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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

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### GENDERING OUTCOMES

#### **Different Paths, Similar Outcomes: an Analysis of Cross-Generational Biographical Consequences of Activism in Feminist Spaces**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

This article analyzes different paths leading to similar outcomes across three age-cohorts of activists in three feminist spaces in Italy. It addresses three challenges in the literature on biographical outcomes. First, it brings forward the methodological problem of recognizing crossing-points, which define a before-and-after in the activist's life course. Second, it improves the ways in which gender and sexuality are discussed in terms of biographical outcomes. Third, this empirical study elaborates the time in movement and the generational aspects of biographical outcomes, emphasizing the radical challenge of the younger cohorts and the long-term effects on the older cohort. This article suggests that only by deep case study, which incorporates different feminist spaces, we are able to better understand the gendered and generational biographical outcomes of feminist movements. These results can also be insightful for the analysis of other types of collective action outcomes.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Biographical Outcomes, Cohorts, Feminist Spaces, Gender, Generations

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## 1. Introduction:

Anna tells me that women pay a high price for all their revolutions.  
(Fieldnotes, CID, 19-11-18)

“Afternoon, the kitchen room, the International House of Women, Rome. I have just started eating when a woman comes up to me. She is wearing clogs, baggy clothes and a red beret. She asks me to open the bottle of water, because she has no strength left in her hands. She then asks me if I am studying. I reply that no, I am not, and she sits down and starts talking to me. She tells me that she has lived all over the place, that she lived in the Umbrian mountains for ten years but now she does not know anymore where she wants to live. She cannot calm down. She says she came back to the “House” [the International House of Women] because “I needed to stay in this place again, given the misery of the society around us. I needed to know that this place exists”. She tells me about her political activity in the 1970s and beyond: the collectives in Milan and Rome, and later in Amsterdam and Europe. She tells me that a short while ago, on entering the House again, she stopped to look at the photographs in the entrance foyer. She was moved, because they awakened her memories and the power of that period in her life, when everything seemed possible. It was enough to look at the faces and the smiles to see how much joy there was then, how much collective strength. Something that you cannot even explain in words” (Fieldnotes, CID, 31-10-18). This episode, retrieved from my fieldnotes, among many others, connected me with the feelings of the women that were once – or still are – engaged in feminist spaces. Most of them mentioned the overwhelming impact that feminist activists had on their own lives, and the role of feminist space as a source of individual change.

Still, the practice of “the personal as political” assumes a different meaning, relative to age, generation and ideology, and the feminist space to which each one refers. Differences between men and women depend on their twofold experience of activism within feminist space and on the questioning of the gender construction of the conventional life course by new social movements (Melucci 1996). Although prior research has studied biographical outcomes in general (McAdam 1989, Giugni 2004, Passy and Monsch 2018, Fillieule and Neveau 2019), few have focused on the specific role of gender (Banaszak 2010, Masclat 2016, Van Dyke, McAdam and Wilhelm 2000, Waylen 2007), and even fewer have paid attention to feminist generations (Whietter 1995). However, an analysis of different paths (in terms of age, generations and ideology) leading to similar outcomes, across different cohorts in the same movement, is largely missing. This article aims to fill some of these gaps, by analyzing how political engagement in feminist spaces in Italy impacts the life trajectory of these individuals. I draw on the fieldnotes collected in over two years of participant observation, including 30 in-depth interviews and focus groups. The research has been conducted through participatory action research and constructivist grounded theory method. The never-ending process of trust building and research/participants relationships enhanced the depth and complexity of the participants’ expression of their own self and meanings.

With regard to contemporary feminist movements, the analysis takes into consideration three activist cohorts, associated with three different types of spaces in Rome: activists aged 20-40 who belong to a radical, transfeminist, lesbian and queer squat (C1); activists aged 30-50 who belong to an occupied women’s house and anti-violence shelter (C2); and activists aged 50-80 within a relatively institutionalized house of women (C3). These groups share different times of joining the space; time in the movement (i.e., length of activism); and age-cohort. However, they show similarities in the biographical outcomes. Building on Bosi and Zamponi (2020), who suggest that “no factor has an explanatory capacity in itself, but rather it is when we look at the

interaction of multiple factors in their temporal sequencing that we are able to point at different paths toward the same form of action” (2020: 4), in this paper I will disentangle three fields of similarities (engagement as a crossing point; changes in the field of gender and sexuality; variations in life-course) by addressing the different paths which bring activists there, the different perceptions they have about outcomes, and the different impact of these outcomes in the activists’ own life (see Tab. 1).

**Table 1. Different paths, similar outcomes across three age-cohorts of feminist activists**

FEMINIST SPACES AND AGE-COHORT	Engagement in feminist spaces	Gender and Sexuality	Life-course Norms
<b>C1</b>	Significant impact mediated by time of joining the space, the length of activism and age-cohort	Contestation of gender norms, social reproductive work; de-naturalization of gender	Dissonance between unconventional life-path, ageing and social structure
<b>C2</b>	Strong impact enhanced by time of joining the space, length of activism and age-cohort	Questioning of the taken-for-granted relation between gender and of gender as a category	Unconventional life-path supported by professionalization, community-building around service provision
<b>C3</b>	Strong impact enhanced by time of joining the space, length of activism and age-cohort	Fight to heteronormativity; radical queer and lesbian identities; strong community ties	Unconventional life-path supported by strong community ties

The presented comparison explores paths and biographical outcomes of activists of feminist spaces, and it does not allow for a generalization to the feminist movement, as a whole.

In the following pages, first, I will explore the literature on biographical outcomes, by highlighting some gaps this paper aims to address. I will then present the research design and methods. Third, in the empirical section, I will analyze the three types of outcomes accordingly to the three spaces. The last section critically discusses the empirical findings and sets some tentative conclusions.

## 2. Biographical Outcomes, Gender and Generations

In a recent work, Nancy Whittier asserts that “as social change occurs, individuals’ lives are altered” (2016: 130). The micro-scale analysis of the consequences of social movements sheds light on the way demography, the life course, and the life choices of activists are affected by collective actions. In this section, I discuss the current literature on collective and biographical outcomes, so as to shed light on some of the blind spots that this article aims to elucidate.

## Collective Action Outcomes and Biographical Trajectories

A growing body of literature has illuminated the ways in which collective action matters, by analyzing time, scope and effects (Fendrich 1974; Gamson 1985; Giugni, McAdam and Tilly 1999; Giugni 2004; Bosi, Giugni and Uba 2016, Fillieule and Neveu 2019). Beyond the focus on the origins and trajectories of social movements, these studies frame the concrete impact of social movements on society. While for a long time scholars complained about the lack of attention towards micro-scale consequences of collective actions or the impact of mobilization on the life-course of activists (Giugni 2004; Van Dyke, McAdam and Wilhelm 2000), several emerging studies provided important insights to the process. For example, studies on the New Left reveal the ways in which activism affects individual's work choices and trajectories, for example, orienting them towards teaching or other "helping" professions (Fendrich 1974; McAdam 1989; Giugni 2004). It was also found that activists had lower incomes compared to their age peers, they tend to divorce more often, marry later or remain single, and follow a non-traditional work path with respect to their age peers (McAdam 1988, 1989; Giugni 2004). Moreover, activists tend to remain involved in some type of political activity and to define themselves according to a political identity (Whittier 2016). By broadening these studies, Fillieule and Neveu show by using in-depth analysis how activists change in terms of identity, behaviors, personal relationships, or "the ways in which political commitment generates or modifies dispositions to act, think, and perceive, in a way that is either consistent with or in contrast to the results of previous socialization" (2019: 3).

Other scholars stress that changes in values and identity have been an effect of broader societal changes rather than pure participation in social movements, and therefore, by studying only the highly committed activists, we would get a biased picture of society. Inglehart (1977) observes, in relation to the post-War cohorts in Western Europe, that they pay greater attention to self-expression values and quality of life compared to the cohorts that had experienced the two World Wars, who were more concerned with economic and physical security. It is likely that the experience in activism as well as the broader societal change contribute to the deviations from life-course norms. McAdam (1999) argues for a combined understanding: while highly committed activists have opted to deviate from life-course norms (such as cohabitation or childlessness), this alternative then became available also to the upper middle class thanks to socialization processes. Finally, through the processes of diffusion and adaptation, it has become embodied among large strata of young Americans. Here, I have no goal to generalize the argument to the entire population, but rather to focus on the difference made by the varying time of involvement in the feminist movement. Hence, it is reasonable to focus on a high-level intensity type of activism.

## Gendering Outcomes

Despite the attempt to pursue a gendered analysis of collective action outcomes (Van Dyke, McAdam and Wilhelm 2000, Taylor and Raeburn 1995), gender has been little considered as a source of both different forms of political engagement and different types of biographical outcomes. Through a logistic regression and event history model Van Dyke et al. (2000) examined the different impacts of movement participation on men and women, due to their differing gendered experiences in the movements, as well as the New Left questioning of traditional gender norms and the life course. A stream of studies stemming from feminist research has elaborated on the efforts taken by the women's movement for gender consciousness raising (Sapiro 1989; Whittier 1995; Klawiter 2008). As an example, in her extensive work on Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the Mexican State of Chiapas, in over two hundred interviews with women, Kampwirth (2004) analyzes the way political violence and the guerrilla struggle relate to feminist movements, and how these legacies shape contemporary women's organizations. Banaszak (2010), through document analysis and forty in-depth interviews, sheds light on the ongoing relations between "insider feminists" – who were involved at some level

in public institutions and the bureaucracy – and the second wave of the women’s movement, and how this relationship is an internal part of the success and failure of women’s organizations. In her work on Ku Klux Klan activists, Blee argues about the consequences of involvement in racist groups, by looking at the activists’ narratives on their own experience. The methodological choice to rely on two in-depth interviews for the analysis allows her to deeply explore the steps of mobilization, enduring participation and long-term consequences of far-right activism (2016).

However, a thick analysis of the biographical consequences and life-course changes of highly committed feminist activists – in terms of the gendered consequences of activism, on one hand, and the specificities of feminist ideology and actions, on the other – is still missing. A step in this direction was taken by Viterna (2014), who engaged with the women involved in the war in El Salvador. Relying on 230 in-depth interviews, she discusses why and how women became involved in the guerrilla armies, and the repercussions they faced in their personal and social lives. In her work, Viterna uses a micro-processes analysis, which is sometimes overlooked by social movement literature. Nonetheless, activists who share a common macro- and meso-level setting can greatly differ in their participation paths. This paper explores three activists’ age cohorts, which differ from time of joining the space, time in the movement (i.e., length of activism), time of joining the feminist space they take part in, and age of individuals. As the literature on activism and life-trajectory shows (Portelli 1991, Passy and Giugni 2000, della Porta 1995), the analysis of actors requires to link the micro level of personal experience, the meso level of organizational change, and the macro level of the historical and socio-cultural context (Bosi forthcoming). Although we cannot disentangle the effects of these different factors, we can investigate how they interplay with each other in activists’ perception and narratives. Moreover, the paper argues that, quite strikingly, notwithstanding the different time in the movement, the three activists’ age-cohorts result in similar biographical outcomes, as I will further develop.

### Outcomes Across “movement” Generations

Together with the gendered dimension, a generational understanding of the outcomes relating to feminist movements is also absent. With the concept of micro-cohorts, I am referring to Whittier’s work on feminist generations (1995, 1997). Through this concept, she highlights how “joining a movement two, four, or six years after its taking off often means experiencing different political socializations, facing different stakes, and living different experiences of the connection between the private and the political” (Fillieule and Niveau 2019: 3). Thus, it is not just how long one has been active, but also the timing of joining the movement has an important role. Here the process is clearly context-dependent, and different political generations elaborate different definitions of feminism and different types of actions. Over time, in Italy, feminist movements fragmented into groups, communities and spaces: some survived in the long term, others arose in different contexts and times, while others were ephemeral and short-lived. As a consequence, several political generations and age cohorts of activists co-habit the same movement, sometimes by sharing groups and ideas, sometimes not. This paper explores how different paths across feminist spaces (related time of joining the space, time in the movement, ideology, age) lead to similar outcomes. In the empirical section I will look at three biographical outcomes, that emerged from all age-cohorts: the engagement in feminist spaces as a crossing point, the questioning of gender and sexuality, changes in life-course norms. Although the outcomes are similar, differences regard activists’ paths and perceptions about the impact of such outcomes in their own life.

### 3. Research design and Methods

The analysis below is part of a larger project on the production of feminist spaces as safe spaces in urban areas, and here I focus on the Italian feminist movement. As the literature on free spaces points out (Polletta 1999, Polletta and Kretschmer 2013), political spaces are an insightful site of analysis to understand the continuity of social movements in time, the day-by-day interaction among activists, and the “enduring outcome of protest” (Polletta 1999: 4). Not surprisingly, feminist activists call these spaces “home”, by bridging the field of intimacy and domesticity with the one of politics. The word “home” is telling of the depth of influence of these spaces on biographical paths. Thus, spaces are compelling sites to explore biographical outcomes. Feminist spaces can be very different from each other: women’s houses, women’s libraries, women’s shelters, health clinics and counselling centers, separatist co-habitation, just to mention a few (Spain 2016). In order to narrow the unit of analysis, I focused on three types of feminist spaces, which are relatively representative of the range of feminist spaces and are associated with different but roughly homogeneous age cohorts:

- 1) the International House of Women is a relatively institutionalized house of women, originating in the second wave of the feminist movement during the 1970s. It involves activists aged 50-80 (henceforth C1); most of them were involved in the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1970s and kept their activism via House of Women.
- 2) the House of Women Lucha Y Siesta, an occupied house of women which is also an anti-violence shelter. It involves activists aged 30-50 (henceforth C2), who, despite their different background, engaged in the space from the date of the occupation in 2008.
- 3) the space of Cagne Sciolte, a radical, transfeminist, lesbian and queer squat. The name of “Cagne Sciolte” refers to the feminine of “mavericks”, but it has also a sexual dimension and can be translated as “bitches without the leash”. It involves activists aged 20-40 (henceforth C3), who engaged in the space from the date of the occupation, in 2013.

Participants of both the second and third cohort have had different types of engagement into feminist politics, but all of them report the impact of the participation into the feminist space with a peculiar intensity. The participation into these spaces depends on age, generation, and also ideology, but such elements are often interrelated in feminist political participation (Peltola, Milkie and Presser 2004; Whittier 1995). I take into consideration the notion of generations in a sociological sense: these three groups, indeed, shared some specific events and occurrences, and depending on that they show different values and behaviors (Whittier 1995). More specifically, they inhabited specific social movements settings. Older feminist activists (C1) elaborated their consciousness in the climate of the huge feminist mobilizations of the 1970s. This setting influenced their way of approaching politics, relationships and long-term activism (Fillieule and Neveau 2019). The second cohort was involved in feminist politics in the first decade of the 2000s, when there were fewer feminist mobilizations in Italy, but social movements elaborated strong transnational ties (della Porta and Tarrow 2015; della Porta 2015). Moreover, at that time, social movements engaged with direct social actions, also depending on the rise of the economic crisis (Bosi and Zamponi 2015). The third cohort was the most influenced by queer theory and practices, that spread in Italy in the first and second decades of the 2000s (Busi and Fiorilli 2015).

These settings shaped the type of features and ideology inspiring each space. These three spaces are oriented by specific feminist ideologies, which differ from each other. The House of Women offers a historical understanding of the women’s movement, which focuses on women’s liberation and empowerment. In contrast, the anti-violence shelter focuses on the connection with Latin American women’s organizations and promotes a popular feminism, one that is quite inclusive, avoids separatism and works towards a general transformation of gender dynamics. Finally, the squatter center is oriented to recent achievements in feminist

thought, such as queer theory, trans inclusion and gender non-conformity. Undoubtedly, these three ideological orientations are the consequence of cohorts or generational effects and produce specific outcomes on individual life courses. Hence, it is likely that there are no similarities across the groups.

On the other hand, all included feminists share a period effect: before the interviews they have experienced the neoliberal setting and the rise of populism and right-wing discourses (della Porta 2015; Verloo 2018); the progressive precarization of job conditions (della Porta, Hänninen, Siisiäinen and Silvasti 2015); and the new feminist cycle of protests, which started in 2015 and are associated with the *Ni Una Menos/Non Una di Meno* movements, a transnational, intersectional, queer, and transfeminist type of movement (Constelacion Feminista 2020; Barone and Bonu forthcoming). Hence, the eventual similarities we find might be related to the shared context rather than the time in the movement, the character of the space, or the age of the activists.

For a comprehensive approach to the research, I elected to use participatory action research (PAR) (McIntyre 2007; MacDonald 2012), the constructivist grounded theory method (CGTM) (Bryant and Charmanz 2007; Charmanz 2008), and feminist methods (Reinharz 1992, Duncan 1996). These three approaches interplay in the collection and analysis of data. Following the principles of self-reflexivity (Milan 2014) and the politics of location (Rich 1984; Haraway 1988), I critically assessed my positionality as a researcher and a feminist activist in pursuing research on feminist spaces. As a consequence, I opted for participatory methods, which allowed me to ethically voice my positionality and to involve the participants right from the start of the research. Working with them, together, we defined the research design and questions, the time and space of the research, and the feasible dissemination of the results. In order to solve this puzzle, I combined periods of participant observation (going back and forth for the duration of two years), in-depth interviews with highly committed activists (ten for each space, almost 30 overall), and a focus group. All the people I interviewed were women who at that time self-identified as women, apart from one man.

From the start, I analyzed the data using the constructivist grounded theory method, setting three stages of coding. By bridging PAR and CGTM, I also dedicated some online meetings to shared data analysis with one of the three groups (the space *Cagne Sciolte*). The shared process of analysis challenged some of my previous codes, or confirmed other understandings, by also opening up a space for activists' consciousness raising about their own experiences. This process allowed me to negotiate meanings and concepts emerging from the analysis. I had the opportunity to discuss with them some aspects of the analysis of biographical trajectories, such as the drop-out effect or the process of going back and forth in terms of political participation, depending on internal dynamics. The participatory analysis of data brought some constraints, such as the removal of certain topics or concepts in order to protect the participants' sensitivity. Sometimes this removal has deprived my analysis of some crucial points, and this represents the dark side of the participatory method.

The biographical consequences of activism mostly emerged from in-depth interviews in combination with observation and focus groups. In the interview track I included several questions on how the interviewee's life has been affected by the political engagement; which role the feminist space has in his/her/their life; which aspects of the self and the self in several domains (such as professional career, affective and sexual relationships, family choices and so on) have been shaped by the participation in a feminist space. While the impact of political engagement was sometimes taken for granted, through the interviews I had the possibility to trigger a deeper reflection on the participants' biographies. The interviews were conducted only at the end of the period of participant observation, when a strong relationship of trust had been built upon. That intimate setting allowed the interviewees to disclose their inner feelings with respect to the intended and unintended consequences of activism, and to reflect on those aspects of their political engagement that they usually underestimate. While high-intensity activism narrows the time and space for self-awareness, the setting of the interview was a moment that the interviewees dedicated to themselves, out of frantic times of activism. During

the phase of participant observation, I started to tackle some fil rouge, regarding the activists' biographies. These intuitions were then explored through the in-depth interviews and well-focused questions.

The small sample is not intended to be representative, but is aimed at guaranteeing a deep qualitative analysis. The analysis will not aspire to generalize the findings, but will instead explore individual-level variations and the personal paths of change of a small number of feminist activists, which do not mirror the paths of change of feminist activists as a whole. The ongoing process of trust-building and the careful cultivation of relationships within the field allowed me to access their inner feelings, deep reflections and thick perspective on their life trajectory. Moreover, I interviewed only highly-committed activists and a woman who had survived gender violence and was being hosted in the space. I thus avoided "run-of-the-mill" activists and a non-activist control group, preferring, instead, to understand the micro-processes rather than to generalize the findings. This contribution addresses some lines of comparison among different feminist cohorts, by taking into account their age, the context in which their political participation took place, and the differences in terms of values and behaviors related to gender, sexuality and family life.

In order to make the quotations anonymous, I will tag each extract from the thirty interviews (ten for each space) with a reference to the cohort, the sequential number of the interview, and the age of the interviewee (e.g., "C1, 7, 76"). For the fieldnotes, I will use the same tags and the date of the retrieved extract (e.g., "Fieldnotes, C2, 12-07-18"). The focus group was held only at the Cagne Sciolte and is tagged C3.

#### **4. Engagement in Feminist Spaces as a Crossing Point**

In the empirical section, I will focus on the similarities that affect different feminist cohorts. The first similarity I will point out is the perception of the engagement in the feminist space as a crossing point across different age-cohorts. According to the view of the participants, they all share the beginning of their political participation in a feminist space as a critical juncture of their biographies, which cuts across a before and an after. In order to detail the similarities and differences across feminist cohorts, I will approach the notion of feminism as a "watershed". This process occurs by enhancing self-consciousness raising and a collective identity, which has a deep influence on individuals. Both aspects are consistent with a progressive detachment from the male sphere, as a symbolic, cultural and political sphere, but also as a physical one, through the relative removal of the male element from the individual life. This characterization of "watershed events" is not common in prior studies of biographical outcomes of feminist activism. Depending on the time of joining the space, time in the movement, age, and ideology, the three age-cohorts show different perceptions about the engagement in feminist spaces: while the older cohort expresses a significant impact, C2 and C3 report a strong impact, as I will further detail.

Collier and Collier, referring to the macro level, define a critical juncture as "a type of discontinuous political change in which critical junctures 'dislodge' older institutional patterns" (1991: 36 in della Porta 2018: 558). By stretching the concept to the micro-level, we can consider the critical juncture as individual change which "dislodges" older personal patterns. People's previous habitus and behaviors spectacularly change. What was considered as taken for granted becomes the rough material of a new work on consciousness, through the contamination with other feminist activists, their ideology and their challenge to the socio-cultural system. A new political subjectivation and socialization occurs (Masclat 2016).

We can consider the starting point of political engagement in a feminist space as an eventful moment. Scholars who investigated protests as eventful moments describe these events as "characterized by an

experience of a rupture in daily life” (Zhuravlev 2015: 69), which “challenge existing structures” (della Porta 2018: 3). Similarly, the beginning of the political engagement in a feminist space coincides with a specific memory: the first meeting with other activists; the first entry into the feminist space; the first march to which they participate. That moment appears in the memory filtered by the subsequent meanings, through the lens of the process it activated. People live it as a turning point in their life.

As most of them outline, engagement within a feminist space results in a progressive withdrawal from the male-dominated sphere. Whittier argues that “the women’s movement reshaped the larger movements of the New Left with a broad-based critique of male dominance within activist circles” (2004: 531). This process affects the field of symbolic and cultural values, but also the political field and, above all, men. “Activists who come from a mixed movement, slowly leave it, because then [you search for] a new way of doing politics together.” (C2, 7, 35). The harsh critique of and distancing from a male way of doing politics goes hand-in-hand with a marginalization of the male influence in activists’ lives. “The way I relate has changed, I have totally stopped seeing men.” (C3, 1, 33). Whether they are heterosexual or not, activists politicize gender dynamics and contest masculinity as a site of privilege and oppression.

The consequence of activism as a watershed event is similar for all the age-cohorts. However, they come to that outcome through different paths.

“I am spending the morning at the International House of Women. At some point I meet one of the activists and we start chatting about her experience in the feminist movements and in the House. She tells me that the only process which can change the world is the inner consciousness of women. A change in their way of being in the world. [...] In their case, as 1970s feminists, self-consciousness messed everything up: relationships, family, relations with their mother, with culture, with work, because if you start changing things you acknowledge that all the awareness you must have to be socially accepted is frightening” (Fieldnotes, C1, 19-11-18). In this conversation, a C1 participant sheds light on long-term activism awareness on the relation between biographies and feminist politics. She addresses the fields of intimacy and family, the one of professional career, and of culture as the spheres where political engagement had an impact. For older activists this can be a negative impact, when the changes of one’s life deeply struggle with the structures of a society that has not changed to the same pace (McAdam 1988, 1989, Bosi, Giugni and Uba 2016, Giugni and Grasso 2016, Fillieule and Neveau 2019). Aging and life-course effects play a role in activists’ disengagement. “I don’t want to be a Perennial, that is, one of those who is forever on the scene.” (C1, 4, 70). Some C1 activists voice the difficulties of keeping to fight for the same issues as 30 or 40 years ago, such as reproductive rights or sexual freedom. Because of their long-term activism and experience, they often feel disillusioned due to a world that they wanted to change, but that partially remains the same. Moreover, some relational troubles impact on C1’s wish to participate, since “the older you get the more difficult it is to build a relationship” (C1, 6, 67). Age and long-term activism can influence a more positive attitude towards others, and also the capacity to negotiate with others and find agreements. This cross-generational difference shows how age is a key factor in the type of activists’ emotional setting and in their willingness to keep organizing.

The impact is mediated by the length of time in the feminist space: as something occurred in the past, the boundaries are less clear, and the somehow negative perception of the present, linked to ageing and social structures, is harder.

C2, instead, keeps a perception of strong impact of the engagement in the feminist space. To illustrate the jump to another stage of life, one interviewee describes it as “a small, personal Copernican revolution. This is how I catapulted myself down ‘the White Rabbit Hole’, and it became more and more intense.” (C2, 1, 37). In the novel *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, the metaphor of the White Rabbit Hole

symbolizes Alice's adventure along the path to adulthood, through which she builds her identity, her choices and her life course, by increasing her self-consciousness and personal strength (Carroll 2014). The metaphor fits with the role of feminist spaces in the activists' life paths, as long as the political engagement re-shapes their frames, identity, behaviors, values.

The path goes through self-consciousness raising, by enabling activists to get in touch with their emotions, sufferings and needs, but also by the acknowledgment of the social inequalities they are trapped in. "In this space [Lucha] I undertook a biographic re-evaluation. I looked back at my past and enriched it with a new perspective." (C2, 1, 37). If in the past some suffering or difficulties were experienced as individuals, in the transition to political activity they are reworked as political issues that do not concern the individual but the structure of society. A very well-known example relates to gender socialization. Many young girls feel exclusion or inadequacy when they would like to play soccer or wear "male" clothes. Under the lens of political activism, individual behaviors become a problem of society, as long as it produces a strict codification of gender performances (Stockard 2016).

Beyond the stereotypes and gender socialization, biographical revaluation concerns also women, lesbian and queer people's understanding of gender-based violence. As spaces that are deeply involved in the fight against gender-based violence, they enhance the activists' awareness of the multiple dimensions of violence, and the way violence shapes their lives.

The deep change in activists' lives produces an emotional charge. Especially for those activists working in direct social action (Bosi and Zamponi 2015) such as the management of anti-violence services, mental breakdown can be an outcome. Dealing with women who have survived gender-based violence or discovering how violence and harassment are widely spread across political spaces burdens activists with a heavy personal load, and they eventually disengage. Activists develop a new consciousness on the variety of forms and the impact of gender-based violence on women and LGBT subjects. This consciousness has a consequence on the personal level. As an activist argues, "you withdraw yourself a little" (C2, 8, 30). As I will further develop later, the process of withdrawing comes in several spheres, such as the relationship with men, or the increasing difficulties in the sexual interaction with men and the capacity to trust men and to share with them everyday life and feelings. Personal costs are balanced by pros and cons: "the sense of responsibility in this place is enormous. [...] That is rewarded in many ways. In relationships, in care, in caring, in community" (C2, 3, 43). Because of these pros and cons, even when people drop out or they leave, they tend to go back to the feminist spaces and to return to activism: "almost all of us who went away then we returned and we re-entered the mechanism" (C2, 7, 35).

Ideology, the closeness in time of the opening of the feminist space and the age of activists make the impact of engagement stronger.

Similarly, for C3 the engagement in feminist space represents a revolutionary shift in activists' life. Ideology, age and time in the space produce a strong impact on C3. As the following quote shows, each experienced an important moment.

For me "the before" of the Cagne Sciolte is like a previous life. It was a life where, first of all, I was heterosexual. In which I did not live in Rome. In which I lived in monogamous relationships, I did mixed politics. I had never wondered about my person, my body, my sexuality, the relationships I created. "The after" is only the Cagne... in the sense that for me the birth of the Cagne Sciolte is a watershed in life. [...] It was a reversal of perspective that had a revolutionary potential [...] in the existence of our revolutionary lives. So, yes, for me "the after" has been another life. (C3, 10, 30)

Sometimes, the turning point (which can correspond to the day of moving into the space) is so strong that it can cause a lapse of memory: “I don’t remember that moment... [...] of course this stuff is symptomatic [...]. I remember things, but I don’t remember that specific moment, of me entering, the first day” (C3, 5, 30).

Feminist engagement shapes individual frames (Benford and Snow 2000), and the capacity to locate themselves in a specific social, political, and economic setting. As an interviewee argues: “the way I see the world has changed” (C3, 3, 30). Activists change their way of understanding social reality and gender dynamics, by questioning their gender, sexuality, relationship with the body, their perspective and life course. Often, they abandon previous relationships, friends and social patterns, and become immersed in their new physical, political and social space. “All the rest of the time was spent at the Cagna. [...] More or less all of us ended our relationships. [...] That was the priority. And it wasn’t a painful thing, it was the only thing we wanted to do” (C3, 5, 30).

In her study on the Native American Movement, Nagel (1995) shows how the activism of Native Americans in the 1960s and 1970s led to the growing tendency among larger population strata to self-identify as Native Americans, which can partially be explained by the movement’s ethnic pride mobilizations. From a historical perspective, the feminist movements elaborated on the reappropriation of women’s subjectivity, which had been somehow dismissed as a social identity (Bracke 2012, 2019). More generally, the identification with feminism as a collective identity has been a vehicle of empowerment and increasing agency. Feminist spaces produce different types of collective identity, which has led activists towards a personal path of awareness and strengthening:

For me, Cagna holds many things inside [...] with respect to practices, to experimentation, to an approach to life which is often disruptive, stubborn, annoying, disarming... [...] Yes, it has a lot to do with my identity. [...] For me, a comrade is one who in some way questions a whole series of things that are at stake, a whole series of norms, canons, ways of being, she is a Cagna. [...] It is something I only share with my comrades. To whom I can say... how much of a Cagna you are! [...] and that became a compliment. Like: you’re too much of a Cagna! It’s like I’m telling you “*wow* sister, you’re smashing!”. (C3, 7, 30)

While for the older cohort the collective identity refers more to the feminist movement, as a space of wider identification, the younger cohort’s political identity is more related to the specific collective. This shift is telling of a political turn in feminist activism, which changes through phases of higher mobilization (when the point of reference is the movement as a whole) and less visibility (when the point of reference becomes the specific group) (Bellè 2021).

This paragraph highlights a field of similarity among different cohorts: the starting point of political participation in the feminist space is quite homogeneously a revolutionary shift in activists’ biographies, which changes in relation to intimate and public life. While C1 shows a significant impact mediated by the length of time in the space and in the movement, the overlap between feminist movement and feminist space, and the historical context they lived in at the time of engagement, C2 and C3 show a strong impact, and for some of them the price for this biographical turmoil is an emotional burden.

## 5. Questioning Sexuality, Questioning Gender

While the previous section stressed engagement in feminist activism as a crossing point across different age-cohorts, here I address two other fields of biographical outcomes: gender and sexuality. The process of feminist political participation influences the relation with the self, leading to a deep questioning of one’s

gender identification and sexuality. Thus, gender and sexuality are similar domains emerging as outcomes of feminist spaces. Differences occur in age-cohort paths – depending on early socialization, the historical context and discussion about sexuality and gender, ideology and repercussions in the present.

## Questioning Sexuality

“I started looking at women in a new way.” (C2, 2, 37)

Feminist spaces rely on women-to-women relationships. From an historical point of view, relationships between women were dismissed as part of the private sphere and of the realm of “gossip”, instead of the male sphere of public discourse and politics (Fraser 1990, Bono and Kemp 1991, Braidotti and Griffin 2002). The emergence of women as a political subject also influenced women-to-women relationships, which came to be a site of empowerment, mutual acknowledgment, politics, and eroticism. Such close relationships with other women open up a wide range of emotions, feelings and perceptions, which were often quite invisible until this point. The legitimization of love as a political and material feeling towards other women is an outcome of feminist politics.

Despite the activists’ sexual preferences and orientation, all of them experience closer relationships with other women and a progressive detachment or distrust towards interactions with men. Becoming lesbian, as a political and affective choice, is sometimes a consequence of this way of experimenting with the body and the erotic. While eroticism has historically been stigmatized with regard to women, feminist spaces enhance its power and its political dimension: “in order to perpetuate itself, any oppression must corrupt or distort the various sources of power which, within the culture of the oppressed, can provide them with the energy for change. For women, this has meant the suppression of eroticism as a conscious source of power and information within our lives” (Lorde 2014: 128).

The older cohort, originating in the women’s movement of the 1970s, has been deeply influenced by its reflection on the social and sexual ties among women. However, the issue of sexuality is less visible and less claimed than for the other cohorts and is also related to age. Other issues, such as seniority, illness, and loneliness are much more crucial. Some issues, such as loneliness, can be related to a non-conventional life course, such as the non-heterosexual choice, as I will discuss in the following sections. Some of them say that lesbianism “is a divisive issue” (C1, fieldnotes, 24-10-18). From a historical point of view, many conflicts arose around sexuality. In the 1970s, the fracture between feminism and lesbo-feminism was sometimes harsh, and other times more nuanced (Biagini 2018). However, this fracture keeps shaping older activists’ perception of sexuality. As a matter of fact, while “most of the community is composed of women that have had relationships with one another” (C1, fieldnotes, 13-11-18), the element of sexuality is quite hidden in the activists’ narratives about themselves.

C2, which manages an anti-violence service, is oriented to a political rather than a sexual claim to women-to-women relationships. Experimenting is legitimized, and promoted by the women-to-women approach to politics and life: “In this context I thought I could try other things too for the first time, because I got so close to a woman, and it wasn’t something I had ever excluded... it was simply something that had never happened to me.” (C2, 2, 37). However, sexuality is not the core of their political claims. This difference partially relies on the generational framework. As a feminist space, they were influenced by the legacy of direct social action and transnational movements against precarity, globalization, and the neoliberal order. This background makes them work more on material values and claims, such as the access of women to housing, welfare, basic income, services and so on. As an interviewee argues, their activism is based upon “an awareness with respect to how

important it is to break down a whole series of systems of inequalities” (C2, 3, 45). This difference does not confirm a separation between materialist and post-materialist types of movements, but rather shows how the stress on materialist values produces a shift in the dimension of sexuality. The urge of managing an anti-violence service changes the priorities of the space. Sexual relationships are not excluded, but the priority is the service provision (while sexual relationships within feminist spaces tend to produce a more difficult emotional setting to manage).

C3, instead, keeps sexuality as the core of political action, through a radical fight to heteronormativity, a claim on lesbian and queer identities, and strong community ties based on sexual and affective relationships. This biographical outcome is so strong that it determines a change in the framing and ways of understanding the social world: “for example, now for me it’s obvious that [...] all the women I meet are not straight. I’m not saying that they are lesbians, but they are not straight. But [...] I realize that I live in a somewhat distorted reality.” (C3, 4, 30). Adrienne Rich calls the fluid model of relationships among women “lesbian continuum” (1980), by addressing women’s bonding not necessarily linked to genital sexuality, but rather to a radical choice of sharing life, affects, love, family, the erotic.

Depending on age but also ideology (oriented to the recent development of queer and intersectional theories), C3 sees sexuality as a main field of collective action. This cohort elaborates strong community ties based on sexual and affective relationships.

I approached feminism at the same time that I was questioning my sexual orientation. For me [...] the encounter with other women was a 360-degree encounter with the other. That is, with other women. It was an encounter with the discovery of sisterhood, of solidarity, of my body, of my sexuality. I could not live politically in a space where these dimensions do not go hand in hand. I am not interested in discussing and practicing a theoretical feminism. [...] So I probably go to the Cagne because it is the only place where I think that the reflection on gender roles and gender oppression is linked to a questioning of mandatory heterosexuality. (C3, 10, 30)

Lesbianism and queer identification are radical political choices which influence all relationships, social, and political domains, by enhancing the feminine/feminist/gendered element in the individual life and by marginalizing hegemonic male legacy. As long as women withdraw from male desire, they can produce a counter-reality radically based on women-to-women commitment.

The cross-generational analysis shows how age-cohorts relate with different historical and political backgrounds. Sexuality emerges as a field of discovery for all of them. However, different backgrounds shape different political perceptions and priorities. Depending on age, historical background and political values, the politicization of sexuality is sometimes avoided in order to prevent conflict (C1), less intense (C2) or significantly more intense (C3).

## Questioning Gender

Just as sexuality emerged as a site of biographical outcomes, gender matters, too. While women used to be “the second sex” (De Beauvoir 2010), the women’s movement recognized gender as a category of analysis and a social construction. Authors such as Judith Butler have disentangled the performativity of gender, a field of repetitions, rituals and performances (2006). Questioning social categorization and gender roles became a priority also for feminist activists. There is an ongoing re-evaluation of all activities, behaviors and expectations emanating from women’s socialization. By questioning their previous life, women are broadening the field of what is considered possible and viable for a woman (Piccone Stella and Saraceno 1996, Naldini

and Saraceno 2011). Social reproduction, a typical women's task, is constantly addressed and re-shaped. Care, as an un/natural requirement for women, is being disentangled into a mutual ritual among women. This challenge is formulated in different ways, depending on the cohort of activists.

The older cohort has been remarkably engaged in questioning gender socialization, by fighting for self-determination, equal parenting rights between men and women, and so on. As such, they are an unprecedented generation. "We are still completely new elderly women in history. My mother as a generation at my age was dead. This requires another kind of investigation" (C1, 7, 69). Because of this historical background, C1 shows the greater shift in terms of gender socialization and life-course trajectories. As part of the women's liberation movement in the 1970s, they fought for the de-naturalization of gender. As a consequence, they are unprecedented women compared to their mothers and grandmothers, who reproduced certain family settings and gender identification in the post-World-War scenario (Bellè 2021). They acknowledge how gender performance changed over time. This historically informed view is sometimes making it harder for them to accept the recent developments of queer theory, because "for one with my story, I feel a bit lost after all of our fights" (C1, 7, 69).

In the C2 case, the management of the anti-violence shelter leads them to develop a whole series of capacities and skills. The fight against gender-based violence requires to deeply question what a woman is, what a woman is in relation to a man, and which are the boundaries of this relationship. This material and theoretical effort makes them engage with gender representation, performances, and stereotypes. As long as they "learn by practice", they change with the women they help in the service. By challenging gender socialization and identification, they also question themselves, their way of embedding gender and of performing it. As an interviewee states, "I have never felt better, more empowered, more happily a woman" (C2, 1, 37). This work also regards boundaries: gender is a factor organizing society (Scott 1986). Activists discuss what is taken for granted in gendered relationships, and they contest the way violence is embedded and naturalized. As a consequence, this work changes what is acceptable for a woman in her own life in relation to men, and it also changes her way of being a woman.

Both cohorts, C2 and C3, have developed a whole set of skills in order to avoid male intervention. By challenging gender socialization and the sexual division of labor, which orients women into, for instance, caring activities and men into technical tasks, they engage in work that involves hydraulics, electricity, mechanics, carpentry, and so on. These developments depend on the management of the feminist separated space, more according to a political aim than to a biological one. The activists wish to do everything on their own without involving men, when it is usually taken for granted that men are the ones who perform such technical tasks.

C3, influenced by recent developments and reflections on gender, has reached a deeper questioning of gender identification. By disentangling gender binarism (or the male/female dichotomy), they are open to the possibility of fluid gender identification, or gender transition.

Moreover, the changing relationship with the body is favored by the specificities of this particular space, which was formerly a nightclub. As a consequence, since the beginning of the occupation, they started a self-managed pole dancing course, which has deeply influenced the activists' perception of the body and the self.

The pole dancing course [...] was a bridge between the inside and the outside, through an artistic and sporting discipline [...] which in practice unhinged a stigma. It unhinged a stigma, a stigma on sex work, and above all it uses the body. [...] And for me it was... [...] it was something that changed my existence. That is the relationship with my body [...]. It was very powerful. (C3, 10, 30)

And it's a kind of a parable of life. It's something that when you start to do it you realize that so many of your limits are the ones you have given yourself, that in reality your body potentially has no limits. When I do this thing I think I can fly. It was an individual path within a collective space that was one of the things that changed me the most. (C3, 3, 30)

The cross-generational analysis shows the way gender as a field of practices and reflections has changed, and it also helps to understand current conflicts among different generations of feminists. C1 laid the foundations for rethinking gender, through reflection on the denaturalization of gender and roles. C2 proceeds to questioning gender from a practical point of view, because of the engagement with service provision. C3 fights against heteronormativity and positively welcomes the questioning of gender binarism, while C1 is struggling to deal with it.

## 6. Disentangling Life-Course Norms

For all of the three age-cohorts, the questioning of gender norms produces a disentanglement from the expected life course (McAdam 1989). However, it impacts the spheres of relationships and work in different ways.

To a certain point, these women were supposed to get married, take care of their children, and eventually to find a job which would be compatible with childbearing and, more generally, with social reproduction (Saraceno and Naldini 2007). At the aggregate level, scholars emphasize a period effect due to the transition to new family patterns in the post-war era, which is related to economic growth, changes in norms and values, and the shifts in gender roles (Saraceno and Naldini 2007). Even though this can be a typical example of the problem of causality, we can also assert that a role was played by the feminist movement in the changes to such norms and patterns. At the micro-level, women who are engaged in feminist spaces display an ongoing influence of such activism in their own lives and relational settings.

The older cohort shows the most relevant effects, due to their radical subversion of gender expectations.

It was a huge effort. It costed almost half the women I know their love affairs. Because so many men didn't make it. On the one hand, there was too much guilt involved. And on the other hand, too much connivance. And too much ignorance. That is, they never laid a path of liberation from themselves. [...] Maturing feminism [...] is a way of being, a thought and an ethics and it has been very painful. It meant separating, for some even in a traumatic, scientific way, like "I cannot live in these conditions, my daughter has to grow up in other conditions". (C1, 9, 72)

Consequent to their feminist engagement, women got divorced, refused to get married, or they opted for non-conventional relationships. This "very painful path" has led them to a challenging present, where these unprecedented women now say "I am perceived as different because few people have had the experience I had. If you ask a normal woman, she thinks I am crazy. Or at least quite weird" (C1, 7, 69). Living unconventional lives can provoke, in old age, a sense of loneliness and bewilderment.

When I tell you what the meaning of this place is, of the community, it's because all the communities fucked up. [...] The loneliness around us is devastating. For example, my generation [...] we wouldn't have experienced this stuff when we were kids. Do you know how many people with psychiatric problems were in our groups [...]? Those who were different were not thrown out. [...] Nobody was so alone. Now you are alone. (C1, 7, 69)

The set of personal revolutions ends up as heavy baggage, which often requires the whole life to be confronted. Many of the women, after the phases of their greatest activity, opted for psychotherapy, in order to deal with their own personal "debris". "I began psychoanalysis in the 1980s, and this coincided with the

crisis in the feminist movement. That period of politics for many [...] was a sublimation of a series of difficulties, even subjective ones, which found a collective response. And this was the strength of politics. In the 80s the crisis began... and perhaps my subjective crisis was also linked to this” (C1, 2, 69).

Part of the older cohort had entered the public sector, as a long-term consequence of their political participation (Staggenborg 1988). “We were hired with the ‘285’, which is a law that was a kind of amnesty after ‘77, the Red Brigades, terrorism and so on, which absorbed the bulk of that generation inside the state. And the public institutions” (C1, 7, 69). However, as Giugni (2004) underlines, activists tend to have lower incomes and a non-conventional work history, and often, as stressed by the older feminist activists, “everything is very much on the verge of poverty” (Fiednotes, C1, 19-11-18).

While the older women outline a general sense of community with comrades and close feminist activists, but “not necessarily a friendship” (C1, 5, 73), C2 reports strong ties that form the basis of daily life activism, which helps women to cope with life-course issues, such as disease and grief. In the C2 case, the community-building process is bound up with professionalization and the development of anti-violence service provision. The other side of disentanglement from life-course norms concerns the personal work path. Activists who manage grassroots services, such as the anti-violence shelter, progressively develop a level of professionalization related to their tasks. Thus, activists become social workers, psychologists, operators, lawyers, bookkeepers, secretaries, and so on, starting from their own experiences in the feminist movements. This professionalization process not only opens opportunities for a sustainable life for activists, but it also helps these spaces survive and proliferate (Staggenborg 1988).

C3 shows stronger community ties, closer to the notion of “family of choice” (C3, 10, 30), so much so that “I am now surrounded only by comrades” (C3, 7, 30). They take a step forward by challenging relationships in the broader sense: the idea of the couple, monogamy, sexual orientation, and so on. They wish their life and relationships to be consistent with ideology and demands, sometimes taking the risk to produce a new normativity, while also enhancing their frustration and feelings of guilt and failure. These types of sexual and affective community ties impact upon the community and individuals, at times leading to disengagement.

On the one hand, we used these relationships as a laboratory for experimenting with what we were discussing theoretically. It was a balance: you discuss a series of things, do the workshops together, [...] and then you had to practice them. Because your relationship was born there, it was with a partner in your collective, so you had an enormous sense of responsibility not to have such a blatant contradiction in your existence. And so this [...] makes you grow beyond everything else. It creates you as a person, it transforms you in the way you relate to others, but above all in what you want and are willing to accept in relationships. (C3, 10, 30)

The effort to protect the space from personal relationships can make the load on the activists’ shoulders heavier, when they are “trying to knock down with a pickaxe” (C3, 10, 30) previous relationship patterns. However, this effort at care, acknowledgment and respect is the way in which to “experience the world as you would like it” (C3, 6, 35).

What you do inside the space then somehow [...] is change things. When I change, I change things in my work environment, with my colleagues, in the gym where I go exercise. [...] This is the kind of revolution we never look at [...]. And yet... when you change the small things... it seems to resonate much louder. And I think that women's spaces have this capacity. To politicize one's own life, and to change life. And it is not the same way of doing politics as in any other space. It is a way that starts with you. (C3, 3, 30)

Feminist activism has effects on the life course, disrupting traditional stages and expectations. C1 shows the most lasting effects, both in terms of loneliness and frustration related to unconventional choices in a world that has not changed at the same rate, and in terms of work, with absorption in public structures or impoverishment processes. For C2, the field of relationships is more strongly joined by the field of work: the management of services leads to professionalization in fields related to activism. For C3, the change concerns above all the sphere of relationships, oriented towards the family of choice and a relative rejection of procreation and marriage.

## 7. Discussion and Conclusions

This contribution aims to shed light on different paths (in terms of time in the feminist space, time in the movement, age, and ideology) producing similar outcomes across age-cohorts of feminist activists who belong to three feminist spaces. Thus far, the literature has missed a deep understanding of the gender and generational dimension of biographical outcomes, despite some insightful studies (Whittier 1995, Van Dyke, McAdam and Wilhelm 2000, Waylen 2007). By addressing the silences and voices of social movements studies and studies on collective action outcomes, I have attempted to examine those blind spots which are so far underdeveloped. Despite Giugni's request for more quantitative work (2004), allowing big sample analysis and generalization, there is also a lack of thick qualitative analysis, which goes in-depth into activists' micro-level variations (Bosi 2019). The analysis of the results from this research on feminist spaces in urban contexts in Italy has led to some initial insights.

The first factor, which is equally highlighted by all the cohorts, is a similar outcomes regarding the perception of activism as a watershed, a critical juncture which symbolically divides a before and an after in the activist's life paths. All of them clearly differentiate between a "pre" and a "post", where their life completely changed. Differences occur with regard to individual and collective paths. The time in the space, length of activism and age somehow mediate the impact of engagement on C1, while C2 and C3 report a strong impact because of a closer experience of engagement in time, and younger age. Questioning of gender and sexuality, as well, emerged as a similar biographical outcome across age-cohorts. C1 reports the long-term impact of contestation of gender norms, reproductive work and de-naturalization of gender. C2 engages with changes of gender and sexuality with regard to gender-based violence, stereotypes and gender as a category. Their orientation toward direct social action, instead, leads to different political priorities – as material values and claims – and does not include sexuality as a core of their politics. C3 displays a strong politicization of sexuality, through the lesbian choice and the questioning of gender binarism, which deeply influences individuals' life paths. Following the feminist literature (Bono and Kemps 1991, Butler 2006), I interpret the life course as a source of negotiation and individual change. Aggregate-level change shapes gender and life-course norms, but so does feminist activism. C1 is "the unprecedented generation" who have been affected by such great transformations, and they also express the charge of an unconventional life-course, while social structures did not change at the same pace. C2 and C3 display non-traditional biographies, both in terms of social expectations and of professional careers, as well, but their choices seem more supported by community ties. The interplay of time in the space, age and ideology, produces different paths toward similar outcomes.

A challenging field to develop is the dimension of space: how does the space, as a physical, emotional and political manner, impact on biographical outcomes? How is the way feminist spaces are designed and inhabited producing a consequence on activists' biographies? This element, together with a cross-generational sensitivity, can disclose micro-level considerations which might shed light on other types of social movements.

These reflections are still an introductory effort at understanding the gendered dimension of outcomes, and its effect across generations. The narrowness of the sample is valuable in terms of thick analysis, but presents limitations for the generalization of results. Further research will be needed in order to deepen these first insights, by broadening the scope of the interviewees and cases, and by repeating the collection of data at subsequent moments. The question of the consequences of feminist movements and spaces on individuals and across generations, which appears to be a promising field of analysis of this continuing powerful political process, is a puzzle to be further explored.

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