

Beyond Hashtag Activism: Exploring Cancel Culture on Social Media¹

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Abstract

Cancel culture is a new phenomenon which refers to online public shaming based on perceived moral transgressions of a well-known or anonymous individual that can result in their social expulsion from the public sphere, professional circles or community. This contemporary form of ostracism typically bypasses traditional institutions showing the power of social media to influence public opinion and pass judgement. Cancel culture is thought to have originated from the #MeToo movement, an online campaign led on social media against sexual harassment. The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly, we shall try to demonstrate the importance of social movements such as #MeToo due to their power to break the infamous spiral of silence. Secondly, our objective is also to explore cancel culture that arises as a consequence of social media activism as well as certain alternatives to it that have emerged recently.

Keywords: cancel culture, #MeToo, online activism, spiral of silence, public shaming

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Introduction

Cancel or call-out culture is a relatively new expression whose origins can be traced back to social media and their mass popularity in recent years. The practice it refers to, however, is by no means a novelty in western civilization – ostracism has been present in western culture since ancient times, the only difference now is its online dimension. It is generally assumed that cancel culture originated from the #MeToo movement, an online campaign and social movement directed against sexual abuse and harassment culture whose victims have been mostly women.

As cultural phenomena, cancel culture and #MeToo are interesting firstly from the perspective of public opinion, since they demonstrate how shifts in the climate of opinion occur for or against a party or a person, and secondly from the perspective

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of the spiral of silence, seeing that they show the ways in which the infamous spiral forms and reverses its course.

In this paper our main theoretical perspective will be that of Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann who proposed and argued for the understanding of public opinion as an instrument of social control. Having tested her hypotheses in theory as well as in practice, she formulated the spiral of silence thesis which explains how the majority point of view prevails in society and why most people opt to keep quiet if they disagree with it.

Bearing in mind the startling speed at which cancel culture is spreading worldwide and its consequences for offline reality, we believe placing it in the context of the spiral of silence can deepen the understanding of its origins and evolution, but also show the direction in which it is headed. Finally, by demonstrating the circular nature of the spiral of silence, in this paper we strive to offer critical perspectives on both phenomena, but also to discuss possible alternatives to cancel culture that have emerged recently.

Public Opinion as Social Control

The concept of public opinion has been present in western culture since antiquity, e.g. it is mentioned in Biblical stories, Homer, Cicero, Plato and Aristotle. However, despite its long history⁴ and countless attempts by scholars, jurists, political theorists and journalists to explain and define it, this term has eschewed their endeavors and it remains to this day without a clear, systematic and comprehensive definition (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 58). According to Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, a German political scientist and a public opinion researcher, numerous interpretations and definitions of public opinion stem from two distinct perceptions of this concept throughout the ages: public opinion as rationality and public opinion as social control.

To begin with, the understanding of public opinion as rationality and opinion formation as a rational process implies “the conscious acquisition of knowledge by the means of reason and the making of logical and rationally sound judgements based on that knowledge” and tends to narrow down the content of public opinion to political matters (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 221-222). This view of public opinion thus indicates that all citizens are well-informed, able to form shrewd judgements and put forward sound arguments, which is rather idealistic meaning that public opinion actually remains restricted to a limited group of citizens who fulfil the mentioned criteria.

One of the main issues with the rational concept of public opinion, according to Noelle-Neumann (1993: 227), is that it “does not explain the pressure that public opinion must exert if it is to have any influence on the government and the citizens.” But, when viewed as a form of social control, the power of public opinion becomes evident since in this context it refers to the approval or disapproval of the public,

⁴ Beginning with the traditional works of antiquity, this concept has evolved over time and can be found in the works of Machiavelli, Montaigne, John Locke, David Hume, Rousseau, Alexis de Tocqueville, to mention but a few, as well as in numerous modern theories (Noelle-Neumann, 1993).

i.e. to attitudes and modes of behavior people exhibit in a certain place at a specific time. What is more, in this view public opinion is firstly not limited to only some subject matters of political importance, but open to all, and secondly, it “is not just a matter for those who feel a calling, or for talented critics [...]. Everyone is involved” (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 64). However, public opinion understood this way “is not concerned with the quality of the arguments” i.e. with what is right or wrong, but rather with the strength of opposing camps and their readiness to make use of isolation and exclusion as a means of social control, as we shall demonstrate on the following pages (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 228).

Noelle-Neumann maintains that the concept of public opinion tends to be more effective when viewed as an instrument of social control than as *raisonnement* in the public sphere.⁵ Our analysis of the #MeToo and cancel culture phenomena in the context of Noelle-Neumann’s theory aims to corroborate the validity of this view and to demonstrate that public opinion seen as a form of social control represents a powerful mechanism in today’s era of mass media and social networking sites.

Noelle-Neumann’s understanding of the concept of public opinion has developed directly out of her theory named the spiral of silence.

The Spiral of Silence

When Noelle-Neumann’s spiral of silence theory was introduced at the 1972 International Congress of Psychology in Tokyo (the book was published in 1980 in German and in 1984 in English), it was a unique and, until then, the only theory to thoroughly investigate and incorporate various aspects of public opinion as a form of social control as well as the effects of the mass media upon both the formation of public opinion and its perception and reception, with the aim of explicating the workings of the infamous spiral, i.e. why individuals opt to remain silent instead of expressing their opinions when they differ from the prevailing ones. Denis McQuail has noticed that Noelle-Neumann named her theory *the spiral of silence* “because the underlying logic holds that the more a dominant version of the opinion consensus is disseminated by mass media in society, the more will contrary individual voices remain silent, thus accelerating the media effect – hence a ‘spiraling’ process” (McQuail, 1983: 202).

According to Noelle-Neumann (1993: ix), it is precisely our social nature that forces us to comply. Namely, people fear isolation, which is why they constantly observe their environment, the climate of opinion and changing trends, “they register which opinions are gaining ground and which will become dominant” and shape their views accordingly. Noelle-Neumann goes so far as to claim, not without foundation,⁶ that people have an innate, intuitive ability to perceive predominant opinions in their

⁵ For a more detailed insight into the arguments in favor of this claim, see Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 220-234.

⁶ She relies on the surveys done at the Allensbach Institute in Germany, where she was employed, as well as on some theoretical works on human nature from the fields of mass psychology, biology and evolution.

surroundings and to adjust – “people in fact do adapt their behavior to the apparent strength or weakness of the various camps” (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 16). The author acknowledges that the factors such as age, sex, education, occupation, social status or place of residence, together with the feeling of being in harmony with the spirit of the times, can to a certain extent influence the willingness to speak out.⁷ As a rule, “[i]n every population subgroup the supporters of the dominant opinion are more willing to voice their view than those in the minority” (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 29).

The question arises, however, relating to the cause of keeping quiet, of not speaking up – is the fear of social isolation strong enough a motive, can it corroborate the spiral of silence theory?

Relying on the one hand on theoretical grounds and on the other on experimental findings, Noelle-Neumann claims that our social nature “causes us to fear separation and isolation from our fellows and to want to be respected and liked by them” (1993: 41), adding that “most people will join the majority point of view even when they have no doubt that it is false” so as to avoid being rejected or despised or standing alone (1993: 38). Furthermore, the author maintains that social isolation can turn out rather perilous for the individual when it comes to issues that are controversial or undergoing change (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 56-57). Consequently, it could be said that the fear of isolation acts as an integrative factor of society, i.e. an effective means of social control pressuring “outsiders” to conform and keeping “peace breakers” in check. “The existing order is preserved on the one hand by the individual’s fear of isolation and his need to be accepted; and on the other by the public’s demand, carrying the weight of a court sentence, that we conform to established opinions and behaviors” (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 63). But, can outsiders – “those who do not fear isolation or are willing to pay its price” – alter predominant views (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 139)?

These “deviants”, these fearless “heretics”, these avant-garde reformers ahead of their time, such as artists, scientists, thinkers or scholars, to name but a few, are the ones who pave the way for a better future, according to Noelle-Neumann. “The concept of the spiral of silence reserves the possibility of changing society to those who either know no fear of isolation or have overcome it,” while it is understood as a matter of course that the courageous ones make up a relatively small percentage of the population (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 139).

But the question is what happens with those greater in number, the cautious ones who prefer silence? Noelle-Neumann claims that, within the framework of the spiral of silence, silence is crucial since it tends to be interpreted mostly as – agreement, and adds that “much of the power of public opinion derives from the fearful silence of many individuals” (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 196).

⁷ For example, men are more willing to express their opinion than women, younger people than older ones, high-ranking officials than low-ranking ones etc. (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 24-28).

How a Hashtag Debunked Hollywood: The Case of the #MeToo Campaign

Denis McQuail in his *Mass Communication Theory* gives a general outline of campaigns (conducted in real-life conditions, not online, but the same framework applies in both cases, as we shall see) stating that “they are often concerned with directing, reinforcing and activating existing tendencies towards socially-approved objectives” as well as that they “work ultimately through the individuals who receive and respond to messages” (McQuail, 1983: 190). The source of a campaign usually occupies a high position in society and distributes messages through different media so as to reach the chosen public; “the success of a campaign depends to some extent on its message being interpreted in the same way as intended,” meaning that a campaign can easily go wrong or boomerang and that its effect can be diverse and unintended, especially if we bear in mind that messages are noticed and then accepted or rejected on the basis of group allegiance (McQuail, 1983: 191).

Digital activism as we know it today has come to be associated mainly with social media platforms and hashtag movements. According to Ng (2022: 41), its origins are to be found in multiple forms of online activities that began as early as Web 1.0. such as spreading information using specific websites, email lists or message boards, online petitions etc. It has been argued, however, that “online activism was most effective when combined with more traditional, offline activities” (Ng, 2022: 41).

For the present analysis, it is important to begin with the fact that the #MeToo campaign had unfolded primarily in the electronic context before its impact started extending beyond the online domain and that its effectiveness was first and foremost based on the hype surrounding the hashtag in question which reached a considerable number of people, many of whom were well-known and influential. “For those who would use electronic media to foster change,” claims Jones (2002: 85), “their potential seems great. Because these media more easily transcend space, class, and cultural constraints, organizers can ‘broadcast’ to many.”

On their official website (<https://metoomvmt.org/>), it is stated that the #MeToo campaign began as early as 2006 when the activist Tarana Burke founded the movement so as to help mainly women of color and lower social standing who were victims of sexual violence find their way to recovery. But the movement became a global phenomenon only in October 2017 when it went viral owing to the actress Alyssa Milano who invited her followers on Twitter to respond to her post if they were also victims of sexual molestation. As a New York Times article from that period reports, “Tens of thousands of people replied to the message. Some just wrote ‘me too,’ while many others described their personal experience of harassment or assault” (Codrea-Rado, 2017). Harvey Weinstein’s name was the first on the hit list which soon grew to include many other high-profile men from the film and entertainment industry as well as politics, all of whom were accused of some sort of sexual misconduct, ranging from minor provocations to rape.

This way an avalanche was triggered which actually initiated the break in a wall of silence surrounding the issue in question. Many activists, stars, VIPs and

famous people from show business and public life stepped forward confessing to having been victims of sexual abuse and demanding that those responsible suffer the consequences of their acts. This prompted ordinary people to start sharing their personal stories as well and to call on the authorities to take action and punish wrongdoers appropriately, regardless of their high positions and in spite of them. As a consequence, a substantial number of men held accountable stepped down and withdrew from the industry, some admitted to their misdemeanors and offered official apologies, many were publicly exposed and then forced to resign their posts. Additionally, lawsuits were filed and the general public along with those in power intervened so as to prevent such events from happening again in the future as well as to alleviate the suffering of the ones who dared to speak up by showing support and understanding. Time Magazine named the silence breakers their person of the year 2017 (Zacharek & Dockterman, 2017).

On January 1, 2018, a couple of months after the #MeToo campaign began, another initiative was launched called Time's Up, spearheaded by prominent Hollywood celebrities, intended to tackle the problem of sexual harassment, particularly in the workplace, advocating gender parity at all levels and fostering social change. Following the launching of the movement, a legal defense fund was established with the aim of covering the expenses of legal proceedings and providing legal assistance to victims of sexual abuse who could not afford it, regardless of their gender (Buckley, 2018).

Having thus stepped out of the virtual into the real world, the movement raised public awareness and changed the climate of opinion creating conditions in which it became acceptable to speak about the topics such as the aforementioned; victims started feeling empowered and secure to expose themselves and more willing to take risks including public disgrace, the loss of reputation or even a job. Owing to the campaign and its influence, some positive improvements have taken place in the lives of women (and men) around the globe. On the other hand, it is also true that the #MeToo initiative ignited a public debate and opened up some thought-provoking questions from the point of view of the spiral of silence theory.

The Spiraling Process in Reverse

Seeing that the spiraling process tends to establish one view as dominant, equating thus the majority opinion with the status quo, all other opinions are consequently labeled as unacceptable, which is why their supporters are less likely to voice them. This process is dynamic and thanks to certain daring individuals, but primarily to the mass media and nowadays social networking sites, can more easily and quickly than in the past change the climate of opinion. People thus tend to either express their views or stay quiet waiting for the shift in the spiraling process. Interestingly, "when a swing in the climate occurs for or against a party, a person, or a particular idea, it seems to be sensed everywhere at almost exactly the same time, by all population groups, all age groups, all occupational groups" (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 19). What is more, "[w]hen people feel that they are in the minority, they

become cautious and silent, thus reinforcing the impression of weakness, until the apparently weaker side disappears completely except for a hard core that holds on to its previous values, or until the opinion becomes taboo” (Noelle-Neumann, 1993: 202).

So, the #MeToo campaign is not only a clear illustration of the spiraling process and its disruption, as previously shown, but it also demonstrates how this phenomenon can reverse its course. Highly controversial as it already is, this topic requires some additional consideration from a different perspective, whereas it goes without saying that movements such as this are indispensable nowadays and that perpetrators are by no means to be understood nor their deeds forgotten. But, as Katty Kay says in her article for BBC News from that period, “what initially seemed such a simple case of black and white, actually has shades of confusing grey” (Kay, 2017). By this she actually refers to all the ways in which the campaign could (and did) backfire on its activists and supporters. For example, fake accusations have discredited the real ones; the effect on men has at times been counterproductive since some of them started avoiding doing business with women or avoiding them altogether for fear that their actions would be interpreted as inappropriate; there is also a constant danger of a witch-hunt being launched against men for no better reason than being men, and women thus branded witches; furthermore, should any harmless flirtation be immediately interpreted as sexual harassment, and should consequently the category of consent be revisited (Kay, 2017)? All this does not help remove the stigma attached to the problem and it only alienates men instead of encouraging them to get involved and take action.

The spiraling process has undeniably reversed its course as it has become undesirable to say anything remotely unfavorable about the #MeToo or any similar movement. One of the consequences of this shift in public opinion is the rise and expansion of cancel culture both on social media and in real life.

Cancel Culture on Social Media

According to Eve Ng, the author of one of the first critical studies on cancel culture, the term *cancel culture* encompasses *cancel practices* or *cancelling* aimed at a *cancel target* (an individual, brand or company) and *cancel discourses*, i.e. comments and discussion related to cancelling (Ng, 2022: 1). Even though cancelling typically commences on social media platforms, e.g. followers are invited to cancel certain individuals by unfollowing them, its repercussions tend to surpass the online realm resulting in boycotting brands, products, music or films/TV series associated with the target; furthermore, TV networks often choose to terminate contracts with such celebrities or celebrities may end collaborations with brands or companies whose activities are viewed as problematic (Ng, 2022: 5). Clark (2020: 88) succinctly explains this practice as “an expression of agency, a choice to withdraw one’s attention from someone or something whose values, (in)action, or speech are so offensive, one no longer wishes to grace them with their presence, time, and money.” It is also worth mentioning that even though cancelling mostly involves celebrities

and public figures, “ordinary” people can as well be cancelled should their behaviors or views be seen as problematic.

Ng (2022: 15) explains that the origins of cancel culture follow multiple trajectories.⁸ In this paper we have chosen to focus on one of them – social media activism, particularly the hashtag movement #MeToo. The reasons underlying our decision are twofold. Firstly, we are of the opinion that the other mentioned sources of cancel culture, though undoubtedly led to its inception and rise, are limited in their scope of influence and specific in their reasons for cancelling, unlike the #MeToo movement which has had a global reach and impact and rather universal grounds for initiating action. In this regard, the effects of #MeToo have been more profound and far-reaching. Secondly, in this paper our aim is to show the existence of a close connection between the two phenomena – #MeToo and cancel culture – from yet another perspective, that of the spiral of silence theory. In other words, our intent is to demonstrate that they represent two sides of the same coin.

The main purpose of cancel culture relates directly to its origins, namely hashtag activism, and could be defined as demanding accountability for actions that go unpunished or have not been adequately addressed through traditional institutions, but are perceived as objectionable and deserving punishment, which in this case comes in the form of online ostracism. Exerting social pressure this way can result in the expulsion of cancel targets from the public sphere and social or professional circles, which can lead to the destruction of their careers. Cancelling thus shows the power of social media to shape public opinion and pass judgement outside (or even despite) traditional channels of redress.

But the efficacy of cancelling seems to be a point of contention. According to both Ross (2025) and Clark (2020), cancelling can be effective and justified as a last resort when the targets are powerful, privileged people, otherwise beyond reach of justice. However, in case of an influential cancel target, cancelling more often than not leads only to a temporary loss of followers, sponsorships and contracts, with many celebrities being cancelled multiple times without any long-term nor adverse consequences for their reputation or careers (Ng, 2022: 60). For example, after J. K. Rowling was cancelled due to her transphobic views, she still had more than 14 million followers on Twitter (and thus considerable power and influence) (Janssens & Spreeuwenberg, 2022: 105-106). Cancelling can also have the opposite effect and generate publicity for the target despite negative comments. On the other hand, when a cancel target is a regular individual who does not possess financial resources to withstand a loss of job or reputation, the question arises regarding the legitimacy, justification and proportionality of the punishment. Seeing that cancel culture rests on the presumption of guilt rather than innocence, little or no room remains for forgiveness and reintegration of the perpetrator, particularly if he or she is not a celebrity.⁹ This way offences of the same or similar level of severity are punished differently

⁸ The lineage of cancel culture includes online celebrity and fandom culture, fan activism, Black oral traditions and digital practices (also known as *Black Twitter*), and digital activism.

⁹ For instance, Bouvier and Machin (2021) question the power of cancel culture to achieve social justice based on the cases of three non-celebrities who faced cancelling because of racist behavior and point out that this practice can lead to the simplification and misrepresentation of complex issues such as racism.

based on the status of wrongdoers, i.e. whether or not they are famous individuals. Ross (2025) points out that for the rich and powerful life goes on normally soon after they face cancelling; it is regular people who do not seem to be able to recover. Furthermore, cancel practices based on problematic social media posts dating a few years back, when perhaps they were not considered questionable, have been disputed by journalists and academics alike (e.g. Ng, 2020; Powell, 2021; Spratt, 2018).

Examples of cancel culture are numerous and diverse as this phenomenon is rapidly spreading across the globe; we have chosen to mention a few illustrative ones from the western media. Among others, the well-known author of the Harry Potter series, J. K. Rowling, has been repeatedly cancelled due to her history of transphobic and antifeminist views, as well as her comments on gender identity; this is why her fans have frequently called for boycotts of her books (Gardner, 2024). Jordan Peterson, a famous clinical psychologist, professor and author, faced cancelling on a number of occasions on similar grounds, which is why he had his Twitter account suspended in June 2022 (Alang, 2022). The US president, Donald Trump, faced cancelling repeatedly during and after his previous presidency due to his racist, misogynist and supremacist comments. This is why his Twitter account was permanently banned in 2021 (Fung, 2021). Kanye West, a controversial musician, was one of the most cancelled celebrities last year. He faced cancelling on similar grounds as Trump with numerous brands ending collaboration with him because of this. The list goes on to include many more names from all walks of life.

When it comes to criticism directed towards cancel culture, Ng (2022: 73-74) has identified two directions that it has taken in the U.S.: left-wing, liberal critics claim that cancel culture is problematic on free speech and social justice grounds, whereas right-wing ones see it as an unfair attack on conservative values and policies and, consequently, on American identity. One of the most prominent liberal critiques of cancel culture came from *Harper's Magazine* on July 7, 2020 in *A Letter on Justice and Open Debate* signed by more than 150 prominent intellectuals and public figures (A Letter on Justice and Open Debate, 2020). The list of signatories includes, among others, Noam Chomsky, Margaret Atwood, Salman Rushdie, Francis Fukuyama etc. In the letter the signatories express their worries about the rising intolerance in public discourse and weakening of the principles of open debate, stating that the proponents of cancel culture advocate for ideological conformity. They claim that in western democracies censorship is spreading in the form of “an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism, and the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty” (A Letter on Justice and Open Debate, 2020). Conservative commentary, on the other hand, has focused on the revision of media content and removal of historical monuments marked as racially problematic (Ng, 2022: 73).

Our intent in this paper is not to take sides, i.e. we shall not delve into neither critical commentary about the phenomenon of cancel culture as such nor criticism pertaining to it, though we will try to give a balanced view in the concluding section that follows. Rather, by placing cancel culture in the context of the spiral of silence theory, we strive to show the connection between hashtag activism, notably the

#MeToo movement, and cancel culture, which could explain the shift in power relations that is taking place in the digital public sphere and its consequences, which will be discussed in the concluding chapter as well.

Conclusion

From the perspective of public opinion, cancel culture, facilitated by social media platforms, has disrupted power relations allowing the silenced and disempowered to partake in the public discourse, thus challenging its Habermasian origins. This way topics outside the dominant discourse become part of it, mobilizing public attention and consequently going viral. From the perspective of the spiral of silence theory, once the wall of silence surrounding a certain topic is broken and the public starts feeling free to step forward and discuss issues formerly considered taboo, the spiraling process can reverse its course resulting in cancel culture which in turn stigmatizes and punishes opposing views. Therefore, it can be concluded that the nature of the spiral of silence tends to be circular – once one topic is no longer restricted in the public discourse, it tends to constrain criticism pertaining to it.

From the critical standpoint, cancel culture, as the outcome of hashtag activism, has undoubtedly led to recognizing numerous cases of misconduct revolving around race, gender and similar concerns as well as punishing wrongdoers (Ng, 2022: 64). Beginning with violence and inequality in the entertainment industry, it has spread to different realms directing public attention to problems that otherwise would have gone unnoticed and raising awareness of certain pressing issues facing marginalized groups today.

On the other hand, one of the main dangers of cancel culture is that anyone, a celebrity or a regular person, “can be #cancelled for voicing an unpopular view,” which can result in people deciding not to speak out for fear of being called out, condemned or cancelled (Spratt, 2018). Such a black and white approach that fosters instantaneous and at times superficial criticism can flatten out complicated issues. Consequently, public debate is typically discouraged and violent online arguments ensue. This way cancel culture loses its transformative purpose and risks becoming nothing more than “a social media morality performance” (Spratt, 2018).

Bearing in mind these conflicting views, we are of the opinion that the middle ground in this case could be so called “accountability culture” or “call-in culture”. Accountability culture represents a more libertarian version of cancel culture introduced by some activists and authors (Brown, 2020; Kornhaber, 2020). Namely, these authors believe that cancelling as a punitive practice has little potential for solving social justice issues in the long run and instead suggest a systemic, sustainable and just approach that fosters constructive dialogue between victims and wrongdoers, gives offenders a chance to repent, apologize and change, and victims an opportunity to be heard, to receive support on their way to healing and to forgive.

The concept of call-in culture is proposed by Loretta Ross (2025) and it suggests that real changes actually require calling people in, i.e. trying to establish a meaningful connection with others before canceling them (the author does maintain that calling out

can and should be used, but only as a last resort). Unlike cancel practices, the notion of call-in culture rests on forgiveness rather than shame, redemption rather than fear, and it empowers people to find the right response in every situation, to become more knowledgeable and responsible and to look beyond a façade.

Both accountability and call-in culture thus open up space for critical dialogue, penitence and forgiveness, but at the same time acknowledge the importance of accountability, reasonable moral disapproval and social justice, thus representing constructive and practical alternatives to cancel culture.

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Van granica hešteg aktivizma: kultura otkazivanja na društvenim mrežama

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Apstrakt

Kultura otkazivanja je novi fenomen i odnosi se na javno sramoćenje koje se odvija onlajn i bazirano je na primećenim moralnim prestupima poznatih ili anonimnih pojedinaca koje za posledicu može imati proterivanje ovih pojedinaca iz javne sfere, profesionalnih krugova ili društvene zajednice. Ova savremena forma ostrakizma najčešće zaobilazi tradicionalne institucije ukazujući na moć društvenih mreža da utiču na javno mnjenje i donose presude. Smatra se da kultura otkazivanja potiče iz pokreta #MeToo, onlajn kampanje koja je vođena na društvenim mrežama protiv seksualnog uznemiravanja. Cilj ovog rada je dvojak. Na prvom mestu, u radu nastojimo da ukažemo na važnost društvenih pokreta poput #MeToo zbog njihove moći da razbiju zloglasnu spiralu tišine. S druge strane, cilj nam je i da istražimo kulturu otkazivanja koja se javlja kao posledica onlajn aktivizma na društvenim mrežama, kao i određene alternative ovom fenomenu koje se javljaju u poslednje vreme.

Ključne reči: kultura otkazivanja, #MeToo, onlajn aktivizam, spirala tišine, javno sramoćenje

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