me-tooism – the adoption or appropriation of a policy, design, etc., from an opponent or rival.

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One of the most common terms heard in Australia in 2007 was **me-tooism** (and its variant **me-too**). In popularity, it was closely followed by **sub-prime** and **mortgage stress**. In an election year dominated by the claim that the Leader of the Opposition was copying Government policies, **me-tooism** has some claim to being the Australian Word of the Year for 2007: 'The rise of Mr Rudd has been extraordinary. Much has been made of his me-tooism: policies more reflective of broad Coalition principles than long-held Labor beliefs' (*Herald Sun* 23 November 2007).

**Me-tooism** was present earlier in Australian English. It was used in the 1980s to refer to the practice of one manufacturer copying from another, as in this passage from 1987: 'The me-tooism of the world car industry means that all good ideas are copied as soon as possible' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1987). It was also used in political contexts in the past: 'It is much easier, though, to see what the Liberals will have to take out than what they can present that is attractive to voters. They failed to sell radical differentiation; can they market me-tooism? Will people want to vote for Dr Hewson dressed in a Keating policy suit?' (*The Age* 1993).

Both **me-tooism** and **me-too** originated in the United States, and their meanings are entirely in keeping with these Australian uses. **Me-too** is first recorded in 1886, and the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it this way: 'Designating or relating to the adoption or imitation of another's views, policies, etc., often (frequently depreciative) for political or other advantage. Also, designating or relating to a product (esp. a pharmaceutical) designed to emulate or rival another which has already been commercially successful.'

**Me-tooism** appears much later, in 1949, and the political meaning is strongly to the fore:

‘The practice of adopting or imitating a policy successfully or popularly proposed by a (usually rival) person or party; (more widely) the practice of following a popular trend.’

There is therefore nothing distinctively Australian about **me-tooism**, except that it became a political buzzword in 2007, and was clearly used much more intensively in Australia than in any other country. Because of its political popularity, towards the end of 2007 and into 2008 the term **me-tooism** came to be used in many non-political contexts. On 15 January 2008 the Sydney Daily Telegraph lamented the plethora of **me-tooism** in Rove McManus stories:

ROVE PICS TACKY ME-TOOISM
Not quite measuring up to the balcony scene from Romeo & Juliet on an artistic level, but pics of Rove McManus and his new girlfriend Tasma Walton taking in the views from their Sydney hotel over New Year have triggered one of the tackiest examples of magazine **me-tooism**.

It will be interesting to see if the 2007 political uses of **me-tooism** generate even further uses of the term in Australian English in 2008.