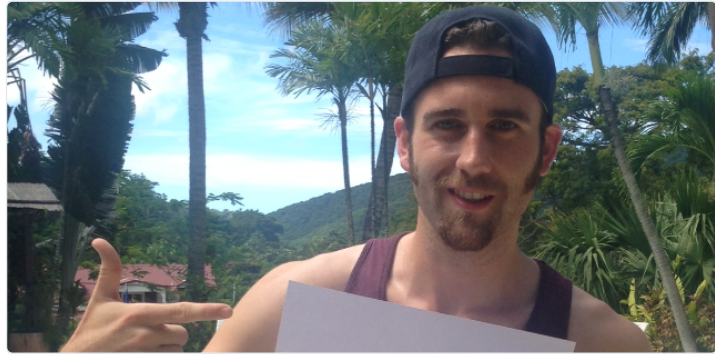
← ↻ 178 ★ 516 ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Matthew Lewis @Mattdavelewis · Sep 24

So proud of @EmWatson. From the girl I grew up with to the inspirational woman she is today. I'm with you. #heforshe



← ↻ 19K ★ 32K ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Kevin Durand @Kevin_Durand · Sep 24

Stand up for your women. Stand up for your men. Stand up for equality. #heforshe



← ↻ 302 ★ 654 ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Tom Hiddleston @twiddleston · Sep 24

@EmWatson you are impeccable & extraordinary. I stand with you. I

...[EmWatson](#) you are impeccable & extraordinary. I stand with you. I believe in gender equality. [#heforshe](#)



41K 62K [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 24

THANK YOU! It's just the beginning for [#HeForShe](#). Next goal: Reach 200,000 men. Visit [HeForShe.org](#)



1.4K 1.2K [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted

Logan Lerman @LoganLerman · Sep 23

My friend [@EmWatson](#) delivered a powerful speech to the UN [tinyurl.com/jwftvdf](#) I support equality. [#HeForShe](#)



33K 50K [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Chloë Grace Moretz @ChloeGMoretz · Sep 21

[buzzfeed.com/rossalynwarren...](https://www.buzzfeed.com/rossalynwarren...) bravo @EmWatson



1K



1.9K



[View summary](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Wolf Blitzer @wolfblitzer · Sep 22

I'll feature some of the strong remarks by @EmWatson at the @UN #HeForShe conference that I hosted. #SitRoom 5-7PM ET @CNN



49



116

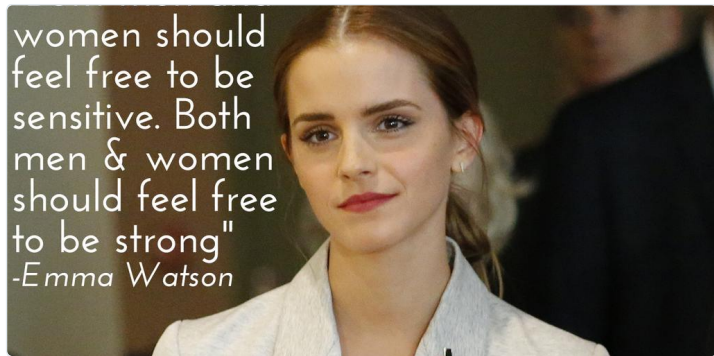


HeForShe retweeted



Arianna Huffington @ariannahuff · Sep 22

Yes! @EmWatson launching @UN_Women's #HeForShe gender equality campaign: huff.to/1C4fcr



3.5K



4.3K



[View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted



Kate Bosworth @katebosworth · Sep 23

Powerful @EmWatson #HeForShe

unwomen.org/en/news/storie...



92



242



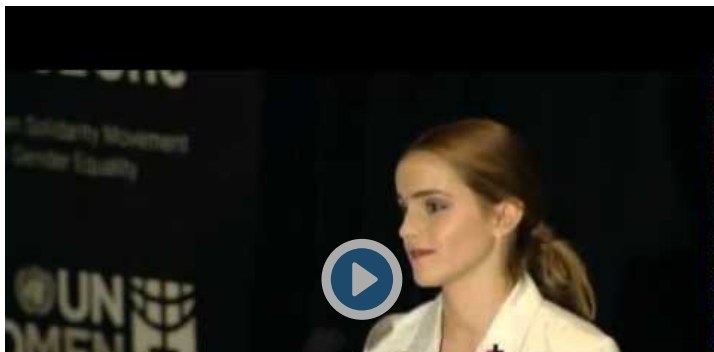
HeForShe retweeted



Ellie Goulding @elliiegoulding · Sep 23

A beautiful speech @EmWatson youtu.be/p-iFI4qhBsE Inspired. #HeForShe

YouTube





1.5K 2.4K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted

Chris Colfer @chriscolfer · Sep 23

#HeForShe is a great cause to get behind! Please check it out. So proud of @EmWatson!



11K 20K View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 23

"I'm inviting you...to ask yourself...If not me, who? If not now, when?" @EmWatson Visit HeForShe.org

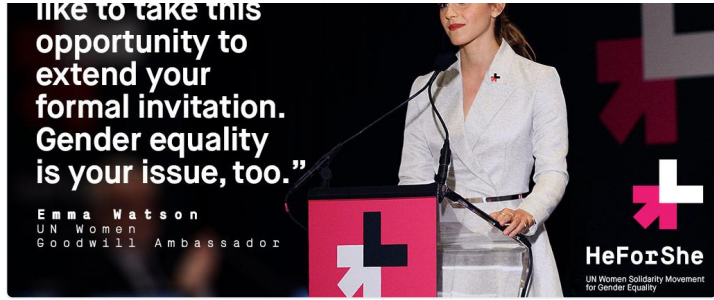


2K 1.7K View more photos and videos

HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 23

"Men-I'd like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. #Genderequality is your issue,too" @EmWatson





← ↻ 3K ★ 2.2K ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted

Yoko Ono @yokoono · Sep 23

Join @HeForShe and sign the pledge. Read more at imaginepeace.com/archives/20731 love, yoko

👤 Yoko Ono, John Lennon, UN Women Singapore and 7 others



← ↻ 1.9K ★ 2.8K ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted

Pegg News @simonpegg · Sep 23

Husband to a wife, father to a daughter, son to a mother. You bet I'm on board, @EmWatson! #heforshe



← ↻ 14K ★ 29K ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

HeForShe retweeted

Phoebe Tonkin @1PhoebeJTonkin · Sep 22

Watch this, rewatch this, retweet this. I applaud @EmWatson m.huffpost.com/us/entry/58582... 🙌🙌 #HeForShe x

← ↻ 2K ★ 2.5K ⋮ [View summary](#)

➕ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 22

If you haven't seen the speech yet, watch it now! “@EmWatson: This was my #heforshe speech. youtu.be/Q0Dg226G2Z8”

 YouTube





  1.8K  975  [View more photos and videos](#)

 HeForShe retweeted



Joseph Gordon-Levitt @hitRECORD.Joe · Sep 22

And speaking of #Feminism, @EmWatson is doing a great project called #HeForShe. Go check it out HeForShe.org

  2.1K  3.3K 





 **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 22

Watch @EmWatson Deliver a Game-Changing Speech on #Feminism for the U.N. (UPDATED) vanityfair.com/vf-hollywood/2... v @VanityFair

  555  343  [View summary](#)

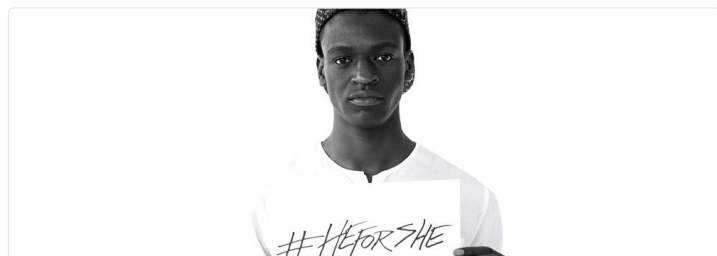
 **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 22

"Watch @EmWatson Explain Why She's a Feminist" time.com/3415901/emma-w... via @TIME

  222  172  [View summary](#)

 **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 22

Show the world your support of #genderequality as a #HeForShe. Join us at HeForShe.org.





654 474 View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted



Gossip Cop @GossipCop · Sep 22

.@EmWatson Starts @HeforShe, Pleads For Men To Join Fight For Gender Equality gossipcop.com/ctgov #HeforShe

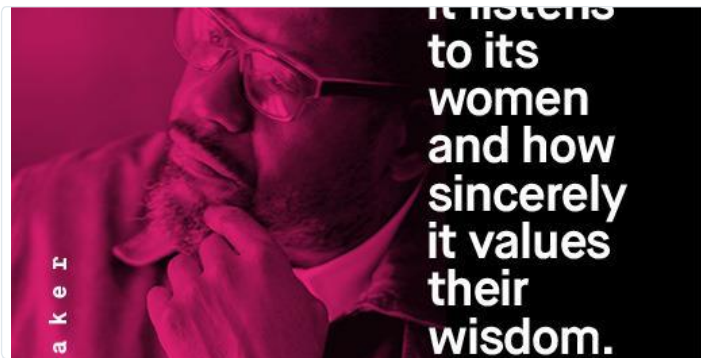
64 60 View summary

HeForShe retweeted



Forest Whitaker @ForestWhitaker · Sep 20

Proud to support the #HeforShe campaign of @UN_Women



3.5K 5.6K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted



Emma Watson @EmWatson · Sep 21

Take our pledge and put your name on the @heforshe worldwide map.

All over the world, men are taking a stand for gender equality. See how many men in your country have committed. Join them and move your country into the lead.

14K 17K View more photos and videos

HeForShe retweeted



Emma Watson @EmWatson · Sep 21

Wonderful men out there. I'm launching a campaign - #heforshe. Support the women in ur lives and sign up here now! heforshe.org

29K 38K




HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 21

"It not me, who'? It not now, when?'" WATCH @EmWatson's historic #HeForShe speech here [Official]: youtu.be/pTG1zcEJmxY

 YouTube



  1.2K  602  [View more photos and videos](#)

 HeForShe retweeted

 Luke Windsor @lukejwindsor · Sep 21

 jezebel.com/badass-emma-wa... #heforshe @HeforShe @UN_Women

  31  55  [View summary](#)

 HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 21

.@EmWatson Says That The View #Feminism Is "Man Hating" Has To Stop bzfd.it/1pnS1pN via @BuzzFeed

  135  139  [View summary](#)

 HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 21

"#womensrights has too often become synonymous with man-hating...this has to stop." @EmWatson's extraordinary speech: bit.ly/1C1I4YW

  283  167 

 HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 21

We're tired of the #domesticviolence status quo-help us change the conversation at HeForShe.org. #NFL #HeForShe @nfl

  44  40 

 HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 21

Love the picture! "@DouglasBooth: I am a passionate supporter of gender equality. @EmWatson @UN_Women "





← ↻ 266 ★ 483 ⋮ [View more photos and videos](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 21
"@tirushad: @NigelBarker @GirlUp @UN_Women As a survivor of #DomesticViolence I stand up for #GenderEquality. We are all #equal."
← ↻ 9 ★ 22 ⋮ [View conversation](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 21
Thanks for your AMAZING support! "@NigelBarker: .@JujuChangABC @GirlUp @UN_Women Get Up Stand Up Man Up! #heforshe"
← ↻ 9 ★ 15 ⋮ [View conversation](#)

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 20
Want to learn more about the #HeForShe campaign? Read: m.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/art...
← ↻ 62 ★ 30 ⋮

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 20
"My name is Kiefer Sutherland. I am a #HeForShe." - @RealKiefer Make your commitment at HeForShe.org
← ↻ 39 ★ 63 ⋮

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 20
The conscious effort to split our society's potential in half makes no sense to me. We must fight for equality for all. @RealKiefer
← ↻ 53 ★ 43 ⋮

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 20
This is no longer about women or men, but rather about women and men working together - @RealKiefer #HeForShe
← ↻ 77 ★ 76 ⋮

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 20
"We are struggling for a uniting word but the good news is we have a uniting movement. It is called #HeForShe." @EmWatson
← ↻ 77 ★ 74 ⋮

✚ **HeForShe** @HeforShe · Sep 20
If we stop defining each other by what we are not & start defining ourselves by what we just

...not even dreaming about it by what we just
are-we can all be freer. @EmWatson
#HeForShe

↩️ ↻️ 160 ★ 126 ⋮

✚ HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 20

"We want to end gender inequality - and to
do that we need everyone to participate." -
@EmWatson #HeForShe

↩️ ↻️ 104 ★ 80 ⋮

✚ HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 20

Today we are launching #HeForShe. I am
reaching out to you, because I need your
help. - @EmWatson @UN_Women

↩️ ↻️ 79 ★ 89 ⋮

✚ HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 20

Help us get 100,000 men to pledge their
commitment to #HeForShe at HeForShe.org.
#womensrights

↩️ ↻️ 276 ★ 115 ⋮

✚ HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 20

Proud to announce #HeForShe launch w/website for men to commit
support for #genderequality #womensrights. Visit heforshe.org

↩️ ↻️ 76 ★ 33 ⋮

✚ HeForShe @HeforShe · Sep 20

Thrilled for our 'Special Event' with @EmWatson tonight! We'll be live
tweeting here. Visit our @HeForShe Insta for pics! #HeForShe

↩️ ↻️ 28 ★ 32 ⋮

🔄 HeForShe retweeted

UN Women WCAfrica @unwomenwcafrica · Sep 17

Video Exclusive: #LesTwins (Laurent et Larry) #HeForShe -@HeForShe
cc@offlestwins @lestwinsoff ow.ly/BCCvV

