Geographies of Feminist Activism in Berlin and Dublin: Hybrid

Feminist Counterpublic Spaces of Resistance.

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Abstract

Feminist activists have long confronted violence against women (VAW), re-defining violence and defying narratives that normalise or excuse it. This thesis explores how feminist activisms challenge violence in place in ways that elucidate the complex reality of violence across a range of spaces and how we can better develop collective responses. In particular, I ask how the spatial tactics of feminist groups/projects in two European capital cities, Berlin and Dublin, call attention to violence at multiple scales.

Feminist resistance has traditionally been classified according to 'waves' of feminism, with the most recent 'fourth wave' characterised by the use of new media. Moving from this, I propose a feminist geotemporal approach, building on work in sexualities geographies, that acknowledges the unique socio-political environment and temporalities in which activisms emerge. Matching this with a transnational feminist research design, I respond to the multiplicity and fluidity of feminist knowledges. In-depth interviews and participant observation were undertaken in ways that evolved through engagements with activists in their localities. Centring activist understandings and voices, the thesis focuses on four case studies: the anti-street harassment group Hollaback!Berlin (Berlin. 2015-16), the pro-choice artist-activist group home|work.collective (Dublin, 2016-18), the pro-choice 'Repeal the 8th' mural (Dublin, 2016-18), and the anti-harassment queer feminist group, She*Claim (Berlin, 2016-18).

A conceptualisation of feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces was developed to offer ways of thinking about how feminisms form in place, with increasing digitisation and opportunities to enact feminist politics across new

technologies. The three main case studies reveal how feminist anti-violence and reproductive rights activists made use of digital storytelling, mapping, social media, and artistic, site-based practices to share their emotional and embodied experiences with others across space and time. In this way, the thesis conceptualises the complex ways that modern-day feminists challenge and resist VAW, reshape local urban space and create feminist politics through hybrid practices in place.

Images and Tables

Chapter One: Introduction: A geographical approach to

understanding everyday violence against women

1.1. Introduction

There is an urgent need for more situated geographical studies of common

'everyday' forms of gender-based violence, as few works 'directly and explicitly

address gender violence specifically, and violence more broadly' (Tyner, 2016:

195). The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights has specifically appealed for

research that examines 'the different avenues for highlighting and combating

violence against women' (EU FRA, 2014: 3). Geographers have similarly called

for more research into the 'spatial and gender power relations' underlying

multiple manifestations of violence against women (VAW) and how these need

to become a 'mainstream concern' for the discipline (Brickell and Maddrell,

2016: 206). Despite the calls by human rights organisations and scholars, and

the centrality of concerns over social justice and human rights in Geography

more broadly, research about VAW remains distanced, located 'elsewhere' and

about 'others', and not in the cities in which we live (Pain, 2014; Tyner, 2016).

To address this gap in policy and research, this PhD analyses

geographies of feminist activism that call attention to VAW in the European

capital cities of Berlin and Dublin. My research specifically builds upon the

earlier work of geographers who have examined the control of women's bodies

and VAW in public space but extends this work by paying particular attention to

how activists resist and create new feminist spatial imaginaries through

reclaiming the increasingly co-constituted digital and material spaces of the

city. In this way, I hope to offer a fresh geographical perspective on VAW and the spatiality of feminist activisms in an era of increasing digitisation. I examine how feminists in these European capital cities create alternative feminist *hybrid counterpublic spaces* to highlight their own understandings of their activist practices. Through a *geotemporal approach* and *transnational feminist research design*, this dissertation highlights feminist anti-street harassment movements in Berlin and pro-choice art-activism or 'artivism' (Milhonic, 2005; Zebracki and Luger, 2019; Zebracki, 2020) in Dublin from 2012-2018. My empirical research demonstrates how activists make and re-make feminist activisms to respond to their specific political and socio-cultural environments and according to their specific place-based struggles. I argue that the places and alternative hybrid counterpublic spaces that feminists re/make through their activist and creative practice offer lessons about how vibrant feminist futures might be sustained.

A feminist geographical approach has much to offer the interdisciplinary scholarship about VAW and modern-day feminist activism. Firstly, I add to the empirical research by feminist geographers to interrogate the normative heteropatriarchal discourses and spatialities that frame understandings of violence against women that maintain the social and power relationships that render women's bodies invisible and mute women's voices. In particular, I pay attention to what Tyner (2016) describes as 'everyday' forms of VAW in the city that have been largely unexamined by feminist and urban geographers, which I describe further in Section 1.3. Throughout my analysis I centre women's voices, bodies, and agency in confronting these 'hidden' forms of gender-based violence. In particular, feminist activists in Berlin and Dublin called attention to

street harassment and obstetric violence at the time of this study, so this PhD focuses on these everyday forms of VAW.

Secondly, this study also contributes to advancing geographical research about activism as forged through social relations and flows that are simultaneously global and local (Featherstone, 2012). This PhD thesis advances such a feminist geographical approach specifically by analysing the embodied, material, and digital actions of modern-day feminist activists who challenge VAW through particular places and international networks. My geographical approach to feminist anti-violence activisms explores how local resistance is enacted through practices that forge hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces (cf. Fraser, 1990; 2014a). Taking into account the ways that digital, material, and emotional geographies are co-constitutive and hybrid, I outline how these alternative feminist counterpublic spaces offer support for individuals, challenge socially dominant narratives that seek to control or denigrate women's bodies and connect feminist activists across national borders.

Thirdly, the study remains sensitive to the specific geopolitical and socio-cultural contexts of feminist activists, their unique geotemporalitie*s* (Mizielińska and Kulpa, 2011; see Chapter Two). Geotemporal processes at different scales shape and silence understandings of VAW and feminist responses to that violence at different moments in time. Thus, rather than assume a singular international understanding of VAW or a universalist Anglo-American definition of feminist activism, my study calls attention to the particular place-based experiences of women in Berlin and Dublin during the time of this study, while remaining sensitive to underlying systemic structural forms of oppression. This study further advances transnational feminist

research approaches (Browne et al, 2018; see Chapter Three) to deepen academic insights into how feminisms are made in and through particular places.

Having introduced reasons for undertaking this study and its contributions to feminist geography, in the next section I introduce my research questions and the main objectives of this PhD thesis. Following this, in Section 1.3, I justify my motivations for undertaking empirical research into two everyday forms of VAW, street harassment and obstetric violence, that have been overlooked in geographical debates around VAW. I follow this by contextualising my PhD research in both Dublin and Berlin in Section 1.4 to situate my choice of case studies and highlight their significance. In Section 1.5, I provide a short outline of the chapters that follow.

1.2.   Research Goals, Objectives, and Questions

The overarching goal of this PhD is to analyse the geographies of feminist activism calling attention to VAW in the European capital cities of Berlin and Dublin. This PhD engages with feminist activists who call attention to VAW in these two cities through answering three broad pairings of research questions:

1. How do recent feminist groups in Berlin and Dublin (2012-2018) specifically call attention to violence against women in the cities where they live? How do they define themselves and their work and what do these definitions tell us about modern-day feminisms?

2. What is the impact of the spatial tactics used by activists to call attention to violence against women at multiple scales? What do their practices

and actions tell us about geographies of feminist activism in an era of increasing digitisation?

3. What is the role of social media, the body, maps, artistic practice, and place in their activism? What do these practices reveal about the gendered (and hybrid) nature of public urban space in the 21st century?

The study has three related objectives. First, as I discuss in more detail in the next section, I advance feminist geographical research about everyday forms of VAW and interdisciplinary scholarship about modern-day feminist activisms. Geographers such as Doreen Massey (2005) have long articulated how space is more than just a container for social action and processes but is instead 'constituted through [our daily routines and everyday] interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny' (p. 9, my additions in brackets). The spatial shapes how we understand and engage with the world, wherein 'the possibility of the existence of multiplicity' of 'distinct trajectories' can result in 'coexisting heterogeneity' (ibid: 9). My PhD thesis specifically demonstrates how feminist activists understand violence against women which has become 'normalised' in a society as related to the gendered power relations that govern public space, including hegemonic constructions of female bodies as being 'out of place' (McDowell, 1999). Street harassment and the various responses to it, for example, are of significant importance for both urban and feminist geographers, who have already established the ways that space is shaped by and shapes gendered power relations (McDowell, 1997; Koskela, 1997; Doan, 2010). Feminists' embodied and place-based forms of resistance challenge normative ideologies about the city. Building on these understandings

of space, I argue that feminist activists respond to power relations, hegemonic institutions, and gendered oppressions locally, while at the same time may connect with, influence and be influenced by other social-spatial forces at different scales (see Chapters Two and Four).

A second goal of this study is to advance a geotemporal approach and transnational feminist research design in order to deconstruct the normativity of Anglo-American experiences and understandings of feminist activism as universal. The notion of coherent, unified progressive waves of feminism as being a global experience has become a standard way of depicting the history of Western feminist activisms (Hewitt, 2010). Most recently, 'fourth-wave' feminism is a term which is increasingly invoked to describe and homogenise a complex range of feminist activisms that are said to have emerged around 2008 (Baumgardner, 2011; Phillips and Cree, 2014). Social media has been cited as *the* contributing factor of this new so-called 'fourth wave' of feminist activism, as evidenced by innovative, creative, and technologically savvy approaches to draw attention to multiple forms of oppression (McLean and Maalsen, 2013; 2019; Munro, 2013; Guillard, 2016). Despite criticisms, the 'wave' metaphor endures as a standard means of classifying types of feminist activisms in Western countries (Cullen and Fischer, 2014). I instead propose a transnational feminist research design and geotemporal lens to recognise the multiplicity, divergence, and difference in feminist movements across time and space. In contrast to this popular universal classification of feminism according to chronological temporal 'waves', my geotemporal approach frames feminist activisms in relation to heterogenous social and political contexts, processes, relationships and identities (see Chapters Two and Three).

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A third objective consists of documenting digital, embodied and place-based creative urban feminist interventions, including forms of 'artivism' (Milhonic, 2005; Vilar, 2019) and their effects at local, national, and transnational scales. While I reject the classification of these practices as constituting a 'fourth-wave', this study pays explicit attention to feminist strategies to combat VAW that have evolved in recent years alongside developments in new technologies. My research seeks to understand how places, bodies and technologies coalesce to create hybrid spaces of feminist resistance and empowerment. When embodied resistance is understood as forged in place, while simultaneously spanning hybrid digital-material spaces, actions in different localities become empowered forms of solidarity for common causes across geopolitical space. Activists are now able to rapidly connect and share tactics and information with others beyond their localities. My empirical research therefore troubles existing conceptual divisions between online and offline activism, virtual and material space, technology, and the body at multiple scales (see Chapters Five through Eight).

It is important to note at this point that throughout this PhD thesis, my definition of 'women' includes all those who self-identify as women. I also use the terms 'child-bearing people' and 'pregnant people' in subsequent chapters to include trans men while acknowledging that this is an imperfect way of including their experiences. It is not the intention of this thesis to further exclude marginalised trans experiences, but in this study the activists and artists who I spoke to were, to the best of my knowledge, cis-women, and cis-men. Therefore, further research is needed to explore trans women's

experiences of violence and the support/exclusions within activisms confronting it.

1.3. Violence Against Women: geographical perspectives

One in three women will experience sexual and or physical violence in her lifetime (UN, 2010; WHO, 2018), a statistic that powerfully underlines the prevalence of VAW. However, stating that a third of all women experience violence is too simplistic, for it obscures the 'vast array of different experiences of VAWG' that occur 'in dramatically varying contexts' (Leung et al, 2019: 429). Feminist scholarship therefore has attempted to maintain broad definitions of VAW, while also recognising the specific forms that encompass the category of violence, from verbal abuse, threats, and psychological control, to physical attacks, rape, female genital mutilation, reproductive coercion and abuse, and documenting the range of contexts in which violence occurs (Dobash and Dobash, 1998; MacKinnon, 2006; Kukura, 2016). To theorise the widespread and multiple forms of VAW, feminist scholars see 'a basic common character' (Kelly, 1988) of violence being rooted in 'gendered social arrangements and power' (Hunnicutt, 2009: 554). Gender-based violence may be a heterogenous phenomenon, but its source often remains the same: patriarchy, or men's systematic domination of women (Brownmiller 1979; Hunnicutt 2009). In other words, VAW (re)produces and maintains women's structural disadvantage (Galtung, 1975). In this PhD thesis, following Cresswell (1996) and Sharp et al (2002), I understand social power and social resistance to VAW, as always spatial (see also Chapter Two). VAW is an inherently spatial phenomenon that must consider: how, when and where patriarchal structures and relations of

power are expressed in ways that oppress and disadvantage women; when and where violence takes place; and how, when and where women respond to these local situations and multiscalar structures.

Gender-based violence, be it in the form of interpersonal VAW or political and institutional violence, remains severely overlooked in geography (Pain, 2014). In addition, recent geographical investigations into how feminist groups call attention to violence against women at different scales remain scarce (Brickell and Madrell, 2016; Tyner, 2016). Geographers who do study VAW have drawn on feminist understandings of how multiple forms of violence interrelate and weave across a range of spaces (Pain, 2014; Datta, 2016; Brickell and Maddrell, 2016). Notable recent contributions include: Rachel Pain and Lynn Stahaeli's (2014) interrogation of the relationship between VAW and geopolitics, Anindita Datta's (2016) work on multiple and interrelated forms of VAW in India, Ayona Datta's (2016) paper examining rape and the public/private divide, Katherine Brickell's (2016) research on the relationship between domestic violence and forced evictions in Cambodia, and Peter Hopkin's (2016) article on Islamophobic violence against Muslim women in the United Kingdom. This timely and important research highlights the pressing need for more geographical discussion around the multiple manifestations, experiences, and responses to gender-based violence and their associated spatialities in the twenty-first century. The work of these geographical scholars is particularly relevant because it highlights the interrelationships between different types of VAW.

However, more research into everyday forms of violence and responses to it that centre women's political agency is needed, and this is where my PhD

thesis will attempt to make a contribution. Pain (2014) specifically points out

how the current trend among geographers is to focus on more distant

manifestations of violence that are 'framed as public, political, and spectacular',

for example acts of international terrorism, rather than on those that are

'framed as private, apolitical and mundane' (p. 534). In fact, she draws parallels

between these two forms of violence and how they both aim to control

populations and instill fear (ibid). Hence, my work responds to Pain's renewed

calls for more geographical research into more 'mundane' forms of violence,

and what Tyner (2016) calls 'everyday' forms of VAW and their impacts by

focusing on street harassment and obstetric violence.

Street harassment, as a form of everyday violence that occurs in public

space, can have both physical and psychological impacts, resulting in strong

feelings of fearfulness in public space (Gardner, 1993). This PhD thus extends

earlier research about VAW in public urban spaces, including the

groundbreaking work on geographies of fear and violence by Gill Valentine

(1989), Rachel Pain (1997; 2001), and Hille Koskela (1997; 1999; 2003), whose

work I draw on throughout this PhD thesis. However, there has been little to no

recent geographical research on street harassment or how grassroots activists

interact with public urban space to confront it. This, despite its continued

persistence as a form of everyday violence that impacts women's mobility,

feelings of safety and participation in public urban space (Gardner, 1993; Kearl,

2010). Indeed, a study released at the start of my PhD research revealed that

84% of women around the world experience street harassment for the first

time before the age of 17 years old (Livingstone, 2015). The lack of geographical

research into street harassment is surprising, especially in light of a growing

awareness of street harassment by international media (Chrisafis, 2012; Méréo, 2018; Tutton, 2019). Government authorities have also recognised street harassment as a problem in recent years, as evidenced by recent reports by state transportation agencies (MTA n.d; Keilani, 2017; SNCF, 2020), and legislative responses from both local and national governments, for example by the city of Rotterdam, The Netherlands, and by European countries including France and Belgium. However, rather than focusing on attempts made by urban planners to 'design out fear' (Koskela and Pain, 2000), this PhD thesis offers an investigation of street harassment by paying attention to grassroots activists who have been mobilising against street harassment for several years and should be considered as experts who can provide scholars with significant data and ideas about ending this form of violence.

In addition to forms of VAW that are often associated with public urban space, obstetric violence is a form of violence against women and pregnant people which occurs daily in maternity hospitals worldwide (Cohen Shabot, 2015; Kukura, 2018). Obstetric violence is increasingly linked to neoliberal health care models, with incidence rates higher in regions with two-tier health systems and expanding income disparity (King, 2013; Morales et al, 2018). This form of violence was defined over a decade ago by the Venezuelan government and refers to: 'appropriation of the body and reproductive processes of women expressed via dehumanizing treatment; abuse of the medicalisation and pathologisation of natural processes, which entails a loss of their autonomy and ability to make free decisions regarding their own bodies' (Venezuela, 2007: 13). As an everyday form of violence, obstetric violence confronts the social and political distinctions between public and private space, and the forms of

violence that have been traditionally mapped onto these supposedly separate realms (see Chapter Two). Obstetric violence occurs in a space of unique vulnerability and intimacy, where expectations of care are ruptured through abuse and mistreatment. While discussions about women's bodily autonomy in geography have not yet framed restrictive abortion access as a violent practice, I draw upon feminist geographers who have established the ways in which the pregnant body is subject to specific forms of public scrutiny and socio-spatial control (Longhurst, 2001).

This PhD recognises obstetric violence as another form of violent spatial control that, in the context of Ireland, is intimately related to institutional forms of violence carried out against women by what I refer to as the 'Church-State nexus' (Chapters Two and Four; cf. Kennedy, 2018). In addition, this dissertation contributes to a growing geographical literature regarding reproductive rights in Western Europe, where ideologies about public health care are questioned due to the lack of free, safe, and legal access to abortion. This research includes work about the geographies of abortion travel and access (Gilmartin and White, 2011; Side, 2016; Calkin, 2019), emotional geographies (Olund, 2020), and geographies of abortion activism and visual culture (Brown et al, 2018; Calkin, 2019; O'Hara, 2020). Significantly, it has been grassroots activists who have been at the forefront of defining and highlighting obstetric abuse and reproductive control as a form of VAW (Laako, 2017), which I discuss further in Chapter Two.

Finally, this study is unique in Geography by emphasising local activists' expert and lived knowledges about everyday forms and geographies of violence. Indeed, most definitions and problematisations of VAW emerged in the spaces

of consciousness-raising and feminist resistance throughout the 20th century (Boyle, 2019). The experiences, knowledge and political agency of ordinary women has always been central to bringing about change, providing vital support for women experiencing VAW, and widening political agendas to address multiple forms of gender-based violence and their impacts. Hence, another main objective of this study is, by centring on activist's voices, to illuminate how women are not passive victims in violent patriarchal environments but play an active role in defining and agitating against VAW in all its forms across a range of spaces and places.

1.4.   Case Studies

To select the case studies for this PhD, I was particularly drawn to the sites and locations of feminist resistance, be they material, digital or, as I would uncover, creative combinations of both. As a feminist geographer, having lived in Berlin and Dublin, I was intrigued by the unique geographies of feminist activisms in these two cities.

In **Berlin**, in addition to the almost weekly demonstrations advancing feminist causes, numerous queer feminist spaces and bars allowed activists to use their venues free-of-charge for organising political events and meetings. Many such spaces have their roots in the squats that emerged in both the 1960s and 1970s and again following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989-1990 (Amantine, 2011; Vasudevan, 2016). Some women within the squatting movement struck out on their own to carve out spaces free from the continued patriarchal violence and attitudes they experienced in mixed squats, creating

separatist squats as well as women-only cafés, shops, and collective bars (Amantine, 2011).

I understand these German feminist practices as having 're-imagined the [post-reunification] city as a space of refuge, gathering and subversion' and creating a 'renewed form of emancipatory urban politics' (Vasudevan, 2016: 4, my addition in brackets). Many spaces created by feminist activists at different moments in time remain key sites of mobilisation in Berlin today. Indeed, after joining an open meeting for a festival called LaDIYfest in 2014 in one of Berlin's many autonomous spaces, I was introduced to numerous feminist activists and key sites of grassroots politics. As a result, I decided to focus on Berlin in my research because of this vibrant feminist community. I was particularly interested in how some of the 'newer' German groups, popularly known for using digital practice in Berlin at this time, were situated within these networks and spaces. Berlin, as a site of dynamic feminist activity that is local, national, and international, has much to offer in terms of understanding the practices of modern-day feminist activists and their complex geographies of mobilisation and resistance.

During my Berlin field research from 2015-2018, I noted a clear pattern emerging: feminist activists called attention to sexual violence and VAW in public space and pushed for changes in German legislation around rape and sexual violence in particular (see Chapters Four and Six). As a result, I selected two feminist groups in Berlin for this dissertation: **Hollaback!Berlin** (H!Berlin) and **She*Claim**. H!Berlin is a local branch of an international anti-street harassment network (now non-for-profit) called Hollaback! that was founded in 2005 in New York (Hollaback!, 2020). I first learned about H!Berlin during

LaDIYfest (2014) mentioned above, and was particularly struck by their creative and digital interventions in public urban space. I later learned that H!Berlin was founded in 2011 by Julia Brilling and Claudia Johann, local German feminist activists who were students in Gender Studies programmes and had previously been engaged in anti-racism work (Brilling, interview with author, 2015). They set the group up because they strongly felt there was a 'culture of silence' (*die Kultur des Schweigens*) around street harassment in Germany and they wanted to break that silence (H!Berlin 2014). Similar to other local branches of Hollaback!, their Berlin group reviewed, mapped and published stories of street harassment that came in through their website. In addition, they used social media, specifically Facebook (with 1,908 followers as of December 2019) and Tumblr, to build community and increase the visibility of the stories of harassment submitted through their website and app. Finally, they also hosted local artistic events. At the time of submitting the PhD (July 2020), the group is no longer active, although stories are published intermittently on the website. I analyse these digital and material strategies of mapping violence and reclaiming the city in Chapter Five.

She*Claim describes itself as a 'queer feminist action group', or '*queerfeministische Aktionsgruppe*', and was established in 2016 (She*Claim, 2016). Following a much-publicised mass street harassment incident which happened in Cologne on 31 December 2015/1 January 2016 (see Chapters Four and Six), the group was established as an anti-racist feminist group to address sexual harassment and violence in public urban space, as explicitly tied to racist discourse in Germany. As one member informed me, the structure of the group is relatively loose, and they collaborate with and support similar queer and

feminist movements. They function as both a non-hierarchal reflective space for its members as well as engaging in direct action (V, interview with author, Berlin, 2018). I learned about the group in 2016 while attending the art festival, *48 Stunden Neukölln* (48 Hours Neukölln), where I encountered one of their creative urban actions: projecting Tweets of women's experiences of harassment onto a building. Their intervention recalled those of H!Berlin, which assumes that digital and creative place-based practices are co-constitutive. She*Claim similarly has a Facebook page with a healthy 1,850 followers (as of July 2020) and a blog. It continues to maintain an active social media presence, and organises protest actions, workshops, queer feminist film nights, and artistic events. For reasons I explain in Chapter Three, however, I chose not to dedicate a complete chapter of my thesis to this group.

Dublin is the location of the second European city I selected to research feminist practices calling attention to everyday structural forms of VAW. As the capital of the Republic of Ireland, movements for sexual and reproductive rights have flourished here in recent years, which built upon the decades of activist work. In general, since 2012, Ireland has seen a distinct move away from the more conservative proscriptions of gender and sexuality traditionally shaped by the Catholic Church-State nexus both in terms of legislation and popular attitudes (Gilmartin et al, 2019). As discussed in the next chapter, in this PhD I use the capitalised version of the word 'Church' as a shorthand for the Catholic Church, to indicate its dominance in politics and governance, although I recognise the existence of other forms of religion and faith in the Republic.

Alongside a growing campaign for same-sex marriage in 2015, and a successful national Referendum which passed in 2016, feminist activism,

particularly pro-choice activism, had been growing in Dublin since 2012. This movement responded to both national and international developments (see Chapter Four) but was particularly mobilised following the death of a young woman, Savita Halappanavar (Doherty and Redmond, 2015; Kennedy, 2018). In Ireland, the Eighth Amendment (article 40.3.3), introduced in 1983, was a constitutional ban on abortion which created a legal situation whereby pregnant people's lives were continually at risk, regardless of whether they wanted to continue the pregnancy or not (de Londres and Enright, 2018). Before my PhD research, I began to participate in pro-choice demonstrations in Dublin, volunteering for the first March for Choice in September 2012, and attending early meetings of the Irish Choice Network, which later became the Abortion Rights Campaign (ARC), the national movement for reproductive rights. After moving to Berlin in 2014, I remained actively engaged in pro-choice activism, in solidarity with Ireland, but also with activists in Poland, Chile, Argentina and Germany. My focus on the Republic of Ireland in this PhD thesis reflects my own personal location within pro-choice mobilisation in the Republic of Ireland (here after, Ireland) as well as practical limitations on my research. Possible future research would advance work in obstetric violence and reproductive rights in Northern Ireland, which has a distinct set of geopolitical and Church-State relations than the Republic, although, as I describe in Chapters Seven and Eight, the geographies of abortion access in the Republic were and continue to be connected to those in the UK.

My main research question for the Irish case studies considered how activists drew attention to structural violence against women, in particular how everyday forms of reproductive and obstetric violence were carried out by

state-run institutions. I focused my Dublin analysis on two different projects: the pro-choice artist-activist group **home|work.collective** and the **'Repeal the 8th' mural** by the popular street artist Maser. home|work.collective was founded by Irish artist Siobhán Clancy. The group developed out of a series of meetings and workshops between Siobhán and activists from ARC in 2015, after which she applied for funding from The Arts Council of Ireland to continue her work through their 'Artist in the Community Scheme 2016' (Clancy, 2016). This award granted Siobhán three months of financial support in which she was able to carry out research. During this time, she created artistic work in collaboration with activists, resulting in the formation of home|work.collective, which continued to operate after the initial period of the award in 2016 until 2018.

The name home|work.collective refers to the traditional domestic sphere which women were relegated to in the Irish Constitution (1937), but also the ability to make a change in one's self and one's own community (Clancy, 2016). Through engaging in research, discussion and creating artistic pieces, the group mainly explored the impact of censorship in visual culture and art production concerning fertility management, reproduction, and abortion (Clancy, 2016). In Chapter Seven, I analyse an earlier public performance piece of Siobhán's, *Metronome,* which took place in the streets of Dublin in 2012, which led to her later work with home|work.collective, specifically a voice-based participatory performance piece called *The Renunciation* and a textile piece called *Indigo Scarves.*

The second Dublin case study was a public artwork, the 'Repeal the 8th' mural, created by the popular Dublin street artist Maser and commissioned by a

new feminist website, The HunReal Issues. The first material version of the work appeared on 8 July 2016 on the exterior wall of The Project Arts Centre in Temple Bar in central Dublin. The mural was produced with both the permission and overwhelming support of Project Arts, a national centre for performance art, installation, and exhibition work. However, the mural proved to be controversial and just over two weeks after its unveiling, collaborators were forced to take it down on 25 July 2016, following an order from Dublin City Council (DCC). DCC's Planning Committee stated that it had received 'several complaints' and that the mural 'violated planning law' (O'Sullivan, 2016). In retaliation, the artist gave up copyright and made the image available digitally to the public (see Chapter Eight). Two years later, Maser was invited by Project Arts to repaint the piece where it originally stood. Once again, less than two weeks later, the mural was ordered to be removed by the Charities Regulator who stated that the mural put Project Arts in breach of the 2009 Charities Act (Holland, 2018). Project Arts worked with Maser to make an event of its 'strategic removal', leaving one small corner of the iconic heart after a painting-over event (see Chapter Eight, Figure 8.7). This street art remnant was still present on the wall of Project Arts at the time of writing.

These four case studies illustrate how feminist activists and artists in two different European countries mobilised around everyday lived VAW in the form of street harassment and obstetric violence. They innovatively combined digital, material, and embodied creative practices to make visible the ways in which women's bodies are subject to disciplinary practices – be it at the hands of individual or groups of men in the street, or at the hands of political, medical or legal authorities. In the chapters that follow, I describe and analyse how these

contemporary feminist activist moments created hybrid counterpublic spaces

that connected activists locally and globally, using place-based, embodied, and

digital spatial tactics. Discussing case studies from two cities that focus on

different types of VAW highlights important similarities and differences

regarding the use of digital tactics, particularly in terms of how activists felt

about social media and the kind of communication it could generate; the

presence of female bodies in public urban spaces; and artivist's practices. Such

revelations would not have come to light without including the voices of

activists and artists who offered their own understandings and interpretations

of their practices. Among these insights was a clear current of cautiousness:

while highlighting the potential for social media to bring progressive change,

these activists illustrated the limitations, exclusions and hierarchies digital

practice could reproduce and obscure.

Having outlined my main research aims, justified the topic of the study, with

its focus on everyday VAW and feminist activisms, and introduced the case

studies, I end this introduction with a brief overview of the chapters that follow.

1.5.   Chapter Overviews

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter

Two develops a conceptual framework for this study by providing a literature

review of relevant feminist and geographical scholarly research. I first explain

my geotemporal approach, following Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011) concept of

geotemporality which they use to offer a critique of Western activisms and

notions of progress when analysing Central and Eastern European queer

movements. I use this framework to critically examine the notion of a universal

'fourth wave' of feminism, and then discuss the limitations of such an approach

when examining the feminist movements of Germany and Ireland. I then develop my concept of 'hybrid counterpublic spaces' by developing feminist critiques of the public sphere and public space with research on the co-constitution of technologies, bodies, space and place. I extend Fraser's (1990; 2014a) theory of subaltern counterpublics to analyse how feminist activisms are enacted in place and include a discussion of hybrid urban space that challenges distinctions between on and offline activisms, and the 'a-spatiality' of the Internet (De Souza e Silva, 2006; Wilken, 2009; Graham, 2013). I extend these discussions by drawing on literature that examines the activist potential of art in the city. Artivism, rather than political art, attempts to directly stimulate social change and empower audiences by giving them a voice, either individually or collectively (Felshin, 1995; Frostig, 2011). Public forms of artivism, or 'public artivism' specifically target 'public-accessible sites' to 'address/redress social marginalisation' and promote 'inclusive change' (Cartiere and Zebracki, 2016; Zebracki, 2020). Activist use of public art to engage and mobilise new publics is increasingly extended through digital practice, reaching new publics (see Zebracki and Luger, 2019; O'Hara, 2020), and, as I expand on throughout this dissertation, contributes to the creation of feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces. I demonstrate how hybrid forms of feminist public artivism, produced through embodied artistic practice in neighbourhoods and symbolic sites within the city, are made mobile through digital practice, reproducing the impact of artivism at local, national and international scales.

In Chapter Three, I introduce and describe my transnational feminist research design which draws upon Browne et al's (2017) research and

introduces the methods and data analysis used. My research design resulted from the challenges and limitations of carrying out a Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) approach (Reid and Frisby, 2006) in both cities. This study initially was supposed to examine the international anti-street harassment network Hollaback!, in three European capital cities: Berlin, Dublin and Paris. However, during my internship with H!Berlin in 2015, I became aware that such an approach would not be suitable for practical and conceptual reasons because the particular geographies of feminist activisms had shifted. Returning to Ireland in Autumn 2015, I uncovered that Hollaback! Dublin (H!Dublin) had ceased activities earlier that year. Moreover, feminist activism in Dublin had by then begun to primarily focus on the campaign for reproductive rights, meaning the FPAR approach was no longer possible nor desirable if I wanted to carry out contextually sensitive transnational research into feminist activisms. I explore these feminist methodological choices, research strategies and ethical decisions in this chapter, which also includes a discussion of my own positionality.

Chapter Four is both an empirical and theoretical exploration of legal documents and feminist scholarship on VAW that further situates the national and international geotemporal contexts for research on street harassment and obstetric violence. This chapter includes an examination of significant recent court cases and legislation in Germany and Ireland. Using Bacchi's (2012) feminist social policy analysis approach, 'What's the Problem Represented to be'(WPR), I critically analyse the legal and official definitions and representations of violence against women produced through international and national policies. At international and national scales, I argue that agencies and

states define gender-based violence as interpersonal and exceptional; state institutions are generally assumed to be the protectors of women. Such legal assumptions perpetuate damaging stereotypes around VAW by 'normalising' or minimising some forms of gendered violent actions, and in some instances, result in demonising certain communities as 'violent Others'. I outline how contemporary activists in both countries have responded to and offered alternative definitions of VAW that include everyday forms of violence that take place across a range of spaces and contexts.

After situating my research within the academic literature and geopolitical and legal contexts needed to develop my theoretical framework, I turn to my four empirical chapters. Chapter Five examines my first case study, H!Berlin. I argue that the group's digital actions, such as storytelling, used in tandem with local creative actions, create hybrid counterpublic spaces of empowerment, care, and mutual support. Their feminist strategies expand the discursive space, re-defining the city to render street harassment, a form of violence that is often invisible or normalised, both problematic and visible. I also analyse their hybrid tactics through the concepts of 'boldness' (Koskela, 1997) and a 'place-based ethics of care' (Till, 2012). This chapter thus contributes to feminist geographies by investigating how feminist activists specifically re-create, re-imagine, and re-claim public urban space as inclusive by caring for others who experience street harassment and enabling women's resisting bodies to be visibly present in their city.

Chapter Six continues to analyse H!Berlin in terms of its relationship to the international network Hollaback!. I describe how members understand and define their group and their work, and the challenges they face, in particular,

the tensions that arose from being a part of a 'global' feminist network. Despite the opportunities for support, solidarity, and the potential for non-hierarchal forms of organising offered through the Internet, the hierarchal structure imposed by the founding 'Mothership' Hollaback! network in New York created significant exclusions. Berlin members argued that the voices and knowledges of feminist activists in local branches were often side-lined by the 'Mothership', whose organisers saw themselves as advancing a 'global' feminist identity but were institutionalising a hegemonic Anglo-American one instead. I discuss how the Berlin chapter critically interrogated digitisation as a means of overcoming difference and hierarchies within feminisms. My research suggests that the specific embodied struggles, local knowledges, and material challenges faced by local activists may be overlooked within larger, digitally driven 'global' movements. I also contend that digital practice may inadvertently obscure the significance of place-based knowledges emerging from local struggles and their specific contexts, which may lead to the loss of new spatial imaginaries of the city that may effectively confront the normativity of street harassment discourses locally and nationally.

In Chapter Seven, I move to Ireland to analyse the embodied politics of abortion. Through an analysis of the performances of home|work.collective, I describe how the performing female body is transformed into an active site of resistance against the Irish Free State's control of women's bodies. I argue that the group's embodied performances challenged normative gendered geographies by performing formerly silenced abortion stories in public locations along what has been referred to as the 'Abortion Trail', such as in streets and train stations. Modern day pro-choice activists and artists, such as

those that constitute home|work.collective, were particularly motivated to address the shame and silence that shrouds abortion (Rossiter, 2009). Through their performances, which also incorporated social media technology, my data presents new ways to think about the embodied nature of digital activism, feminist performance art, and the female body in public urban spaces, contributing to recent geographical discussions on public art and digitisation more broadly.

In Chapter Eight I examine how digitally networked public art, specifically street art, was used strategically during the 'Repeal the Eighth' (Amendment) campaign. Through analysing my final case study, Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural, I argue that digital technology transformed the political potential of this piece of street 'artivism' by bringing art and abortion politics to new publics. This piece of street artivism sought to make the topic of abortion in Ireland unashamedly visible through its bright colourful style, its public location, and its collaborators' strategic use of social media. It also acted as a direct political intervention in the centre of Ireland's capital city through its 'transgression' of planning laws and definitions of how charitable public institutions should use public space. The mural's hybrid nature helped it overcome attempts to censor it, and, through the controversy that ensued following its removal(s), revealed the dominant powers shaping the urban landscape in Dublin. Thus, my final empirical chapter further extends my discussion of hybrid space by including forms of street art and activism providing a form of critical feminist engagement with the urban politics of Dublin City.

1.6. Conclusion

This PhD thesis examines the hybrid geographies of feminist activisms in two different cities: Berlin and Dublin. Using the four case studies introduced above, I pay attention to how modern-day feminist activists strategically combine embodied, digital, and material practices in particular places to make violence and the control of women's bodies visible at multiple scales. The dissertation offers a geotemporal and transnational feminist framework to analyse the actions of feminist activists seeking to challenge the invisibility and taken-for-granted 'normality' of VAW in European capital cities. I focus on how feminist activists initiated place-based actions and spatial tactics to create alternative feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces. I also focus upon feminist activists' understandings of their work rather than superficially impose labels and 'global' interpretations on their place-based embodied practices.

In this chapter, I have outlined the objectives and motivations for my research and demonstrated how a geographical analysis of 'everyday' forms of VAW and modern-day feminist activisms offer unique insights into the diverse embodied practices of feminist activists in public urban spaces. I have contextualised my case studies and outlined both my personal motivations for selecting them as well as how they may offer understandings of the complex spatialities of modern hybrid feminist activisms. From the qualitative research engendered by this study, I develop the concept of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces to describe how digital storytelling, embodied performance, street art and other creative interventions in public urban spaces communicate women's experiences of political, social, and physical violence in Germany and Ireland. I also attempt to address the critical absence of

activist/artist voices and interpretations of digital and artistic interventions that draw attention to violence.

      In the next chapter, I summarise multidisciplinary literature that deepened my geographical understanding of feminist activisms. This chapter, together with Chapter Four, forms the basis of my theoretical framework.

Chapter Two: Feminist Geotemporalities in Germany and Ireland: Creating Hybrid Counterpublic Spaces

2.1. Introduction

Friedman (1989) and Tuzcu (2016) argue that feminisms are always situated even as they are the result of translocal dynamics. Similarly, Olesen (2011) explains how 'feminists draw on different theoretical and pragmatic orientations that reflect national contexts where feminist agendas vary widely' (p. 129). Despite these calls for geographically sensitive approaches to understanding feminist movements, within Geography itself only a small literature examines the multiple spatialities and temporalities of feminist activisms (McLean and Maalsen, 2013; 2017; McLean et al, 2019). This chapter contributes to that emerging literature by offering a theoretical framework – a feminist geotemporal approach – and by introducing a new concept, 'hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces'. I argue for a more situated, geographically sensitive exploration of feminist activisms, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the range of feminist activisms in particular places at different moments in time. I contend that my geographical approach to feminist activisms pays attention to local/national/global geopolitical contexts as well as the embodied struggles, materialities, and subjectivities of feminist activists. Taken together, my geotemporal approach and discussion of how activists can change the fabric of the city through creating hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces can provide a richer account of modern feminist activisms and their complexities, similarities, divergences, and contradictions.

In the first part of this chapter, Section 2.2, I introduce my geotemporal theoretical framework that pays attention to the complexity of feminisms at different moments in time and within, between and across spaces. This framework builds upon queer geographers' Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011) 'geotemporal perspective' and similarly unsettles dominant understandings of 'Western' Anglo-American activist movements as a universal model. Using evidence from feminist scholars writing about the nuances of activist movements in Germany and Ireland, I acknowledge the multiplicity of feminist activisms in relation to their unique social and geopolitical contexts and temporalities. A goal of this chapter therefore is to address the very real exclusions and hierarchies that can develop from characterising all feminist histories as similar to the supposedly progressive 'waves' of English-speaking Anglo-American feminist activists. Finally, my geotemporal feminist approach also acknowledges local difference and how activists respond to specific geopolitical contexts, resulting in, for example, multiple, concurrent feminisms in both Germany and Ireland. After discussing the problems with attempting to understand German and Irish modern feminisms from a traditional 'wave' approach, towards the end of this chapter, I draw on the concept of alternative feminist counterpublics by Fraser (1990) to the concept of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces. Through a 'hybrid' feminist approach, I argue that activists forge spaces of empowerment which question the artificial divisions between 'online' and 'offline' activism as well as public and private space in ways that reflect the specific contexts in which activists are operating. Engaging modern feminist activism through the concept of hybridity further challenges

dichotomies between the local and the global, the digital and the material, technology, and the body.

In Section 2.3, I outline how this approach challenges the traditional 'wave theory' of feminist movements which assumes a singular understanding of Western, Anglo-American women's activism as a universal model. Using Germany and Ireland as case studies, in Sections 2.4 and 2.5 respectively, I highlight how the specific interactions between local political and social contexts, as well as the influence of dominant Anglo-American feminisms, results in multiple feminisms that do not fit neatly into chronologically coherent waves. My examination of the history of feminist activism in Germany, a once divided, non-Anglophone country, and Ireland, a postcolonial one, illustrates how the complex trajectory of feminisms in both countries is influenced by their unique geopolitical and social contexts.

At the end of the chapter, in Section 2.6, I introduce a key concept that allows for more situated, geographically sensitive understandings of the significant work of feminist activists in place, and across and through spacetime. The idea of hybrid feminist counterpublics extends Fraser's (1990) concept of subaltern feminist counterpublics through discussions of digital counterpublics (Salter, 2013), and feminist relational and hybrid geographical understandings of space, place, and the body. Engaging modern feminist activism through the concept of hybridity further challenges normative dichotomies between the local and the global, the digital and the material, technology, and the body. Recognising both the situatedness and hybridity of feminist activisms helps us fully appreciate the significance of contemporary feminist activists' actions.

As I argue below, my feminist geotemporal approach to anti-VAW feminist activisms reveal the multiple, interconnected instances of everyday gender-based violence activists confront in place. Furthermore, my discussion of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces adopts a multiscalar approach to anti-VAW feminist activisms that acknowledges the co-constitutive nature of bodies, material contexts, technologies, and space. Taken together, this chapter compliments my transnational feminist design described in Chapter Three and my multi-scalar legal analysis of VAW in Germany and Ireland outlined in Chapter Four. These three chapters provide the foundations for a feminist geographical approach that reveals the multiple but interconnected manifestations of gender-based violence activists confront in place.

2.2. Towards Feminist Geotemporalities

In this section, I develop a geotemporal approach to understanding feminist activisms by drawing on the writings of Mizielińska and Kulpa (2011). In their examination of queer activism in Eastern Europe, Mizielińska and Kulpa argued that countries either side of the Iron Curtain operated according to different 'geopolitical-temporal modalities'. They highlight, through examples investigating the specific experiences of LGBTQ activism in former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), how not only the 'when' but the 'where' of how queer activisms emerge are critical to understanding them. Until 1989, when communism collapsed, they noted that the geotemporality of capitalism had become mostly universal in Western Europe. The collapse of communism and the 'triumph' of capitalism in 1989, saw LGBTQ activists in CEE increasingly draw inspiration from earlier Western modes of queer activism,

often adopting their terms and definitions, even though these did not always reflect their specific experiences. Mizielińska and Kulpa argue further that whereas Western scholars interpreted such practices as 'stepping back in time' because activists adopted 'older' models of Western LGBTQ activisms, for CEE activists, they were actually stepping forward in time because they could now openly organise in a way that was previously impossible under their authoritarian regimes.

Central to their argument is the critique of unified notions of Western (Anglo-American) activism. Instead of assuming that 'the West' always represents the progressive future, which means that definitions and models of activism everywhere are conceptualised as belonging to one time, Mizielińska and Kulpa argue for multiple geographical and temporal understandings of history. They ask further how does 'Western hegemonic imposition/dominance' work 'in local contexts?' (Mizielińska and Kulpa, 2011: 13). Specifically, they question the way that contemporary queer activism in CEE should be assumed to be measured against the 'norm' of Western LGBTQ activism, relegating the 'here and now' of queer activism in the CEE as only ever an older version of Western queer activism. Moreover, Mizielińska and Kulpa point out that concepts such as 'West', 'European' and indeed 'Western European' are themselves not coherent but slippery concepts: '"West"' is a myriad constellation, floating in a space-time of individual perceptions' (ibid: 21). They highlight how even the concept of 'Western' remains dominated by what might be considered Anglo-American experiences of queer activism specifically, which 'barely touches/reflects the experiences of non-English speaking countries' (p. 15).

Mizielińska and Kulpa's attention to multiple geotemporal engagements resonates with critiques long made by transnational feminist activists who exposed how supposedly 'global' feminist movements often represented the struggles and experiences of Western feminists, while framing women of the Global South as in need of rescuing by their more 'liberated' Western 'sisters' (Mohanty, 1984; 2003; 2013; Swarr and Nagar, 2010). In an increasingly globalised and neoliberal world, there have been renewed calls from transnational feminist theorists to once again engage in 'the old debates about the specificity of patriarchal and capitalist gender systems that prevail in different parts of the world' (Brah quoted in Carty and Mohanty, 2015: 96). Similarly, feminist geopolitical scholars argue for a turn towards 'alternative units of analysis' at which power, politics and subjectivities are enacted (Hyndman, 2019: 8), a discussion I return to in my multiscalar analysis of VAW in Chapter Four.

What I take from Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011) research and those of transnational feminist geographers is the recognition of activist movements operating in numerous, yet specific geotemporalities. Each movement has its own rhythms, in relation to particular political and social contexts, resulting in activists' distinct experiences of time and place. A feminist geotemporal approach therefore troubles the supposed homogeneity of Western feminisms and recognises the grounded knowledge and practices of local feminist activists, while also acknowledging the dominance and influence of Anglo-American feminisms. Having identified the strengths of a feminist geotemporal approach, I now turn to a geographical critique of dominant historical understandings of contemporary feminist movements. As I argue in the next section, the 'wave

theory' of modern feminist activisms operates according to a Western capitalist geotemporality, and anything outside of that is presented as only ever 'catching up'. Like popular representations of queer activist histories as discussed by Mizielińska and Kulpa, the wave model of categorising feminisms imposes a particularly Anglo-American understanding of feminist activisms, overlooking differences between Western feminisms and creating simplistic understandings of progressive time without consideration for geographical and temporal differentiation between feminisms. Geographical engagement with wave theory has been lacking, perhaps because of our emphasis on the 'where' rather than the 'when' of activisms, but in the sections that follow, I argue that both are important and influence the development of feminisms and how we understand them.

By way of demonstrating these arguments, as well as the relevance of Mizielińska and Kulpa's discussions to Western European countries, I offer a brief history of modern feminist movements for Germany and Ireland. In Section 2.4, I identify the problems with an English-speaking Anglo-American experience as the norm linguistically, culturally and in terms of the experiences of feminists living in an occupied and later divided 'Western' and 'Eastern' Germany. In Section 2.5. I argue that Ireland, a postcolonial country, in many ways, has been cast as a 'contemporary periphery' (ibid: 11) (alongside former communist countries), European 'enough' but still often portrayed as trying to catch up temporally with more 'advanced' or 'progressive' European counterparts (cf. Connolly, 2005).

2.3 Wave theory: imposing homogeneity?

Many European and North American feminist historians and sociologists have traditionally understood feminist activism according to four different periods or 'waves', beginning with national suffrage movements in the late 19th to 20th centuries (Henry, 2004; Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004; Evans, 2010). This 'wave theory' describes periods of increased feminist action and debate that emerged, like waves throughout history: swelling, cresting, and ebbing (Evans, 2010). The origins of the wave metaphor are attributed to Marsha Weinman Lear's 1968 *New York Times* article, 'The Second Feminist Wave' (Cullen and Fischer, 2014). Nancy Hewitt (2010) traces it back to Irish activist Francis Power Cobbe, who, in 1881, wrote about women's movements according to their wave-like characteristics, as demonstrated by the rolling of women's movements 'in separate waves' while 'carrying forward all the rest' (Cobbe quoted in Hewitt, 2010: 2). While some feminist scholars understand the metaphor as proposing continuity between so-called waves (Connolly, 2002), others use it to signify separate generations of women's and feminist movements, with younger, 'more radical' women in the next ebb or flow (Henry, 2004; Evans, 2010). In this section, following a brief overview of the classic three waves, I introduce new discussions about a fourth, and provide an overview of existing critiques of wave theory.

The first wave generally refers to the intense period of activism and political concern about women's right to vote that took place from the mid-19th to early 20th century, ending with success following World War I (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004; Evans, 2010). In the US, the emergence of the first wave of feminism is traced to the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 where North

American women first demanded the right to vote; the three main organisers were also active in abolitionist movements and rights for indigenous peoples (McMillen, 2009; Hewitt, 2010;). US feminists built upon their ongoing campaigns for improved education and access to the workforce, as well as property rights and inheritance for women (Walby, 1990; Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004). In Britain, the emergence of the first wave of rights in the areas of education and employment was tied to industrialisation, which extended rights gained by men in the 1860s to include similar reforms for women (Walby, 1990). Later, the focus would evolve into the campaign for women's right to vote. This first wave also varied according to ideology, as evidenced by debates about who deserved the right to vote – property-owning and/or single women as opposed to married women in the US and UK (Walters, 2005). It also differed according to tactics. For example, in the UK suffragists pursued a campaign of political lobbying, while suffragettes, their arguably more 'radical' counterparts, became known for their more militant approach, including smashing windows, arson and hunger strikes (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004). The first wave is popularly described as 'ebbing' in the 1920s once women were granted the right to vote, in 1918 and 1920 respectively (Hewitt, 2010).

The second wave refers to the women's liberation movement, dated roughly to the 1960s through to the early 1980s, in the US and the UK; the label spread to other countries later (Walters, 2004). As a political movement, second wave feminism is often described as emerging out of the civil rights and anti-war movements in the US, and student movements in the UK and Europe (LeGates, 2001; Bowden and Mummery, 2009). Women of the so-called 'second

wave' retroactively referred to earlier women's movements as the 'first wave' of feminist activism. Ultimately, they adopted the wave metaphor to differentiate themselves from their forbearers' too 'narrow' feminisms (Henry, 2004). 'New' feminists of the second wave claimed to be more progressive in their understandings of race, class, and sexuality, and as having international concerns (Hewitt, 2010). Second wave feminists in both the US and the UK campaigned for equal pay for equal work, women's bodily autonomy, reproductive rights, wages for housework, against sexual harassment, rape in marriage and domestic violence (Walters, 2004).

The international best-selling books, *The Feminist Mystique* (1963) by American feminist Betty Friedan and *The Female Eunuch* (1970) by the UK-based Australian feminist Germaine Greer added popular support to this movement. The books highlighted how women, defined by their roles as wives and mothers, faced severe restrictions on their social opportunities and were unable to live according to their full potential (Bowden and Mummery, 2009). Art was another important arena in which feminist activists of the second wave expressed their frustration with misogynistic stereotypes and norms. Towards what might be understood as the end of the second wave, the artivist group, the Guerilla Girls, emerged in 1985 in the US to draw attention to the multiple barriers facing women artists. Through hijacking museums, galleries and other cultural institutions using 'facts, humor and outrageous visuals', they exposed gender-bias in art, film, and popular culture (Guerilla Girls, 2015). It is worth noting that the Guerilla Girls have remained active in many countries to the present-day (ibid), a point that already hints at continuity rather than distinct periods of activity.

In the 1990s, a so-called 'third wave' of feminists claimed to reject the concept of 'global sisterhood' promoted by earlier feminists (Mann and Huffman, 2005). Third wave feminists, particularly in the US, are said to have challenged the idea of women as a homogenous group (Zack, 2005; Evans, 2015) and instead embraced legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) theory of intersectionality to recognise how multiple oppressions – race, class, gender identity and sexuality – intersected in complex ways. In their writings, third wave feminists cited their inspiration from Black and Chicana feminist writers in the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed, Rebecca Walker, daughter of famous second wave black feminist writer, Alice Walker, is cited as the first to have used the term 'third wave' in an article in *Ms. Magazine* (Gray and Boddy, 2010).

Third wave feminists called for a plurality of voices and a multiplicity of feminisms and the need to foreground personal narratives and reject ideological rigidity (Snyder, 2008). They re-appropriated the word 'girl', imbuing it with a sense of empowerment and used grassroots DIY culture, as encapsulated by zine-making, Riot Grrrl punk rock groups, and the re-appropriation of pop culture, to express the everyday oppressions they faced, from sexual harassment or domestic violence to AIDS and consumerism (Mack-Canty, 2004). As part of this 'new wave', for example, the US group Lesbian Avengers engaged in creative and carnivalesque forms of direct action, including, dressing up like a marching band or fire-eating to protest homophobia and the marginalisation of lesbian voices within movements. This 'visibility politics', reminiscent of the earlier Guerilla Girls, challenged both the commodification of women's bodies and growing commercialisation of lesbianism (Rand, 2014). Some scholars critically assess the third wave as

focusing too heavily on the micropolitics of individual emancipation (McRobbie, 2004; Munro, 2013) and for embracing 'increasingly neoliberal social policies that are centered on self-responsibility, active citizenship, freedom, and choice' (Gray and Boddy, 2010: 383; see also Fraser, 2014b). Media scholar Ealasaid Munro (2013) claimed that because the third wave turned the second wave expression of 'the personal is the political' on its head, greater systematic change has become more difficult.

Scholars using the wave analogy typically outline these three classic waves of activity. In recent years, however, scholars (Munro, 2013; Phillips and Cree, 2014; Guillard, 2016) and journalists (Solomon, 2009; Leupold, 2010; Cochrane, 2013) have identified a 'fourth wave'. Both Munro (2013) and Maclaran (2015) characterise this new fourth wave of feminism as carrying forward the significance of personal narratives to change the systemic causes of oppression. Munro (2013) argues that such an approach 'is indicative of the continuing influence of the third wave, with its focus on micropolitics and challenging sexism and misogyny insofar as they appear in everyday rhetoric, advertising, film, television and literature, the media, and so on' (p 23). Maclaran similarly highlights this continuity in tactics between the third and fourth wave but makes a clear distinction about the fourth wave's focus on structural change:

> [T]here is a fresh feminist zeitgeist coming from young activists outside our field who try to blend the micropolitics that characterised much of the third wave with an agenda that seeks change in political, social and economic structures much like the second wave. Importantly, they are using the power of the Internet and online media, creating blogs and Twitter campaigns (Maclaran, 2015: 1734)

As these scholars suggest, the third wave's tendency towards individualism is what the fourth wave corrects: the Internet is understood to be the means through which this can be achieved. The defining feature of fourth wave feminism, therefore, is commonly held to be the use of social media (Guillard, 2016; Looft, 2017; Zimmerman, 2017). As Guillard (2016) states, fourth wave feminism is 'defined by digital spaces' (p. 609).

Not all agree that a fourth wave of feminism yet exists. Some question if the use of the Internet alone suggests the emergence of a new wave (Munro, 2013). To be sure, the use of digital tactics as part of activist practice is not unique to present-day feminist activism alone and has been widely written about concerning events such as the Arab Spring and Occupy Movement (Gerbaudo, 2012; Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira, 2012; Zebracki and Luger, 2019). Furthermore, some UK-based scholars refer to modern-day feminist groups and projects, for example, UK Feminista, as third wave feminism (Evans, 2015; Aune and Holyoak, 2018; Charles and Wadia, 2018). These scholars distinguish their current third wave as different from the 'culturally specific' third wave of the US (Charles and Wadia, 2018: 167). On the other hand, other UK-based scholars embrace recent feminist activities in Britain as a fourth wave (Looft, 2017). At the same time, not all North American scholars agree with the term fourth wave and some continue to refer to recent feminist actions and campaigns as belonging to the third wave (Wooten, 2012). In other countries, as I outline below for Germany, discussion centres around the terms 'new feminisms' and 'popfeminismus/popfeminism', rather than 'third wave' or 'fourth wave' (Eismann, 2008; Scharff, 2010; Smith Prei, 2016).

From the summary of waves outlined in this section, the assumed 'norm' of modern feminist movements is that, after women's enfranchisement, each new wave of activism is constructed, in at least partial rejection of the previous one. Hewitt (2010) summarises this well, highlighting how both second and third waves framed themselves as 'broader in their vision, more global in their concerns, and more progressive in their sensitivities to transnational, multiracial, and sexual politics than earlier feminists' and classified those who have gone before them as 'largely white and middle class' (p 2). In particular, those belonging to the first wave were (often rightly) criticised for their often racist, classist and colonialist practices and rhetoric (Rowbotham, 1992). Finally, we see this criticism arise again in the claims made to a fourth wave, who criticise the third wave as neglecting the impact of wider structural forces on women's lives (Munro, 2012; Maclaran, 2015).

These debates about whether a fourth wave exists call attention to larger criticisms of wave theory in general. Scholars find problems with the inherent assumption of linear progress that the model suggests, which relies on 'a positivist notion of history' in which each wave is an improvement on the previous one (Henry, 2004). Fernandes (2010) argues that this 'teleological narrative of progressive inclusion' overlooks the presence of women of colour and third world feminists who have challenged dominant feminist narratives throughout the decades, not just during the so-called 'third wave'. The wave narrative ignores the plurality of positions and struggles within multiple feminist movements at different moments in time, including anti-racist white feminists, labour activists, abolitionists, civil rights activists, and working-class women's groups (Fernandes 2010; Hewitt, 2010). For this reason, some

feminist historians and sociologists argue that the wave metaphor is historically inaccurate. Karen Offen (2000) notes that the starting point in the late 19th century ignores the multiple struggles against male hegemony dating back to medieval times, while Connolly (2002; 2003) argues that smaller feminist groups active in the years between mass movements are often ignored.

Scholars have offered alternatives. Garrison (2005) and Hewitt (2012) suggest nuancing the wave metaphor to refer to ocean or radio waves; as one wave moves further and further away from a first wave, both exist and are not divided ideologically or chronologically. Critical of the essentialising nature of wave theory, Jo Reger (2012; 2013) suggests approaching feminist mobilisation in terms of political generations of feminism, with different women entering different movements at different moments depending on the social and political context, what she calls a 'political opportunity structure'. This term, commonly used by sociologists, pays 'systematic attention to the political and institutional environment in which social movements operate' (Della Porta, 2006: 16) and moves closer to a more culturally sensitive account of feminist activisms that I aim to develop through my geotemporal approach.

As Philips and Cree (2014) acknowledge, there is: 'a great deal of overlap (and more than a little divergence) between and within the waves of feminism' (p. 936). Indeed, supposedly 'fourth wave' feminist activists focus on issues that have endured across both the second and third waves of feminism, such as sexual violence, reproductive rights and the political importance of personal narratives, points that I develop in my empirical chapters. Ultimately, I argue that the wave metaphor obscures the complexities and continuities of feminisms as well as divisions that occur between feminisms at any one time, in

any one place. The boundaries between one wave and another are never clear; issues endure and continually re-emerge both temporally and spatially. As wave theory is primarily concerned with temporal explanations and significantly overlooks the spatialities of political movements, it does not pay attention to local and international flows of information, ideas, tactics and people (Featherstone, 2012). For example, in Germany and Norway, women fought for contraception, abortion, and welfare rights in the early 20th century, issues conventionally associated with the 'second wave' in the late 20th century (Frevert, 1989; Blom, 2005).

In this section, I have indicated numerous problems with using a wave model to characterise feminist activist history. In contrast, a geotemporal approach would recognise the geographies of feminist activism within and between countries and deepen understandings of the development of feminist movements in different locations and at different moments in time. The local contexts and histories in which movements arise are important. In the next two sections, I develop my case for a geotemporal approach to feminist activisms through the particular examples of Germany and Ireland. As I demonstrate, neither German nor Irish feminist movements 'fit' the wave model. In both regions, nation-building projects were highly gendered (Young, 2010; Fischer and McAuliffe, 2015). The different monarchies, colonies, and states in the 19th and 20th centuries in what are now the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and Ireland offer complex histories of feminist activisms. For the purposes of this PhD, in the next two sections, I offer only a brief, non-exhaustive history of feminist activisms in the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany) from the 1960s

and 1970s, the period in which the wave analogy was first adopted by feminist activists. I follow this with a brief overview of feminist movements in the Republic of Ireland in the second half of the 20th century. In Chapter Four, I discuss how national legislation prevented women from engaging in the world of politics and work by locating their labour in domestic roles and regulating their bodies, sexuality, and reproductive rights.

2.4. A Wall in the Head: German Feminisms and the limits of wave theory

In this section, I describe feminist movements in three Germanies in the post-World War II era, largely referring to the work of German scholars who root their analysis of feminist activisms in the changing socioeconomic and political contexts of the many incarnations of the German nation that developed in a relatively short historical time (Frevert, 1989; Young, 2010). Recall that following the War, Germany was divided into four zones that were occupied by the Allied forces of Britain, France, the US, and the Soviet Union. In 1949, Germany was officially divided into two states that became the centre of what would become the Cold War: the socialist GDR, a satellite state of the Soviet Union, and the FRG, an amalgamation of the three zones originally occupied by Britain, France, and the US. Similar to Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011) analysis, I argue that the communist geotemporality of the GDR and the capitalist geotemporality of the FRG played significant roles in shaping feminist activisms and modes of resistance. The two political states constructed oppositional representations of what they considered 'true' German womanhood to be, against which women on both sides of the Berlin Wall struggled (Young, 2010). Autonomous feminists existed in both East and West Germany but mobilised in

ways that responded to their significantly different social and political contexts

and histories – their specific geotemporalities. After providing an overview of

FRG and GDR feminists, I briefly discuss activists in reunified Germany (1990-

present-day).

2.4.1. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)

In the FRG, restoring order after the War included re-establishing the centrality

of the family and traditional gender roles, including an idealised notion of the

wife-mother (Frevert, 1989). The West German state did not question the role

of women as wives and mothers, even though equality between men and

women was enshrined in the Federal Republic's Basic Law (1949) (Berghahn

and Fritzsche, 1991). Lenz (2010) identifies the factors that mobilised women

in the FRG as both local and international. Similar to the German New Left

student's movement, women organised to directly confront the continued

authoritarian nature of German politics, calling for serious interrogation of the

country's National Socialist past. At this time, German feminists were also

influenced by the German translations of books such as Simone de Beauvoir's

The Second Sex (*Das Andere Geschlecht*) and writings of US feminists,

particularly those that made up the group New York Radical Women in the

1960s (ibid). Perhaps for this reason, in 1968, West German feminists publicly

broke with the New Left student movement, tired of the patronising attitudes of

their male comrades and continuous side-lining of women's issues. Ferree

(2012) argues how equality with men, espoused by many liberal American

feminists at the time, was not the central goal of German feminists, autonomy

was. They also actively distanced themselves from older, more institutionalised

women's rights groups such as The German Women's Council (*Deutscher*

Frauenrat) and rejected hierarchal structures and political affiliations because of a deep distrust of the State following National Socialism (Frevert, 1989; Ferree, 2012). Feminist activists in the FRG also created women-only spaces in which they could embrace the empowering aspects of womanhood and politicised the private sphere, in particular concepts such as the 'body', 'gender' and 'violence' (Young, 2010), a legacy that continues to be relevant today as I discuss in Chapter Five.

One particularly unifying struggle was the campaign to remove Paragraph 218 (Para. 218) which criminalised abortion. In June 1971, 374 women, including prominent German feminists, such as Alice Schwarzer, and celebrities, such as actress Romy Schneider, launched what they called a 'self-incrimination campaign' ('*Selbstbezichtigungskampagne*'), by publishing their abortion stories in German weekly news magazine *Der Stern* (Der Stern, 1971). Their photos appeared on a front cover accompanied by the title '*Wir haben abgetrieben*!' ('We had abortions!') (Digitales Deutsches Frauenarchiv, 2018). Activists did not achieve full, unrestricted access but their campaign was successful in expanding the provision of abortion with an accompanying number of conditions (DiCaprio, 1990). West German feminists further expanded the discursive space about reproductive rights and established their own autonomous media. In 1972, they established Germany's first explicitly feminist magazine: *Hexenpresse* (Witch's Press) (Rosenfeld, 2010). Later magazines such as *EMMA*, founded in 1977 by Alice Schwarzer, are still in publication today and have since become digitised (EMMA, 2019). In these magazines, they publicly discussed topics such as domestic and sexual violence, abortion, and sexuality – all of which were taboo at the time (Ferree, 2012). The

re-emergence of struggles, such as for abortion access, and even the continuity

of feminist spaces and publications problematises the notion of distinct waves.

Some West German feminist activists eventually took up 'insider roles' in

new governmental institutions dedicated to women's rights in the 1980s-90s

(Ferree, 2012; 2013). However, the conservative political climate of the 1980s

during the Kohl administration saw others retreat into what Frevert (1989)

terms a 'cultural ghetto' to turn further away from the 'patriarchal institutions

of male society' (p. 302). Frevert articulates this retreat to 'women-only spaces'

as a failure rather than as creating new political spaces and extending the

traditional realm of politics, even though she acknowledges that feminist

activists made a lasting mark on West German society. I return to a

reconsideration of such periods of 'retreat' and the important function of these

for movements when I explore the concept of feminist counterpublics in Section

2.6 below. First, I turn to an examination of feminisms in the GDR to highlight

the important geotemporal divergence shaping German feminist activisms.

2.4.2. The German Democratic Republic (East Germany)

In the GDR, the ruling Socialist Unity Party or SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei

Deutschlands*) celebrated the worker-mother conception of womanhood and

declared the emancipation of women a primary goal, which they would achieve

through socialisation into the workforce (Shaffer, 1981). Women were

encouraged to pursue work outside the home; their participation peaked at

87% in 1986 (Bassnett, 1986), which is 17% higher than the 2017 figures for

Germany (OECD, 2017). The GDR encouraged economic independence by

providing training and free child-care, significant paid maternity leave, and

offered a system of no-fault divorce in which child maintenance was deducted

automatically from the male partner's salary (Basnett, 1986; Young, 2010). The state also provided women with significant reproductive control, making the contraceptive pill available for no cost beginning at the age of 16, and providing abortion on request up to 12 weeks (Basnett, 1986). Despite these significant achievements, fundamental attitudes about women that centred around reproduction, housework and sexuality remained mostly unchallenged in the GDR (Ferree, 2012). The East German state failed to address the role of men in society or the promulgation of traditional heteronormative gender roles that was produced through legislation and media (ibid).

One of the main differences between how feminisms developed in East Germany compared to West Germany is that women in the East did not have access to other basic civil rights that women in the West already had, such as freedom of speech; nor, for that matter, did men, as civil society had 'withered away' (Meuschel, 1992). In this autocratic political system, independent groups were simply not allowed to form outside the state apparatus (Ferree, 1994; Miethe, 2013). While distinct oppositional women's groups formed during the 1980s, including women's peace groups, feminist groups, and lesbian groups, their clandestine nature meant they often left little physical evidence of their existence (Miethe, 2013). A lack of material evidence and visibility led to the popular claim that feminism simply did not exist in East Germany, which historians have since proved to be false (Ferree, 2013; Miethe, 2013).

Dissent existed, indeed 'the extent of disobedience, and of political expressions of discontent, is [sic] far greater than previously imagined' (Fullbrook, 1993: 265). Under autocratic rule, women could not gather on the streets or in their own material feminist spaces. As a result, discontent was

primarily expressed discursively, through literature. Susan Basnett described

the GDR as an 'intensely literate' society, in which the book was 'an instrument

of considerable power, a way of reaching a wide audience' (Basnett 1986:88).

Writers such as Imtraud Morgener, Christa Wolf, Maxie Wander and others

served to politicise the younger generation, making them more aware of the

unequal gender relations that continued to exist despite the East German state's

claims to equality (Young, 2010). Young (2010) claims that literature provided

future feminist activists in the GDR with the language of feminism, which would

serve them during the period of social and political transformation in 1989-

1990, following the fall of the Berlin Wall.

What might be recognised as more coherent independent women's

groups emerged in the early 1980s in East Germany (Miethe, 2013), when a

significant turning point developed in the relationship between the East

German state and the Lutheran Church. This political-cultural change enabled

the emergence of explicitly feminist groups to form (Ferree, 1993; 2011;

Miethe, 2013). Unlike many other socialist countries, the dominant church was

Lutheran rather than Roman Catholic, which was more open to discussions of

feminist theology and issues of gender and sexuality (Ferree, 1993). This made

East Germany one of the only socialist countries with independent feminist

groups at this time (Miethe, 2013).

Young (2010) underlines how one of the key differences between the

women's movement in the East relative to that of the West was its hidden

nature. Because activists did not have access to media publicity or freedom of

press, they relied heavily on private networks of contacts. However, during the

period of civil unrest and social transformation of 1989-1990, feminist and

lesbian groups emerged from the shadows taking on pivotal public roles in discussing the future of the GDR and then later of a reunified Germany. Indeed, feminist groups were a critical presence in the political round tables that developed as an alternative political system in the interim period before reunification (DiCaprio, 1990), some of whom eventually formed a feminist political party, that ran in the 1990 general election (Ferree, 2012). One example is the Berlin feminist group Lila Offensive, whose manifesto outlined that: 'Women themselves must be responsible for their own liberation' (DiCaprio, 1990: 629). Demands articulated by these groups focused primarily on issues such as peace, anti-militarism, and lesbianism, non-ideologised childcare and the fundamental transformation of gender roles (Miethe, 2013). Moreover, women in the East, like those in the West, initially called for autonomy from the state in organising, but later hoped to play an important role in transforming its patriarchal form (Young, 2010). A dramatic example is when East German feminist activists re-appropriated the material spaces of GDR state power, such as Stasi (Secret Police) offices – transforming them into women's shelters (Ferree, 2012). In addition to this, with the collapse of censorship in the spring of 1990, many distinctly feminist projects and publications rapidly sprang up in the GDR, among them the feminist publication *Ypsilon* (Y), a formatted version of the East German women's magazine *Für Dich* (For You), as well as the lesbian newsletter *Frau Anders* (A Different Woman) (Ferree, 1994; 2012).

There had initially been great optimism held by feminist activists on both sides of the Wall to transform society during the period of reunification, however, this soon gave way to irreconcilable differences and disappointment

(Miethe, 2013; Ferree, 2013). Clashes took place between East and West feminists over the ways that motherhood, the role of men in the movement, the role of the state, and the function of the private sphere for women were understood. East German feminists, such as those in the umbrella group and later political party, the Independent Women's Association (*Unabhängiger Frauenverband* or UFV), insisted on a fundamental transformation of gender roles, while feminists from the West were preoccupied with specific supports and policies that would advance the status of women (Ferree, 2013). Despite several conferences which attempted to reconcile the differences between East and West German feminists, the 1990s are often described as a period of 'silence' and demobilisation in German feminism (Gerhard, 1999). However, this is a perspective that has recently been challenged, as I outline in the next section.

2.4.3. Post-Reunification German Feminisms

As I have suggested above, real and imagined differences between East and West are significant when considering feminist movements in Germany. However, Germany today is ultimately considered a Western European state; its socialist past has largely been erased through unification, even though East Germany has gone through a transition similar to, yet slightly different from, that of other former communist countries. Indeed, the significant distinctions between the geotemporal experiences of East and West German feminist activisms (and LGBTQ activisms) outlined above emerged at the 'geotemporal disjunction' of reunification, to use Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011) words (p. 14). When the geotemporality of communism collapsed, the Western (German) geotemporality was assumed to be universal.

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As Mizielińska and Kulpa (2011) argue, Western social movements tend to regard their experiences as normative. Similarly, the perception that feminist thought and practice are disseminated outwards from more 'advanced' Anglo-American and Western countries appear to be prevalent in many versions of describing German feminisms after 1990. West German activism around gender and sexuality were often cast as the norm, even though, as already noted, a mass movement simply could not exist in the GDR, as oppositional groups mounting any kind of public challenge were not tolerated in East Germany's authoritarian political environment. What may have been called feminist activism in East Germany was often not overtly described as feminism until the late 1980s because up until that point feminism was synonymous with Western 'bourgeois feminism' (Ferree, 2012). Instead of adopting Western modes and definitions of feminist activisms, East German feminists had long developed their own strategies, and their resistance to the imposition of what were popularly constructed as 'more advanced' West German models of feminist activism resulted in conflict. The unfamiliar modes of East German feminist activism appeared 'backwards' or 'behind' to many West German feminist activists after reunification or fed into claims that feminism simply did not exist in East Germany and that East German women, therefore, needed to 'catch up' (Ferree, 2013).

In more recent years, German feminist scholars and historians have challenged broad characterisations of the 1990s as a period absent of feminist mobilisation (Gerhard, 1999), in part because East and West German feminist activists were initially unable to co-operate and mobilise together following reunification (Ferree, 2013; Miethe, 2013). Others, such as Tuzcu (2016),

document how queer migrant, Afro- and Jewish-German feminists actively organised during the 1990s, engaging with transnational Black, Chicana and postcolonial feminisms. Disagreements also exist about using the wave metaphor to refer to periods of feminist activism, due to the problems of the 'visibility' (or not) of movements, and how voices and actions are valued in a particular context or moment. A 'second wave', for example, would only include the mass mobilisation of West German women's movements from the 1960s and 1970s that specifically used the term 'feminist' and whose chronology was roughly similar to those in the US or UK. Further, Eismann (2007), Baer (2011) Smith-Prei and Stehle (2016) point out that activisms that might be compared to the 'third wave', including those focused on DIY culture, re-evaluated pop culture, encouraged empowerment, and acknowledged Riot Grrrls, appeared later in Germany, around 2008, and were self-described as 'new feminism' or 'popfeminismus' ('popfeminism'). Finally, in the time frame of what is now being deemed fourth wave, the LaDIYfest/Ladyfests, popular in Germany and German-speaking Austria in the early 2000s as noted above, already included digital communication and engagement (Zobl, 2004; Groß, 2006). Indeed, Tuzcu (2016) argues that German-speaking feminists in both Vienna and Berlin were engaged in discussions and events around the topic of 'cyberfeminism' as early as 1991, culminating in a cyberfeminist conference in Kassel in 1997, almost two decades before the first discussions of a temporally designated fourth wave. These debates by German feminist scholars again highlight temporal disjunctures between the feminisms outlined in the Anglo-American wave model and German feminisms.

The complexity, divergence and overlap demonstrated through this brief history of German feminist activism highlights the value of a geotemporal approach that challenges Anglo-American assumptions when examining German feminisms. With other feminist scholars, I argue that singular 'global' feminisms and indeed even singular 'Western' feminisms do not exist (Mohanty, 1984; 2003; Kaplan et al, 1999; 2013; Swarr and Nagar, 2010). The literature review outlined above underscores the importance of acknowledging multiple feminist activisms and including scholarship that is not only English-speaking. A geotemporal perspective allows for such an approach. In the next section, I make a similar case, moving from the unique context in Germany to analyse feminist activisms elsewhere in Europe, in this case, Ireland.

2.5. Not the Church, Not the State: Irish Feminisms

Ireland occupies a unique space: a postcolonial country geographically located in Western Europe, next door to its former colonial master. Religion has played a pivotal role in maintaining socially conservative attitudes towards the role of women in this divided country. In Northern Ireland, the Catholic, Protestant and Presbyterian Churches demonstrated a rare unity in their strict regulation of women's sexuality (McCormack, 2009; Evans and Tonge, 2016), while in the Republic of Ireland, the Catholic Church, working hand in hand with the state, operated a particularly gendered form of governmentality as part of its nation-building project in the post-revolutionary era (Smyth, 1998; Kennedy, 2018). As scholar and activist Sinéad Kennedy (2018) illustrates, Catholicism became a crucial marker of cultural identity in the newly formed Irish state: 'Catholicism, as the principle regulating ideology, conferred a much-needed legitimacy on the

new post-colonial state and was quickly reflected in the laws of the new state'
(p. 15). Irishness was initially constructed in opposition to the imperial British
'other', and this manifested itself through the Church-State's fixation on the
sexuality of its citizens, specifically women and girls (ibid; see also Smyth,
1998). Below, I discuss the effects of Ireland's unique geotemporality, as
influenced by postcolonialism and religion, and the particularly conservative,
hostile environment feminist activists responded to, which, like the GDR,
included forms of political and artistic censorship (see also Chapters Seven and
Eight).

The 1937 Irish Constitution enshrined the centrality of the family as
'indispensable to the welfare of the Nation and the State' and specifically
outlined the appropriate place for an Irish woman: in the home, fulfilling her
domestic duties (Bunreacht na hÉireann, 41.2, 1937). This clause remains in the
Constitution at the time of writing in 2020. The systematic control of women's
bodies and sexuality in Ireland, through both legislation and incarceration, is
well-recorded (Smith, 2007; Kennedy, 2018; see Chapter Four). Abortion had
been criminalised since the 19th century while a series of legislative changes
during the 1920s and 1930s forced women out of public life. These attacks on
women's rights are often understood as backlash to women's growing political
involvement during the revolutionary era (Ward, 1995; Connolly, 2002; 2005;
McAuliffe, 2015a). These included, but were not limited to, a marriage bar
which forced women to retire from posts in the civil service once married, the
Juries Act (1927) which automatically excluded women from juries, the
Criminal Law Amendment Act (1934) which banned contraceptives, and a ban
on divorce (McAuliffe, 2015a). Many of these laws endured until the 1970s,

1980s and even, in the case of divorce, the 1990s (Connolly, 2002).

Furthermore, the lived experiences of women were silenced. Theatre, literature,

and film that discussed 'indecent' issues, such as abortion and contraception,

were censored in the Free State under the Censorship of Publications Act

(1929). 'Indecent' normally meant anything pertaining to bodies, sexuality and

particularly abortion or contraception (O'Callaghan, 1998). The ban on

literature discussing contraception was eventually lifted in 1979, but not the

ban on discussing abortion (Howes, 2002).

 Despite these extreme forms of silencing women, I argue that Irish

women were not *more* oppressed than their German or American counterparts.

Indeed, such narratives run the risk of turning into colonial narratives of Irish

feminism as 'weaker' or lagging behind feminism in other more 'liberal'

countries (Connolly, 2005). This resonates with Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011)

critiques of hegemonic Anglo-American ideas of Western progress. Rather,

Reger (2012) argues that in such politically and socially conservative

environments, feminists tend to band together, producing what Cullen and

Fischer (2014) have described as 'significant cross-generational co-

operation[s]' in the Irish context. Similar to the case of Germany, recognising

the multiple geotemporal trajectories of feminist activisms is key to avoiding

the creation of hierarchies of feminisms which frame some as in need of

'catching up' with a presumed Anglo-American norm. The difficulties Irish

activists faced were distinct, as were their actions and specific demands, many

of which were often in direct response to the Catholic Church and state's

misogynistic policies during a particularly repressive era of Irish politics

(Fischer and McAuliffe, 2015). Although prominent Irish feminist sociologist

Linda Connolly (2002; 2005) recognises the continuity between periods of mass mobilisation, I show here that Irish feminist activisms are also not easily classified using the wave model and prefer instead to continue to adopt a geotemporal framework.

The 1970s witnessed a mass mobilisation of Irish women, a moment that has been repeatedly described as the 'second wave', as influenced by both US and UK feminist movements (Connolly, 1996; 2002; Connolly and O'Toole, 2005). In Connolly's writings about Irish feminist activism of the 1970s and 1980s, these 'new' activists often criticised existing women's groups, such as the Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) and the Irish Housewives Association (IHA), as too conservative in views and actions (Connolly, 2002). Feminists instead expressed deeper affinity with the radical actions of revolutionary Irish women of the early 20th century, as illustrated by one member of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement (IWLM) who, in 1970, stated: 'we wouldn't have been too pleased to be bracketed with the ICA at the time. We mightn't have minded being bracketed with the suffragettes' (quoted in Connolly, 2002: 146). This comment expresses a stronger identification with the 'first wave' activism of women like Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, who took part in more 'radical' actions such as smashing the windows in Dublin Castle during the campaign for suffrage (Ward, 1997). Indeed, despite overwhelming social conservatism, groups such as the IWLM and the later, arguably even more 'radical' Irish Women United (IWU, est. 1975) challenged the Irish State and Catholic Church throughout the 1970s (Connolly and O'Toole, 2005; McAuliffe, 2015b). New groups such as the IWLM and IWU both embraced a non-hierarchal and anti-authoritarian stance and distanced themselves from

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supposedly less-radical women of their own 'generation' of feminism. The Irish case, therefore, stands in stark contrast to an explicit rejection of the suffrage movement or 'first wave', which is claimed to be characteristic of other so-called second wave feminists as described above in Section 2.3.

The IWLM campaigned for contraception, for childcare and against the Marriage Bar (McAuliffe, 2015b). As many of the group were journalists, they used this to their advantage, frequently using mainstream media to ensure national coverage of actions and to disseminate feminist ideas and issues (ibid). Rather than creating an alternative, independent feminist media like their German counterparts, they appeared on mainstream shows such as 'The Late Late Show', Ireland's most popular late-night talk show, to strategically launch their manifesto *Chains or Change* in 1971 (ibid). They engaged in protest actions calling for the availability of contraception, including picketing churches, Leinster House, and political party offices (Galligan, 1998). The most famous of these direct actions was the 'Contraceptive Train', where members of the IWLM travelled from Dublin to Belfast in 1971 to buy contraceptives, bringing the illegal goods home and flaunting them in front of Customs (ibid). This symbolic action has been compared to bra-burning in the US (Bourke and Deane, 2002), as it drew a crowd of supporters as well as the attention of both the national and international media (McAuliffe, 2015b).

Irish feminists at the time generally refrained from public campaigns on abortion specifically. Aware of the particularly conservative climate in which they operated, the IWLM purposefully avoided the issue, when it was central to the mobilisation of women elsewhere at the time (Connolly, 2002), for example in the US and West Germany. It was the IWU, emerging in 1975, that first took

up the issue of restrictive abortion laws in Ireland and created their own publication, *Banshee*, where it printed the group's charter. Their demands followed the IWLM manifesto but added more 'radical' demands, including free contraception, sex education, the establishment of women's centres and the right for self-determined sexuality (McAuliffe, 2015b). Significantly, *Banshee* was the first feminist publication in Ireland that openly discussed abortion. Other feminist publications already existing at the time included *Wicca: The Wise Woman's Irish Feminist Magazine*, which shared many of the IWUs debates, events, and actions (Connolly, 2002). These magazines had letter sections where women could openly express many different views, even if they clashed with that of the IWU (ibid), serving as important discursive spaces.

Access to contraception was also central to the IWU, which set up the Contraception Action Programme (CAP) in 1976, which provided information and counselling on contraception as well as illegally selling condoms and dispersing contraceptives in housing estates (Galligan, 1998; Campling and Hug, 2016). Gender-based violence was also a significant focus, with members of the IWU setting up the first domestic violence centre in Ireland, Women's Aid, in Dublin in 1974 and the first Rape Crisis Centre in 1979 (RCC, 2019; Women's Aid, 2019). They also established the first Women's Right to Choose Group (1980) to campaign for abortion rights, a group that would eventually oppose the Eighth Amendment (see Chapter One), which went to a national referendum vote in 1983 (Smyth, 1998; Connolly, 2002). The Eighth Amendment was only overturned by another national referendum in 2018. I discuss feminist activist and artistic examples of this movement in Chapters Seven and Eight.

Connolly (2002) uses the concept 'movements in abeyance' to interpret small groups such as the ICA and IHA. Such an analysis, while acknowledging the ongoing work of feminists and their ideas, nonetheless assumes the legitimacy of the wave model. My discussion above suggests the multiplicity of movements and synergies across political generations. With Kennedy (2018), I argue that the work of pro-choice activists working in underground networks remained vital from the 1970s through to the 1990s. Such work was critical, even after the successful campaign led by 'pro-life' groups to future-proof Ireland's abortion laws through the Eighth Amendment. For example, the well-funded Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) continued their campaign of fear against feminist groups and progressive organisations in Ireland. Indeed, they were successful in suing the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) and Trinity College's student's union for distributing information on abortion clinics in the UK (Bacik, 2009; Quilty et al, 2015). Their legal case resulted in the phone numbers of abortion clinics advertising in British magazines and distributed in Ireland being blacked out (Earner-Byrne and Urquhart, 2019). Despite this hostile atmosphere, feminist activists ran helplines, provided information, and helped women access abortion in the UK (Kennedy, 2018). I consider such groups as similar to the underground feminist activists in the GDR before the fall of the Berlin Wall: rather than absence, these women provided important structures and networks for future mass movements.

Moreover, a distinct third wave of Irish feminism, that fits into the description of wave theory outlined in Section 2.2., remains difficult to trace. The fragmentation of Irish feminism in the 1990s into smaller community

groups and hidden networks is explained by some scholars as a response to the conservative backlash of the 1980s and the defeat of progressive forces in the referendum on the Eighth Amendment (see Chapter Four) (Connolly and O'Toole, 2005; De Wan, 2010). Cullen and Fischer (2014) refer to a 'third wave' of Irish feminism, incorporating institutionalised and professionalised feminists rather than Riot Grrrls or DIY enthusiasts as described by the Anglo-American models of feminist activism. Despite referring to waves, Cullen and Fischer (2014) nonetheless prefer to use Reger's (2012) aforementioned concept of 'political generations' to highlight the significant cross-generational collaboration between Irish feminists to the present-day. This becomes particularly evident when one examines the recent pro-choice campaign in Ireland, where feminist activists who might be described as belonging to the 'second wave', such as veteran pro-choice activist Ailbhe Smyth, worked alongside younger feminist activists throughout. Another example is how the Abortion Rights Campaign re-worked visual representations used by the earlier republican and revolutionary feminists of the early 20th century, Inghínidhe Na hÉireann (Daughters of Ireland), in their campaigns (Antosik-Parsons, 2019). Such actions show a marked reverence for feminist revolutionary histories across Irish feminisms. Finally, although Clara Fischer (2015) uses the term 'fourth wave', rather than use it to describe the use of social media, she refers to the specific feminist responses to local experiences of austerity and the revival of the Catholic far-right and includes the Irish Feminist Network (2010) and pro-choice groups that emerged from 2012 onwards.

This brief summary acknowledges tensions and divisions between younger and older feminists in Ireland, between feminists of the same age, and

between different understandings of how to most effectively respond to particular contexts. With Cullen and Fischer (2014), I argue that there are significant limitations to applying wave theory to the Irish context, not only because of important cross-generational alliances but also because of divergence and difference between feminist activists of the same 'generation'.

My geotemporal overview of German and Irish feminisms in this and the previous section demonstrates how a geographical approach may help develop conceptualisations of feminist activisms beyond chronological paradigms such as the wave metaphor. Such an approach draws on geographically and temporally situated feminist movements as shaped by and shaping: specific local political-social contexts; women's bodies, stories and experiences; and the influence, but not necessarily unproblematic acceptance, of what may be called 'hegemonic' Western feminisms. Rather than assume a linear temporal and geographical understanding of 'progress' moving from a universal Western centre, a geotemporal approach acknowledges multiplicity and difference. It also recognises political generations working across spacetimes to forge new types of ideas and realities. In the following section, I develop this geographical approach further through exploring the hybridity of the spatiality of feminist urban movements who reclaim and create spaces of feminist resistance.

2.6. Geographies of Feminist Activism: a spatial perspective

As argued in the previous sections, a geotemporal approach addresses the contextual realities of geopolitics that activists face and respond to, allowing for scholars to acknowledge emergent multiple feminisms and their distinctive temporal and spatial modalities, within and across national boundaries.

Occurring alongside larger discussions about 'global' feminisms, other feminist theorists were critiquing Western understandings of the public realm and public space. In this section, I contribute to those discussions by introducing my concept of 'feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces'. Following an overview of the concept of 'public space', I draw on three literatures to develop my concept: Fraser's (1990) notion of subaltern feminist counterpublics, recent work on digital counterpublics (Salter, 2013; Wånggren, 2016; Rúdólfsdóttir and Jóhannsdóttir, 2018), and geographical understandings of relational space (Massey, 2005) and hybridity (De Souza e Silva, 2006). Through developing the concept of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces, I hope to develop a better understanding of the complexity of spaces of feminist resistance and how they shape the politics of place in different cities. My concept extends a situated approach to analyse how particular feminist activisms are enacted and embodied in place, even as they are connected with others elsewhere through new media to create a geopolitics of solidarity.

2.6.1. Alternative Counterpublics: Resisting Masculinist public space

Public space has been traditionally framed as a democratic space open to all and is often assumed to be the location of politics and the public sphere (Smith and Low, 2006). Both the terms 'public space' and 'public sphere' are often used interchangeably even though they are quite distinct, if interrelated, concepts (Bodnar, 2015). The 'public sphere' was defined by philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1989) as emerging alongside public or semi-public spaces such as coffee houses in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, where citizens could engage in critical political debate. These gatherings became 'the sphere of

private people who come together as a public' to use 'reasoned' discussion to identify the common good (p 27).

Such understandings of the public sphere were founded on the archetype of the white, well-educated, middle-class, 'rational' male citizen (Asen & Brouwer, 2001). Feminist critical theorist Nancy Fraser (1990; 2014a) critiqued idealised conceptualisations of the liberal public sphere as replete with exclusions along gender, sexuality, race and class lines. Around the same time, feminist geographers revealed how space, rather than a mere backdrop for social action, is produced through social relations, specifically unequal gender power relations (Massey, 1994). In particular, they highlighted how public urban space was heavily gendered: women's voices were traditionally absent from planning and decision-making regarding the physical design of the city, which has developed according to masculinist ideals, needs and desires (Rose, 1993; Bondi, 1993; Massey, 1994). Far from being 'an emptiness which enables free and equal speech' (Massey, 2005: 152), or space of open and democratic political engagement, feminist geographers highlighted how the urban landscape is shaped by power relations and marked by multiple barriers to participation based on gender, race, and class. They also demonstrated how gendered divisions of private (feminine) and public (masculine) life were mapped onto divisions between public and private space (McDowell, 1999). Excluded from public spaces of political debate and economic power, women were relegated to the private space of the home, which was framed as a-political (McDowell, 1999; Pain, 2014). Moreover, violence, and fear of violence, was (and is) used to restrict women's access to public urban space and control their mobility (Pain, 1991; Koskela, 1997; Datta, 2016).

While this research demonstrated the ways that patriarchal power relationships may shape and dominate public urban spaces, other research also documents how women are not passive-citizen subjects. From a post-structural perspective, power can be understood as both domination and resistance, rather than unidirectional; as such it is inherently spatial, diffuse and entangled (Foucault, 1979; 1980; Sharp et al, 2002). Domination and resistance are not polar opposites but exist at the same time within the same space: one always contains 'the seeds of the other' (Sharp et al, 2002: 20). Women continue to resist gendered power relations and their resultant limitations and exclusions through everyday forms of spatial resistance in the form of both individual acts and organised collective actions (Koskela 1997; Datta, 2016; Whitson, 2018). Despite obstacles, feminist urban activists both past and present have 'reclaimed' public spaces to transgress gender norms and claim a (safe and equal) 'right to the city' (cf. Lefebvre, 1996 [1968]) as well as carved out their own spaces of resistance (Whitson, 2018).

To consider the ways in which feminists engage in practices, build community, and create spaces of resistance, an understanding of hybridity is crucial, wherein urban space, bodies and technology are co-constituted. Feminists use different strategies at multiple scales to call attention to everyday forms of violence and change existing public spaces, which are masculinist and exclusive, to become more inclusive. They create alternative spaces of belonging, and forge multiscalar connections simultaneously. I therefore understand public space as at once created and produced by bodies, materiality, and digital practice. I argue that feminist spaces of resistance and solidarity are

always hybrid. The hybrid counterpublic spaces they create are transformative by providing new spatial imaginaries of the city.

My arguments build upon and extend the work of feminist scholars and geographers who highlight the hybridity of spaces created by feminist activists. Fraser (1990; 2014a) uses the concept of subaltern counterpublic spheres to describe examples of feminist contestation. Alternative counterpublics emerge where 'members invent and circulate counter-discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs' (Fraser, 2014a: 67). She draws on feminist subaltern counterpublics of the late 20th century as an example of how those traditionally excluded from spaces of public debate created their own political spaces in which they could describe their social reality and forge new subjectivities. Examples of subaltern counterpublics spheres included independent feminist media, conferences, festivals, and bookshops (Fraser, 1990; 2014a; Palczewski, 2001). Fraser (1990) highlights how the emancipatory potential of subaltern counterpublic spheres lies in their 'dual character': 'on the one hand, they function as spaces of withdrawal and regroupment, on the other hand, they also function as bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed toward wider publics' (p. 68).

These alternative counterpublics functioned as political spaces of empowerment and support that also engaged with wider publics to confront dominant narratives about women's lives and experiences circulating in mainstream media and politics. Fraser's (1990; 2014a) primary focus is on the *discursive* function of counterpublic spheres, specifically how they forge new political subjectivities and break down the boundaries between the public and

the private: for example, how activists used consciousness-raising groups to reframe the personal as political. Feminist counterpublics enabled women to interpret their experiences of individual sexist acts and misogynistic attitudes as part of a systemic problem. Furthermore, through sustained discursive contestation with hegemonic public spheres, feminist counterpublics succeeded in making issues traditionally considered a discussion behind closed doors, for example domestic violence, a matter of public concern (ibid). Through their actions, feminists raised awareness about 'everyday' issues as politically relevant, eroding the divide between public and private space that, as feminist geographers have argued, served to obscure women's oppression (McDowell, 1999; Pain, 2014).

Fraser's concept of feminist counterpublics advanced our understandings of subjectivities and subaltern feminisms. However, she does not explicitly theorise space. She refers to some of the spatialities of feminist counterpublics, including their physical locations, providing examples where feminist activists gathered, for example cafés, bookshops, libraries, and women's centres. But these are not developed into an engagement with the embodied, material and indeed digital aspects of these spaces of feminist counterpublicity. As I move to explore in the following two sections, feminisms, I argue, are formed in and through spaces that are created by and constituted through the intersection of embodiment, digital and material practices.

2.6.2. From Subaltern to Digital to Hybrid Feminist Counterpublic Spaces

In more recent years, feminist scholars have developed Fraser's theory of alternative counterpublics by introducing the term 'digital counterpublics'. This concept has recently been applied to the ways that feminist activists now use

the Internet to create alternative digital communities and discursive political spaces (Salter 2013; Rúdólfsdóttir and Jóhannsdóttir, 2018). Early critiques of the Internet as a space in which alternative counterpublics could emerge highlighted issues with security and access, limiting the Internet's democratic potential (Palczewski, 2001). Despite these early concerns, an increasing number of feminist scholars are once again describing the possibilities of the digital realm as a potential space for the development of feminist counterpublics.

Salter (2013) argues that digital counterpublics emerging on Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms challenge the established 'monopoly on speech' that characterised the old media (p. 226). Writing from a criminal justice perspective, Salter reveals how digital counterpublics can emerge as spaces of online storytelling where women articulate experiences of sexual assault in ways previously disallowed to them in the 'homosocial' institutions of the hegemonic public sphere, such as in the courts and mainstream media (Salter, 2013: 238). Women used digital counter-publics to seek justice and retribution, disseminating information about incidents of sexual violence, communicating their suffering, engaging in political and ethical debate, and at times even influencing court decisions regarding ongoing cases (ibid). Others use the concept of digital counterpublics to describe how feminist knowledge networks and communities of resistance are fostered within specially designed feminist digital platforms. These spaces enable women to build 'a grassroots-based feminist education' where activists engage with and learn from each other (Wånggren, 2016: 412). Finally, the 'dual function' of digital feminist counterpublics describes how, using social media, activists are forging their

own communities while also drawing the attention of the mainstream media to widen their discursive impact; challenging predominantly masculinist narratives of women's sexuality (Salter, 2013; Rúdólfsdóttir and Jóhannsdóttir, 2018).

This more recent research relates specifically to how feminist identities are forged and narratives around sexual violence communicated and challenged online. Similar to Fraser's earlier discussion, these scholars focus primarily on the discursive, yet enhanced and online nature of modern feminist counterpublics. While the contributions of digitality to feminist subjectivities is significant, this scholarship again overlooks the hybrid nature and continued significance of relational spatialities, including the embodied actions and material interventions of modern feminist activists and how these are often used to draw attention to a variety of gendered oppressions in different locations. Indeed, as my empirical research demonstrates, public and site-specific art is a central tactic accompanying the digital activities of feminist activists.

Public art, understood as art that exists outside the gallery in public space (Schuermans et al, 2012) and as art that has an impact on the 'public sphere' (Radice, 2018), is known for provoking strong responses because of its visibility or 'inescapability' (Sharp et al, 2005: 1001). In my research, I draw upon recent works by geographers, such as Harriet Hawkins (2012), who examine the 'remapping of the geographies of art, resituating it beyond studio and gallery space' (p. 53). Public art, in the form of monuments, statues and buildings, has traditionally reflected the values of dominant powers (ibid). However, public art can also be used to subvert and challenge traditional power

relations embedded in the urban landscape when it is seized as a tool by those who have traditionally been excluded, serving as 'a tactic of the dispossessed' (Creswell, 1996: 47), in this case women. I am specifically interested in artivism, as opposed to political art, because it mounts a direct challenge to dominant social structures and promotes inclusive social change (Vilar, 2019; Zebracki, 2020). Activist use of public art, or 'public artivism', takes place outside galleries and institutions, confronting and disrupting normative meanings of public space, rendering socio-spatial inequalities visible and creating spaces for 'meaningful encounter' (Zebracki, 2020:143). Feminist artivism is specifically used to challenge masculine dominance within art institutions and to move women's self-expression beyond 'niche spaces' in which it is so often confined, claiming 'ownership of the spaces where art is created and social norms are shaped' (Vanina et al, 2018:109). Feminist artivism is concerned with empowering women, both the artivists themselves as well as participants and audiences, 'to tell their stories in their own words and voices' (ibid) in a world where women's voices have been systematically silenced, overlooked or undervalued.

Public art increasingly invites reactions, engagement, and participation through new technologies such as social media (Zebracki, 2017; Zebracki and Luger, 2019; O'Hara, 2020). Recently, geographical scholars have examined how technology has created new and innovative ways for the public sphere to engage with cultural objects and artworks (Rose, 2015; Zebracki, 2017; Radice, 2018), how socially networked public art has resulted in user-created content as well as in-situ protest (Zebracki, 2017) and how memes, gifs, and other digital artistic artefacts have been used in the context of populist, particularly

right-wing politics (Zebracki and Luger, 2019). However, the emancipatory potential of hybrid forms of artivism has remained under-researched. In this study, examples of feminist public artivism, therefore, need to be examined as combinations of the physical and the virtual (cf. Zebracki, 2017: 441). Through engaging in artivist practice across a range of spaces, be they material or virtual, or, as I argue, a combination of both, women re-inscribe their identities, imagine new forms of community, and address the (gendered) use of public space (cf. Sharp et al, 2005). As part of hybrid feminist counterpublic space, then, hybrid forms of feminist public artivist practice can serve as powerful visual tools that counter masculinist and hegemonic visual representations and narratives of women's lives and bodies at multiple scales; disrupt masculinist understandings of public urban space and mobilise activists in their localities to demand a more inclusive city.

The complex ways in which the literatures on digital counterpublics and public artivism include embodied and material practices questions the imagined divide between 'online' and 'offline' space, a divide which can obscure the multiple ways that modern-day feminists challenge and resist gendered power relations in place. The lack of attention to the hybrid spatialities of feminist counterpublics overlooks how the politics of place remain important, even in a globalised world. This PhD, by extending the concept of counterpublics through engaging with geographical understandings of hybridity of bodies, place, space, and art develops a greater understanding of the impact of modern feminist resistance in different cities.

2.6.3. Places, Spaces and Bodies as Hybrid: Insights from Feminist Geographers

The term 'hybrid' broadly refers to a fluidity between phenomena that are commonly understood as occupying a binary or dualistic relationship with each other (Kwan, 2004). Geographers have adopted hybridity to describe 'more-than-human geographies' including the complex intermingling of nature-society (Whatmore, 2002; Kwan, 2004), but the term has also been used elsewhere to challenge dualisms between categories such as global-local, coloniser-colonised and human-machine (Haraway, 1991; Bhabha, 1994). Most recently, the term 'hybrid' has also been adopted by urban theorists and geographers to address the interface between material and digital space (De Souza e Silva, 2006; Wilken, 2009). In the context of this PhD thesis, I use the concept of 'hybrid' in this way: to challenge divisions between the digital and material from a geographical approach, which means to think and act relationally, through local and global processes and networks simultaneously. This geographical understanding of hybridity is weaved throughout this thesis and evident in the way that I, and the many feminist geographers and theorists I draw upon in my work, understand the body, space, and place: as hybrid constellations of both social relations and technology (Haraway, 1991; Massey, 1991; 2005; Rose, 1993). My dissertation introduces the concept of co-constitutive hybridity to expand the theory of digital counterpublics through understandings of feminist activism.

My analysis of the actions of feminist activists specifically reflects the work of geographers who have critically examined the corporeal, political, and social potentialities of the body (Rose, 1993; Shilling 1993; Longhurst 2001). Feminist geographer Gillian Rose (1993) argues that bodies are of paramount

importance in understandings of scale, boundaries, space, self and other. The human body is where individuals express and inscribe their personal and shared identities, and through which they carry out numerous tasks, from daily routines to political actions and artistic performances. As interdisciplinary scholars, feminist geographers draw on gender studies, psychology, sociology, and philosophy to theorise these relationships between the physicality of the body, human subjectivity, and the psychosocial and political contexts of embodiment. These include materialist understandings of the fleshly body as defining the boundaries of experience and subjectivity (Grosz, 1992) but also post-structural accounts of bodies as discursively produced and performed, as sites of disciplinary power upon which meanings, morals, values and laws are inscribed (Foucault, 1979; 1980) and as subject to normalising practices that are enacted to produce a specifically gendered subjectivity (Butler, 1990).

Geographers contribute to these arguments by highlighting how place, space and bodies are relational; they are co-constituted and always in process (Rose, 1993; Longhurst, 2001; Massey, 2005). Space, as stated earlier, is produced through social relations, while place is the locus where these relations interweave: place is forged out of multiple meanings, identities and complex networks of relationships that range from the local to the global, never static, and always changing (Massey, 1991; 2005). Rose (1993) draws on this fluidity when she describes the relationality between bodies and space: this relationality is not something which takes place between pre-existing actants. Instead, she specifically draws on Judith Butler's (1990) theory of performativity and thus sees these relationalities as performed. These relationalities are performed by the body and constituted through their

repetitive nature and this produces space (ibid). Bodies, therefore, produce and interact with space to forge subjectivities and 'bring place into being' (Johnston, 2009: 326). Although bodies, space and places are socially constructed, they also have an 'undeniable materiality'; they are neither clearly stable nor separable (Longhurst, 2001: 8). In this respect, then, I argue that the relationship between the body, digital space and place is no different, especially when we move towards hybrid understandings of public spaces and the body that incorporate the use of new technologies.

People communicate and connect with others through their embodied physicality in a particular place and can also be emotionally and socially co-present with others in different spaces and places using mobile technology and social media platforms (Willis and Aurigi, 2011). Hybrid space refers to the embodied merging of physical, emotional, and digital geographies through the use of mobile phones and other mobile technologies as social devices (De Souza e Silva, 2006). The Internet is no longer a static 'thing' that is 'accessed' at a fixed point, such as a desktop computer, or a separate space that we 'enter' (ibid). Users, through mobile technology, are continually connected to others in different locations, bringing their social networks with them as their bodies move through physical space (ibid). Understanding space as hybrid resonates with earlier feminist engagements with the body and technology (Haraway, 1985; 1991; Hayles, 1999; 2006). For example, Donna Haraway's (1985) earlier concept of 'the cyborg' as the embodied experience of using technology that considers more fluid relations between the human and non-human and between the material and the virtual. Haraway used the language of hybridity and presented the cyborg as a challenge to distinctions between human and

machine. She claimed that we are all 'fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs' (Haraway, 1985: 66). However, Hayles (2006) writes, the cyborg is now somewhat outdated as a tool to understand the world in which we live because 'it is not networked enough' (p.159). While Hayles (2006) argues that the relationality between technology and the body as proposed by Haraway (1985; 1991) remains as relevant as ever, she highlights how programmable and networked technologies that have emerged since the late 1980s have resulted in more subtle and widespread effects on people's brains and subjectivities, as well as in politics and economies at multiple scales. My understanding of feminist activism draws on these subtle relationalities between the body, space, place, and technology as outlined here.

Considering space and bodies as hybrid allows us to re-evaluate the emancipatory potential of embodied material interventions into public urban space, which have become 'stretched' through digital practice (Zebracki, 2017; Zebracki and Luger, 2019). It also allows us to acknowledge the materialities of digital practice at multiple scales. I propose that hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces emerge where feminist activists gather (digitally and materially) to express their needs and name their oppressions. My concept of 'hybrid counterpublic spaces' develop where feminists make visible such oppressions through re-claiming, re-shaping, re-naming, and re-imagining public urban space through embodied practice.

Hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces are produced through the embodied actions of feminists in place, responding to both the situated politics of their struggles, but also connecting with other spaces and places, expanding the potential for acts of solidarity across borders. Rather than seek a utopian

narrative, I understand feminist activisms as possibly resulting in emancipatory politics. My evaluation of feminist counterpublic spaces as hybrid also acknowledges how power, as domination and resistance, is itself hybrid; to paraphrase Sharp et al (2002) they can exist at the same time within the same hybrid space. Within such spaces of feminist resistance, there is always the potential for domination. In the subsequent empirical chapters, I outline how the hybrid nature of feminist counterpublic spaces have transformed, in a variety of ways, how we might do feminist activism and art in particular localities while also forging links with activists and artivists across borders.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I began by drawing on Mizielińska and Kulpa's (2011) work on activist geotemporalities to provide an alternative way of understanding feminist activisms . A feminist geotemporal approach recognises how feminist activism is made in place, taking into account the unique social and geopolitical context in which feminisms emerge. Taking such an approach may offer a more robust analysis of the development of feminist activisms that avoids the universalising tendencies of the wave analogy. I then outlined the traditional 'wave theory' that assumes the Anglo-American model as the norm for understanding feminisms, an approach that has emerged yet again in recent discussions of 'fourth wave' feminisms (Munro, 2013; Maclaran, 2015). I engaged with critiques of the wave model and illustrated how it promotes a particularly homogenous Anglo-American conceptualisation of feminisms, a positivist notion of progressive time and obscures the multiplicities and complexities of feminisms at any one moment in time in any one place

(Fernandes, 2010; Hewitt, 2010). I described how neither Germany nor Ireland fit this model, and instead discussed the particular geotemporalities of each country, as divided into West/East and as a postcolonial state, describing multiple activisms since the 1960-70s to the present-day according to feminist political generations.

While a geotemporal framework advances a more situated approach to modern feminist activisms, my concept of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces remains sensitive to the ways in which activists' initiatives create the possibilities for more inclusive public urban spaces. I drew upon feminist geographers' discussions of the body, space, and place, as well as geographical engagements with hybridity to extend Fraser's (1990) theory of feminist counterpublic spheres. I develop Fraser's original concept, and more recent feminist literature on digital counterpublics, by identifying the significance of embodied and material practices of feminist activists across a range of spaces, places, and scales. The concept of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces allows us to understand how feminist activisms are made in place while simultaneously being enacted across scales enabled by technologies. Their initiatives shape and are shaped by both local struggles and the increasingly rapid exchange of information and tactics with other feminist activists worldwide. These exchanges can have both positive and negative aspects as I discuss in my empirical chapters.

Overall, this chapter provided the feminist geographical theoretical framework upon which this thesis is based, one which 'pays attention to the specificities of time and place' but is also 'not parochially limited to a single feminist formation and takes as its founding principle the multiplicity of

heterogeneous feminist movements and the conditions that produce them'
(Friedman, 1999: 5). However, I stop short of Friedman's suggestion to create a-
new 'feminism in the singular' (p. 5) and instead insist upon the multiplicity,
complexity, and fluidity of feminisms. Acknowledging the geotemporalities and
diverse hybridity of feminist activisms in Germany and Ireland informed my
methodological design and demanded a more flexible approach to my study. In
the next chapter, I discuss my transnational feminist research design, types of
methods employed, case studies, positionality, and ethics.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Guided by my geotemporal framework, in this chapter I outline my methodological approach, a transnational feminist research design, and discuss the range of qualitative methods I employed to answer my research questions listed in Chapter One. Transnational feminist research avoids enforcing 'comparative sameness' across differently located case studies (Browne et al, 2017). Drawing upon feminist critiques of hegemonic 'global' (Western) feminisms that 'flatten' out difference (Mohanty, 1984; 2013; Kaplan et al, 1999; 2013; Swarr and Nagar), such an approach pays attention to the historical, political, and cultural contexts of particular struggles against oppression. As outlined in Chapter One and detailed in this chapter, I examined five feminist activist groups and projects that emerged in Berlin and Dublin (2015-2018) and called attention to specific forms of everyday violence against women, and in this chapter I describe how I remained sensitive to their particular geotemporal contexts. Moreover, because of my focus on anti-VAW feminist activists, I have included a more flexible temporal approach to recognise the 'alternate timescales' of participants (McArdle, 2019). As I describe, my transnational feminist approach involved forging connections and building relationships with a variety of different feminist groups, artists, and projects in several different locations.

This chapter has eight sections. In Section 3.2, I reflect on my initial motivations for choosing a qualitative feminist research approach, and the

reasons why I changed the framing of my work from a Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) design to a transnational research design. In Section 3.3, I introduce each case study, how I selected them, and how I recruited participants. In Section 3.4, I outline the qualitative methods I used to collect primary data, including (participant) observation and in-depth interviews, and in Section 3.5, I outline the secondary data collected to add depth to my primary data. Section 3.6 discusses data analysis methods coding, Bacchi's (2012) feminist discourse analysis, and visual data analysis. In Section 3.7, I reflect on the ethical considerations that guided my research and my positionality as an activist/researcher. Finally, I conclude in Section 3.8. by examining how the challenges and successes I experienced using this particular research design might contribute to debates on feminist methodologies. Overall, this chapter explains the demands and benefits of doing transnational feminist research.

3.2. A Transnational Feminist Research Design

One of my main research objectives is to explore the complexity and multiplicity of feminist spatial imaginaries and identities, an objective that includes a commitment to feminist principles through my research practice. This means maintaining an awareness of how feminisms are made and re-made in place. In this section, after briefly mentioning guiding principles of feminist research, I discuss how I reframed my initial proposed feminist participatory action research (FPAR) design to instead embrace a more flexible and geographically sensitive transnational feminist research approach.

An important aspect of engaging in feminist research is challenging traditional assumptions around knowledge. Historically, qualitative approaches

have been greatly influenced by feminist, anti-racist, post-colonial and anti-heterosexist researchers who challenged what counted as 'knowledge'. Feminists highlighted how science and traditional social science methodologies excluded or dismissed women's experiences and activities as unworthy of serious academic investigation (Oakley, 1998; Harding and Norbert, 2005). Donna Haraway (1988) and Sandra Harding (1991), for example, are critical of masculinist notions of objectivity and what counts as 'good' research. They argue that knowledge is always influenced by the context in which it is produced. Knowledge is 'constructed, partial, situated and positioned' (Hubbard et al, 2002: 8). Therefore, disembodied, all-knowing researchers do not simply go 'out into the field' and 'collect data' to then analyse. Such an 'unmarked claim to knowledge' allowed 'specifically (white, bourgeois, heterosexual) masculine concepts, whether related to men or men's fantasies of Woman, to masquerade as universal ones' (Rose, 1993: 62).

As discussed in Chapter Two, as there is no homogenous 'feminism' (Olesen, 2011), there is therefore no single way of carrying out feminist research. Feminist researchers seek to broaden the scope for research to include the voices and experiences of those traditionally on the margins, interrogating the relationship between researcher and participant. The diverse experiences, contexts, actions and emotions of feminist activists and artists are central to this PhD thesis. As both a feminist and an activist, I sought to avoid reproducing patterns of oppression through my research. Rather than treat people merely as research subjects to extract data from, I wanted to value participants' embodied and local expertise and knowledges (Oakley 1998), and to treat feminist activists as experts in their own right. Doing so means to co-

produce knowledge and remain attentive to how individuals and groups define themselves, their struggles, and their work, rather than project already existing academic categories onto them. Such an approach helps researchers understand the lived contexts of place (Till, 2009).

While reflexivity is an important feminist methodology that helps researchers remain aware of their own biases and be respectful of local perspectives and knowledges, as Rose (1997) states, to assume that the researcher can maintain 'transparent reflexivity' while doing research is a 'goddess trick': the researcher assumes she is a powerful agent that can somehow peruse a knowable 'landscape' of power (p. 311). Power relations are never completely visible and are spatially organised in complex ways. Rose suggests instead that we take the lead from Gibson-Graham (1994) and examine how researcher and researched are mutually constituted and shaped by the research process, in addition to recognising the 'gaps' and uncertainties of doing feminist research (Rose, 1997). It is these 'gaps' and uncertainties of doing feminist research that I had to navigate throughout my fieldwork.

I began my pilot field research in Berlin in 2015 with the intention of using a FPAR approach (Reid and Frisby, 2006; Langan and Morton, 2009; Cahill et al, 2010). I had originally proposed (and received Irish Research Council Funding for) using participatory methods, such as volunteer work in the form of an unpaid internship, with multiple local branches of an international anti-street harassment network, Hollaback!. I would also conduct participant observation (PO) and in-depth interviews following each internship. My research would be conducted in partnership and with the full permission of activists/artists, and I would be transparent about my researcher position, with

a goal of 'giving back' research data and findings to the local groups for their own purposes (Cole, 1991). But as my research progressed, the specific needs and contexts of the activist groups and artists I studied or wanted to research changed, affecting my selection of case studies and methods. I had to recognise and respond to these needs and contexts, as well as my shifting research and personal relationships to these groups and artivists.

As Sharp (2005) explains, my experience is rather typical: the research process is 'embodied, messy and complex' (p. 305). Researchers are shaped by the research process and are not 'all-knowing' (Rose, 2001). As a result, all objectives, expectations, and projects adapt in the process of conducting research. This was particularly true during and following my pilot research. During my voluntary internship with the Berlin chapter of Hollaback! (H!Berlin), I carried out a single interview with former Hollaback!Dublin (H!Dublin) organiser, Jenny Dunne (name used with permission) to get a sense of the group and the possibilities for using a similar approach to study the group. By this moment in time, in February 2016, the H!Dublin group had become defunct due to both concerns with the international network itself (as I discuss in Chapter Six) but mostly due to different feminist activist priorities in Ireland, in particular a renewal of the pro-choice movement. The volunteering I was doing (and hoped to do elsewhere) was helpful to one activist group low on resources and in need of someone who could help with the day-to-day running of the group but was not possible for other feminist groups that did not have the time and resources for engaging me as an intern.

After the interview with Jenny, I had to re-think my research approach and understandings of VAW in the Irish context and decided to switch my focus

to research the emerging discussions around obstetric violence (see Chapters Four, Seven and Eight). To analyse multiple grassroots groups in formation, I decided to focus on artistic processes and outcomes, which called for observation, visual analysis, and possibly interviews. I realised that attempting to implement any comparative research design, even a feminist participatory one, would be insensitive to the very different contexts in which feminist movements were emerging in the cities I was studying. Moreover, comparing branches of a networked group in different countries with different political, social, and cultural environments risked re-creating a hierarchy of feminisms, in which one might be held up as more superior or more advanced than another. As a result, rather than a systematic investigation of multiple Hollaback! chapters, I began to develop a geotemporal understanding of everyday anti-VAW activist movements in two 'Western' European cities.

It was considerations such as these that led me to question the traditional social scientific concept of comparative research (Yin, 1994) from a feminist and more geographically sensitive research design. In particular, I found that a transnational feminist approach that 'seeks the spatial nuances and complexities *within as well as between places*' (Browne et al, 2017, my emphasis) best suited this study. Drawing on Browne et al's (2017) work, I define a geographical transnational feminist research approach as critical of traditional comparative research designs that seek 'similarities and differences by using or creating data sets that are "comparable", i.e. produced through the same research tools applied in the same way in different places' (Browne et al, 2017: 1384). Transnational feminist epistemologies recognise multiple subjectivities, resist dichotomies, recognise flows of knowledge between the

local and global, and take the politics of place seriously (Swarr and Nagar, 2010). I advance this feminist geographically sensitive approach to data collection, by adopting a complementary flexible activist research design (McArdle, 2019), whereby methods are used and re-worked in relation to their specific contexts and intersubjective relations, so as to remain sensitive to the specific geotemporalities of each project.

To summarise, my transnational feminist research design uses a place-based, rather than locationally comparative, research design to recognise the significance and complexity of feminist movements – from political performance and street art to small, non-hierarchical feminist groups – while acknowledging their relative geographies and interconnections across spaces and times. As I discuss in the next section, a geographical transnational feminist research design enables the researcher to interact with activists, artists and participants in a way that responds to their needs, and also their unique social, political and cultural contexts.

3.3. Case Studies and Recruiting Participants

To carry out an in-depth investigation of contemporary feminist actions calling attention to violence against women in Europe, I focused on a small number of cases to draw out detailed insights (Hardwick, 2009; Herbert, 2010). I wanted to document each group's experiences, struggles against, and understandings of both VAW and contemporary feminist activist practice. I ended up researching four case studies: the anti-street harassment group Hollaback!Berlin (Berlin. 2015-16), the pro-choice artist-activist group home|work.collective (Dublin, 2016-18), the pro-choice 'Repeal the 8th' mural (Dublin, 2016-18), and the anti-

harassment queer feminist group, She*Claim (Berlin, 2016-18). Table 3.1 lists

the time frames and respective methods used for each feminist initiative

researched. In Table 3.1, I also include the interview mentioned above with

H!Dublin Jenny Dunne because it represented a crucial turning point in my

research process.

Table 3.1. Case studies and corresponding methods.

Case Study	Location	Date	Methods
Hollaback!Berlin (Chapters Five and Six)	Berlin, Germany	February 2015 to August 2016	- Volunteer internship (Feb-May 2015) - Documentary analysis of group documents/policies - Participant observation of events. - In-depth interview with Julia Brilling (July 2015). - Follow-up interview with Julia Brilling (August 2016). - Social media analysis of FB/Twitter/Tumblr pages (2015-2018).
She*Claim (Chapter Six)	Berlin, Germany	June 2016 to May 2018	- Participant observation of two events (June 2016; January 2017) - In-depth interview with V, She*Claim (May 2018). - Social media analysis (2016-2018)
home|work.collective (Chapter Seven)	Dublin, Ireland	April 2016 to March 2018	- Participant observation including performances in Dublin and Berlin (April 2016; June 2016). - In-depth interview with Siobhán Clancy (April 2016). - Follow-up interview with Siobhán Clancy (March 2018). - Social media analysis (2016-2018).
Maser 'Repeal the 8th Mural' (Chapter Eight)	Dublin, Ireland	July 2016 to May 2018	- Observation of mural (July 2016; April 2018) - In-depth interview with Andrea Horan of The HunReal Issues (August 2016) - In-depth interview with Cian O'Brien, The Project Arts Centre (May 2018). - Social media analysis (2016-2018) - Visual analysis (June 2016; April 2018)
Hollaback!Dublin	Dublin, Ireland	February 2016	Interview with former H!Dublin organiser, Jenny Dunne (February 2016)

To recruit participants, I used existing networks and a process of 'snowball sampling' (Browne, 2005). Before I started the PhD, I was a feminist activist living in Berlin and had previously lived in Dublin, and already 'embedded' in feminist activist networks. Similar to Browne's (2005) research experience in Brighton, participants of this study were able to look into both my research and activist credentials (through social media, through word of mouth, through other means), and also 'check out' who I was as a person, prior to engaging with me. In addition, my supervisors used their networks to introduce me to possible research partners and participants. For example, I was introduced to Siobhán Clancy of home|work.collective (see Chapter Eight) in 2013, and to Cian O'Brien, the director of the Project Arts Centre in 2015, through my supervisor Prof. Karen Till. Karen met Siobhán at an event in Cork, whereas Project Arts is a national organisation that has collaborated with Maynooth Geography on previous PhD research projects.

With my own and these new connections, I was linked into participant's networks through using social networks of participants to get access to specific populations. Snowballing often began after carrying out field research with one group or project, whereby key actors from a specific group would introduce me to other possible participants. For example, Siobhán Clancy later put me in contact with Vanessa Baker of Hollaback!Dublin through email shortly after I met her. After an informal meeting with Vanessa in person about my potential research, I later emailed her to organise an interview with H!Dublin co-organiser, Jenny Dunne.

How participants learned about me and my research potentially influenced how they interacted with me and ultimately the data that was

produced. This was particularly true in Dublin, a small capital city of 1.3 million,

compared to Berlin's 3.7 million, where those involved in feminist activism (and

arguably, most social movements) are often known to each other. After having

been introduced to Siobhán in 2013, I found, when doing social media work in

2016, that her group home|work.collective was organising a performance. At

this stage, as Siobhán knew me, not only through my supervisor but also

through my involvement in pro-choice activism and many mutual friends. This

meant I was able to easily re-connect with her and gain access to the group. She

also invited me to engage in a performance, which was unexpected. This is just

one example of the role social networks played in sampling my research

participants and in developing feminist collaborative research-practice

opportunities.

In addition to social networks, I connected to various feminist activist

groups and projects to which I had no existing social networks through social

media. I had varying levels of success with recruiting participants in this way.

For example, during the period of carrying out my field research in Dublin with

home|work.collective, the Maser mural appeared (Chapter Eight). While the

artist Maser was contactable through Twitter and Instagram, he did not reply to

my attempts to connect with him – an unsurprising response for street artists,

in part due to the legally complex nature of their work (Cresswell, 1997). Also,

at the time, he must have received numerous such requests for interviews due

to the mural's popularity and media coverage. After reading an online article

about Maser's work (O'Sullivan, 2016), I found out about The HunReal Issues,

the group that commissioned the mural. In the group's Facebook, their email

was available in the 'About' section and thus I was able to contact them and

arrange a Skype interview. I also interviewed another key stakeholder in the project, Cian O'Brien, who, as mentioned above, is the manager of the Project Arts Centre, which hosted the mural on its exterior wall and related artistic-activist events.

While snowball recruiting of participants can help produce rich, detailed understandings of case studies, it may result in exclusions because of the nature of the personal relationships between the researcher and researched (Browne, 2005). Because I began with my own and my supervisor's activist and artistic networks, the populations I accessed were relatively well-educated, and many were white women in their early to mid-thirties. However, as Browne (2005) states, this does not make this form of sampling invalid: 'All recruitment procedures have the potential to exclude as well as include' (p. 53). Moreover, I should note here that participants are more diverse than meets the eye in terms of class, sexuality, political leanings, and nationality. Because I worked in two countries, not all were Anglophone feminists, and learning from these feminists directly enabled me to develop my geotemporal approach.

In the next section, I outline the specific qualitative methods used for each case study and indicate how I responded to the specific contexts of each initiative and/or participant.

3.4. Methods for Generating Primary Data

Qualitative research is about depth rather than generalisability (Herbert, 2010; Lincoln and Denzin, 2011), resulting in detailed descriptions of the concrete experiences of life within a particular social setting or culture that provide deeper insights into understanding social rules and spatial relations (Dwyer and Limb, 2001; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). As listed in Table 3.1, the

methods I used consisted of a variety of qualitative methods that differed according to the specific geographical context and relationships between myself and the participant. The range of qualitative methods used reflects the complexities and practical realities of researching different feminist projects within their different social, historical, and political contexts, and how I was guided by transnational feminist epistemologies and my emergent geotemporal approach. The variety and richness of activists' and artists' tactics called for a corresponding variety of methods to analyse them, which I now discuss.

The main methods I used to collect primary data (Kara, 2013) were participant observation and in-depth interviews with group members, activists, and artists. To gain an understanding of the particular contexts of feminist activisms and to centre feminist activists and artists voices, including their own understandings of what they do, I used both observation, which required me to interpret what is happening, and interviews to gain 'self-reports' of participant's experiences and thoughts (Kitchin and Tate, 1999: 219). I adapted these methods when needed. During primary data collection and analysis, I took fieldnotes, wrote memos and documented the case studies through photography.

3.4.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation was the most significant method used to gain a deeper understanding of groups and their inner workings and motivations because it revealed important insights into what people said about their work as well as what they did in practice (Balsiger and Lambelet, 2014). Participant observation is a common ethnographic method which involves spending time with people, a community or a group and collecting data in settings where the

researcher observes and/or takes part in the everyday to special activities of participants (DeWalt and Musante, 2010; Watson and Till, 2010). It involves both observing and engaging with participants, but also taking fieldnotes, sketches, photographs, and videos (Laurier, 2010). It is used to produce contextualised research which often results in a tacit understanding of a group or community not easily articulated or recorded but that can be employed in subsequent analysis (DeWalt and Musante, 2010; Watson and Till, 2010).

Throughout participant observation, I took the time to observe activities and build relationships of trust which also allowed me to take part in activities. While participant observation is often conceived of as involving lengthy periods completely immersed in the day-to-day lives of those being researched, it is adaptable in scope depending on what/whom is being researched (Guest et al, 2013). I adapted participant observation for each case study, which ranged from longer periods in the form of a volunteer internship with H!Berlin, to specific artistic actions and activist events. As Laurier (2010) states, often the best participant observation is done by those who directly are part of or have 'tried to do/and or be part of the things they are observing' (p 118). The longest period of participant observation was in the form of a four-month volunteer internship with H!Berlin, from 2 February to 2 June 2015, as mentioned above (Table 3.1). The H!Berlin case study was unusual in that the group was open to working with researchers and indeed already had experience of this. Furthermore, the group needed people to help the everyday functioning of the group. Working as an unpaid volunteer intern was not only a research choice but also an ethical and practical choice: it allowed me to respond to the needs of

this particular group through providing them with a volunteer while allowing me to observe and participate in their work, giving me greater insights.

Before the internship, I worked with local group organiser Julia Brilling (and my supervisor) to draft a learning contract that included my objectives and goals for the internship, tasks I would do, and how many hours the internship would involve (see Appendix 1). Tasks mostly consisted of managing the group's social media, helping organise events and meetings and monitoring, editing, and publishing the stories that came in through their app and website. Julia added me to various online groups including two 'closed' or private FB groups and provided me with access and login details for the H!Berlin site. I did not use any data that was in these closed groups for ethical reasons, which I discuss in greater detail in Section 3.7. To obtain background information on the group, I engaged in a digital form of participant observation, which meant joining training webinars organised by what the local group referred to as the 'Mothership', or the Hollaback! headquarters in New York (see Chapter Six). In addition to digital tasks, I also gained insight into the group's most recent events and actions by organising, observing, and participating in the group's activities, including some of the artistic events, an open meeting or 'Holla:Salon', in March 2015 and an exhibition (after my internship officially ended) in June 2015 called Own Your Body. My involvement in these events ranged from contacting a variety of bars/cafés to organise a venue for the open meeting, coordinating, and organising a street art event both through Facebook and in-person, and manual labour such as painting backdrops and helping move furniture for the exhibition.

Doing a volunteer internship as a form of participant observation was a very productive means through which to gain a deeper understanding of these activists' experiences and struggles, which was also crucial to the interview stage. By the time it came to the interviews (described below), I already understood the role of each member in the group, their takes on the feminist activist scene in Berlin, and had a sense of their feelings, thoughts, and frustrations about being part of a wider international feminist network. A wealth of data was produced through day-to-day interactions, informal conversations, and observations, which I recorded through fieldnotes. While the participatory nature of this type of observation meant I was often treated as an 'insider' – something I explore in greater detail in Section 3.7 – I was also able to lend an under-resourced group support in the form of volunteer work. Indeed, my embodied labour was more highly valued by Julia than any potential research outputs. For her, the daily work of running the group on the ground, which for her meant providing space for women's experiences of harassment, was the single greatest priority (Brilling, interview with author, 2016).

In Dublin, for **home|work collective**, I initially used less immersive participant observation, such as responding to and analysing specific artistic and activist events in their varying spatial and temporal contexts. I moved quite smoothly between observer and participant in a way similar to H!Berlin due to the existing set of social networks I had established before conducting research. I was able to observe the group discussing their work at a seminar, but later became a participant when I took part in a performance (when it was appropriate to do so); I also supported the group by coordinating and sharing their piece with an international audience.

After meeting with Siobhán in early April 2016, she invited me to attend a Talking in Circles seminar later that month in A4 Sounds Studio, Dublin, where the group discussed their work. There I observed the group and other artists, taking fieldnotes. This initial period of observation provided me with valuable insights into the group and helped me build trust between myself and Siobhán, helping me prepare for the interview stage. Siobhán and two other members of the group invited audience members of the workshop to participate in a performed reading of the group's main piece, *The Renunciation*. Siobhán asked me personally if I would like to take part. This shift from observer to participant was significant because from that moment on Siobhán seemed to open up more about the group and relax, treating me as someone engaged with the group's work rather than someone on the outside merely looking in. I later helped organise and participate in a Berlin production of the work as I discuss in Chapter Seven.

For the Berlin group **She*Claim**, I was an audience member/observer at their events, and, with their permission, watched and took notes. I first attended a live artistic event called Alle Antworten Sind Antworten ('All Responses Are Responses') on 25 June 2016, which I came across while attending an arts festival called 48 Stunden Neukölln. At the event, I chatted informally to the organisers about the action and their group. The group projected images of Tweets in which women responded online to their harassers, and I took some photographs of the projections and was given some stickers and literature by the group. After finding their page on Facebook, I attended and took notes at other events, including a film night that I attended in January 2017. It is important to note here that following analysis of my Berlin-based data, I

decided against including an empirical chapter that focuses specifically on the details of She*Claim. The themes emerging from my analysis of the group were similar, but not as well-developed, as those that emerged from my analysis of H!Berlin. Therefore, while She*Claim is only discussed briefly in Chapter Six, my interactions with the group provided me with rich empirical data with which to consider feminist activist groups in Berlin more generally during the time of this study.

For **Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural**, I engaged in limited observation of the first completed piece but did not witness the artist create the work in-situ. The nature of this piece of street art, appearing as a guerrilla artivist action spontaneously overnight, meant observing the process of mural-painting was unlikely, unless one was involved in the action directly. As I discuss in Chapter Eight, the subsequent removal(s) of the piece limited the window for observation further. I visited the site of the mural the day before its first removal in July 2016, and both before and after the second removal in April 2018. I observed the piece from different angles and documented it through a series of photographs and documented its 'absence' by taking photos of the watermelon shape left behind by the mural's collaborators following its final removal. This observation was important because of the transient nature of the mural (see Chapter Eight).

As demonstrated above, for each main case study, the type of participation required shifted according to the nature of the project and/or the group's openness and ability to invite me as a researcher into their space. Participant observation also opened new possibilities for participation, for example bringing *The Renunciation* to Berlin (see Chapter Seven), which helped

me gain more intimate understandings of groups. I discuss my shifting

positionality with different groups and projects over the course of my field

research in Section 3.7. For each case study, the rich data produced through

participant observation was advantageous during the interview process as I

discuss in the next section. Having a background on groups and projects

enabled me to focus the detailed questions and helped build a foundation of

trust that encouraged more in-depth responses.

3.4.2. Interviews

While participant observation gave important insight into groups and projects,

interviews allowed me to discuss things which were not as obvious or

observable. Interviews allow participants to describe their situation in their

own words (Reinharz, 1992; Stringer, 1999; Kitchin and Tate, 1999). Following

a feminist methodological perspective (McDowell, 2001), I sought to use and

develop an interview technique that helped to decentre power relations

between the researcher and researched. Semi-structured interviews can

provide for some flexibility, such as allowing those interviewed to guide the

discussion (Kitchin and Tate, 1999). However, some feminist social researchers

argue that in-depth, open-ended interviews better ensure that interviewees are

given as much opportunity as possible to present events and ideas on their

terms (Stringer 1999; McDowell 2001), while being able to ask the researcher

questions as well.

In total, I carried out eight interviews: seven in-person and one online

(through Skype), as listed in Table 3.1 alongside the case studies. As evident in

Appendix 2, I used open-ended questions which allowed participants to 'speak

back' to the entire process. While the type of interview questions I used roughly

followed the same model, most questions were specific to a case study, group and/or initiative. There were personal differences also in my relationship to the person being interviewed. For H!Berlin and home|work.collective, for example, individual participants became familiar with me and got to know about my research interests long before I interviewed them. Similarly, as I became more familiar with the group and/or artist, I was better able to ask more directed questions and it was relatively easy to set up voluntary interviews.

I was very selective in targeting specific individuals to be interviewed because the groups I was researching were voluntary and I did not want to unnecessarily demand time from members who had other priorities. I decided to approach the individuals listed in Table 3.1 to ask about interviews for two reasons. First, these individuals played a central role in a group or action; for example, Julia Brilling was the branch leader of H!Berlin and Siobhán Clancy was cofounder of the home|work.collective. Secondly, they agreed to be involved with my research. Interviews varied from 30 minutes to two hours in length, and participants chose when and where we would talk. While eight open-ended interviews is a relatively small number, they contributed rich empirical detail to my PhD research. Used in combination with the ethnographic contextual detail of my (participant) observation data and with the secondary data I discuss below, these expert interviews resulted in meaningful conversations for both interviewer and interviewee.

Allowing participants to select the interview sites themselves means that, as McDowell (2001) specifically argues, we, as feminist scholars, remain mindful of the power relations between researcher and participant. Elwood and Martin (2000) note further that recognising the significance of interview venues

helps us remain sensitive to ethical concerns, including confidentiality and anonymity, while providing insights into important aspects of our research questions. For example, one participant was uncomfortable about discussing her personal experiences of abortion in any space (either public or private) unfamiliar to her, for fear of being overheard. Therefore, she selected a location where the only people who could potentially overhear were personally known to her.

In total, two interviews took place within participants' homes, and a third took place in another private location. I found these interviews to be most useful in terms of practicality and the richness of detail produced. Four of my interviews were carried out in public spaces at the request of interviewees. Two of these interviews highlighted the difficulties of interviewing in such venues, including noise and difficulties recording, that may arise when conducting interviews in public spaces. A final interview, carried out online at the request of the participant, was particularly valuable as it was more focused and had fewer disruptions.

After each interview, I wrote fieldnotes on the experience while it was fresh in my mind and later wrote reflective memos. This process helped me to jot down important topics that I later developed through further analysis or returned to in follow-up interviews. I did this before transcribing interviews and wrote another set of memos during and after transcription.

3.4.3. Fieldnotes, photos and memos

Recording can take multiple forms: fieldnotes, photographs, and sound and/or video clips (Crang and Cook, 2008). There are different ways of taking fieldnotes, from physically jotting down descriptions of key moments in a field

journal, to putting aside time in private after an event/engagement to write these up on a laptop (Taylor et al, 2015,). Both are valid ways of recording observations, and I used a combination of these, depending on what the specific situation/environment called for. Where possible – when I was equipped with a pen and paper/notebook and when it felt right for me, which varied according to the context and case study – I took physical notes during key events. When it was not, I wrote notes later. Taking notes during informal conversations with participants felt awkward because I was concerned about making the people feel as if they were distanced 'objects of knowledge' (Watson and Till, 2010). This is one of the key reasons why I took fieldnotes in private on my laptop throughout my internship with H!Berlin. Following either my daily internship tasks or meetings/events, I detailed what I did and what I observed, gathering these into weekly and monthly summaries.

Fieldnotes were also accompanied by reflective memos. Reflective memos are short essays that reflect and interpret your response to various situations during different stages of the research (Till, 2009). These are longer, more open-ended reflective and interpretive writings than fieldnotes because they scrutinise 'experiences and assumptions' and 'pay attention to processes, respond to our embodied and emotional presences' (Watson and Till, 2010: 128). Memos may also summarise descriptive fieldnotes which may come in handy when you wish to share your research findings with your research partners. At the end of the H!Berlin internship, for example, I wrote a final report based on summaries of my fieldnotes, alongside smaller reflective memos. This report summarised some of my initial findings as well as reflected

on the process of doing an internship, including its advantages and disadvantages.

At the seminar with home|work.collective, taking physical fieldnotes 'felt right' because of the particular environment: many people were taking notes as speakers presented, there were tables to lean on and those presenting anticipated notetaking because it was a public educational event. As a result, I wrote down what I observed including key remarks made during discussions in a small notebook. In contrast, when taking part in artistic events for both home|work.collective and H!Berlin, I did not take fieldnotes. This was merely a practical consideration because I was engaged in artistic practice. Kavanagh (2019) discusses a similar experience when doing and researching creative geographies, drawing upon Hawkins (2015). When I was not performing, I took photographs to document these artistic events. Upon returning home, I wrote up notes with specific details about what I noticed or what my reactions were to these events. I used the same process when observing the artist actions of She*Claim and when visiting the Maser mural: photographs seemed an appropriate way to document these particularly powerful visual and spontaneous artistic events. I felt that looking away and attempting to jot down details in a field journal when I was first responding to an artwork would distract from the experience of the piece.

In addition to generating primary data, I used different methods to collect secondary data. As I discuss in the next section, secondary data contextualised and deepen empirical results from participant observation and interviewing.

3.5. Methods for Collecting and Analysing Secondary Digital and Documentary Data

Secondary data pertains to data produced by someone else, usually for a different purpose (Schutt, 2006). Coffey (2014) points out how documents produced by organisations and groups are valuable for understanding how various actors comprehend and represent themselves. She considers these documents as '"physical traces" of social settings' (ibid: 367) that can range from policy documents, diaries, reports, minutes from meetings and pictures, to online forms of communication such as email and social media. As Coffey explains: 'documents, then, are literary, textual or visual devices that enable information to be shared and "stories" to be presented' (p. 369). The secondary data I consulted primarily took the form of online sources and material reports and publications. Both online and material documents provided additional information about each group or artist and their tactics and deepened many of the findings and themes emerging from primary data collection.

3.5.1. Collecting online data

As our lives are now mediated digitally (Bishop, 2012), social media serves as a rich source of secondary data. In particular, social media is known to be a vital source of data for those exploring marginalised voices and topics that may be considered 'sensitive' or 'illicit' that might not be normally shared in other public forums (Germain et al, 2018). For these reasons, social media served as a particularly suitable source of data for a project exploring VAW and reproductive rights. Furthermore, many of the groups and projects I analyse in this PhD thesis had a strong social media presence and were widely known for

their digital tactics; Hollaback! specifically already had scholarly analyses of these. Groups frequently published Tweets, Facebook posts, blog posts, engaged in digital campaigning and networked with other groups online. This secondary data was an important part of familiarising myself with a variety of groups as well as initiating contact with key actors. Therefore, much of what Coffey (2014) refers to as the 'physical traces' of the groups and projects I investigated existed in digital format.

I often used social media analysis to determine a project's goals, methods, and their audiences. For example, for H!Berlin, I first examined the global Hollaback! website to gather information about the history of the group and its aims. I then examined H!Berlin's local page, ran as a WordPress blog, and studied its published map of street harassment in Berlin, geo-referenced stories submitted by women who had been harassed, and posts by the group about various campaigns and actions in which they took part. I then examined their Facebook (FB) page, noting the kind of posts and content shared, the number of followers and photos from events they hosted. All of this gave me a better idea of what the group was doing, how it engaged with its community and how it used social media to strategically organise and campaign.

Despite my discovery of the home|work.collective through a FB event, the group did not have its own Facebook page. However, the event which alerted me to the group's existence, called *The Renunciation: Simultaneous Readings in Ireland and the UK*, already gave a rich account of the group's aims and explained the history of the performance. I then located the group on Twitter and Tumblr, where it had a much stronger presence, with videos, images, and files. In contrast, I learned about She*Claim through informal

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conversations with activists on-site and later found their Facebook page and online blog, both of which provided me with a significant history of the group, including a timeline of when the group formed.

For Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural, I collected a significant amount of secondary data through social media. This reflected the strategic way that social media was engaged by the mural's collaborators. In this case, social media became the object of study. I collected data on the group that commissioned the project, The HunReal Issues, and the subsequent controversy surrounding the mural on FB, Twitter posts and online newspaper articles. Later I was also able to examine various ways that people interacted with the mural and reproduced new forms of the artwork (digitally and materially) through the street artist Maser's Instagram account, where he often posted images of what people had created.

While the participatory nature of Internet technologies may eliminate some barriers to communication and give us access to a variety of actors, such as activists, politicians, and artists, it neither guarantees direct contact nor participation (Kozinets, 2009; Iacono et al, 2016). Ethical research includes informed consent which functions to protect participants who do not want to reply or are unable to do so. Both the street artist, Tatyana's Fazlalizadeh, whose work makes up part of the H!Berlin case study in Chapter Five, and Maser, whose work I discuss in Chapter Eight, chose not to respond to my request for an interview. Instead, I depended on analysing secondary data about the artists and their work in the form of newspaper articles, blog posts, and filmed interviews that I found through social media. Even though this study does not include the personal reflections of the artists on their work, the

systematic collection of detailed secondary data was adequate in providing a rigorous analysis of these respective projects.

3.5.2. Collecting documentary data

I also collected several other secondary sources produced by groups, artists, and organisations relevant to my research focus. The first of these were two key documents provided to me by H!Berlin. One was a report about laws on street harassment in many European countries, including both Germany and Ireland called Street Harassment: Know Your Rights (DLA Piper, 2014). This document was a comprehensive legal guide to street harassment created by the central Hollaback! headquarters in association with DLA Piper and several other law firms. Analysing and translating the document proved valuable, providing me with important insights into the legal context of street harassment in Germany, which was also helpful in understanding the Irish context. It also equipped me with important vocabulary about street harassment in German and the specific laws related to this everyday form of VAW that would later prove helpful for the internship. The second document was a report I analysed produced by Hollaback! HQ in collaboration with Cornell University: the first international survey on street harassment (Livingstone, 2015). I was given access to this report, which was also published online, during my volunteer internship. Both reports helped me understand the widespread nature of street harassment and gave me insight into the actions of the international Hollaback! network and how it represented itself.

I also analysed a report that belonged to home|work.collective produced as part of the funding process required by the national Irish community arts organisation CREATE (Clancy, 2016). Funded by The Irish Arts Council, CREATE

has an 'Artist in the Community Scheme', for which Siobhán was awarded a

Phase 1: Research and Development with Mentoring award. As I discuss in

Chapter Seven, this award provided Siobhán with the financial support to carry

out research and resulted in the formation of this artist-activist collective. This

report documented the motivations behind the group and the process that went

into making their two central artistic pieces, the performance *The Renunciation*

and a textile piece called *Indigo Scarves*. This document was vital in preparing

me for the primary data collection phase of the case study and in better

understanding the findings produced during this research phase.

3.6. Data Analysis

After carrying out participant observation, interviews, and collecting secondary

documents, I had a vast quantity of qualitative data in the form of interview

transcripts, fieldnotes, documents, digital content, and images and videos of

artistic pieces and actions. In this section, I examine the range of analysis used

to interpret the data generated in the study. This involved systematic

qualitative analysis, including coding of textual data, visual analysis, and

feminist discourse analysis. This process of was not linear but required

constantly revisiting research questions and literature to draw out relevant

themes and interpretations.

3.6.1. Textual Analysis

To make sense of transcripts, fieldnotes, and other written data such as

documents, Facebook posts and policy documents, I used different types of

textual analysis. Textual analysis considers how language is used to enact social

identities, activities, and meanings (Gee, 1999). Geographers use textual analysis in different ways (see Rose, 2001; Doel, 2010; Zebracki & Milani, 2017) depending on the specific text under investigation (interview transcript, policy document or image). The different types of textual analysis which I employed can all be broadly grouped under what is known as discourse analysis.

Discourse can best be understood as 'particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it' (Rose, 2001: 138). Rose (2001) defines discourse following the theories of Foucault (1977) about how human subjects (and indeed places and relations) are produced and shaped by particular institutions, practices and experiences through discourses, i.e., 'statements which structure the way a thing is thought' (p. 38). Of course, different discourses are more dominant than others, and this has to do, as Rose explains, with both their location in socially powerful institutions and how discourse is used to claim absolute truths (ibid). Although 'all knowledge is discursive and all discourse is saturated with power' (p. 38), power, as discussed in Chapter Two, is diffuse. Therefore, there are multiple and competing discourses produced by different actors. Guided by the feminist principles that underpinned my methodological approach, I engaged in what can be best described as feminist discourse analysis, which is specifically about analysing 'how power is produced and/or (counter) resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices' (Lazar, 2007: 149-151). I engaged in an analysis of the competing discourses about women's' lives through examining the speech, texts and images produced by activists, as well as texts written by national and international governmental institutions.

In Chapter Four, I used a distinct type of feminist discourse analysis to evaluate what might be considered 'official' discourses about women's lives produced through gender equality policy and legislation. I used the WPR 'What's the Problem Represented to be' approach by Carol Bacchi (2012). This technique is concerned with critically examining the historical, ideological and policy context of research participants (Meehan, 2019). Influenced by post-structural and feminist theory, the goal of WPR is to reveal representations of a particular problem in policy documents, and how these representations, in turn, create particular understandings of an issue and their accompanying forms of subjectivity (Bacchi, 2012). WPR advances feminist understandings of how lived lives are affected by such discourses that produce particular representations of a 'problem' (Bletsas & Beasley, 2012; Meehan, 2019). Practically, this involves close-reading and interrogation of the language and assumptions used in policies to call attention to how a problem is characterised by an institution or agency. WPR is framed by six analytical questions (see Appendix 3), which I operationalised when engaging in analysis of different national and international policy documents on VAW (see Chapter Four).

Feminist concerns over power, agency, and resistance in discourse analysis are primarily concerned with the gaps and silences, specifically 'the absence of participants' first-hand experiences within broader discursive accounts of women's lives' (Thompson et al, 2018: 94). As I was primarily concerned with activists' understandings, identities, and actions (see Section 3.4), I therefore used feminist discourse analysis to identify, for example, discursive patterns and framings that featured in interview transcripts, social media posts, as well as documents and reports produced by activist

groups/artists. This involved paying attention to 'lexis, clauses/sentences/utterances, conversational turns' (Lazar, 2007: 149-151). This was done systematically through the process of coding, details of which I outline in the next section. Through engaging in analysis of the different discursive materials produced by activists and artists, I was able to gain greater insight into how they understood violence, activism, art and so forth.

 3.6.2. Coding

Regardless of the type of textual analysis employed, each analysis began with coding, which helped organise data from texts into emergent themes for further analysis. Coding is a heuristic method of analysing the meanings of different sections of data produced through qualitative research (Saldaña, 2011; Till, 2009; Cope, 2010). It is 'an active, thoughtful process that generates themes and elicits meanings' enabling the researcher 'to produce representations of the data that are lively, valid and suggestive of some broader connections to the scholarly literature' (Cope, 2010: 451). While it is a systematic approach to analysing data, it is iterative: after one or more rounds of coding, codes that are too specific are deleted or subsumed into larger categories. During the process, I also returned to the preliminary literature review to reflect on initial codes, adapted research questions to reflect emerging patterns and themes in research and identified where existing literature was inadequate (ibid). While considering how the codes and data relate to the research questions and literature, I wrote memos and worked through the data and emerging analytical points. Writing my chapters ultimately involved a process of identifying topics and forming research questions, coding, building themes and then returning to the literature and to my research questions.

Codes usually consist of words or phrases that stand out as significant in data and are repeated throughout interviews and field notes (Cope, 2010). There are many ways to do coding (see Strauss, 1987; Charmaz, 2006; Cope, 2010). The two stages of coding that I engaged in are best understood as 'descriptive' and 'analytical' (Cope, 2010). I used a piece of software called QDA Miner 4 Lite where I was able to input transcripts, fieldnotes and documents for coding. To produce the first set of codes, I read through each document several times, assigning specific sections or phrases a code. These codes often consisted of words or expressions taken from text or used by the interviewees, for example 'emotional support', 'precarity', 'burn-out', 'access' and 'participatory'. Such codes are known as 'in vivo' codes (Saldaña, 2012). Appendix 4 shows an example of these 'in vivo' codes. I would uncover anywhere between 20 and 40 codes per document.

These codes were further grouped into categories such as 'challenges of activism' or 'the role of art in campaigning' and so forth (see Appendix 4). These codes came up again and again across both interview transcripts and fieldnotes. I would then return to the literature and see what significant themes were emerging there and how my descriptive codes might relate to them. I then returned to my transcripts and fieldnotes and carried out another round of coding. This is called 'analytic coding' (Saldaña, 2012). I used codes such as 'international solidarity', 'creating safe spaces' or 'raising awareness', that related more clearly to my research questions and the broader literature but also allowed for codes to spontaneously emerge from the data. Sometimes simple codes would co-occur alongside the analytic codes, for example 'resources' (under the category 'community building') would occur alongside

'creating safe spaces'. As these codes grew in complexity and became more and more related to the theoretical framework of the project, they developed into key themes for exploration in analytical memos. Analytical memos are often called 'think pieces' because they allow the researcher to reflect on and interpret data (ibid).

I also analysed my materials, including the analytic and reflective memos and any other related documents (such as the reports produced by a group), according to their content and emergent themes. This would include writing further memos and scribbling diagrams. I then had to return again to the literature to explore how these themes might build upon existing research. The process of drafting chapters involved this iterative process of going back to the codes and memos but also back to the raw data and to the literature to develop coherent insights, arguments, and contributions.

3.6.3. Feminist Visual Analysis of Artistic Pieces and Images.

Geographers have a strong interest in how the visual can be used to shape understandings of space and place (Bartram, 2010; Crang, 2010). Images, like texts, can be analysed and interpreted to consider their effects, the social conditions which produce and are produced by an image, and the culturally, geographically, historically specific ways of seeing and interpreting images (Rose, 2001; Bartram, 2010). However, Domosh (2005) points out how there has been a general mistrust of the visual within feminist geography. The visual, she explains, has traditionally been used 'by and for dominant groups' and has been critiqued in terms of its masculinism (p. 38). While women have featured widely in the visual sphere, Buikema and Zarzycka (2012) highlight how traditional gender divisions and hierarchies remain inscribed upon women's

bodies. Women's bodies have primarily been understood in relation to their 'to-be-looked-at-ness' (ibid: 121), with women popularly being presented as passive objects of the male gaze in visual culture (Mulvey, 1975). In response, feminist theory demands that we engage with alternative imagery which challenges dominant Western representations of women's lives and bodies and develop new ways of seeing and interpreting visual culture (ibid). Feminist proponents of visual methodologies, therefore, insist upon a critical approach in which one analyses and interprets the visual:

> in terms of the cultural significance, social practices and power relations in which it is embedded; and that means thinking about the power relations that produce, are articulated through, and can be challenged by, ways of seeing and imaging (Rose, 2001: 3).

Buikema and Zarzycka (2012) outline a practical approach to analysing images from a feminist perspective which: 1) requires a critical approach to purely aesthetical readings which can depoliticise, universalise, and marginalise; 2) considers the context within which the image is located, acknowledging how visual culture is shaped by institutional practices, media and political discourse; and 3) focuses on the awareness that images help to form and how they are, in turn, formed by dominant and alternative understandings of conventions and tropes that circulate in the visual sphere (p. 28). Importantly, feminist approaches to visual analysis are also guided by the same epistemological concerns as other feminist methods of collecting and interpreting data, chiefly the situated nature of knowledge, reflexivity (see Section 3.2) and recognising the multiple contexts in which images and audiences are implicated (Rose, 2001). Therefore, I must also recognise the limits of my own interpretations of images.

Throughout the process of analysing feminist artistic interventions in public space, I tried to think critically about the multiple and contested meanings of images, their intertextual relationship to other images, and the role they played in 'visually constructed imagined geographies' (ibid: 252). In particular, how artists and activists attempted to subvert traditional (and even contemporary) representations of women through the visual and what this meant for the feminist politics of place. My approach to the visual responded to these considerations by drawing heavily on a semiotic approach to visual analysis. Semiotics examines how meaning is created through signs (Bal and Bryson, 1991). Visual semiotics is primarily concerned with how images produce and communicate meanings and is popularly used to decode advertisements but also art (Bal and Bryson, 1991; Rose, 2001). As Bal and Bryson (1991) explain: 'human culture is made up of signs, each of which stands for something other than itself, and the people inhabiting culture busy themselves making sense of those signs' (p. 174). Signs are made up of two parts: the signified and the signifier. The signified consists of an object or concept while a signifier is a word or image attached to the signified (Rose, 2001). Images, as cultural signs, have referents, or in other words, reference points that allow us to understand and interpret their meanings (Bartram, 2010). In this way, signs become 'symbolic of additional or associated ideas and images' (ibid: 133). It is the relationship between the signifier and the signified which produces meaning (Rose, 2001).

As mentioned in Section 3.4, I observed a number of time-specific and place-based artistic works as part of my research, recording them through photographs and videos. Through analysing these transient live performance

and street art pieces visually and analysing their content, I hoped to gain an understanding into how creative interventions in public space challenged the normative, masculinist meanings built into the urban landscape. When examining a piece, I took note of my initial impressions and emotional responses as part of my fieldnotes. While doing this, I kept in mind Bartram's (2010) guidelines for interpreting an image, reflecting on 1) the production of the image (who produced it); 2) its aesthetics (composition, symbolic elements, location); and 3) interpreting audiences, which includes how, why, and where audiences engage with an image. In this way signs become 'symbolic of additional or associated ideas and images' (p. 133).

As mentioned in Section 3.4, I also examined artistic pieces by familiarising myself with them through observation, trying to interpret meanings by paying attention to their symbolic elements, their context and their intertextual relation to other signs and symbols. I considered Rose's (2001) discussion of how signs work in relation to other signs and the differences between syntagmatic, paradigmatic, denotive and connotive signs. Syntagmatic signs gain meaning from the signs that surround them in a sequence, while paradigmatic signs forge meaning in opposition to other signs. Denotive signs are descriptive of something, and images often contain multiple possible denotive meanings (ibid). Connotive signs contain deeper meanings that relate to social norms or practices. Connotative signs are usually metonymic (a sign that is associated with something else, causing it to represent that phenomenon) or synecdochal (a sign that represents something that it is part of, it stands in for the whole) (Rose, 2001). In Berlin, I examined how anti-street harassment art has multiple functions and symbolic meanings,

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for example, communicating to potential harassers by returning the 'male gaze' and claiming agency for those harassed, while also symbolically challenging typical stereotypes about macho street artists (Chapter Five). In Dublin, I often considered the way pro-choice art worked paradigmatically due to its location alongside or context in relation to 'pro-life' advertisements or imagery, but also how pro-choice artistic pieces worked connotatively (Chapters Seven and Eight).

Detailed explorations of such themes in relation to each artistic piece helped me interpret their multiple meanings. As Rose (2001) cautions, there is no singular, true meaning that lies behind an image; hence we must recognise again the partiality of our own interpretations (cf. Haraway, 1988). In part, for this reason, I also read my interpretations of pieces across those offered by artists and collaborators, such as during interviews, which illuminated how images can have multiple and contingent meanings. To consolidate my visual analyses into coherent discussions, I again returned to making what I called 'post-coding memos' to bring together the various themes emerging from fieldnotes, transcripts and visual analysis of artistic pieces. I often found myself re-coding in the process of writing these memos as themes emerged from the analysis of multiple sources. These coalesced to create new codes and, ultimately, new insights.

I turn now to a discussion of my own biases in the next section on research relations, positionality, and ethics.

3.7. Research relations and ethical considerations

Undertaking feminist research specifically means engaging in research practices that are non-exploitative and sensitive to the power relations that exist

between researchers and researched. There are always ethical implications to consider when designing and implementing any research project. Ethically responsible research is ultimately about 'justice, beneficence, and respect for others' (Hay, 2010: 38). When working with human participants these often relate to, but are not limited by: informed consent, confidentiality, protecting personal information, participation and 'giving something back' (Clifford et al, 2010: 10). In addition, for feminist researchers, it is of utmost importance to avoid reproducing patterns of oppression through the act of research (Olesen, 2011). In this section, I explore how I navigated ethical conundrums and power relations between myself and participants throughout the research process: from interviews and participant observation, to the challenges of leaving the field.

3.7.1. Procedures and Processes in Interviews

Obtaining informed consent is critical to any research project involving human participants (Hay, 2010). Researchers need to provide participants with enough information about a study before they decide to participate; this means informing participants of all the risks as well as the benefits when engaging in a research project (Leavy and Harris, 2018).

To this end, I designed two consent forms, one for participant observation and interviews, and a smaller one specifically for photographs at events (see Appendices 5.1 and 5.2). These two forms provided information about the project itself and provided participants with a description of benefits and potential risks, informed them of their rights and provided them with my contact details. Written consent was always sought prior to interviews and participants were reminded verbally that they could opt out at any point. While

the process of obtaining consent might seem straightforward, this is often not

the case. As Leavy and Harris (2018) point out, despite the researcher's best

efforts 'no one can anticipate every possible way a participant might be affected,

nor can you entirely anticipate every way you as the researcher might be

affected' (p. 111).

Procedural approaches to ethics do not always correspond to what

happens when you are in the field and how ethical issues unfold in practice

(Ellis, 2007). In my field research, my positionality, which I discuss in the next

section was critical. For example, taking out consent forms for photographs in

the middle of engaging in some street art or a chalkwalk with participants at

H!Berlin simply did not work. Participants, some of whom I knew as

acquaintances, responded awkwardly; refusing to sign the consent forms, they

told me it was enough that I had asked for their permission and ultimately

brushed me off. Given the history of National Socialism in Berlin, asking for

personal information and signatures means something different then in another

country. I found that obtaining oral consent was a more ethical practice in this

context. I informed people at events of my status as a researcher, asked for oral

consent for photographs and told them to approach me if they had questions to

ask me afterwards. In most cases, these events were part of larger public events,

meaning photographs were often already anticipated.

Minimising risk was also an important ethical concern. Considering the

nature of my research and the close relationships I developed with participants,

it was always possible that during interviews people would share personal

experiences of harassment, violence, or abortion. When this occurred, I was

careful to maintain a high degree of sensitivity, be mindful to allow them to

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discuss their lived experience without judgement and was watchful for signs of emotional distress. I also always reminded interviewees that they were free to stop the interview at any point.

Again, such procedures were often more complex than anticipated. For example, when one participant revealed her abortion story to me during an interview, she was not upset at all. Despite this, I paused the interview and I stopped recording and asked if she wanted to pause the interview. She refused and continued to talk about the experience, which made me feel a bit embarrassed – was I being overly-sensitive towards her discussion of abortion, which after all is an everyday occurrence? She did, however, later request to change the option on the consent form to require a pseudonym. I gladly did this, and in my initial fieldnotes and memos, I referred to her by this different name. Two years later, at the follow-up interview, the same participant began to discuss an artistic event that she had seen which had provoked a powerful emotional response in her because it related to her experience of abortion. This time, and rather unexpectedly, she began to cry. I again paused the interview and asked her if she wanted to take a break, but again she refused. Admittedly, when she talked about her experience it made me feel very emotional too, especially as we were in the midst of the intense national campaign to change the constitution to make abortion legal (April 2018). To my surprise, at the end of the interview, she specifically requested that her real name be used. Upon reflection, she also consented for it to be used for the previous interview too. She informed me that she was now speaking more freely about her experience, feeling it was important in the context of the campaign.

This example demonstrates three important points. First, it highlights the complexity of ethical practice in the field; the process is not homogenous and can often be unpredictable. Second, it reveals how the contexts of feminist activism change, which affect a participant's personal and a researcher's relationships to the 'field'. Third, and relatedly, it also reveals how the same experience for any given person may result in distinct reactions to research practices at different moments in time, as these are related to ever-changing political and emotional public and private contexts. During the campaign, many women came forward to bravely share their abortion stories in private and more public settings, which, taken together, created an atmosphere that made this participant feel slightly differently about sharing her experience. This example speaks to the importance of checking in and following up with participants at all stages of the research process (Leavy and Harris, 2018). For any future publications from this work, for example, I will provide an advance version of the article, chapter, or blog to make sure participants still want (or not) their names to be used.

3.7.2. Positionality

Reflexivity involves the researcher reflecting on and remaining aware of her position in the 'web of power relations' that constitute the research process (Moss, 2004: 45). This involves an investigation into 'the interactions and relationships between researchers and those being researched' or her 'positionality' (Browne et al, 2010: 586). Reflexivity, as mentioned earlier, can be difficult. Rose (1997) states that: 'Assuming that self and context are, even if in principle only, transparently understandable seems to me to be demanding an analytical certainty that is as insidious as the universalizing certainty that so

many feminists have critiqued (p. 318). Instead, it is better to think about researcher positions and identities as performed and relational, they are multiple rather than fixed into discrete categories such as 'insider' or 'outsider' (Kobayashi, 1994; England, 1994; Browne et al, 2010). From a feminist geographical perspective, I performed multiple positions or a 'mesh of subjectivities' (Avis, 2002: 206) that were constantly changing across different case studies, spaces and times.

A good example of these multiple and ever-changing positionalities can be examined through my fieldwork with H!Berlin. I moved through several different positions and held multiple, sometimes conflicting identities at the same time. For example, when I began volunteering with H!Berlin I was an intern and was regarded by the group (and myself) as a beginner – someone marginal who was there to learn and help out. In a sense I was an 'outside insider'. On the one hand, I did not yet know how the group worked and there were clear linguistic and cultural differences between me and the other activists. On the other, I also had an important role within the group. Julia knew I was an experienced feminist activist and a researcher and held high expectations of me and my work despite my 'beginner' (or outsider) status within the group. As time went on, I gained confidence in my abilities. This was reflected by the group as I became trusted with bigger tasks, such as organising an open meeting and an artistic event. As my fieldwork progressed, my relationship with Julia turned into friendship, and I began to socialise with her and other members of the group outside of my research. I strongly believe that a lot of the insights gained throughout the internship were not only a result of the relationship of trust (and genuine friendship) that developed between me

and other members of the group over time, but also because of the way I was (mostly) accepted within the group as a peer. At this juncture, it is important to reflect that I belonged to a similar demographic to those in each group/project, i.e. I am a young, white, educated woman. This is another, albeit unconscious reason, as to why I was so quickly accepted into groups as a peer and perhaps why I was attracted to investigating these specific groups. This is a significant blind spot that reveals the limitations of my research, which unwittingly privileged white middle-class feminist experiences (see Chapter Nine; Valentine, 2007). However, working with more marginalised groups also brings its own challenges as regards power and positionality (see, for example, Hubbard, 1999).

It is critical to note here that I did not simply move from being more of an 'outsider' to more of an 'insider'; my position and relationships with others and the H!Berlin group were always more complex than a linear progressive temporal path would suggest. For example, when I finished the internship and began the interview process, I switched again to what I felt was a more 'traditional' researcher position, by performing 'the expert', or the researcher with notepad and pen who asked her participants to fill out consent forms when placing a recording device on the table. Even in the interview, Julia often poked fun at me, my research and also referred to me as 'Irish girl'. As Browne et al (2010) state, throughout the research process, our engagements 'do not necessarily fall into the paradigm of powerful researcher/powerless researched' (p. 587). Julia's behaviour towards me demonstrated how I was her friend, and in this way a type of 'insider', while also remaining simultaneously 'outside' – a researcher prodding for further information. Her jibes were playful,

but they also made me realise that my understandings of feminist activism in Berlin, and indeed H!Berlin, would only ever be partial and from the perspective of an 'Irish girl' looking in. No matter how much I identified with Julia, as with others in my research for this PhD thesis, my representation offers only a partial understanding of the work that they carried out (Rose, 1997). This is just one example of how power relations and researcher positionalities are not stable and can change over the course of the research process (Kobyashi, 1994; Browne et al, 2010). As Kobyashi states 'the geography of centring and marginalisation is remarkably fluid' (Kobayashi, 1994: 75). On one hand, I was integrated into the local group and made feel welcome and valued; I was invited to give my input, yet I also still felt like an outsider because I was not from Berlin (and had only been in Berlin for a relatively short period of time), am not of German ancestry, nor a native speaker of German.

Another complexity created by positionality emerges when leaving the field. I found it quite difficult at the end to untangle myself from groups, particularly in the case of H!Berlin, and even stayed on a bit longer after the volunteer internship ended to help with an exhibition the group were organising in June 2016. Taking necessary precautions and setting expectations about one's role within a group is important at the outset of a research relationship, especially when it comes to the end of field research (Leavy and Harris, 2018). Even though the duration of the internship was written into the learning contract (see Appendix 1) and I reminded Julia a month before leaving, it remained a difficult process. Leaving the field and ending research relationships take time, the same way that building research relationships do (Letherby, 2003). I felt a sense of guilt leaving the group because I cared about

their welfare and work beyond the research. Activist work in general requires responsibility and the lack of resources faced by the group complicated matters further. However, some research relationships can change to become different types of social or personal relationships (ibid).

Ultimately, I now reflect that my ability to leave groups and projects indicated a position of power. I was the one who approached groups with my research agenda and once I was finished my research I got to leave. I am also the person who will interpret and write up the experience. As Katz (1996) states: 'Such moves reflect power no matter what the intent is and no matter how deep are the feelings engendered in the process' (p. 172). Leaving the field as a scholar-activist who understands the challenges in maintaining a group or campaign, including effectively managing different responsibilities and group dynamics, may therefore present unique difficulties

3.8. Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced how feminist epistemology guided my research practice, specifically how feminist scholars encourage researchers to acknowledge the partiality and situated-ness of all knowledge (Haraway, 1988; Harding, 1991). Recognising the context-specific nature of knowledge production led me to rethink the value of enforcing sameness across case studies through my original comparative research design (Browne et al, 2017), even if it sought to be a feminist participatory approach. Adopting a flexible activist and transnational feminist approach to research in different feminist groups and projects instead involved a geotemporally sensitive consideration of power relations in shifting fields, between researcher and researched, and their

own negotiations of specific contexts and goals. Rather than seek supposedly 'comparable data', this project allows for more engaged forms of data generation and knowledge (co)production that remained sensitive to contextual difference.

The key methods of my primary data collection were participant observation and interviews with key informants, which varied according to the nature of the group or project, and level of access granted by participants. Fieldnotes, memos, photographs and videos were produced to record observations. Following data collection, I used coding, qualitative content, and feminist discourse analyses of textual data, including fieldnotes, interview transcripts and other documents. I also utilised visual analysis to examine artworks and photographs. Coding helped me to make sense of data and identify patterns and themes for further exploration and interpretation. This was an iterative process that involved coding, returning to my research questions to consider the relevance of codes, re-reading literature and writing analytical memos. Analysing visual materials through a semiotic approach helped me interpret the meanings generated by artistic pieces and other visual materials, and how these, in turn, revealed and questioned broader cultural meanings and power relations.

I also discussed how I endeavoured to keep the research process as ethical as possible, constantly negotiating a fine balance and reworking procedural ethics as needed, such as obtaining informed consent and managing risk in the most appropriate ways. This led to an assessment of my positionality, one that was shifting and often contradictory, but also produced robust data that offered key insights.

My transnational feminist research design and flexible use of multiple methods led to an examination of how feminist activists and artists articulated and responded to multiple forms of everyday violence against women in Berlin and Dublin. Their articulations and responses were also shaped by, while contesting, dominant narratives of gender-based violence. To provide the context for situating their work, in the next chapter, I outline the multi-scalar legal circumstances in which activists operated at the time of this study by discussing how international and national governing bodies define and ascribe responsibility for VAW legally. I further discuss how feminist critiques of the patriarchal state provide a framework for interpreting the legal geographies of how women's bodies are managed by government agencies and institutions in Germany and Ireland. The next chapter complements my geotemporal framework outlined in Chapter Two by providing further details about how multiple feminisms emerge and respond to international and national legislation, policies, and practices. It is also intended to contextualise the significance of the hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces I describe and analyse in Berlin and Dublin in Chapters Five through Eight.

Chapter Four: Defining and Challenging Violence Against Women

4.1. Introduction

Paying attention to how nation-states enact power and manage bodies through the law is particularly salient when examining VAW. As Hearn and Strid (2016) argue, 'practices in the state, religion, media and other institutions, nationally and transnationally, are powerful in setting agendas of systems of differentiations and recognitions of violence' (p. 553). Definitions of VAW have been operationalised in several significant international policy documents and treaties over the past 26 years and these often guide national legislation and policies designed to address gender-based violence, including: the United Nations General Assembly (1994, 2006); the Council of Europe (2011); the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014); Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (the German Institute for Human Rights) (2018); and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2019). However, within these international and national policy documents implicit assumptions exist about the nature of VAW and the role the state should play in addressing it.

The overall aim of this chapter is to examine critically how definitions of VAW by international and national intra- and state institutions affect normative understandings of violence. Drawing upon feminist scholarship and analytical approaches, I unpack these assumptions to draw attention to how states directly create and reproduce gendered, sexed subjects and spaces through legal policies implemented through state institutions, which affect social norms and result in oppressing those subjects. Furthermore, I refer to the work of

activists who document the experiences of violence that do not correspond to these legal definitions and seek to change state and normative classifications that deny 'everyday' forms of VAW. Another major objective of this chapter is, through an analysis of legal documents in Germany and Ireland, to highlight the 'interlocking' nature of multiple forms of violence and their local expressions. This chapter provides a geopolitical context for the empirical chapters that follow.

I begin this chapter by briefly engaging with feminist theories of the state which begin to dismantle some of the assumptions around its role in responding to VAW. In Section 4.3, I then turn to the multi-scalar legal context of VAW using Bacchi's (2012) feminist social policy analysis approach, 'What's the Problem Represented to be' (WPR). My analysis problematises the legal and official definitions and representations of VAW produced through international and national policies. I specifically discuss the United Nations' and Council of Europe's definitions of violence that have been particularly significant in guiding the agendas of states and how they define and address VAW. The second half of this chapter then moves to how violence has been understood in the specific geotemporal contexts of my case studies. In Section 4.4, I turn to an examination of the patriarchal nature of state institutions and actors in Germany and Ireland by discussing significant recent court cases and legislation in both countries. I argue state legislation perpetuates damaging stereotypes around VAW that serve to 'normalise' or minimise some forms of gendered violent actions. In some instances, legal interpretations uphold a racist and patriarchal understanding of the state that demonises certain communities as inherently violent and as outliers to the body politic.

Overall, this chapter provides a discussion of the institutional contexts that the feminist activists I discuss in Chapters Five through Eight challenge, draw upon, and/or seek to change. In particular, I develop my understanding of systemic violence against women as arising from the patriarchal structure of society (Brownmiller, 1979; Hunnicutt, 2009) and as occurring along a continuum (Kelly, 1988). I try to avoid a hierarchal understanding of violence, but instead take all forms of VAW seriously and attempt to demonstrate how these forms are often interrelated (ibid). I push for the recognition of everyday forms of gender-based violence that have, in many ways, become 'tolerated' and rendered invisible (Garcia, 2004; Tyner, 2012; Hayes et al, 2016).

4.2. Feminist Interpretations of the State

Feminist scholars have long critiqued modern Western nation-states as patriarchal systems of oppression, insofar that those in power benefit from the sexist organisation of society, as well as other unfair systems such as capitalism and white supremacy (MacKinnon, 1983; Brown, 1992; Pateman, 2016). Before delving into my multi-scalar legal analysis of international and national legislation and how it frames the state's role in addressing VAW, in this section I outline feminist critiques of 'the state' and how states and their legal institutions have been understood through the concept of patriarchy (Walby, 1990; Hunnicutt, 2009).

The state as a concept is difficult to define. Rather than thinking of the state as a homogenous unit or all-controlling entity, it is best thought of as a social process that is performed and reproduced through a range of practices and narratives, including our own daily thoughts, behaviours, and actions

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(Butler, 1990; Painter, 2008: 26). I therefore draw upon feminist understandings of the state and legal institutions as patriarchal while also following Brown's (1992) understanding that the state is not a unit, but a complex combination of 'powers and techniques, an ensemble of discourses, and practices, cohabiting in limited, tension-ridden, often contradictory relation with one another' (p. 12). Nation-states and their institutions 'operate (and are recreated) in geographically uneven and inequitable ways' (Painter, 2008; Browne and Bakshi, 2013). Cooper (2016) similarly argues that scholars need to move beyond conceptualising states as coherent bounded entities or as one unified, dominating force. While critiquing the patriarchal nature of the state and how it responds to VAW, it is important to bear in mind the way that states and their institutions often act in contradictory ways.

Lisa Brush (2003) explains that liberal interpretations of the state tended to view it as a neutral arbiter. Brush, along with earlier feminist scholars such as Sylvia Walby (1990), argue that political scientists and Marxist scholars in their analysis of the state often completely overlooked how the state is gendered and how its various institutions and actors work to maintain gender and sexual hierarchies. Indeed, as part of the foundation of the modern nation-state, understandings of citizenship were defined by the classical liberalist conception of the free, equal, rational, objective [white] man (Brown, 1992; Brush, 2003). It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that nation-states subordinated women's sexuality in the name of nation-building projects; women were frequently cast as the bearers of the nation but were 'without any direct relation to national agency' (McClintock, 1993). Furthermore, women who failed to submit to state sanctioned notions of (hetero)sexuality, for example

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sex workers, single mothers, and lesbians, were marginalised and punished (Luibhéid, 2006; see Section 4.4.). It is also through the control and regulation of their sexuality that women's bodies also came to mark internal and external racial boundaries, or as feminist scholar Anne McClintock (1993) states: 'gender difference between women and men serves to symbolically define the limits of national difference' (see also Luibhéid, 2006). Thus, race also became a central element that 'differentiates, values, and organizes women's reproductive contributions' (Fletcher, 2005: 366) within the nation-state. I return to examples of how the state is racialised as well as gendered in Section 4.4.

The histories of many state-run legal institutions and organisations were and are shaped by conceptualisations of masculinist objectivity and rationality (MacKinnon, 1983; Mirchandani, 2006). As legal scholar Catherine MacKinnon (1983) argues: 'the state, in part through law, institutionalizes male power. If male power is systemic, it is the regime' (p. 645). MacKinnon (1983) highlights how the law emulates scientific understandings of objectivity: supposedly 'neutral' judicial decision-making is considered the ideal, whereby courts and judges are expected to be 'dispassionate, impersonal, disinterested, and precedential' (p. 655), even in cases where women have been raped or sexually assaulted. Mirchandani (2006) similarly points out that the law is conducted according to an abstract rationality. She contrasts this 'adversarial model of justice' to feminist-lawyering, the latter which she describes as characterised by consensus, such as arbitration and mediation (p. 784). The patriarchal foundations of such state institutions are often cited as the reason why 'men are able to utilize considerable amounts of violence against women with impunity' (Walby, 1990: 150). Legal scholar Carol Smart called the

inadequate response of the legal system to improve the lives of women a 'failure of feminism to affect law' (Smart, 1989: 5). However, Irish legal scholar Ciara Molloy (2017) refutes this dismissal of feminism and instead highlights the deeply resistant nature of the criminal justice system towards women's rights. The legal system, she argues, remains 'immersed in patriarchal traditions' (p. 711).

Brown (1992) continues that state institutions and actors do not employ one form of power, but multiple varieties, an approach echoing Foucault's conception of the state as made up of a network of institutions that employ various techniques of power (McNay, 1992). Cooper (2016) urges activists and scholars 'to pay attention to dissident intra-state actions' and to recognise 'the importance of different governing scales' (p. 409) when advancing transformative progressive political agendas. Similarly, feminist geopolitical theorists and feminist political geographers call for an investigation into power relations at multiple scales, moving beyond the state and focusing on how global processes, be they economic, political, or social are experienced at 'scales finer and coarser than the nation state' (Hyndman, 2000: 315), such as in places and bodies (Smith, 2016; Hyndman, 2019). Feminist geographers argue that we must move 'beyond states as the sole protagonists acting on a world stage' and examine the alternative 'scales at which power, violence, subjectivities and politics are analyzed' (Hyndman, 2019: 9). Particularly relevant to this PhD is Hyndman's (2019) suggestion that scholars should pay attention to 'subaltern analyses of violence' (p. 7) that challenge the public/private divide and 'paternalistic narratives of vulnerability and rescue' that are often reproduced through state-intervention (p. 8).

However, Cooper (2016) also cautions against dichotomous thinking of the state versus romanticised versions of 'civil society' as 'the state's antithesis'. Indeed, state institutions and their social and economic role have undergone a significant transformation since the 1980s, away from state managed capitalism to neoliberalism. This shift has had a resultant impact on progressive movements. Fraser (2014b) specifically highlights the increasingly ambivalent relationship between the neoliberal state and contemporary feminist politics. She highlights how feminist activists, while critiquing the androcentric nature of the welfare state in the 1960s and 1970s (for example, social protections that entrenched gender hierarchies), may have unwittingly pushed feminism into a dangerous alliance with neoliberal capitalism. Liberal feminism, she argues, has now gone in the direction of marketisation and individual advancement, resonating with neoliberal currents, while failing to recognise the socioeconomic constraints and racial barriers that prevent many women from pursuing emancipation. This, Fraser (2014b) argues, emerged from the pursuit of an emancipation that 'challenged oppressive forms of social protection, while neither wholly condemning nor simply celebrating marketization' (p. 316).

Meanwhile, state governments, institutions of global governance and corporations are increasingly cloaking regressive practices, neoliberal policies, and cuts to social protections in 'an aura of emancipation' (ibid: 12; see also Repo, 2016). In a similar vein, Hemmings (2018) argues that supposedly 'progressive' actions taken through gender-mainstreaming and gender-equality policies pursued by nation-states and institutes of global governance are often held up as a marker of 'modernity in a narrow mode' (p. 965). Feminism, she states, is increasingly: 'folded into a progress narrative charting a relentless

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move away from inequality' in Western nation-states, yet this narrative 'rarely takes account of enduring operations of power or critiques of the basis on which such equality is evaluated' (ibid).

In my empirical chapters, I turn to grassroot feminist strategies of storytelling and creating hybrid counterpublic spaces in Berlin and Dublin that may offer alternative understandings of VAW and ways to confront it. To frame their multiscalar work, in this chapter I first identify how the state continues to be represented as the neutral and responsible agent for ending VAW in international policy. Through my WPR analysis of legal documents below, I identify how such depictions of the paternalistic and benevolent state ignore women's agency. This is not to argue that the state should cease offering support to women that enables them to escape violence. Rather, it is a critique of how the state has ultimately failed to offer meaningful solutions to VAW through perpetuating and accommodating multiple forms of gender-based violence, despite signing up to international agreements and conventions that supposedly commit to ending it. While some of this relates to how social protections are being cut under neoliberalism, I argue that the problem arises because women continue to be framed as objects of policy rather than active political agents. State institutions continue to ignore how feminists create their own spaces of resistance and empowerment and how they can offer lived, 'subaltern' understandings of VAW, including its multifaceted and often-hidden nature.

4.3. International Definitions of Violence against Women

Gender-based violence creates enduring barriers to women's full social, economic, and political participation but it has only been in the past three

decades that international organisations have defined and systematically examined the extent and impact of VAW (EU FRA, 2014). In this section, I analyse definitions of violence against women and the role of the state in four comprehensive policies and programmatic recommendations published by the United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe (CoE). I selected these four documents because they have been particularly influential in shaping definitions of VAW and guiding national approaches towards its prevalence in Europe (Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte, 2018; Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2019). I identify problematic assumptions underlying these documents using Bacchi's WPR approach outlined in Chapter Three. Firstly, I argue that the documents analysed continue to treat the complex set of gendered power relations, experiences, and discrimination as existing outside the state, despite explicit references to state-based and condoned violence by the UN. Secondly, the state is framed as a benevolent system responsible for preventing or punishing such violent instances in women's lives. Finally, these documents assume women are passive 'victims' in need of the state's protection, overlooking how women resist violence.

4.3.1. UN Definitions of VAW

The UN addresses VAW through three key pieces of policy:

> 1) the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women General Recommendation no. 19 (1992) (hereafter UN CEDAW GR19);
> 2) the UN General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) (hereafter UNGA Declaration); and
> 3) the UN General Assembly In-Depth Study into All forms of Violence Against Women (2006) (hereafter UNGA In-Depth Study).

UN definitions of gender-based violence in these documents are based on a universal human-rights approach. The original definition of gender-based violence provided by the UN CEDAW in GR19 characterises it as:

> Violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty (UN CEDAW, 1992: 1).

In its subsequent policies on gender-based violence, the UN uses this definition, or a variation thereof.

This broad definition of VAW, despite being written in 1992, was and remains ground-breaking for at least three reasons. To begin with, the UN's description of VAW reflected feminist theorists' work at the time about defining VAW along a 'continuum' that recognises the 'basic common character underlying many different forms of violence' as 'the abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat and force men use to control women' (Kelly, 1988: 75-76). This document addressed a broad range of gendered violent behaviours which include: domestic violence, sexual harassment in the workplace (but not elsewhere), forced sterilisation, trafficking, female genital mutilation and forced pregnancy through lack of provision of abortion services (UN CEDAW, 1992). When considering existing national legislation, many states have only recently begun to acknowledge some of these specific forms of gender-based violence. For example, coercive control was only legally recognised by the Republic of Ireland as a form of domestic violence in 2018 (Domestic Violence Act, 2018), even though it was outlined as a psychological form of violence in the UN's definition above almost thirty years earlier.

In 1993, a year after defining VAW, the UN General Assembly published

its Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women following the

landmark World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, where delegates

placed a particular emphasis on the need for a human rights approach to gender

discrimination (Khan, 2015). This document defines violence in a way that

closely follows that outlined in the UN CEDAW GR19, again emphasising the

multiple forms that violence can take:

> the term 'violence against women' means any act of gender-
> based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical,
> sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including
> threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of
> liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (UN
> General Assembly, 1993: 3).

Similar to the 1992 document, a broad definition of violence is presented, but

this time with slightly more nuance. This definition stresses intent over action:

how an act needs to be considered violent even if it does not necessarily result

in 'physical, or psychological harm' but is 'likely to'. It also stresses that these

acts can occur across a range of social spaces: in 'public or in private life'. This

may be understood as a conscious effort on behalf of the UN to challenge

conceptions of violence against women as primarily a domestic and private

issue (Price, 2012; Hearne and Strid, 2016).

The UN General Assembly in 1993 (p. 3) listed both the specific forms of

violence and the perpetrators of these actions:

> Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the
> family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in
> the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female
> genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to
> women, non-spousal violence and violence related to
> exploitation. [...]

> Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution. [...]
>
> Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

This document, unlike GR19, clearly outlines three main perpetrators of VAW: 1) family members/partners, 2) members of the general community, and 3) states. States were recognised as potential perpetrators of gender-based violence and, as such, instructed to '[r]efrain from engaging in violence against women' and to practice 'due diligence' in preventing, investigating and punishing violence against women (ibid: 4).

Thirteen years later, the 2006 UNGA In-Depth Study did not produce a new definition of violence but operationalised the two previous definitions above (pp. 15-16). Like the previous policy document, this report highlighted the continued persistence of VAW in its multiple forms in every country in the world, while recognising the particularity of how that violence might unfold locally:

> Violence against women is both universal and particular. It is universal in that there is no region of the world, no country and no culture in which women's freedom from violence has been secured. The pervasiveness of violence against women across the boundaries of nation, culture, race, class and religion points to its roots in patriarchy – the systemic domination of women by men. (UN General Secretary, 2006: 28).

This above passage, unlike the previous documents, repeatedly expressed an understanding of VAW as arising from patriarchal systems of domination 'and other forms of subordination experienced by women in specific contexts' (p 28). This document provides an understanding of violence as systemic (Hearn and Strid, 2016). The patriarchal nature of states is also alluded to, particularly its embeddedness in the legal system. The report pointed out how states perpetuate violence against women, particularly through the continued failure to implement recommendations made by human rights organisations, but also through direct violence via state agents, and legislation (including forced birth, abortion, and sterilisation):

> The State – either through its agents or public policy – can perpetrate physical, sexual and psychological violence against women. State agents include all people empowered to exercise elements of State authority – members of the legislative, executive and judicial branches (UN General Secretary, 2006: 43). [...]
>
>
> A State may also perpetrate violence against women through its laws and policies. Examples of such laws and policies include those that criminalize women's consensual sexual behaviour as a means to control women; policies on forced sterilization, forced pregnancy and forced abortion; policies on protective custody of women that effectively imprisons them; and other laws and policies (ibid).

While patriarchy is explicitly labelled, the report did not label other systems of domination, such as capitalism, but referred to economic inequality and 'globalisation' as creating further inequality and contributing to VAW (ibid: 31-32).

Drawing upon the work of the UN, the 2011 Council of Europe's (hereafter CoE) *Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against*

Women and Domestic Violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, calls on its members to 'prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence' and support survivors of all forms of gender-based violence. The Istanbul Convention (here on in IC) follows the same definition of VAW as laid out by the UN CEDAW. However, unlike the UN's most recent policies, this legally binding document does not refer to patriarchy or specifically address violence carried out by states against women. The IC also does not refer to reproductive rights, other than prohibiting 'forced abortion' (p. 18): it makes no reference, for example, to forced birth, unlike previous UN policy. Instead, the Council directs its focus towards interpersonal violence, specifically domestic violence, but fails to acknowledge the interrelations between domestic and other forms of violence (Price, 2012). As Hearn and Strid (2016) state, such characterisations of violence limit 'the potential to tackle the interweaving of public and private, and related gender hierarchies' (p. 553).

The IC is perhaps the most powerful legally binding treaty on VAW in Europe (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016). Based upon the Council's reports about the widespread and systemic nature of gender-based violence, the IC required signatories to implement its measures and outlined governments' responsibility to enact appropriate legislation, support, and education programmes (Council of Europe, 2011). The purpose of the treaty is:

> to protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence' (Council of Europe, 2011: 7).

46 countries have signed this treaty and a further 34 had ratified it by 2019, including both Germany and Ireland.

4.3.2. Defining the Role of the State in Preventing VAW

As indicated above, the UN explicitly acknowledged the role of the state as a violent force in women's lives in these documents. The UN, while emphasising sexual and domestic violence, acknowledged that states commit violence directly through public institutions. According to the UN CEDAW GR19 (1992):

> Under general international law and specific human rights covenants, States may also be responsible for private acts if they fail to act with due diligence to prevent violations of rights or to investigate and punish acts of violence, and for providing compensation (p 2).

Such an understanding of violence resonates with feminist critiques of the state as a patriarchal and violent force (Walby, 1990; Pateman, 2001; Hunnicutt, 2009). At the same time, while identifying states as perpetrators of VAW, the UN CEDAW GR19's specific recommendations identify 'State parties' as responsible for implementing changes to prevent VAW and provide support for 'victims of violence'. Their specific recommendations stated that:

> States parties in their reports should state the extent of these problems and should indicate the measures that have been taken and their effect. [...]
>
> States parties should ensure that services for victims of violence are accessible. [...]
>
> States parties should establish or support services for victims of family violence.
>
> (UN CEDAW, 1992: 5-6)

For the UN then, states are represented at once as violent forces against women and as systems of democratic institutions that, through these instructions laid

out in international policy, 'should' document forms and effects of VAW; take preventative measures to stop such violence; and ensure access to justice for 'victims'.

Even though the UN identified states as forces of violence, it simultaneously identified states as the most capable agents for change. For the UN (1993): 'States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women' (p. 4) and: 'States should also inform women of their rights in seeking redress through such mechanisms' (p. 5). This pattern, of identifying states as perpetrators while also as *the* institution responsible to implement change, persisted in the UNGA's 2006 report, despite the more advanced and comprehensive approaches to VAW they evidenced above. From the opening sentence to every single recommendation in the UNGA's 2006 report (pp. 102-109), states are addressed as coherent entities that act to protect their citizens, in this case, women:

> States have an obligation to protect women from violence, to hold perpetrators accountable and to provide justice and remedies to victims (UN General Secretary, 2006: 9). [...]
>
> The use of the standard of due diligence underlines the State's duty to protect women effectively from such violence (p. 73). [...]
>
> States have a general duty to promote de facto equality between women and men and to develop and implement effectively a legal and policy framework for the full protection and promotion of women's human rights (p. 74).

The 'due diligence' expected of the state's duty to protect women from violence, as noted above in the UNGA's 2006 report, is restated in the 2011 CoE's recommendations in the IC:

> Parties shall refrain from engaging in any act of violence against women and ensure that State authorities, officials,

> agents, institutions and other actors acting on behalf of the
> State act in conformity with this obligation (Council of Europe,
> 2011: 9).

> Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures
> to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, punish and
> provide reparation for acts of violence covered by the scope of
> this Convention that are perpetrated by non-State actors (ibid).

However, the IC has no explicit statement recognising the historical role played by the agencies and institutions of multiple states as perpetrators of violent acts. This signals a step back from the UN's understandings of VAW.

To conclude, the UN's and CoE's recommendations continually present violence as a 'problem' that needs to be 'solved' by state parties, to borrow from Bacchi and Goodwin (2016). The reluctance of state actors and institutions to adequately address VAW and its potentially violent nature is outlined in all the UN policy documents and the IC as reviewed above. The next section moves to critique the state as both perpetrator and protector, highlighting how the state is framed both as a paternal authority that can protect but also one that can inflict violence (Young, 2003).

4.3.3. Problematic Assumptions about VAW

In this section, I respond to some of the problematic assumptions and representations surrounding VAW and the role of the state that are re-produced through the above documents. First, the content of these documents frames violence as primarily occurring between two people, be they partners, family members or strange men, suggesting that states and governments exist as neutral organisations outside of the problem of VAW. Moving beyond narrow definitions of VAW as occurring primarily between two people means

recognising how it occurs along a continuum (Kelly, 1988); different forms of

violence weave together and across numerous spaces: from the private to the

public (Price, 2012; Brickell and Maddrell, 2016). Different women in different

places with different racial, socio-economic, and sexual orientations will often

experience violence (and responses to it) in quite different ways.

As outlined in Section 4.2, state institutions are steeped in patriarchal

traditions and attitudes that can hinder progress when it comes to addressing

VAW. I have already identified a contradiction in UN and CoE documents that at

once acknowledge the state's propensity for directly committing and

contributing towards gender-based violence, but still assume that the state's

'democratic institutions' can fairly enforce the directives that address VAW. It is

problematic, unethical and an abuse of power to expect institutions responsible

for violence to self-report, document and prevent forms of violence. For

example, the IC has an independent monitoring body, GREVIO, but members

may be nominated by the governments of signatories. Furthermore, GREVIO's

procedures are also primarily based off questionnaires to state bodies, where

they are still ultimately expected to self-evaluate and report their

implementation of the IC (CoE, 2018). Ultimately, the international policy

documents analysed in the previous two sections reinforce what Iris Marion

Young (2003: 3-4) has referred to as a 'logic of masculine protection'. States are

portrayed according to an understanding of masculinity akin to the way men

have traditionally been presented as the protectors of families (ibid). The UN

reports and IC reaffirm the state as a singular entity through policy, presenting

states as the 'protectors of a population' (Young, 2003: 3).

Further, I have suggested above that women are treated as passive victims rather than active citizens by these international agencies. In my analysis of the UNGA 2006 document alone, for example, the words 'protect' and 'protection' are mentioned 103 times, almost always in reference to states and their role towards women. The state's assumed neutrality as a democratic set of institutions justifies its ability to intervene in cases between two people (Price, 2012). Such representations exist in UN policy and the most significant legally binding international policy on VAW, the IC. The IC is now the cornerstone of much national legislation on gender-based violence in Europe.

Similar to UN policy, the signatories of the IC, i.e., different nation-states, are called upon to act as the protectors of women and girls and intervene, again reproducing a masculine logic of protection as outlined by Young (2003). The IC demands that states ensure that they take all 'necessary legislative and other measures' to ensure that women 'live free from violence in both the public and private sphere' (Council of Europe, 2011: 8). The representations of VAW and how to address it by the UN and CoE, therefore, reinforce what might be understood as a fraternal form of patriarchy in which states are called upon to 'come to the rescue' of women threatened by violence (Pateman, 2016; Hyndman, 2019; Çinar, 2019). As objects of policy, women are 'cast as requiring protection from the world of male violence while the superior status of men is secured by their supposed ability to offer such protection (Brown, 1992: 25). Çinar (2019) argues that through this logic of protection, the state can 'legitimise its existence and authority by portraying itself as the ultimate protector of the lives, safety, and well-being of all whose interests it claims to represent' (p. 462). Even though such protectionism is generally associated

with more paternalistic authoritarian states, feminist political theorist Pateman (1989; 2016), along with Çinar (2019), point out how this logic of protectionism can also operate in fraternal forms of patriarchy, such as those found in modern, liberal states.

However, as Hearn and Strid (2016) outline, there is considerable variation in how different European states address and understand VAW, resulting in the EU lacking 'legal competence in the domain of violence' (p. 554). We might consider these variations as contributing to the everyday geopolitical and geotemporal contexts within which women and activists live and seek to change. In the next section I examine state responses to the specific forms of VAW in this study for two EU 'modern liberal states', Germany and Ireland.

Section 4.4. Legal Cases and Disruptive Narratives of M/Others in Germany and Ireland

Identifying how different nation-states distinctly wield physical, economic, sexual, and reproductive control over women allows scholars to remain attentive to the particular discursive, semiotic and spatial terms of women's politics (Brown, 1992). The specific state legal systems and geotemporalities in which feminist activists and artists function have real material consequences for them and their families. This section highlights how two European states, Germany and Ireland, have failed to prioritise, legislate for, and direct appropriate resources towards the complex varieties of VAW.

4.4.1. 'Father State': The Patriarchal State in two Germanys

Gender-based violence in Germany is characterised primarily as interpersonal violence, featuring under criminal law in the forms of domestic violence, rape

and, more recently, sexual assault (EIGE, 2015; Hörnle, 2017). The legal

precedent for assuming a woman's place is in the home is the 1900 German

Civil Code. This law enshrined men's power and rights over women and

provides the historical political context for the traditional patriarchal gender

stereotypes discussed in Chapter Two. Remaining with relatively few changes

until the 1970s, this legal code defined women primarily by their role within the

family in the FRG (Frevert, 1989; Young, 2010). As I previously discussed in

Chapter Two, in the East, the role of women became that of the 'worker-mother'

(Young, 2010), but women were still expected to be responsible for domestic

work and rearing children, despite their supposed 'emancipation' (Ferree,

2012).

Domestic violence, in particular, was represented in both German

societies as a private matter: a legitimate way for a man to maintain his

dominant role in family life (Leuze-Mohr, 2001; Smartt and Kury, 2007). To

challenge these social norms, the women's movement in both Germanies

established many local anti-violence projects and campaigns ran by and for

women, including the first women's refuge or *Frauenhaus* (Women's House) in

Europe which opened in West Berlin in 1976. By 1982, 99 similar shelters were

in operation in the Federal Republic (Summers and Hoffman, 2002). Such

initiatives were initially greeted with hostility by conservative political parties

in the FRG, such as the *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (Christian

Democratic Union or CDU), which saw them as a direct threat upon the stability

of the German family. Even in the face of such contradictions and conflicts, the

foundation of these refuges was one of the greatest legacies of the women's

movement in Germany. *Frauenhäuser* soon became recognised as a great

achievement, winning the praise of even the most conservative politicians

(Ferree, 2012). Nonetheless, in both West and East Germany, the subject of

VAW was ignored despite the battles waged by women's' movements.

After reunification, the 2002 Protection Against Violence Act

(*Gewaltschutzgesetz)* was passed (Grafe and Hagemann-White, 2015). This act

does not name 'domestic violence' as a specific legal concept and instead

classifies this form of VAW under the larger criminal umbrella term of *Gewalt*

(violence). This, despite the fact that domestic violence is widespread in

Germany: in 2018, one woman every three days was killed by her partner or ex-

partner, and in 2017, the Federal Criminal Police Office (*Bundeskriminalamt)*

reported that 147 women were murdered (Bundeskriminalamt, 2017, cited in

Berliner Zeitung, 2018; Der Tagespiegel, 2018; Die Welt, 2018). According to

the 2014 report of the German Women's Shelter Association

(*Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V.*; hereafter FHK), services supporting survivors of

gender-based violence, domestic or otherwise, are poorly resourced. In

response to these statistics, the Federal Chairman of the Workers' Welfare

Association *(AWO Bundesverband*), Wolfgang Stadler, called for more support

for women's shelters, which remain severely under-funded (Deutsche Welle,

2018).

Following the ratification of the IC, the FRG introduced the new

'Together Against Violence Against Women*' *('*Gemeinsam gegen Gewalt an*

Frauen') project in 2018 to meet the goals set out by the IC. However, Germany

failed to allocate financial support to provide the adequate number of women's

shelters (Hecht, 2019). The IC specifically lists providing shelters, counselling,

and other supports for survivors of violence as obligations of the state, as

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outlined in Section 4.3. Most services provided for survivors of VAW in Germany are concentrated around capital cities and are inadequate (FHK, 2014). Gaps in service provision nationwide have led to women waiting on lists for a place in a shelter, as 'the total number of women's shelters nationwide is simply not enough' (FHK, 2014: 2), particularly in rural areas and the new Federal States (i.e., former East Germany). Women's organisations have strongly criticised the state for the lack of support to survivors of gender-based violence (Terre des Femmes, 2019; Hecht, 2019). In September 2019 Katja Grieger of the Federal Association of Rape Crisis Centres and Women's Counselling Centres (*Bundesverband der Frauenberatungsstellen und Frauennotrufe:* hereafter Bff*)*, for example, pointed out how Germany's 2020 Budget had allocated no money to implement the necessary requirements outlined in the IC (Hecht, 2019).

In addition to domestic violence, other forms of gender-based violence also remain widespread, with little intervention or support from the state. For example, in 2018, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) reported that 58% of all German women experienced sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is systematically underreported across the EU (EU FRA, 2014), meaning that this percentage is probably higher. In addition, German laws around sexual violence and rape have particularly lagged behind international standards set out by the UN and the IC. Sexual assault, including groping, was only classified as a criminal offence in 2016 (Hörnle, 2017; see Chapter Six). Rape was originally defined in German Criminal Code according to its 'extramarital' nature, holding onto outdated understandings of consent and resistance, two requirements unique to the crime of rape (Caringella, 2008),

until 1997, when marital rape was finally made a criminal offence (Venkatesh and Randall, 2017). Germany, in other words, legislated for marital rape after the US and Ireland, where spousal rape was considered a crime in 1990 (Bergen, 2006; Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1990).

Following a study of 107 legal cases in 2014, The Association of Women Against Violence (*Frauen Gegen Gewalt e.V.*) concluded that there were other significant holes in German sexual violence law (Grieger et al, 2014). An act was considered a criminal offence according to Paragraph 117 of the Criminal Code only if the perpetrator threatened the victim either with violence or if there was an immediate threat to the life and/or body of the victim (ibid). Survivors had to show evidence of a physical struggle, and even then, this was often not enough to secure a conviction (Hörnle, 2017). Legal scholar Tatjana Hörnle (2017) argues that sexual offences were not a topic taught in German law schools until recently. Moreover, because 'the overwhelming majority of legal scholars in Germany are male, and not interested in what might be considered feminist issues' (ibid: p. 4314), violence against women remains a 'non-topic' professionally for lawyers and judges. Hörnle's critique echoes Young's (2010) argument that the German State has been particularly resistant to the demands of civil society, including feminist groups, because of its male, corporatist nature. In this way, the German state's patriarchal systems can be understood as resisting a more comprehensive approach to VAW.

German legal institutions may have resisted changes in laws related to sexual violence, but a number of notable campaigns against sexual harassment, particularly in public spaces, emerged in Germany from 2010 onwards. These included anti-street harassment group, Hollaback!Berlin (see Chapter Five) and

an everyday sexism Twitter campaign #Aufschrei in 2013 (see Sadowski, 2016).

The focus of such campaigns was to create a popular discourse around various

forms of VAW that were often consider 'trivial', including street harassment and

groping, for which there were no existing German laws (DLA Piper, 2014).

Street harassment is broadly understood as the unsolicited verbal and/or

physical acts of a man towards a woman based on her gender, which take place

within a public space (Bowman, 1993; Laniya, 2005) and is one of the most

common forms of sexual violence, with 90-100% of women experiencing it at

least once in their lives (Fileborn, 2019). Gardner (1993) places street

harassment firmly on the continuum of violence (Kelly, 1988) underscoring its

seriousness, impact, frequency and how it creates atmospheres in which other

forms of VAW become tolerable. Common forms of violence, such as street

harassment, are often seen as 'just a bit of fun' from a male perspective or are

often referred to as 'compliments'.

However, such forms of violence are strongly connected to other forms

of violence that are coded as criminal acts (Kelly, 1988). Although campaigns

had been launched by German feminist activists since 2010, it was not until

2016 that the government and media began to take serious notice of sexual

harassment. The reasons for the state's attention were not out of concern for

women's health and well-being, but as I explore in the next section were, and as

Boulila and Carri (2017) point out, profoundly connected to deeply embedded

racism present in the German context. Evidence of institutional racism

intersecting with the patriarchal state emerged during the so-called 'refugee

crisis' in 2015 through growing anti-migrant discourses.

In 2017, Germany updated its laws on sexual assault to align with definitions outlined in the IC. Despite the passage of this law, certain bodies continue to be 'othered' according to moral ideologies tied to an idealised German citizen. Two recent events are cited as triggers to a larger public debate about VAW, pressuring state officials to consider new legislation as a priority for the German political agenda: a mass harassment incident that happened in Cologne on New Year's Eve 2015, and the Gina Lisa Lohfink case in 2016. I examine the impact of these events in greater detail in the next section.

4.4.2. Racism and Sexual Violence in Germany: The violent 'other' and hypersexual women as non-citizens.

Two recent events are believed to have led to the passage of the *Nein Heisst Nein* (No Means No) rape law introduced in Germany in September 2017, which finally recognised sexual harassment as a criminal act (Hörnle, 2017). On 2 January 2016, the popular sensationalist German national newspaper, *Der Stern*, reported that 1000 'Arab or North African' men had attacked a large group of women outside of Cologne Cathedral on New Year's Eve 2015/New Year's Day 2016 (Der Stern, 2016). Given the European refugee crisis and the Islamophobia associated with the so-called 'War on Terror', and more recently the war in Syria, these men were presumed to be refugees. Following calls from police for victims to report the incidents, the number of complaints rose to 516 by January 10, 2016 (Boulila and Carri, 2017). The story was quickly picked up by mainstream media, including in respected national and international newspapers such as *Die Welt* (2016) and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (2016), as well as in other more popular national publications, such as the magazine *Focus* (2016).

Instead of a debate around public harassment as a serious form of gender-based violence in Germany, what became known as the 'Cologne incident', or simply 'Cologne' (Boulila and Carri, 2017), was framed by popular and mainstream news publications as something that came from elsewhere: a 'contaminant' polluting the German body-politic perpetrated by the recent 'influx' of refugees. Anti-migrant discourse had already been growing in Germany through the foundation of Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident (PEGIDA) in 2014 and the growth in support for the anti-migrant political party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in local elections. However, conservative, pro-business media outlets such as *Die Welt*, but also politicians on all sides of the political spectrum framed what had happened in Cologne as an attack on (White) 'German values' of gender and sexual equality. Those most vocal about this attack on women's rights were often figures who had displayed no interest in the topic of sexual harassment until this event and feigned caring about gender equality to justify their views of a racially pure Germany. One particular journalist, Uwe Schmitt, known for writing searing articles about feminist and queer politics, reported that the event had wounded the German nation and its values (Schmitt, 2016; Boulila and Carri, 2017). The hypocrisy of such statements is well-noted by feminist scholars. For example, Boulila and Carri (2017) claim the 'Cologne incident' highlighted the 'intersectional workings of racism and antifeminism' (p 286). In this particular context, challenging the Islamophobic and racist narrative that developed in relation to sexual harassment became a priority for the feminist groups I worked with in Berlin, as discussed in Chapter Six.

The incidents in Cologne are cited as the reason the government introduced the long-awaited *Nein Heisst Nein* rape and sexual harassment law (Weber, 2016; Hörnle, 2017), but in this case, the demand for improved sexual violence legislation was only granted by the state for racially motivated ends. The law now includes, along with criminal sanctions, deportations for sexual assault (Boulila and Carri, 2017), which may explain its rapid passage. This example further demonstrates how the justice system has a structural bias not only against women but also people of colour (Walby, 1990). Weber (2016) argues that the new law was 'an appropriation of gender violence to produce European Others' (p. 86).

Before the new legislation was passed, in 2016-17, a second significant event fed into the growing debate around sexual violence in Germany: the 'Gina Lisa Lohfink case'. In 2012, Lohfink was drugged and raped after a night out. The two men who raped her filmed and put the violent incident online under the incriminating title 'Rape Video' (*Vergewaltigungsvideo*) (Anzlingner, 2017). Lohfink brought the men to court in 2012, seeking to have the video removed from the Internet and the men charged with rape. The video, now deleted, was used as evidence in the case, and clearly shows her saying 'no' and 'stop'. At one point, she tried to remove her attacker's hands from her throat, despite being drugged (Silman, 2016). However, the verdict deemed that the action could not be called 'rape' because she had insufficient proof, which was defined as evidence of a physical struggle (Grieger et al, 2014; Hörnle, 2017). Not only were the two men acquitted, but they also brought Lohfink to court for defamation in 2016, where she was fined 24,000 Euro (Silman, 2016). The injustice of this judgement caused outrage among feminist activists, who had

been protesting outside the courtroom and tweeting support, using the hashtag #teamginalisa.

The verdict was tied to Lohfink's public image, in which she starred on Germany's *Next Top Model* show in 2008 and was known for making sex-tapes. Clear physical evidence was provided in the video of the attack but Lohfink did not fit into the trope of the 'ideal victim' (Walby, 1990), a point sensationalised by the national media and used against her in court. Because she was known for making pornographic videos, Lohfink was presumed to have already always consented to all sexual acts, so her claim to rape was dismissed. During a re-hearing of the trial in 2017, the judge questioned why Lohfink would turn up to court every day if she was so traumatised when she could have just sent in the testimony. He made it clear that he believed she was only doing it for attention and was doing 'women who'd actually been raped a great disservice' (Fischer quoted in Anzlinger, 2017). Statements such as these were made throughout the initial and subsequent trials, perpetuating damaging stereotypes and rape myths about how women make false rape accusations 'for attention', or blame a woman (or in this case profession) for 'inviting' rape (Hockett et al, 2016). The framing of Lohfink as undeserving of protection by the courts because of her profession and public image is an example of how 'moral exclusion works to legitimize violence' (Tyner, 2012: 11) against different groups of women and how certain bodies of 'others' are considered to be outside the protection of the state (Foucault, 1979).

Taken together, the Cologne incident and the Lohfink case influenced the passage of the 2017 'No Means No' rape and sexual harassment law, and contributed to widespread public debate over sexual violence, consent, and

rape culture (Hoven, 2017). Yet feminist activists were understandably

disappointed when the final version of the law included German Residence

Laws that perpetuate racist myths both about sexual violence and the image of

the virginal blonde German woman as in need of protection (Boulila and Carri,

2017; see Chapter Six). People of colour and 'whores' are deemed not deserving

of state services and are depicted as threats to the body politic. Nonetheless, as I

develop in Chapter Six, these events, and specifically how feminist activists

responded to them, resulted in more nuanced discussions of VAW in Germany,

in particular the 'ethinicisation of sexism' and sexual violence (Dietze, 2016).

4.4.3. Pure Irish Women: The Patriarchal State in Ireland

In the Republic of Ireland, VAW and interpersonal violence have historically

been systematic and institutionalised forms of spatial injustice due to the

alliance of the Catholic Church and state. Following the establishment of the

Irish Free State (*Saorstát na hÉireann*) in 1922, a Church-State obsession with

sexual morality resulted in a particular type of governmentality enacted to

produce 'pure Irish women' (Crowley and Kitchin, 2008; see also Chapter Two).

Therefore, the Irish state, in partnership with the Catholic Church, was heavily

involved in regulating the sexuality and bodies of women as part of its nation-

building project. Central to the construction of this new state was promoting

women's role as reproducers of the nation. However, as discussed in Section

4.2, different women's reproductive capabilities are valued differently within

the racialised and gendered nation-state. For example, Rivetti (2019) points out

how the glorification of Irish motherhood has always involved exclusions:

'white and settled Irish women were encouraged to find an appropriate

husband and reproduce' while 'non-settled, Traveller women's sexuality and

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childbearing have often been securitised and controlled, if not prevented and demonised' (p. 82). Such racialised reproductive exclusions emerged again and again in public discourse, from the Irish Citizenship referendum of 2004 (for an account see Lentin, 2013; Rivetti, 2019) to the abortion cases of Savita Halappanavar (2012) and of Miss Y (2014), the details of which I discuss in Section 4.4.4.

The Irish state were quick to discipline and criminalise those who fell outside state proscriptions of pure Irish womanhood. Women who deviated from this were routinely punished, even if this 'deviation' was the result of abuse or violence at the hands of an individual man (Smith, 2007). Evidence collected by historians from Irish court cases throughout the 20th century reveal how many women and girls were sent to Magdalene Laundries because they were raped or sexually harmed, with the court ruling that the defendant must have done something that resulted in her victimisation (ibid). Survivors were exposed to the violence of individual men and subsequent cruelty of the state's 'shame industrial complex' (Hogan, 2019), a system of incarceration and abuse that included Magdalene laundries and Mother and Baby Homes, some of which endured until the 1990s. To this day, the Irish state has done little to recognise institutional abuse against women as a form of VAW, despite its inclusion in reports from the UN CEDAW that frame it thus (UN CEDAW, 2017). Indeed, the lack of redress for institutional violence carried out against women, restricting reproductive choice and unnecessary medical procedures in the maternity system are the three main areas of concern highlighted by the UN CEDAW in its most recent report on Ireland (UN CEDAW/C/IRL/6-7, 2017).

The history of anti-VAW legislation in Ireland, or rather lack thereof, therefore reflected patriarchal Church-State configurations defining appropriate Irish womanhood. Women in Ireland were defined as the property of men (in particular their husbands), and as a result the definition of rape only applied to carnal knowledge of another man's wife, which was understood more as trespass of another man's property than as a form of violence (Molloy, 2017). Gender-based violence as a distinct phenomenon was relatively invisible in Irish law until the 1980s and 1990s and remains primarily characterised by interpersonal violence. Both rape and domestic violence were covered in very limited ways by the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act (Galligan, 1998), the same section of the law that criminalised abortion (de Londres and Enright, 2018). A change towards a victim-centred approach in the legal system and the emergence of the women's movement in Ireland, discussed in Chapter Two, provided the impetus to review Ireland's rape and domestic violence laws in the 1980s (Galligan, 1998; Molloy, 2017). The more significant victories came in the 1990s.

The introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1990) considerably overhauled rape laws, broadening the definition of rape to include marital rape. This Act also legislated against sexual assault and removed physical resistance as the only way of measuring a lack of consent (Molloy, 2017). In 1996, after a decades-long battle spearheaded by Women's Aid, the Domestic Violence Act (1996) was finally implemented, extending definitions of rape and violence, and strengthening responses of law enforcement and the health services. In 2018, domestic violence was further reviewed to include coercive control and psychological abuse (Domestic Violence Act, 2018).

While legislation has been greatly improved, Irish feminist scholars
Caroline Forde, Carol Ballantine, and Nata Duvvury (2017) have pointed out
how the Republic's support for victims of violence, be it battery or rape,
remains 'grossly inadequate'. Exacerbating the situation is a neoliberal
government imposing austerity measures on all social services following the
2008 Global Economic Crisis, while subsidising foreign development (Kitchen et
al, 2015; Hearne and Murphy, 2018). Again, this is an example of how the
patriarchal state interlocks with other systems of oppression, in this case free-
market capitalism (see Section 4.2.). In 2014, Ireland was initially hesitant
about signing the IC because of its requirement for emergency barring orders,
which might 'interfere with the property rights of the accused person, as
protected by the Irish Constitution' (Crowley, 2017: 303). That same year, the
Mid-West branch of the Rape Crisis Centre, which serves three different
counties, was forced to close temporarily due to funding cuts implemented by
the government. These cuts were made in the face of an increase in demand for
services (Rape Crisis Network Ireland, 2014). The deepening housing and
homelessness crisis in Ireland, caused by a rapid increase in rental and property
prices and the lack of social housing supply (Kitchin et al, 2015), has also
contributed to an increase in need and reduction in services. In 2019, over
10,000 adults and children, including young families, were currently homeless
(Department of Housing, 2019); of the 1,698 homeless families, 1,046 were
single-parent families (Lambert et al, 2018). Women's Aid specifically criticised
Ireland's neoliberal approach to housing policy, which has further endangered
women and children: 'social housing must be provided for families with
children escaping domestic violence' (Women's Aid, 2018: 15).

Legislative changes in Ireland also ignored the continued violence against women that took place in state institutions, including the Irish maternity service (UN CEDAW, 2017; Delay and Sundstrom, 2019). Obstetric violence includes abusive practices such as reproductive control, coercion, forced surgery, non-consensual medical procedures, physical restraint, and sexual assault (Kukura, 2018). As Kukura (2018) explains, in popular geopolitical spatial imaginaries, state-condoned practices of obstetric violence are considered commonplace in countries with poor healthcare systems and/or high levels of gender-based discrimination. Yet there is evidence of this form of VAW as an 'everyday' occurrence in Ireland, which is classified as a 'Global North' industrialised country (AIMS, 2016; UN CEDAW, 2017). For example, the Irish state visited obstetric violence upon women as carried out in Catholic hospitals through the practice of conducting symphysiotomies (see Delay and Sundstrom, 2019). This childbirth operation unhinges the pelvis and was practised between the 1940s and 1980s in Ireland, leaving many women with serious physical, psychological and emotional damage (Enright, 2018)). Obstetric violence ranges from forms of abuse, including sexual violation and non-consensual medical procedures, to coercion, through judicial or child welfare intervention (Kukura et al, 2018). These practices are violent in and of themselves, some scholars consider the violation and abuse of women's bodies during childbirth, including non-consensual procedures, as a form of 'birth-rape' (Cohen Shabot, 2015). Reproductive control and forced pregnancy are also particularly common among women experiencing domestic violence (Moore et al, 2010), again calling attention to how different forms of VAW interweave.

Lévesque et al (2018), in their study of maternity services in the US and Canada, note that obstetric violence is: 'obscured by privacy norms that govern healthcare – particularly reproductive healthcare – or by the complicated power dynamics present in many provider-patient relationships' (p. 727). As Sadler et al (2016) argue, obstetric violence needs to be understood as a form of structural social violence rather than as something that arises from mistreatment at the hands of specific individual health care practitioners. They argue that a broader analysis of VAW should include:

> the cultural and social dimensions embedded in the phenomenon of obstetric violence, which can allow a shift from the limited focus on victims (women) and victimisers (health professionals), to the acknowledgement of the ubiquitous socialisation of men and women into naturalised, and thus invisible forms of violence and power dynamics between groups (ibid: 51).

This recalls Hunnicutt's (2009) definition of violence as arising from cultures of patriarchy that reinforce structural inequalities between men and women. At the same time, as I have indicated here and in Chapter Two, in Ireland, there are specific institutional, legal, and social dimensions that reify these inequalities which are related to the particular histories of the Church-State nexus, and the Republic's neoliberal ideology.

The violent practice of withholding consent on medical procedures includes preventing women from deciding whether or not they want to continue a pregnancy (Kukura, 2018). Until recently, the Republic of Ireland had some of the strictest abortion laws in Europe (de Londres and Enright, 2018). Although abortion was already outlawed by British colonial law through the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act, the Eighth Amendment (Article

40.3.3), introduced in 1983, made abortion in Ireland a constitutional matter (see Chapter One). This constitutional amendment acknowledged: 'the right to life of the unborn', 'with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother' (Bunreacht na hÉireann, 40.3.3, 1983). This essentially equated the life of a foetus with that of a woman and stripped women, particularly pregnant women, of their right to appropriate healthcare (de Londres and Enright, 2018). Irish feminist activists, artists, scholars and journalists have traced a line between Ireland's restrictive abortion laws and the institutional abuse of pregnant women and girls in Church-State run institutions, such as the Magdalene laundries (see Smyth, 1993; Mullally, 2018; Hogan, 2019). Over 10,000 'fallen' women were incarcerated in these laundries, a quarter of which were admitted by agents of the state, such as the police, judges, and social workers (Hogan, 2019). Britain was traditionally the destination for women who managed to escape the laundries and the associated ostracisation of having a child out of wedlock. It also quickly became the destination for women seeking to access abortion services: 'a vast laundry for the human "dirty linen" that Irish morality refuses to handle' (Smyth, 1993: 21), a point I return to below in Section 4.4.5. In addition to adding an increased psychological burden through enforced travel, even those choosing the have children in Ireland remained subject to the effects of the Eighth Amendment, putting all pregnant people at risk (AIMS, 2016).

Ireland's legacy of institutional abuse is intimately tied to the continued coercion, mistreatment and abuse of pregnant women and girls within the maternity system in Ireland (Enright, 2018; Delay and Sundstrom, 2019). Discussions that resonate with aforementioned definitions of obstetric violence

began to emerge during the run-up to the Irish abortion referendum, as I outline in the next section and further discuss in Chapters Seven and Eight.

4.4.4. A Vessel and Nothing More: The Impact of Ireland's abortion laws

A popular myth among 'pro-life' advocates was that Ireland without abortion was the 'safest country in the world for pregnant women' (ARC, 2016; Fletcher and McGuinness, 2017) despite the fact that maternal deaths are generally lower in countries with liberal abortion regimes (Sedgh et al, 2012). Recent studies have increasingly linked obstetric violence to neoliberal health care models (Morales et al, 2018). Indeed, maternal deaths are on the rise in many countries of the Global North (King, 2013) and are particularly evident in countries with two-tier health systems (Morales et al, 2018), with incidence strongly tied to both racial and income inequality (King, 2013). The Irish state's disregard for the lives and safety of pregnant women has been illustrated through several recent high-profile cases which have demonstrated how the state continually prioritised the life of a foetus, to the extent that it would let a woman in need of a life-saving abortion die (Fletcher, 2014). In this section I describe two such cases, one which led to changes in Irish law which were supposed to clarify where a life-saving abortion was legal and yet remained mostly impracticable. These two cases underline the particularly violent nature of restrictive abortion laws in Ireland, which involved the physical and mental abuse of one woman and the slow and painful death of another. Importantly, these cases are just two of a countless number – the true extent of violence resulting from the Eighth Amendment will never be fully known.

The first event was in 2012, when Savita Halappanavar died due to complications of a septic miscarriage at 17 weeks after being denied an

abortion. Savita and her husband Praveen were informed that the foetus could not survive outside the womb, yet the detection of the foetal heartbeat meant that doctors refused to intervene and carry out a termination, even though the mother's life was at risk. The couple repeatedly requested an abortion after her amniotic fluids broke but were told by a nurse that because there was a foetal heartbeat and because Ireland is 'a Catholic Country', that this would not be possible (Lentin, 2013). Such a statement could also be read as a racist comment made to what the nurse assumed was a migrant not worthy of state protection, as Savita wore a sari and was of south Asian descent. Indeed, Side (2016) argues that such a comment suggests that the couple were seen as not 'belonging' because of their migrant status, ethnicity, race, and requests for an abortion. Thus their 'otherness' was seen as conflicting with supposed pro-life 'Irish values' (p. 792). As the neck of Savita's womb was open, she contracted septicaemia and E.coli. The infection spread throughout her body causing shock and multiple organ failure (Lentin, 2013). Savita died on 28 October 2012. Three days later the news of Savita's death broke and on 17 November 2012, 20,000 people marched in Dublin alone (Doherty and Redmond, 2015). Her slow and painful death sparked outrage, increasing demands that Ireland's restrictive abortion laws be liberalised.

Due to mounting public and international pressure following Savita's death, as well as the increasing growth of the pro-choice movement in Ireland, the government introduced the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act (PLDPA) in January 2013. The PLDPA purported to respond to the 1992 X Case, more than a decade earlier, in which abortion was deemed allowable only when a woman was suicidal or when the woman's life was at risk (see Smyth, 1993;

Fletcher and McGuinness, 2017). However, the 2013 bill introduced heavy penalties for doctors if their interventions were done 'unlawfully'. If a woman was diagnosed as suicidal, for example, the law also required that three doctors – two psychiatrists and one obstetrician – agree with the initial medical diagnosis and affirm her right to an abortion (PLDPA, 2013: 10). The bill further introduced a new criminal sentence for anyone attempting to self-abort, for example, using the abortion pill which is legal in most other European countries; if enacted, women could be sentenced up to 14 years in prison. The PLDPA was, in essence, a deeply unclear and impracticable law (de Londres and Enright, 2018), that demonstrated how the state's legal institutions created more, rather than fewer, barriers for women to have the right to a life-saving abortion (Quilty et al, 2015; de Londres and Enright, 2018).

Two years later, the flaws of the PLDPA were illustrated by the case of 'Miss Y'. In 2014, Miss Y entered Ireland as an asylum seeker who was suicidal after being beaten and raped repeatedly in her country of origin. She asked for and was denied an abortion on the grounds of suicide and forced to continue her pregnancy. After going on a hunger strike in response, the Health Service Executive (HSE) took out a high court injunction to force-feed Miss Y to prevent harm to the foetus (Fletcher and McGuinness, 2017). Delay tactics used by the healthcare system and courts, denying the legal right to abortion when suicidal, and using state services to enforce pregnancy, meant that an early delivery of the foetus through a forced Caesarean-section surgery could now be carried out (Fletcher, 2014). This example demonstrates the brutal disregard for a woman's right to decide what happens to her body, particularly if that body is the body of a migrant woman (Side, 2016). Such incidents fit clearly within definitions of

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obstetric violence; Miss Y's body was both appropriated and exposed to

dehumanising treatment, taking away her autonomy 'ultimately affecting a

woman's quality of life' (Venezuela, 2007; Pérez D'Gregorio, 2010). This case

again illustrates how the state performs in both racist and patriarchal ways.

Indeed, race, ethnicity and migration status have a history of being used in the

Irish legal context to stigmatise, regulate, and control certain kinds of abortion

decisions (see Fletcher, 2005). The case also highlighted the interlocking

relationship between different forms of violence, in this case, rape and obstetric

violence. For legal scholars Ruth Fletcher and Sheelagh McGuinness (2017),

Miss Y represented:

> a woman who is harmed through the refusal of care
> consequent to Article 40.3.3, to a woman who is harmed by
> enforced medical care in the interests of the foetus consequent
> to Article 40.3.3. [Miss] Y is violated and harmed first through
> rape, then through enforced pregnancy, and finally through
> enforced medical treatment' (p. 376).

The two high-profile cases of Savita Halappanavar and Miss Y

highlighted the Irish state's disregard for women's bodily integrity. As

sociologist Ronit Lentin (2013) argues, these cases are an example of how

women in Ireland are 'cast as m/others' rather than equal citizens within the

Irish state (p. 131). They also illustrate the Irish state's complex relationship

with race and reproduction (see Fletcher, 2005; Luibhéid, 2006; and Rivetti,

2019). Both cases added urgency to the ongoing struggle for women to have

safe access to abortion, but they also opened up broader conversations about

the mistreatment of pregnant women in the Irish maternity system and migrant

women in particular (see Side, 2016; Kennedy, 2018; MERJ, 2018).

Three years later, in 2017, Midwives for Choice submitted a complaint to the UN CEDAW about the unfair treatment of pregnant women in Ireland. Activist and midwife, Philomena Canning, described the 'common practice by hospitals of invoking the Eighth Amendment – with threat of, or actual, court order - to force women to comply with medical decision-making about their care and treatment with which they do not agree' (cited in Midwives for Choice, 2017: np). In addition, numerous reports emerged from the Association for Irish Maternity Services (AIMS) which highlighted cases where women were threatened and coerced with high-court injunctions into invasive medical procedures (AIMS, 2017). Although the new National Maternity Plan (2016) included important changes, the number of C-sections in Irish maternity hospitals remained three times the rates recommended by the World Health Organisation (de Londres and Enright, 2018). Rising numbers of C-sections are correlated with rising maternal mortality rates, which generally indicate the poor quality of a maternity system (King, 2013). Medical procedures were routinely implemented without consent because the foetus was claimed to be 'at risk' (AIMS, 2017). The HSE's National Consent Policy (2016) made it quite clear that a woman's (lack of) consent to medical procedures during childbirth was related to the Eighth Amendment:

> [B]ecause of the constitutional provision on the right to life of the unborn there is significant legal uncertainty regarding the extent of a pregnant woman's right to refuse treatment in circumstances in which the refusal would put the life of a viable foetus at serious risk' (HSE, 2017: 41).

Such practices constitute obstetric violence, and yet, at the time of writing, even after the national referendum to remove the Eighth Amendment in 2018, the

Irish government has not yet investigated the past or present mistreatment and abuse of women within these state institutions.

Meanwhile pregnant people continue to travel abroad for abortion access in dire circumstances (ARC, 2020; Side, 2020). In the next section, I briefly discuss the 'itinerary of shame' (Olund, 2020: 182) created through Ireland's restrictive abortion laws, as tied to the state's historical 'shame-industrial complex' (Hogan, 2019) outlined above. Paying attention to the emotional geographies of shame is important to address at this point because they support an established national narrative that has long framed sexually active women in Ireland as 'fallen women' (Hogan, 2019) and because it illustrates the Irish patriarchal state's abdication of responsibility when it comes to ensuring the welfare of women. Through forcing women to travel, the state produces women as abject bodies unworthy of care and marked by social stigma.

4.4.5. An 'Itinerary of Shame'

The geography of abortion in Ireland follows a long tradition in which inconvenient women were sent elsewhere if they transgressed the boundaries of accepted Irish womanhood (Rossiter, 2009; Calkin and Freeman, 2018). As previously discussed, the Church-State nexus heavily regulated the bodies of Irish women as part of the construction of Irish identity centred around ideas of Catholic purity. Women who failed to meet these credentials were punished through ostracisation and incarceration within Church-State institutions, locked away lest they contaminate the rest of the population with their sinful bodies. Many of these women were brought by families who simply could not withstand the judgement of their communities within 'the shame-industrial complex'; a

system of institutionalisation that managed the undesirable elements of Irish society, primarily the impoverished and the 'morally contagious' (Hogan, 2019: 36). Public discourse around abortion in Ireland was further shaped by tight state control of cultural production, through censorship of anything relating to women's sexuality, the body, but particularly abortion (see Chapter Two). Róisín Kennedy (2018) explains how censorship in Ireland was both related to the state's 'defensive nationalism' against American, and particularly British, cultural influence, but also arose from the social construction of Irish people as 'pure' and 'spiritually minded' (p. 108).

Irishness in the postcolonial era was a highly gendered project, as discussed in Chapter Two, and constructed in opposition to 'non-Irish' others (Nash, 1997; Fletcher, 2005; Browne et al, 2018). Abortion was strongly associated with Irish national identity and was often described as a practice carried out by the 'barbarous English' but not the 'God-fearing Irish' (Smyth, 1998; Kozlowska et al, 2016). Therefore, abortion was not only understood as an attack on the family unit, but a threat to the Irish state itself (Kozlowska et al, 2016). This 'pro-natalist nationalism' continued to persist even throughout the 2018 referendum campaign (Calkin, 2019).

Unmarried pregnant women who had the means to escape the laundries traditionally went to the UK to 'avoid publicity' (Hogan, 2019). Following the legalisation of abortion in the UK through the 1967 Abortion Act, what has been termed 'the Irish abortion trail' has closely followed this itinerary (Rossiter, 2009; Calkin and Freedman, 2018). The lack of access to abortion services did not prevent abortion from happening but merely forced 170,000 women abroad for abortions since 1980, or 12 women a day (IFPA, 2018). Similar to the

Magdalene laundries, the open secret that constituted the 'Abortion Trail' was condoned by the Irish state, indeed it was essentially legislated for: installed in the constitution with the addition of the 13th Amendment following the X Case (1992) and a subsequent referendum (Bunreacht na hÉireann, 1992; de Londres and Enright 2018; Kennedy, 2018). In addition to risking the lives of pregnant people in Ireland, the psychological impact of travelling to access abortion created feelings of 'shame' and 'isolation, creating an unnecessary and damaging burden for abortion-seeking women (Aiken et al, 2016). Through such practices, the legacy of shame surrounding women's sexuality was assured.

Both Aiken et al (2016) and Olund (2020) argue that the feelings of shame surrounding abortion in Ireland are primarily produced by the experience of having to travel in secret to access abortion, rather than the procedure itself. Indeed, relief is the most common emotion expressed by women post-abortion, whereas shame generally emerges as a response to its criminality or the influence of public discourse, rather than the medical procedure (Kumar et al, 2009; Aiken et al, 2016). Olund (2020) specifically refers to how enforced travel for abortion contributes to an emotional geography, one he refers to as 'an itinerary of secret shame' (p. 182). Similarly, Calkin and Freeman (2018) describe abortion travel as an 'overwhelmingly solitary and covert act' (p 2). The journey is, as they explain, about more than the mobility (or immobility) of bodies across international borders and argue that a geography of affect emerges along abortion trails (ibid). Targeted anti-abortion campaigns, from activists picketing clinics and harassing patients, to

ad campaigns that shame women, are just some of the many barriers that emerged along the abortion trail (Doan, 2007; Lowe and Hayes, 2019).

While the narrative of shame around abortion was already well-established in Ireland (Smyth, 1993; 2015; Ferriter, 2010; Hogan, 2019), in the summer of 2012, a particularly stigmatising outdoor billboard campaign by 'pro-life' group Youth Defence appeared all over the country. This campaign featured the slogan 'Abortion Tears Her Life Apart' and images of an ultrasound or an image of a young woman quite literally torn apart. Youth Defence purposefully targeted spaces such as airports, bus stations and train stations – public spaces where women travelling to access abortion services in the UK would undoubtedly pass through (Doherty and Redmond, 2015). Through targeting these spaces, the bodies of abortion-seeking women were cast as shameful, embodying only guilt, hence somehow deserving of the suffering and isolation imposed on them through enforced travel.

However, this event is also considered an important catalyst in the re-emergence of the pro-choice movement in Ireland (ibid). The stigmatising nature of the campaign, in addition to its sheer extent and targeted nature, mobilised pro-choice activists and resulted in the beginning of a particularly fraught battle over public space, which is a characteristic feature of the abortion debate in recent years (Doherty and Redmond, 2015; O'Hara, 2020). This has involved challenging 'pro-life' representations that attempt a 'personification of the foetus' (Balsamo, 1996: 91). These representations, in which the women carrying the foetus are erased or completely invisible were commonly used by the 'pro-life' movement in Ireland (Barry, 2015). Such visual tactics are a practice of domination and control, which reduce women to their reproductive

functions and role as child-bearers (Stabile, 1992; Wise, 2018). These representations, as outlined earlier, were embodied by the legislation that exposed women to violence in the Irish maternity system.

In this specific campaign, however, a representation of young women was included, but she was constructed as being 'torn apart' by guilt and abortion regret. Shame was projected onto the travelling bodies of young women through representations placed carefully within the spaces of that travel. However, shame can also become productive; it has 'political potential' (Munt, 2009: 2):

> When you no longer care that you are being shamed, particularly when horizontal bonds formed through communities of shame can be transmuted into collective desires to claim a political presence and a legitimate self, that new sense of identity can forge ahead and gain rights and protection (ibid: 4).

Rather than accepting their narrative of shame, pro-choice activists seized upon the Youth Defence campaign as an opportunity to push for greater reproductive freedom. The forms of resistance that emerged following this campaign are the focus of Chapters Seven and Eight.

Section 4.5. Conclusion

> Can such a state be made to serve the interests of those upon whose powerlessness its power is erected? (MacKinnon, 1983: 644).

This chapter described the multi-scalar legal context of gender-based violence in which modern feminist activists and artists operate. I have drawn upon the work of feminist scholars and activists to define VAW as more than the

commonly held conceptualisation of something that happens between two people (Hunnicutt, 2009; Price, 2012; Flynn, 2018). Feminist activists identified and labelled street harassment at least as early as the 1960s and 1970s (Richter 2014), and yet it remains absent from both policy definitions and anti-violence legislation. Through the recent work of activists, everyday forms of violence existing for over a century, such as obstetric violence, have become understood as a form of structural and gender-based violence (Sadler et al, 2016; Morales et al, 2018).

In this chapter, I demonstrated how the UN identified the role of the state in perpetrating violence and acknowledged patriarchy as a structural basis of inequality between men and women. However, the only legally binding treaty, the Istanbul Convention, avoids such terminology. Using Bacchi's (2012)) WPR approach, I provided a feminist analysis of these key anti-violence policies to identify how the state is framed in public international social policy as somehow existing outside of these problems, and that the state's role is simply to intervene and fix problems 'waiting to be "addressed"' (p. 14). Both the UN and CoE still assume that the state is the most 'neutral' institution responsible for documenting and preventing gender-based violence, problematically representing the state as a 'protector' of supposedly passive female 'victims'.

Modern nation-states thus implement policies that do not question the deeply entrenched misogyny and racism of its own agents and institutions. There are also significant gaps in how VAW is defined and addressed by international organisations and bodies, such as the UN and the CoE, as well as individual Western European nation-states, such as Germany and Ireland. When

nation-states address VAW, limited improvements result because legislation is not always implemented at its 'points of delivery'(Pickup et al, 2001: 295) or may be resisted and performed in different ways. Furthermore, national law continues to frame VAW as interpersonal and exceptional rather than structural, universal, and specific; violence is framed as something that is 'on the edges of society in deviance and criminality' (Walby, 2013: 97).

Following Bacchi (2012), I also asked in this chapter: 'how might we think about the problem differently?' (p 21). Part of the failure of nation states to adequately address VAW can contributed to the intensification of gender oppression under neoliberalism, which has seen the destruction of public infrastructure, social protections, and the individualisation of social problems onto women (see Brown, 2015). Therefore, state institutions and actors do have a role to play in challenging VAW, but scholars as well as activists must remain critical of claims to protect women made through policy and legislation at both the international and national levels, particularly in light of the deeply patriarchal and racialised nature of the state. As outlined in this chapter, women in Germany and Ireland, and in other countries, continue to experience violence through existing and/or lacking services offered by states presumed to have women's best interests at heart (Sadler et al, 2016). Signing up to international agreements while simultaneously doing much to perpetuate violence raises the question: can any of these states really be considered 'modern' (Walby, 2013)? For example, the Irish state failed to adequately address its long history of institutional violence even as the government enacted laws addressing the complexities of interpersonal violence.

Enduring multiple forms of gender-based violence affects women's quality of life. This PhD calls attention to the work of feminist activists who provide alternative narratives and spaces for women, as well as articulate their violent experiences and support one another in the face of inadequate official supports and services (Schechter, 1983; Sadler et al, 2016). As Sylvia Walby (2013) states: 'new ways of making violence visible unsettle old notions of the nature and direction of violence' (p. 95). This is precisely what I examine in the following four empirical chapters: how contemporary feminist activists in Berlin and Dublin make everyday violence visible by creating hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces through a variety of creative, digital, and embodied acts of resistance within their specific geotemporalities.

Chapter Five: Storytelling in Hybrid Spaces: Hollaback!Berlin

5.1. Introduction

To make everyday forms of VAW visible, grassroots feminist activists mobilise locally to create alternative hybrid digital and material spaces. This chapter examines the digital storytelling and creative place-making of Hollaback!Berlin (H!Berlin), a branch of the international network dedicated to calling attention to street harassment in cities around the world. Through an analysis of their feminist practices and actions, I demonstrate the situated and embodied aspects of feminist anti-violence activism in the digital age.

As I describe below, H!Berlin documents and locates experiences of harassment in the streets and public spaces where this form of violence takes place, resulting in empowering and caring practices in public urban spaces for participants. Rather than experience the city through fear, activists create new hybrid spaces that name specific forms of oppression, overcome their exclusion from traditional sites of political deliberation, and forge new forms of community (Fraser 1990; 2014; Palczewski 2001; Salter 2013; see also Chapter Two). I argue that the group's participatory mappings and creative practices can be understood as forms of 'boldness' whereby women reclaim public space to challenge their subjugation (Koskela, 1997). Furthermore, their actions also embody forms of 'place-based care' (Till, 2012) whereby the urban landscape is transformed and re-imagined, acknowledging the stories of women who have been harassed, offering moments of solidarity.

I begin in section 5.2 by introducing the international group Hollaback! and reasons for establishing the network. I focus on the goals and digital tactics

of H!Berlin, and how storytelling and mapping work through the Internet. Section 5.3. extends that discussion by describing the local material creative practices of the H!Berlin community and in the public spaces of the city. I sequence my discussion of H!Berlin's feminist activist practices according to first the digital and then the material for ease of analysis but, as I argue below, the hybrid digital-material nature of their work is emergent and co-constitutive. The alternative counterpublic spaces that H!Berlin feminist activists created in the city were at once place-based, embodied, creative, empowering, and supportive.

5.2. Hollaback! Berlin: Digital Practices

Hollaback! founder Emily May contends that the Internet is one of the most important tools for change. Technology has created what she calls a dramatic 'historical shift' for social movements (Fieldnotes, 2015). Women no longer have to wait for stories of violence, harassment and everyday sexism to be picked up by the traditional media (print, TV, radio etc.) because new media is 'in our hands' (Fieldnotes, 2015).

When I commenced my research in 2015, the international Hollaback! anti-street harassment movement was active in 92 cities in 25 countries (Hollaback!, 2015). For each of those cities, a local chapter or group hosts a website which has a blog where people can upload and map their individual stories about street harassment; there is also an App which allows users to upload their geo-referenced stories as well. Local groups also host offline, on the ground events, and may participate in some of the international events hosted by the central organising group based in New York, such as webinars, or

visit the webpages or related social media of other sister groups in other cities. For all branches, there is a similar Hollaback! virtual platform, that has a common layout, Hollaback! logo with half star, pink with grey-scale colours, and specific fonts, which provides aesthetic unity and a Hollaback! brand across the different chapters.

Each Hollaback! branch has its own website that is run by local activists. A screenshot of the Hollaback!Berlin homepage is depicted in Figure 5.1. The Hollaback! website allows users to submit stories of street harassment, which are uploaded and illustrated through a map of their city (I discuss mapping in more detail in Section 5.2.2). Above the city map is the statement, in all capital letters and in bold: 'YOU HAVE THE POWER TO END HARASSMENT' (*DU HAST DIE MACHT BELÄSTIGUNG ZU BEENDEN)*. As a central feature of the homepage, the map depicts, through pink dots, where users have identified locations of 'harassment in public space'. Users click a button that says, 'Share your story' ('*Teile deine Geshichte'*), which is located just beneath a large map of the city, to the right of a black bar that says, 'Read and share stories' (*Lies und teile Geschichten*). White boxes under the bar offer website viewers a sampling of the stories submitted, with a short bold title written by the user. If they don't choose a title, the platform titles it simply, 'New Submission'. Once users click on the 'Share your story/*Teile deine Geshichte'* button, they are brought to another page where they can submit the details of their story through an online form; from a dropdown menu, they then select the type of harassment it was from the options of: verbal, groping, or following (Figure 5.2). Users can also choose to give their name or remain anonymous.

H!Berlin the group that I analyse below, was founded in 2011 by Julia

Brilling and Claudia Johann. The group uses the main Hollaback! digital

platforms, including social media, to raise awareness and build community,

challenge dominant narratives that silence and/or distort stories of gender-

based violence in Germany, and to reclaim the narrative about street

harassment and right to their city. Their actions create visible forms of

resistance and gestures of solidarity through re-telling and re-mapping the

emotional geographies of women's fear in public urban space. These hybrid

counterpublics, forged in part through digital storytelling and mappings, are

examples of how feminist activists navigate hybrid space to achieve their goals.

5.2.1. Digital Storytelling

In this section, based upon my primary research and other scholarly research, I

describe the importance of digital storytelling through the Hollaback! platform

in creating a safe and empowering counterpublic space for users. Storytelling in

combination with a range of different media is not new to feminist activism and

is certainly not new to Irish or German feminist activism, as discussed in

Chapter Two. For feminist activists, sharing personal narratives within

alternative feminist counterpublic spaces has traditionally been an important

part of responding to a variety of violent behaviours (Fraser, 1990). Fraser

(1990) specifically outlines how now commonly used terms such as 'sexual

harassment' and 'marital rape' were first created within feminist

counterpublics, for example in the form of consciousness-raising groups, which

emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Used by many different movements as a tactic

for bringing about social change (Davis, 2002; Polletta, 2006), such discursive

politics are further enabled through the use of digital media (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012; Liao, 2019).

I identified six interrelated ways in which Hollaback!'s digital storytelling platform created a feminist hybrid counterpublic space for women. For H!Berlin founder, Julia Brilling, who has a degree in Gender Studies, the platform's digital storytelling is an important consciousness-raising tool, particularly for reaching younger women who may be unfamiliar with feminist thought (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). Reading, publishing, and sharing the stories daily was essential, primarily because 'it reaches many people' (ibid) in a way that is impossible using traditional print media. For this reason, Julia considered the group's digital tasks, such as reviewing and publishing stories, as the most important aspects of their work; she described those mundane duties as being the 'hard activist work' (ibid). Hours of local activists' time went into reviewing and publishing stories every single day (Fieldnotes, 2015).

I found that the pedagogical reach of digital storytelling was not limited to a younger generation; Hollaback! users included women of many ages and with different experiences. For Julia, who was in her thirties at the time of this study, she first accessed the Hollaback!London website in 2010 , which equipped her with the language she needed to express her specific experience of public harassment. The multiple digital resources provided through the Hollaback! platform provides users with studies, reports and legal documents that explain and define street harassment and inform users of their rights. As a result, Fileborn (2014) has interpreted Hollaback! as creating a digital counterpublic space 'of resistance and consciousness-raising' (p. 34).

Prior to learning about street harassment through Hollaback!, Julia said she felt a sense of linguistic powerlessness when it came to discussing street harassment because no word for it existed in the German language: 'There's no word for street harassment in German [...] you could say it doesn't exist! [H]ow do you talk about it when you don't have the words to express it?' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015). She used the phrase *Belästigung in öffentlichen Räumen*, literally translated as 'harassment in public spaces', which is how H!Berlin continues to translate street harassment on their website (Hollaback!Berlin, 2020; see Figure 5.1). Finding words allowing her to describe her experience was an important step for Julia in her journey towards founding a branch of Hollaback! in Berlin. This is a second way that Hollaback! digital storytelling is significant. As legal scholar Olatokunbo Laniya (2005) explains, naming a specific form of oppression can be an important step in the struggle against it: the same process took place for feminist activists campaigning against workplace harassment in the 1960s and 1970s.

The feminist counterpublic space of Hollaback! furnishes women with the language needed to make sense of their experiences, while providing them with the ability to connect others and share their stories of public harassment in a 'safe' (counter)public space, which leads to a third way that Hollaback!'s digital platform is significant. In the past, individual women have had to repeatedly come forward to testify to traumatic incidents and share them, be that in court rooms or media (including social media), to reveal the systemic nature of sexual violence. Such a process can expose survivors to risk and judgement, potentially re-traumatising them (Crowe, 2019; Harris, 2019). In contrast, while difficult, those with whom I have spoken in my research have

found the Hollaback! storytelling process to be quite healing. While it may be painful and even traumatic for women to have to re-tell their stories, Dimond et al (2013) argue that for some, the process of writing and sharing their experiences online can be therapeutic. Individuals take control of their own narrative and in reading about others' stories may feel connected to them (ibid).

My research both confirms and expands upon Dimond et al's (2013) arguments. In my position as a volunteer intern, which included reviewing and publishing stories coming in from the public through the H!Berlin platform, I witnessed, on a daily basis, the profound therapeutic significance of digital storytelling to users: the webpage provided a counterpublic space in which women experiencing harassment in Berlin could vent their frustration and work through their emotions (Fieldnotes, 2015). Moreover, not all the stories women shared were recent: several users submitted stories of incidents that occurred many years ago or wrote of multiple times they were harassed since they were teenagers (ibid). Emotions expressed through these stories were complex and multiple; they were stories of shock, frustration, indignation, bravery, and defiance. Users frequently expressed gratitude that the platform existed, whereas others chose defiant statements, such as '*Wir sind frauen, die mit respekt zu behandeln sind,* ('We are women who will be treated with respect') (H!Berlin User 1, 25 Nov, 2014) as the title of their stories. Multiple users expressed frustration that they had not reacted better (Fieldnotes, 2015). Others proudly shared the various ways in which they *had* responded (H!Berlin user 2, 11 Nov 2016). These examples demonstrate the ongoing

impact harassment has over the course of women's lives, negating

presumptions of 'one-off' events that women should 'recover' from.

In addition to the therapeutic function which contributes to making a

safe feminist counterpublic space for users, my research confirms Dimond et

al's (2013) point about how telling and sharing stories may shift users' personal

understandings, or 'framings', of the problem, in this case street harassment,

from an individual to a collective one. Formal conversations with Julia

throughout my field research, in-depth interviews with H!Berlin and H!Dublin

organisers, and my observations as a volunteer intern managing the users'

inputs to the local H!Berlin website revealed that reading the stories of others

helped women to (re)'frame' their individual experience as part of a

widespread, systemic problem. Both Julia and Jenny (H!Dublin) explained that

street harassment was such a regular feature of their daily lives that they both

tended to just block it out. This changed when they saw the stories of others

online:

> I never even really actively thought about street harassment or
> this daily sexism. It was always there and always bothered me,
> but it was the first time that I was really like 'Wow!' [after
> seeing the Hollaback! webpage] (Brilling, interview with
> author, Berlin 2015).

> I honestly don't think I'd ever heard the term 'street
> harassment' until then... and I was like 'Oh that's that thing that
> keeps happening to me!' But I didn't know it had a name.
> (Dunne, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Although neither Dunne nor Brilling had access to the Hollaback!

storytelling platform in their specific locales, after they read stories that

had come in through other local Hollaback! branches, they connected

others' stories to their own. This is just one example of how, in the absence of a storytelling outlet, reading the testimonies of others may help some women to process and re-frame their experience of harassment as an individual issue to a collective one.

Stories may also encourage users to get directly involved in anti-street harassment activism, a process that again underlines the co-constitutive nature of the emotional, digital, and material. It also indicates a fourth way the Hollaback! platform creates a hybrid feminist counterpublic space. Reading the stories of others had in fact mobilised Julia Brilling to form H!Berlin. After experiencing a particularly bad incident of street harassment in 2010, she expressed how she had felt powerless and angry. She went home and went online to find some way to report what had happened to her. She found no formal legal way to do so, but in the process of searching, she stumbled across H!London's website, as mentioned above. While Dimond et al (2013) refer to the process of storytelling as a cathartic act for Hollaback! users, Julia discovered that through just reading the stories of others she felt better and was able to process her feelings. Reading the stories of other women on the H!London site made her feel less alone. After her experience she stated:

> That's all I did: I just read stories by other women. It made me
> feel so much better. It gave me so much energy. I was just like 'I
> want to do that, I wanna have the same'. I just wanna feel shit,
> sit at home and read from another woman somewhere in the
> planet who has a similar experience. I don't need the solution,
> it's just...like oh my god, yes! We're on the same page with that.
> It felt so good (interview with author, Berlin, 2015).

Julia's quote above is a good example of framing, but also demonstrates how stories may lead to mobilisation. Reading testimonies by women about their experiences of street harassment served as a type of 'personal action frame' (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012) for Julia, propelling her into anti-street harassment activism. In her case, feeling 'on the same page', reading 'from another woman somewhere in the planet who has a similar experience', was the motivation for her to start the local branch of Hollaback!. While stating that she didn't need 'the solution', reading the stories gave her 'so much energy'. She was doing more than reading the stories – from them came the impetus and knowledge of how to get involved in the fight against street harassment. She set up H!Berlin in 2011. Such actions challenge the assumptions that women are passive victims of male violence and illuminate how some women are leveraging the possibilities of digital storytelling platforms beyond seeking support and reassurance, to actively mobilising against everyday forms of violence. This, as I discuss in Section 5.3., may also lead to other forms of direct action.

A fifth critical point about how Hollaback! functions to create a feminist counterpublic space is that, unlike other digital platforms, after a person shares her experience of harassment, she knows she will be understood and supported. She is likely to feel safe in that space. I discussed this at length with Julia, who recognised the limitations of the Internet to provide a safe space for women. But she highlighted how this is no more difficult than trying to create one anywhere else:

> '[T]he Internet comes with the same mechanisms as any other space in patriarchy. It is structured by sexism, racism, classism,

ableism, heteronormativity. Those are the principles that
society works on, so of course the Internet has been
constructed. Some people say 'the Internet' as if it is a natural
thing, like it is just biology. It is not. You build it -- it is
constructed. The good thing is if it is constructed you can
deconstruct it, you can make it new' (Brilling, interview with
author, Berlin, 2015).

The Internet is just like 'any other space in patriarchy': Julia noted how creating

any space in which women feel safe and supported can be challenging no matter

where and how you build them. She ended, however, on an optimistic note

about digital spaces: they can be transformed or 'deconstructed' to open up new

possibilities for action. I understand Hollaback!, with Julia, as an attempt at

'making it new'.

Not all digital spaces are safe spaces for feminist activists. Drüeke and

Zobl (2013) argue that Twitter is far from a safe space for women: it is a

platform also shared with those who express anti-feminist and anti-women

sentiments. They based their conclusion upon their research on the #aufschrei

campaign in Germany, a Twitter campaign started by feminist blogger Anne

Wizorek in 2013 which called out everyday sexism, including sexual assault.

People telling their stories on Twitter, Drüeke and Zobl (2013) contend, are

particularly vulnerable because there is no control over what happens to the

narrative or who responds. The difference is that for the Hollaback! platform,

there are at least some measures of safety.

Those using the Hollaback! platform perceive themselves as a part of a

community of users with similar experiences who understand and support

them. For the Berlin website, people are not allowed to comment directly on the

stories; instead, you can hit the 'Got Your Back' button (on the Berlin website:

Du hast meine Unterstützung) to show solidarity digitally. For example, one of

the stories I reviewed was recorded in my fieldnotes from March 2015 and

describes a young woman who had been harassed in an empty U-Bahn

(subway) car. She expressed how she did not have the 'strength' to speak back

to her harasser in the moment but stated that she was glad to have 'such a

platform' to 'support me in retrospect' (Fieldnotes 2015). The user did not feel

safe in responding directly to her harasser, but in the digital storytelling space

of H!Berlin, reported feeling the support of others reading her story, as many

other users hit the 'I've got your back' button.

Although Dimond et al (2013) have rightly pointed out that anyone could

copy the stories and share them beyond the website, in general there appeared

to be an implicit understanding that people visiting the H!Berlin website (and

Facebook page) would be those sympathetic to the cause and to people's

stories. Another reason this is the case is because a Hollaback! local leader

closely monitors stories further shared through social media to ensure the post

is not subject to abusive or offensive comments. The effective moderation of

feminist social media pages can be critical to feelings of safety and differs from

the inaction of platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, where reports by

women experiencing abusive behaviour, threats or hate speech, are often

ignored (Hardaker and McGlashen, 2016).

It is evident from the deeply personal testimony shared by users that

they perceive H!Berlin to be a feminist counterpublic space in which they can

find some sense of community, justice, and care. Not all digital platforms are the

same. Activists know this and have created empowering digital counterpublic

spaces of storytelling where women feel capable of speaking about their

experiences in a way that they perceive to be supportive. The support and validation offered moreover can be an important part of addressing survivors' needs (cf. Clark, 2010).

Moreover, Fileborn (2014) argues that the Hollaback! platform functions as a type of informal justice mechanism, which is a sixth significant element. Similar to my findings, Fileborn argues that Hollaback! provides survivors of street harassment with four needs generally missing from procedural justice systems: information, validation, voice and control. She argues that while it has its limitations, survivors can articulate their experience in their own words, and get validation by reading and supporting the stories of others. There is little to no room for personal accounts, such as those featured on Hollaback! platforms, within the criminal justice system as it exists (ibid). Indeed, as outlined in Chapter Four, women's testimonies are often dismissed within courtrooms. In contrast, feminist counterpublic spaces such as H!Berlin offer those excluded within the traditionally male dominated systems of the public sphere, such as the legal system, a space in which grievances can be aired, their voices heard and their personal narratives validated.

5.2.2. Mapping Women's Stories of Street Harassment

Mapping, as mentioned earlier, is an important feature of the Hollaback! network. When users submit stories, they go to their local branch's website or download and open the Hollaback! app. The emphasis on mapping varies according to how the user accesses the platform. On the website, in addition to the details of their story, users are asked for the location of the incident, and there is also the option to attach a photo.

As can be seen from the screengrab in Figure 5.3, the central feature of the website is the map. When the location is provided by the person submitting the story, it allows local branches to pin drop the exact location of each incident. The map generated from users' submissions allows others to view incidents of harassment per location. A pink pin-drop on the map indicates an incident of harassment, while a green pin-drop on the map indicates an incident of bystander intervention. Bystander intervention is encouraged through Hollaback!'s partnership with The Green Dot Campaign, a programme founded in 2007 at Kentucky University, trains people to intervene in incidents of harassment, particularly on-campus sexual harassment. They do this through, for example, engaging with the victim of harassment and creating a distraction (Hollaback!, 2016).

The Hollaback! Smartphone App, on the other hand, allows users to utilise GPS to create on-the-spot, real-time recordings of their harassment, as illustrated in Figure 5.4. Swiftly recording the location of the incident and type of harassment is the priority here, with the App only asking for greater detail of the experience afterwards. The 'Take Action' button on the App allows users to input the type of harassment and their name (or the option to remain anonymous); the exact location, through GPS, brings up a map of the user's immediate surroundings. When users click on the pin drops, a speech bubble appears which features an annotated version of the story (normally chosen based on location) and the type of harassment it was (verbal, groping and so forth).

Geographers such as Rachel Pain (1997) have critically examined mapping as a method for understanding the prevalence of violent crime against women. She argued that mapping as a tool to highlight VAW, when using official crime statistics, was largely ineffective; primarily because it is not representative. Violent incidents against women were (and remain) largely underreported (Pain, 1997). Furthermore, she argues that such an approach, which tends to focus on public space, can direct attention away from the home as the main site of violence against women and feed into women's fear of public space (ibid). Pain's cutting-edge research was published almost 30 years ago, when the type of participatory mapping software and feminist geographical research about participatory GIS and open-access mapping software did not exist. Here I examine how these new digital platforms and softwares contribute to creating feminist spatial imaginaries of the city in which women's experiences are visible in public space in ways previously impossible (Leszczynski and Elwood, 2015). Women's self-reporting and remapping of the city, along with their embodied presence which I discuss in the next section, offers a different set of arguments about the role of mapping and (re)making public space, than those made by Pain in the late 1990s.

It is well-established that maps are not objective representations of reality but have always been steeped in relationships of power since colonial times. In particular, Brian Harley (1989) points out how maps 'embody specific forms of power and authority' (p. 14). As a result, participatory mapping projects have become popular among critical geographers and are often used to challenge the representations of public urban space produced through mappings which are almost always shaped by powerful elites (Deitz et al,

2018). In the case of Hollaback! they confront depictions of urban space produced by mostly white, wealthy, straight cis men. Non-state-led, online, open participatory mappings can be used to interrogate the normative meanings and representations of public urban space, highlight social alternatives, and act as forms of resistance in and of themselves (Perkins and Dodge, 2009):

For Hollaback! users, street harassment is, by definition, a form of violence that unfolds in public urban spaces. It is a form of VAW that occurs daily, to the extent that it is normalised even by women themselves, as was evidenced by the quotes from both Berlin and Dublin Hollaback! organisers in Section 5.2.1. Therefore, the goal of Hollaback! maps is to make visible a specific type of everyday violence that has been rendered invisible in both legislation and policy (see Chapter Four), and in official crime reporting. The feminist open-access mapping platform that characterises Hollaback! is fundamentally different than that used by police agencies. The system is not based on official crime data and reporting, but instead involves women themselves using the counterpublic space of the Hollaback! digital platform to report their personal experiences in an atmosphere perceived to be supportive and non-judgemental, as previously argued. To this end, the Hollaback! platform uses a powerful form of participatory mapping which is made by women, for women. It both confronts the dominant masculinist meanings which are built into urban space (McDowell and Sharp, 1997; Doan 2010) and those that have traditionally shaped mapping practices and continue to inform modern spatial information systems such as GIS (Leszczynski and Elwood, 2015). Groups such as Hollaback!, therefore, transform maps from a tool of oppression into a tool of activism and resistance.

Responding to Pain's (1997) second point above about the relationship of mapping and fear, it was not possible from this study to see the impact of the maps on women's fear in public space. However, my research indicates that the maps have been used in ways that defy singular understandings of women's fearfulness. From the stories that came in through the website/App, I understand H!Berlin's mappings as powerful visual and spatial representations of women's hidden experiences and emotions. My understanding draws upon some of the insights by Perkins and Dodge (2009) about the role of mapping in 'revealing secrets':

> Revealing secrets by mapping them has been cast by some as a kind of situated and 'reverse-panoptical' discourse, in which the taken-for-granted neutral power of satellite imagery, aerial photography and mapping is deployed against the very forces that were instrumental in its original deployment (Perkins and Dodge, 2009: 548).

The 'secrets' in this case are the experiences of women which have been hidden until now, be that willingly or not. Using these maps, the deeply personal stories and expressions of complex emotions are now mapped onto the cityscape, changing the spatial imaginary of public space where people learn and construct narratives, which then feeds into their emotional geographies of the city.

The emotional geographies that may be produced through Hollaback!'s participatory mapping are significant for a number of reasons. Mapping these locations may elicit emotions, including fear, but also be a form of therapeutic healing as mentioned above. Mapping, along with reading stories, may lead to forms of resistance, empowering women to share their experience of cities and

insert their narratives into representations of public urban space. Through Hollaback!, users create an alternative representation of the city that challenges normative mappings of public urban space that are commonly created by a limited number of key actors who only map what they conceive of as significant (Warf, 2005; Deitz et al, 2018). In their study of critical feminist GIS, geographers Leszczynski and Elwood (2015) illustrate how the Egyptian feminist mapping project HarassMap (founded in 2010) offered an alternative representation of public urban space. Emerging during the so-called 'Arab Spring', this was a significant political moment, one 'that includes women as participants in its construction and offers a continuously evolving snapshot of gendered urban life' (Leszczynski and Elwood, 2015: 15).

This is precisely what H!Berlin does through feminist open-source (and monitored) mapping practices: through providing a platform where users could map incidents of/responses to harassment, they invited women to participate in creating an alternative visual (and spatial) representation of everyday gendered life in Berlin. In this way, women re-mapped their neighbourhoods and in doing so, they re-shaped representations of urban space according to their specific, personal experiences of those places. When these personal experiences are mapped with those of others, this new geovisualisation of the city is a powerful form providing evidence of the systemic nature of violence. For example, an underground station might be experienced as a liminal space – an in-between location on the way to somewhere else (Turner, 1967; Huang et al, 2018) – for a man, but these transport hubs were frequently mapped as sites of harassment for women in Berlin (Fieldnotes, 2015). Both the fear and impact of such incidents in transport hubs may limit a woman's access to public

transport and ultimately her mobility within the city (Trench and Tiesdell, 1992; Painter, 1992; Whitzman et al, 2013). By digitally re-mapping and re-storying such places according to their embodied and emotional experiences, users are making visible the hidden gendered dynamics at work in the material spaces of the city in order to change them.

Moreover, such emotional mappings of the city are significant because they illustrate how emotions both reside within and beyond our bodies, as emotions are formed in relation to place (Bondi and Davidson, 2005). In particular, the on-the-spot, mobile mappings of harassment recorded through the Smartphone App highlights the relational hybridity of bodies, emotion, technology, and urban space. The exact coordinates of users' embodied experiences of harassment in city spaces are recorded through the App and with their personal narratives while the body moves through the urban landscape. Emotions do not dwell in the bodies of individual H!Berlin users; they are not containers of statistical data. The body/place of users are shared through the digital space of the storytelling platform, reaching out to others to seek their emotional support and social co-presence through the hybrid counterpublic space of H!Berlin.

In this section, I have argued that H!Berlin's storytelling and mapping practices demonstrate the relational nature of bodies, space, and technology as constitutive of safe feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces that are potentially transformative of people's subjectivities and spatial imaginaries of the city. I have suggested that maps are also used to inform, guide, and embolden creative acts of resistance, rather than reinforce women's fear of public urban space. In the next section, I argue that the data collected and mapped through the digital

platform can be translated into 'bold walkings' (Koskela, 1997) that transform

neighbourhoods through acts of place-based care (Till, 2012).

5.3. Creative Interventions in Hybrid Space: From Chalk-walks to Street Art

Locally-based creative engagements carried out by H!Berlin, including forms of

street art, were also strategic feminist tactics creating counterpublic spaces that

were also transformative for members of the group. As Sharp et al (2005) state,

public art is about creating spaces 'whether material, virtual or imagined-within

which people can identify themselves, perhaps creating a renewed reflection on

community, on the uses of public spaces or on our behaviour within them' (pp.

1003-1004). Below I analyse two H!Berlin creative collaborations I was

involved with: a chalk-walk, carried out as part of LaDIYfest Berlin feminist

festival in June 2014 and a street art event that was part of International Anti-

Street Harassment Week in April 2015. Through these two examples, I explore

the impact of these forms of public artivism at a range of scales; from the

activists themselves as they moved through city streets, to how it mobilised and

connected activists in different locations across hybrid space. First, I argue that

these creative actions are examples of women's 'boldness': that women

responded to limitations and expectations placed on them in public space by

moving freely about, and confidently taking possession of, city spaces (Koskela,

1997). Secondly, I outline how, through collaborations with other

local/international groups, artists or institutions, the group expressed a sense

of solidarity, both with local women experiencing street harassment and with

other groups and anti-street harassment activists worldwide. In this way, I

consider feminist creative interventions in public space as a form of place-based caring (Tronto, 1993; Till, 2012). Caring for places and each other transforms neighbourhoods where women may have felt fear. Through such empowering creative actions members produced a sense of responsibility towards, and solidarity with, those affected by street harassment.

5.3.1. Chalk-walks

In 2014, when I was a volunteer organiser for LaDIYfest, I contacted H!Berlin about collaborating with us and Julia suggested doing a chalk-walk. H!Berlin's chalk-walks are a common tactic and used by Hollaback! groups all over the world: it involves going into public spaces, particularly to the spots where harassment occurred, and writing empowering messages and responses in chalk on paths, curbs, roads, and walls in order to 'reclaim the streets' (H!Berlin, 2015). Chalk-walks are simple, and low-cost, making them a relatively easy form of creative action that can be used by anyone and by groups large and small.

During the time of my field research, I learned more about this practice from Julia, who also helped co-ordinate chalk-walks in other parts of Germany, such as in Hamburg with the Queer Studies department of Hamburg University. The route of the chalk-walk, as Julia explained, was informed by the map on the website; targeting areas where harassment commonly occurs in the city. The digital map, therefore, was used to inform the material, embodied actions of the group: attending to the areas where a woman felt (and may feel) fearful, angry, or powerless, as was evidenced by the stories submitted and located on the map. This again highlights the co-constitutive nature of digital and material practice: digital mappings guided our movements through the urban landscape.

Through writing responses and anti-street harassment slogans into the streets where women had been harassed, the chalk-walk demonstrated solidarity with those who had experienced harassment while also attempting to invoke a sense of responsibility and empathy towards women experiencing violence on a daily basis.

I understand H!Berlin's chalk-walk as an act of place-based care in that it uncovered and responded to the invisible stories of women who have experienced harassment within city streets. Place-based caring involves actions that 'produce responsibility to oneself, to others, and to places, neighbourhoods, and social communities' (Till, 2012: 11). Chalk-walking transforms neighbourhoods where women have felt fear through empowering creative actions and reveals how women continue to be active producers of public urban space, despite attempts to control or restrict them, by remaking the streets of their city (see Chapter Two). Their acts of place-based caring offer 'a range of possible futures, many of which are not yet "visible" in dominant representations of the contemporary urban landscape' (ibid: 11). Women reclaimed their city through, to paraphrase Koskela (1997), a bold (chalk) walking.

A guide originally produced by Hollaback!Boston (H!Boston) called *How to Chalk-walk* provides instructions on how to host such an event. As H!Boston has since left the Hollaback! network (see Chapter Six), the guide now appears on Hollaback!Jakarta's page (H!Jakarta, n.d). It specifically instructs groups to be strategic about the location where the chalk-walk is going to take place. The Hollaback! chalk-walk guide also suggests targeting areas where the group is more likely to encounter an audience:

Busy areas (like Car Free Day locations) with lots of foot traffic are definitely best. It's a good idea to go out before there are too many people on the streets so that you're not totally in the way, but you also want lots of people to walk by as you chalk so that you encourage them to engage you in conversation about what you're writing and why you're writing it (Hollaback! Jakarta, n.d.).

This strategic emphasis on selecting a location in hope of attracting an audience reveals how chalk-walks are about more than the graffiti that is produced. Rather, significance is placed on the drama of the embodied performance of activists writing in the street, which is hoped to garner the attention of passers-by. This is illustrated in Figure 5.5., wherein onlookers pause on the bridge to view not only the graffiti, but the participants producing it. This is another example of how this feminist counterpublic space worked. Through performing their bold chalk-walking in the street in front of a potential audience, they attempted to expand the discursive space through rewriting city streets, inserting their experiences/responses to street harassment into locations where they can reach new publics, bringing the issue into 'ever-widening arenas' (Fraser, 1990).

For the H!Berlin chalk-walk for the LaDIYfest, the area chosen was in Kreuzberg, close to the festival venue, and an ethnically diverse area of significant footfall for the city's residents and tourists alike. Both participants and observers took photos while we chalked up paths, walls, steps, and roads. To reach beyond those physically present, those belonging to the group Tweeted, Instagrammed and shared photos through Facebook with the hashtag #endSH (end street harassment) as illustrated in Figure 5.6. Through this, the event was made shareable beyond the immediate location, while hashtags

themselves became transformed into graffiti and re-located within the urban landscape.

Hashtags also opened up the chalk-walk to further potential participation and engagement. For example, a curious passer-by might search that hashtag on Twitter or Instagram and find a whole array of actions, stories and or groups who are fighting to end street harassment. Using hashtags thus can enable the consciousness-raising goal of the action to move beyond the immediate streetscape. Through writing hashtags into the material landscape, the group already anticipated digital engagement and interaction with publics beyond the site of an event or action itself. Hashtags, with their multiple associated actions, stories, events and even meanings, become part (even just temporarily) of the physical urban landscape. Such actions again highlight the co-constitution of digital and material space (De Souza e Silva, 2006; Wilken, 2009; Zebracki, 2017), demonstrating the ways in which feminist counterpublics created new hybrid urban spaces. The chalk-walk is at once a material and embodied intervention that attempts to reclaim the physical space and a digital event: raising visibility and connecting activists with other publics and/or activists across time and space.

Chalk-walks supported H!Berlin's digital storytelling platform by inviting women to speak back and respond to experiences of harassment and build a community of support through using creative practice. Participants are encouraged to take control of the narrative around their experience by reclaiming the very streets where harassment so often occurs and (quite literally) writing it into public urban space. The aim of this creative action was to bring visibility to street harassment as form of everyday violence and

empower women to represent themselves as not merely passive victims of violence, but active producers of public urban space. Through this, the normative understandings of those public urban spaces were transformed. For example, the steps down to an underground station were converted into a brightly coloured canvas which presented commuters with participants' responses to harassers who had made them feel unsafe as they tried to get around the city. Transport hubs featured prominently as locations in which harassment took place (Fieldnotes, 2015). As mentioned earlier, both the actual and imagined violence associated with public transport may severely curtail women's mobility within the city (Painter, 1992; Trench and Tiesdell, 1992; Whitzman et al, 2013), so transport hubs became important strategic targets for activist's creative interventions.

Figure 5.7 shows a section of the stairs going down to the Schönleinstrasse underground station in Kreuzberg, Berlin. One of the messages written onto the steps was an appeal from a participant that reads: 'I want to feel safe as a woman in the underground station' (*Ich will mich als frauen in der U Bahnhof sicher fühlen*). In this way, this woman drew attention to the way that the current space (the underground station) was a gendered ('as a woman') public space where she (and potentially other women) often felt unsafe. Through writing this message into the material setting of the station, she wanted passers-by to re-imagine the station as an everyday place where women belong, no longer feel fear, and instead can move about the city freely. Similar to Sharpe et al's (2005) definition of public art, such creative interventions create places of care and forms of community that invite publics to re-think the city from the perspective of those who are marginalised and oppressed, while

making visible the negative shared effects of everyday violence for all of the city's residents.

Chalk-walks also call attention to the physical presence of women in the city in other ways. The large group of women that made up the chalk-walk occupied large squares, crowded alleyways, and bridges, and jammed into metro stations. They took their time chalking up paths and roads with defiant slogans, chatting encouragingly among themselves as they did so. The sense of community evident in the mobile feminist counterpublic space of the chalk-walk was even more apparent when we supported each other in the face of intimidation. The chalk-walk had been mostly uneventful until the end, when we paused at the entrance of the nearest U-Bahn station at Kottbusser Tor, a very busy central stop in the city. Referred to as 'Kotti' by Berliners, this particular area has strong associations with violence and crime, but also remains an important symbolic space for gatherings of punks, members of LGBTQ and local Turkish communities, as well as tourists (Peal, 2020). Kotti, therefore, was an important site to reclaim for those on the chalk-walk because it is both a major transport hub, where, as described earlier, women are often targeted by harassers, and because of Kotti's function as an important civic space. It was here, while we wrote a large piece saying '*Ich bin nicht deine Süße*' ('I'm not your sweetheart'), that a man on rollerblades began to circle the group and stare at us with a lecherous smile. He skated repeatedly over what we had just written, attempting to destroy it (Figure 5.8).

The Hollaback! *How to Chalk-walk* guide, Step No. 9, informs groups to anticipate such interactions and to 'Ignore the Haters':

You may find that once people (particularly men) read what you're writing on the streets, they choose to harass you even more. Keep your chin up and hollaback in whatever way feels right for you. They're just proving, in a public space, why the work you're doing is so important. (Hollaback! Jakarta, n.d.).

I interpreted his actions as an attempt to reinstate a masculinist understanding of public urban space: trying to silence our message by destroying our chalked graffiti and challenging our role as active makers of public space with an objectifying gaze. Through his behaviour, this man strove to reassert heterosexist male dominance and ownership of the street. The film crew who had accompanied us began to film the man. Once he realised he was being filmed, he began to trip up and fall. Noticing this, some of the people on the walk, including myself, decided to take out their phones and film him too; the image I took on my phone is featured as Figure 5.7. After this confrontation the man went away.

In the space created by the chalk-walk, everyone seemed confident to respond to this man who attempted to intimidate us in a public space. Using Smartphones as a means of turning the male gaze back onto itself emboldened the group further and gave them a sense of control. This example illustrates how women can confront conceptions of themselves as always fearful or oppressed in public space (Koskela, 1997). This community of support and spatial confidence generated through hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces and materialised through shared space has the potential to empower participants to support and defend each other against threats.

A final aspect about this particular chalk-walk is that H!Berlin collaborated with LaDIYfest a feminist DIY festival normally associated with the

Riot Grrrl scene and so-called third wave feminism (Zobl, 2004). This collaboration challenges the perception of division between supposed 'waves' of feminism (see Chapter Two). Not only did these groups work together, but the chalk-walk was also filmed and featured in a documentary about the Riot Grrrl Movement by film-maker Sonia Gonzalez. Called *Revolution: Riot Grrrl Style*, the film reflected on the Riot Grrrl movement and highlighted continuity between DIY 'third wave' feminists and modern-day feminist activists (Gonzalez, 2014).

As I learned after LaDIYfest, this chalk-walk was not the only time H!Berlin engaged in collaborations across 'generations' of feminist activists. In 2013, H!Berlin engaged in a collaborative project with Riot Grrrl Berlin. Riot Grrrl Berlin is an underground feminist hard-core punk group emerging from the Riot Grrrl movement, often associated with the 1990s (see Chapter Two). This collaboration, in which feminist musicians in Berlin were invited to submit their own anti-street harassment songs, resulted in a five-hour music compilation called *Cats against Catcalling* (2013). It also incorporated user-generated content, with those contributing creating their own feminist memes for sharing online through Twitter and Facebook to publicise the compilation. Figure 5.9. is a meme that was generated through the Riot Grrrl Berlin Tumblr page. The meme generator allows users to produce graphics that feature artwork used for the compilation, that is the cats (of *Cats Against Cat Calling*) accompanied by anti-harassment slogans.

These examples merge aspects of what are often considered to be third (punk rock, DIY culture) and fourth wave feminist practices (memes and social media) (see Chapter Two). Rather than seeing these practices as associated

with one particular feminist era or 'wave', aspects of multiple feminisms co-exist in the same time and space. In a similar vein, Zobl (2012) argued that Ladyfests/LaDIYfests in particular laid the groundwork for the networked spaces of more contemporary feminist movements. In particular, she highlighted how Ladyfests/LaDIYfests differ from place to place, but remain connected through their shared name, their identification with queer feminist activism and their 'local, transnational and virtual networks of cultural production' (Zobl, 2012: 5). Such a model was also deployed by Hollaback!. I found that, similar to LaDIYfest, the actions and emphases of Hollaback! branches varied according to their local contexts, yet remained connected through their shared name, goals and through local and transnational networks facilitated by the Internet and social media. As I outline in Chapter Six, this network of sharing and branding had both positive and negative effects locally.

5.3.2. Street Art

During my internship with H!Berlin, I also helped organise an event that constituted part of Anti-Street Harassment Week in April 2015. This international wheat-pasting event was inspired by the work of world-renowned anti-street harassment artist Tatyana Fazlalizadeh. In June 2014, H!Berlin collaborated with Fazlalizadeh on an exhibition called *My Name is Not Baby*, illustrated in Figure 5.10. The exhibition featured portraits from her *Stop Telling Women to Smile* series, and included members of H!Berlin.

Through her blog, Fazlalizadeh connects with and collaborates with activists and women all over the world to create their portraits. This is a participatory form of art, where women work closely with the artist to produce each portrait through an interview process. Each portrait is accompanied with

empowering slogans in the language of the woman's choosing. Both the portrait

and slogan challenge the typical Western media and art depiction of passive or

smiling women (Berger, 1972). Fazlalizadeh also makes the portraits freely

available to download through her website, confirming Zebracki and Luger's

(2019) claim that the Internet provides 'new possibilities for the co-creation

and critical (re)use of art' (p. 894). The artist has created high-resolution

posters in three languages (English, Spanish and French) so that activist groups

and individuals around the world can easily get involved with the project.

Fazlalizadeh combines digital practice and public art to transform

audiences into users (Zebracki, 2017), in this case engaging directly with the

creative process of making feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces. The artist

understands *Stop Telling Women to Smile* as an ongoing public art series that

directly responds to gender-based street harassment by providing women with

a voice and a way of responding directly to their harassers (Fazlalizadeh, 2014).

Prior to beginning my field research with H!Berlin, I visited their exhibition of

her work in June 2014, which took place in the yard of a bakery in Treptow,

Berlin, as illustrated in Figure 5.10. While the portraits were beautiful, their

location in a gallery spoke primarily to an audience who already had an interest

in feminist politics and anti-harassment activism, serving a different (yet no less

important) purpose. I found these portraits more compelling when re-located to

the streets. I now discuss the participatory potential of Fazlalizadeh's work

which illuminates how public art can be critically used to empower individuals

and engage other publics.

As previously mentioned, the 'International *Stop Telling Women to Smile*

Wheat-pasting Night' was held in April 2015 and was organised by Stop Street

Harassment in collaboration with other anti-street harassment groups, including Hollaback!, and the artist Fazlalizadeh herself. The idea behind the *Stop Telling Women To Smile* Wheat-pasting event was to walk through the city and paste images created by Fazlalizadeh using homemade wheat paste in the streets. Wheat-pasting is a common technique used by street artists where they can prepare an image or poster in advance and then use an adhesive paste, normally made from two parts wheat flour and three parts water, which is then used to affix the piece to a wall or other surface (Ross, 2016). For the Berlin action we used pre-existing portraits that past and present members of the H!Berlin group had already made with Fazlalizadeh in 2014; a detailed portrait is illustrated in Figure 5.11.

While the chalk-walk was about making of harassment in public urban spaces visible, the *Stop Telling Women to Smile* wheat-pasting action challenged the typical visual representations of women in urban public space as passive objects of the male gaze (cf. Mulvey) and 'looked-at-ness' of women's bodies common in visual representations (Buikema and Zarzycka, 2012). The project instead allowed women to decide how they wished to be seen in the urban landscape through engaging in the artistic process. The effect of this particular form of public artivism for participants was therefore different from the chalk-walk in that it directly-sought to challenge 'the politics of looking' (Koskela, 2005). The non-typical portraits created in the participatory artistic process included images of women who angrily glare back at their harassers. These images operate in a paradigmatic way (see Chapter Three), confronting popular visual representations of women as sexual objects that exist in public city spaces, such as in public advertisements on billboards, and in middle- and

upper-brow institutional spaces, such as artworks in galleries. Indeed, it has

long been an individual strategy of women to use 'a (hostile, evaluating or

humiliating) gaze as a strategy of resistance' (Koskela, 2005: 263), but in this

case, the gaze came from the wheat-pasted portraits of women who were

depicted as active, angry and/or speaking back to those who would objectify

and dehumanize them. The street art event was a collective act produced

through participatory artistic practice. Through their actions, the women who

pasted images in the streets resisted typical assumptions about street art as a

typically male-dominated practice (Muñoz and Gude, 1994; Ganz, 2006; Held,

2015). They re-created streets, U-Bahn stations, and other public urban spaces

and their traditional role within them, challenging gender relations and norms,

as becomes evident in the images I took of the event in Figures 5.11 through

5.13.

I also understand this particular action through the concepts of

attentiveness and place-based caring (Tronto, 1993; Till, 2012). Perhaps

unexpectedly, the value of *Stop Telling Women to Smile* came through its

collective storytelling function that transformed the urban landscape into an

environment that offered care to women who were experiencing or had

experienced street harassment. Those who had their portraits painted have

noted the positive personal impact that participation in the project produced

(Fazlalizadeh, 2014). In ways similar to the therapeutic and framing effects of

the Hollaback! digital platform, participants mentioned that the conversations

with the artist and creation of the portrait helped them work through their

experiences of street harassment, problematised it, and offered them their own

unique voice to respond (ibid). As Fazlalizadeh describes, when collaborating

on the project, she and the participants also imagined other women who may see the mural in the moments immediately after experiencing an instance of harassment (ibid). They hope the artwork may help viewers, including those harmed, to shift their understanding of that violent experience from an individual one to a collective one. This practice was extended and made even more powerful through putting both the faces and words of those experiencing this form of everyday violence into the streets where they experienced being harassed. The wheat-pasting action called attention to street harassment as an unwanted pervasive culture of systematic sexism, but also one that women can fight and change by making it visible through collective action.

In Berlin, Julia and I met some local women outside K-Fetisch, an anarcho-feminist bar in the district of Neukölln in central Berlin, and pasted copies of the images all over the streets of that neighbourhood, as depicted in Figure 5.13. When we started out, some of the activists initially expressed their hesitance and nervousness about pasting the images in public. However, as we progressed, they explained to me how they felt 'empowered' through taking ownership of public space through the action and with each image they put up, they felt a little bolder and braver (Fieldnotes, 2015).

Both chalk-walking and feminist street art are acts of what I consider spatial confidence that can be understood as 'a manifestation of power' (Koskela, 1997: 316). This builds on previous evidence mentioned in Section 5.3.2: women confronted their experiences and fears of violence through performing boldness and creating alternative feminist counterpublic spaces together. It was within these spaces that they interacted with those individual and shared fears, while reclaiming their bodies/places in the city in a variety of

ways (cf. Koskela, 1997; 2005). The embodied presence of feminist activists in streets, engaging in the popularly portrayed masculine practice of wheat-pasting and street art, was ~~both important~~ significant both symbolically and emotionally for participants. Street art created by women interrogated masculinist understandings of public urban space and expectations of women's fearfulness while simultaneously challenging assumptions about who creates street art in the city.

Like the chalk-walk, the wheat-pasting process was digitally mediated through taking and sharing pictures. The poster-action was part of an international, co-ordinated event: women came together on the same day to wheat paste Fazlalizadeh's portraits in different locations worldwide. Zebracki (2017) argues that contemporary public art needs to be examined as a 'dialectic between the physical and the virtual' (p. 441). Both the campaign and this event were coordinated digitally through various social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr, by both Stop Street Harassment and Hollaback!. These groups shared instructions on how to access the portraits and wheat-paste them in the street. They also encouraged groups to use the hashtags #EndSHWeek and #STWTS so that all the events could be collated, helping organisers and participants keep track of the various events worldwide and re-share images, posts, and videos from local activists on the ground.

Contemporary feminist activists use boundary crossing technologies to create 'transnational social space[s]' (Ip and Lam, 2014: 247). Similar to independent street artists, photos taken during or just seconds after pasting the portraits to the streets of local neighbourhoods were soon circulating globally through social media. Images flooded in from cities all over the world which

took part in the event, united through the hashtag, connecting groups of activists and individuals in countries across the world. For example, an autonomous feminist activist group as far away as Montréal, Quebec, re-shared our images from Berlin, while other photos of our work also featured in Stop Street Harassment's (2015) wrap-up report that summarised the activities carried out by various groups across the globe that week, as well as on artist Fazlalizadeh's (2015) website. Through taking and sharing videos using the hashtag #STWTS, the digitally mediated creative actions of anti-street harassment activists in disparate locations around the world were connected across hybrid space. The action was also featured on German news site Taz.de (Taz, 2015), illustrating the event's significance at a local/national level too.

Enhanced by the transnational flow of portraits and street art actions beyond its immediate material context, the locales of our creative actions, once locations of violence, became places where new memories and meanings were forged by and for participants. We remained aware of our immediate surroundings and engaged with each other, discussing our experiences within the hybrid feminist counterpublic space of the wheat pasting action, while engaging with other publics in the street as people stopped to watch or to talk to us. Just as with the chalk-walk, we were still engaging in an act of embodied, place-based care and performing boldness, which was important to participants engaging in the material creative practice, who moved from feeling fearful to feeling empowered while engaging in this action. This time, a young man joined us, expressing support for our cause (Fieldnotes, 2015). Meanwhile our 'mediated presence' through Smartphone technology (Willis and Aurigi, 2011)

allowed us to communicate and be socially co-present with feminist activists in other locations.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I highlighted the interface between digital and material practice tied to specific embodied and emplaced actions of H!Berlin that created alternative feminist counterpublic spaces in which women could articulate, represent, and challenge masculinist meanings traditionally associated with urban public spaces. The group's actions revealed how oppressive patriarchal behaviours and actions continue to manifest themselves in Berlin, a city with a long history of emancipatory politics (see Vasudevan, 2016; Chapter Two). I argued that these counterpublic spaces of feminist protest can be considered hybrid, wherein digital and material practices coalesced to confront normative gendered understandings and relationships to the city. I began by outlining how the Hollaback! digital platform, including digital storytelling and mapping, makes forms of public harassment visible while also offering users a safe space where they can take charge of narratives around street harassment, access communities of support and work through or 're-frame' their experiences (Salter, 2013; Fileborn, 2014). While 'safe space' is a contested term (see Valentine 1997; Browne, 2009; Hanhardt, 2013) such spaces may offer women and other marginalised groups feelings of safety and affinity with one another (Browne, 2009; Browne et al, 2011).

My data also showed how storytelling and mapping can also result in mobilisation and other forms of direct action, including the creation of collectives to resist street harassment, as well as inform and interact with

creative activities and events in material public space. My research findings build on contemporary considerations of how digital engagement can lead to political mobilisation, including non-digital forms of action (see Gerbaudo, 2012; Papacharrisi, 2016) by encouraging and empowering women to claim a safe and equal 'right to the city' (Lefebvre, 1968; 1996). H!Berlin's creative practices, sometimes informed by digital mappings, targeted the material spaces in which violence occurred, where activists performed boldness and placed-based care (Koskela, 1997; Till, 2012), not fear, and re-claimed and transformed the streets. Their presence created city spaces with active and confident women, challenging stereotypes of women as passive and fearful users of public urban space (Koskela, 1997).

These localised creative practices were part of larger, transnational feminist campaigns where activists' simultaneous site-based practices were digitally co-ordinated, mediated and shared with others beyond the immediate context, enabling forms of international solidarity and place-making. The fusion of creative site-based actions, activism and online practices displayed by local Berlin groups of international networks such as Hollaback!, Riot Grrrl, LaDIYfest, and included international feminist artists such as Tatyana Fazlalizadeh, are of significance to geographies of public art, digital technologies, and activism (see Zebracki and Palmer, 2012; Zebracki 2017; Zebracki and Luger, 2019). In particular, I expand on the work of Zebracki (2017; 2019; 2020) by highlighting the political potential of combining public art with feminist activism and digital practice, something I explore further in Chapters Seven and Eight. Not only did the hybrid practices used by these groups and artists highlight how digital and material spaces have become

increasingly co-constituted and impact our understandings and relationship to the city, they also connected women across physical and linguistic barriers. International groups collaborated and organised with locally based activists, transforming the lived city of particular neighbourhoods to become places of mutual support and care with other activists and artists elsewhere through the Internet. Such practices may even cultivate a sense of belonging to and connection with urban environments in the very locations where past experiences of harassment may have made women feel vulnerable, harmed and/or out of place.

My focus in this chapter was on the political potential of leveraging digital technology for feminist activism, to make everyday violence visible in particular cities, while empowering and linking feminist activists across space and time to create safe counterpublic spaces of international solidarity. However, considering feminist counterpublic spaces as hybrid also means paying attention to ways that digital practice remains grounded in the work of activists who operate in and are shaped by their specific social, cultural and political contexts. Hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces therefore vary according to the politics of place; they have a distinct geography. While the Internet does allow for the rapid exchange of ideas and tactics, it can also, as I outline in the following chapter, lead to the imposition of hierarchal models of feminist organising and the imposition of hegemonic 'global' models of feminism that overlook the geotemporal particularities of place and forms of feminism.

Figure 5.1. The Hollaback!Berlin website as it appeared at time of writing.
(Source: H!Berlin, 2020).

Figure 5.2. Art Der Belästung/Type of Harassment: Screengrab of story submission form on the website. Source: Hollaback!Berlin, 2019.

Figure 5.3. H!Berlin's online interactive map of street harassment in Berlin. Source: Hollaback!Berlin, 2020.

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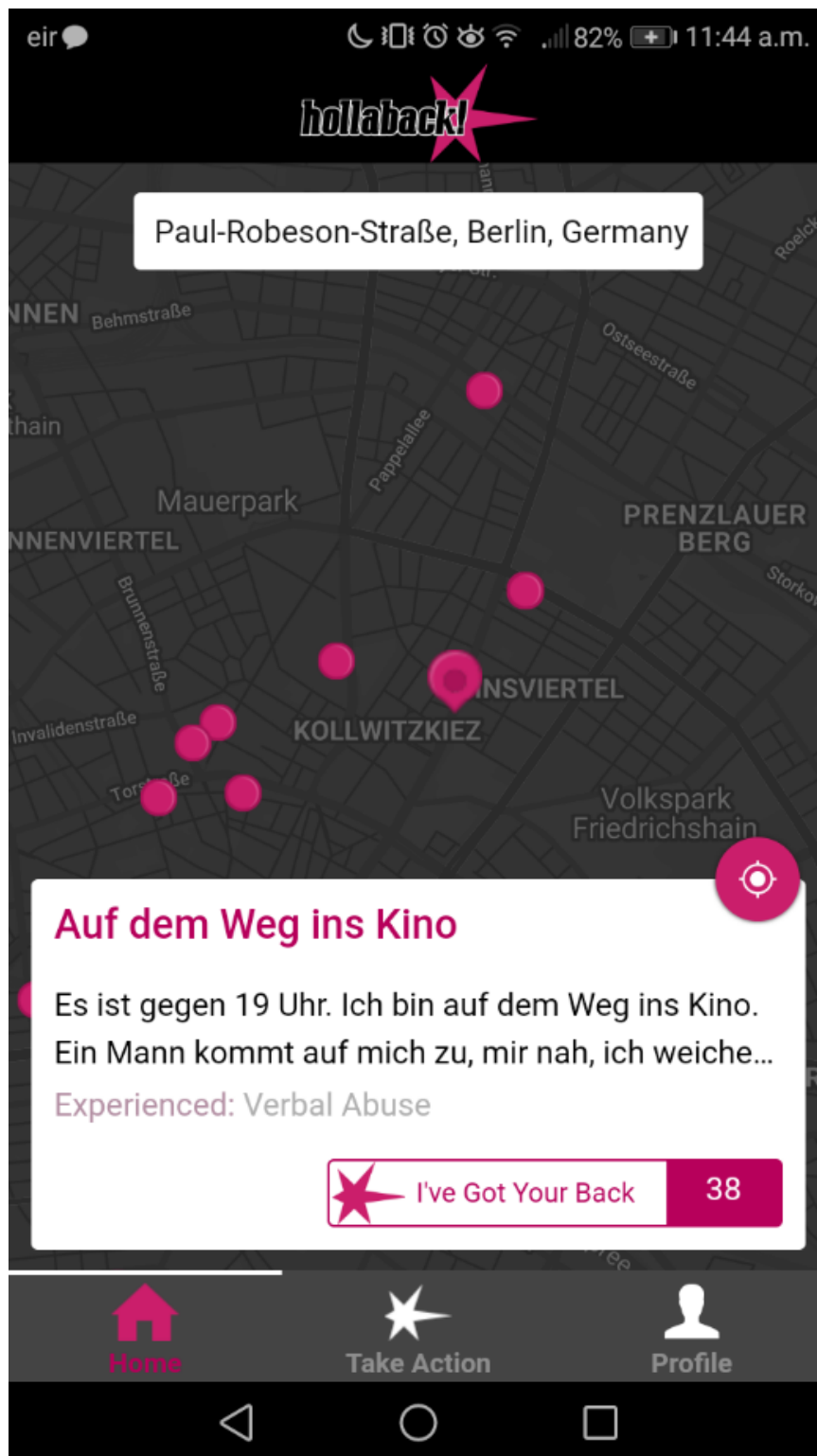
Figure 5.4. Auf dem Weg ins Kino/On the way to the cinema': Story featured on Smartphone App. Source: Hollaback!Berlin,

Figure 5.5. Chalk-walk at LaDIYfest Berlin 2014. Source: Author

Figure 5.6. An example of a chalked-up hashtag during the chalk-walk, Berlin, June 2014. Source: Author, 2014.
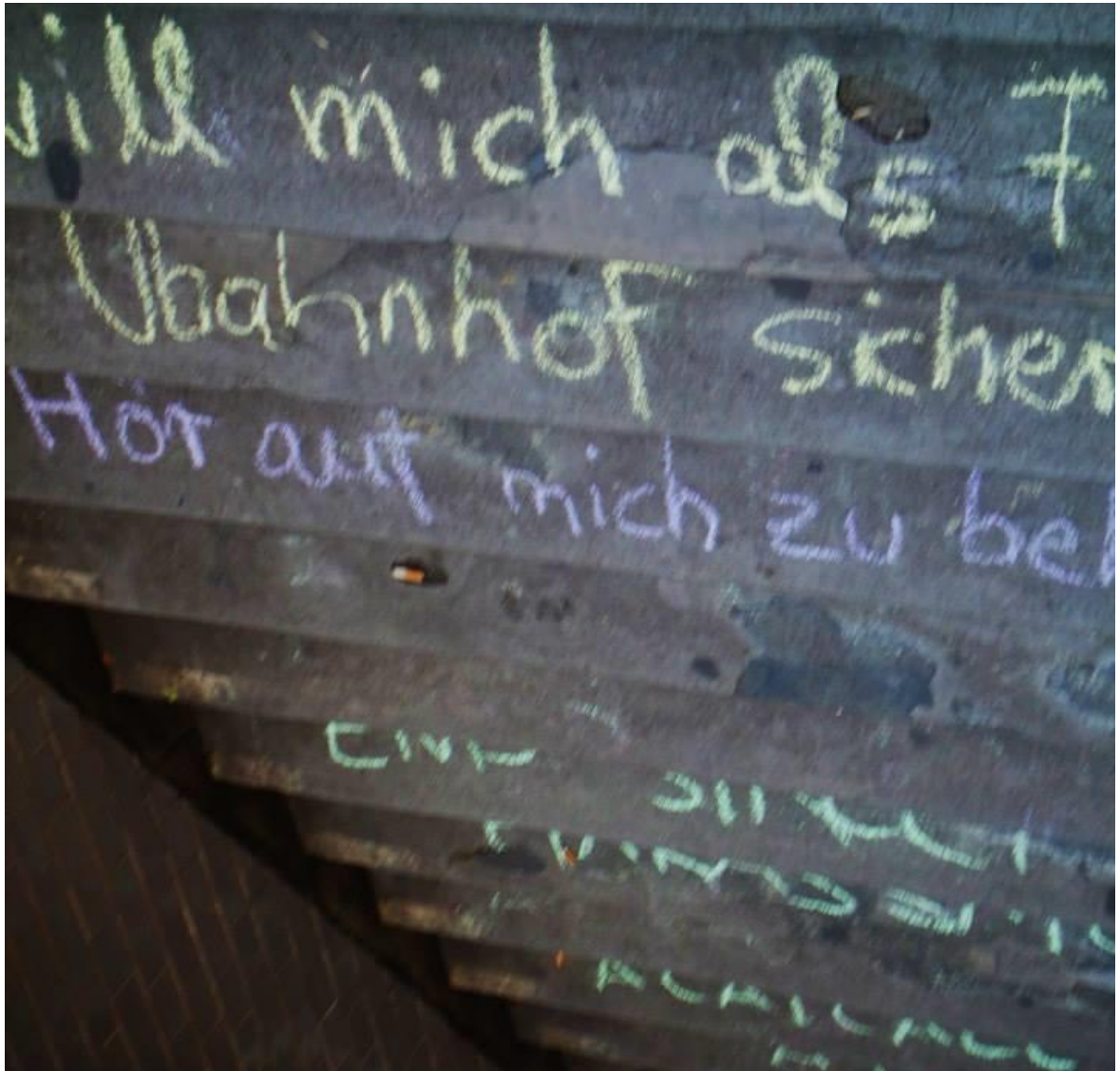
Figure 5.7. Chalked message on the steps of Schonleinstrasse underground station that reads: 'I want to feel safe as a women in the underground station'. Source: Author, 2014

Figure 5.8. A man on rollerblades attempts to intimidate us during the chalk-walk. Kotbusser Tor, Berlin, June 2014. Source: Author, 2014.

Figure 5.9. Cats Against Catcalling Meme, 2013. Source: Riot Grrrl Berlin.

Figure 5.10. My Name is Not Baby exhibition, 29 June 2014. Source: Author, 2014.

Figure 5.11. International STWTS Wheat-pasting Night, 17 April 2015, Neukölln, Berlin.
Source: Author, 2015.

Figure 5.12. Participant jokingly hides behind one of Fazlalizadeh's portraits, outside K-Fetisch, Weserstraße, Neukölln, 17 April, 2015. Source: Author, 2015.

Figure 5.13. Demonstrating care and boldness: participant wheat pastes images onto wall in Neukölln, April 17, 2015. Source: Author.

Chapter Six: Hollaback!: 'Global' networks, hierarchies and local struggles

6.1. Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Two, forms of resistance are never complete, never separate from those of domination, they are: 'constantly conditioned by the structures of dominating social and political power, hinting that resisting power is constantly in danger of replicating the structures of the dominant' (Sharp et al, 2002: 22). Careful consideration of feminist counterpublic spaces as digital, embodied, and emplaced – as hybrid – may reveal divisions between and within supposedly global feminist movements, potentially exploitative practices, as well as 'locationally specific power dynamics, through which sexual differences are brought into being, take shape and hold' (Tuzcu, 2016: 151). Despite the opportunities for empowerment offered by Hollaback!'s hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces of resistance, as described in the last chapter, in this chapter I describe how oppressive power relations and hierarchies can be recreated, even if unintentionally, and hinder their emancipatory potential.

Clark (2016) celebrates the potential for the Internet to create more intersectional and 'open' feminist movements unrestricted by 'the potentially exclusionary membership practices of organizations' and 'whose voices are not filtered through institutional gatekeepers' (p. 801). The idea that the Internet is a free and open space of participation has been well-critiqued, especially as a safe space for women (Stoleru and Costescu, 2014; Lewis et al, 2017; Megarry, 2018), however there continues to be a note of utopianism in popular

conceptions of modern feminist activism regarding the potentials of social media to create a 'global' or 'open' feminist movement by organisations (Kearl, 2010; 2015; Hollaback!, 2019), the media (Cochrane, 2013; see also Loke et al, 2017) and scholars (Clark, 2016; Bell et al, 2019). Such claims can overlook the fact that 'digital' movements, just like any other movements, take multiple forms and are created by people; people that come with all their assumptions, values, and frames of reference – we are always situated in particular geotemporal contexts. Movements ultimately remain 'the products of interrelations' and are 'co-constituted with gendered, racialised, sexualized and classed relations of power' (Liinason, 2018: 1042).

By focusing once again on H!Berlin, in this chapter I explore the divisions and tensions that emerged between Hollaback!'s local groups and the main headquarters in New York, or 'the Mothership', which at times overlooked the specific challenges faced by local activists. I outline the local material and political struggles faced by H!Berlin members resulting from the group's position within the 'global' Hollaback! network and as related to Germany's geopolitical national context, in which post-feminist discourses dominated the public sphere and VAW was becoming increasingly associated with non-European others (Weber, 2016; Dietze, 2016; Boulila and Carri, 2017). Rather than disappearing 'under the unavoidable advance of things global' (Harcourt and Escobar, 2002: 7) this chapter describes how H!Berlin both defended their metaphorical place within the Hollaback! movement and challenged sexist and racist power relations within their city.

I begin in Section 6.2 by examining the criticisms of the Mothership levelled by Hollaback! local branch members, in particular its hierarchal

decision-making processes, apparent US-centric management tendencies, and white feminist orientation. I also outline the funding model and resource issues that have negatively affected the H!Berlin chapter. In Section 6.3, I then turn to the emergence of a racialised discourse around street harassment in Germany in 2015, specifically how German feminist activists had to fight against the 'ethinicisation of sexism' (Dietze, 2016) in their local contexts. For H!Berlin, this meant defending feminist anti-harassment struggles from anti-asylum narratives in discursive spaces by (unexpectedly) engaging with the mainstream media. Their international visibility allowed them to speak about the local contexts within which their feminist actions mattered. This chapter therefore calls attention to the critical significance of the politics of place for feminist struggles. The goal is not to present the local as a more authentic space of feminist politics, but rather to highlight the complexities of building international solidarity and acknowledging, following Massey (2005) and Featherstone (2012), the ways in which activisms are shaped by both global and local forces and situated within wider geopolitical and geotemporal relationships, as argued in Chapter Two. While H!Berlin is indeed a branch within continental Europe and can be considered 'Eurocentric' in outlook, this local group's understanding of feminism clashed with Hollaback!'s style of Anglo-American, neoliberal feminism. This specific example is not necessarily just an issue for Hollaback!. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Western feminisms often claim to be 'global' but often reproduce or organise according to neo-imperialist patterns, maintaining a US-based or Eurocentric outlook which often reinforces a white feminist subjectivity (Swarr and Nagar, 2010; Thapar-Björkert and Tlostanova, 2018).

6.2. Telling Stories about a Movement: The Hollaback! Mothership and Local Criticisms

Although Hollaback! claims to be a 'global movement' to end street harassment (Hollaback!, 2019a), this section will unpack how that 'global' was synonymous with a particular brand of Western, particularly US-centric, feminism. As mentioned in the last chapter, in 2015, Hollaback! had 92 active chapters in 25 different countries (Hollaback!, 2015). This appears to have decreased to just over 18 active chapters in 13 countries (Hollaback!, 2019a). This international network also provides local groups with a number of resources. In addition to the platform and branding I described in the last chapter, Hollaback! has claimed to have trained over 550 local leaders (Hollaback!, 2019b) through their six-month local-leadership training programme for those interested in setting up their own branch of Hollaback!. The aim of their local leadership programme is, according to their website, to create change by supporting 'real people rooted in real communities' (Hollaback!, 2019c). The course, offered in English, teaches activists how to set up their local website, curate stories, talk to the media/local politicians, translate documents, and hold events and rallies. Local leaders are, in turn, expected to complete on-the ground assignments, write, and produce reports about their actions, set goals, achieve them, and attend further training webinars.

Despite these supports and what might be considered the success of the network, Hollaback!'s attempt to build an international feminist movement against street harassment was, by 2015, under criticism from local Hollaback! activists and scholar-activists that had engaged with the Hollaback! network

(@britnidlc, 25 March 2015; Feminist Public Works, 2015; Wånggren, 2016; Rentschler, 2017). Among the most significant of these criticisms are that the network is organised hierarchically and assumes a particularly white, Anglo-American-centric brand of feminism. Lena Wånggren (2016), a member of the Edinburgh branch of Hollaback!, interprets the movement as an attempt to build a transnational feminist movement that does not support the diversity of its local branches. Indeed, she points out that over one third of Hollaback! branches are in the US (Wånggren, 2016). At the time of final revision of this dissertation (July 2020), there were five of eighteen chapters in the US (Hollaback!, 2020)

These criticisms resonated with my experiences of H!Berlin. From the first day I began my internship with H!Berlin in 2015, it quickly became clear that there were tensions between the local Berlin group and the Mothership in New York. In particular, Julia explained that her opinion of the network's structure had changed significantly between 2010 and 2015. Below I interrogate three main points of contention based upon my empirical data: 1) structure and decision-making; 2) (mis)representation; and 3) branding and resources. I argue here that despite the opportunities for support, solidarity and visibility afforded by the international Hollaback! platform, this 'global' movement made universalising claims and imposed models that failed to take account of the specific geotemporalities in which feminists chose to establish a Hollaback! local chapter. In other words, the movement overlooked some basic feminist principals: horizontal participatory power relations, the significance of local knowledges, and the politics of place, including the materialities and experiences of local activists (see Chapter Two).

6.2.1. Structure and Decision-making

Hollaback! has a specific organisational structure that is top-down in nature,

both within the Mothership itself and in how it relates to the local groups.

Despite claims that they are 'community powered' (Hollaback!, 2019c), the top-

down structure of Hollaback! can be viewed openly on their main website

(Hollaback!, 2019a). As of 2020, the Mothership appears to be as follows:

Hollaback! has two staff members: Emily May and Tiffany Ketant, three fellows,

two consultants and a board of directors. Applications for board membership

are open to the public, but a requirement is that each member must secure

5,000 dollars a year for the group in funding (ibid). In contrast, transnational

feminist movements typically consist of loose, more fluid coalitions and

affiliations between organisations, campaigns, and networks in different

locations (Baksh and Harcourt, 2015) and transnational digital campaigns tend

to develop in an informal way around hashtags (Clark, 2016).

Hollaback!'s structure reflects the 'NGO-ization' of feminist movements

(Alvarez, 1999). These top-down group structures risk re-creating hierarchical

power relations (Dominelli, 1995; Wånggren 2016) and as I discuss here for the

case of Hollaback!, its organisational structure led to conflicts over decisions

regarding redistribution and recognition. During the time of my research, it

appeared that the Mothership was overlooking certain needs and wishes of

local branches and making several significant decisions without their input.

This point was raised by H!Berlin members (Fieldnotes, 2015; Brilling,

interview with author, Berlin, 2015; 2016), by scholar-activists involved in

H!Edinburgh (Wånggren, 2016), and on social media, including statements of

former Hollaback! group members in Boston (@britnidlc, 25 March 2015; Safe Hub Collective, 2015) and Philadelphia (Feminist Public Works, 2014).

For example, members of H!Berlin were particularly frustrated with Hollaback!'s choice of location for new local branches and international conferences. In particular, Julia understood the Mothership as attempting to impose their model on different cities and countries without necessarily consulting local activists. She referred to such actions as reproducing patterns of 'US imperialism' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015). Julia claimed that the Mothership tended to decide where a group *should* be, rather than responding to particular demands or the desire for a group to form organically among local people in a particular city. They also 'use' other branches to assist them in their strategic placement of branches. In contrast, according to the Hollaback! website, the group claims that 'To date, all of our site leaders approached us' (Hollaback!, 2019c). This was not the case for at least two chapters.

In early 2015, the Mothership informed Julia that they wanted to launch branches in Leipzig and Amsterdam, requesting her advice to help get these groups off the ground. As Julia explained, those involved in setting up Hollaback!Amsterdam (H!Amsterdam) were not (at least initially) even from Amsterdam: the person that Julia spoke to was actually from the US:

> (N)one of the people who run Hollaback! Amsterdam are from Amsterdam or live in Amsterdam. There is one in The Hague, she was somewhere, but went back to Berlin, and they were worried about their launch because 'We don't really know Amsterdam. We tried to connect with some groups'. I talked to them. Of course it was a US expat who started it. So that's just not how things work (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015).

For the case of Leipzig, a two-hour drive from Berlin, rather than consulting

Julia first about the possibility of setting up another Hollaback! branch, she was

merely informed, after-the-fact, about the Mothership's intention. This struck

me as particularly odd, especially when the Berlin group were aware that other

branches of Hollaback! in former East Germany, for example ones in Chemnitz

and Dresden, were already in decline by this point (Fieldnotes, 2015). Julia

recounted her communication with the Mothership about setting up a potential

branch in Leipzig with disbelief:

> Julia: I casually get an email. 'Hey we're starting a new site in
> Leipzig!'...and I'm like, no you are not. You cannot decide this
> from New York...
> Lorna: Have you said it to them?
> Julia: Yeah, I said it. You cannot decide this... and also you
> cannot tell me after it's been decided. We decide this in
> Germany, the German groups and the people who are active
> here. And I'm telling you it's doomed to fail (Brilling, interview
> with author, Berlin, 2016).

The fact that the Mothership tried to push for another group to be opened in

Germany without consulting their most active German branch, in the country's

capital city of Berlin, pointed to a lack of recognition for the knowledge and

insight of those working within local communities. It also suggested ineffective

communication between the Mothership and local groups despite the

opportunities for real-time engagement afforded by the use of multiple digital

networked platforms.

Julia claimed that such attempts to set up new branches would fail if not

supported by local activists on-the-ground. As demonstrated throughout

Chapter Five, operating a local branch of Hollaback!, even just reviewing the

stories that come in through the digital platform, is labour intensive. Without a

local, on-the-ground presence pushing for a movement from below, such attempts to set up a branch are likely to be unsuccessful. Indeed, over the course of my research, H!Chemnitz and H!Dresden became inactive, with both pages removed from the Hollaback! platform. As of June 2020, there were no chapters in Germany or The Netherlands. These examples demonstrate the need for transnational feminist movements to remain sensitive to local specificities and demands, and to re-evaluate the importance embodied and emplaced activist labour 'on the ground' or, as Chandra Mohanty states: 'the micropolitics of context, subjectivity, and struggle' (2003: 501).

Another point of contention with H!Berlin was the location of larger Hollaback events. Hollaback! often organises talks and conferences. One conference, called Hollaback!Revolution, was held by Hollaback! in New York in 2014 and was supposed to bring together all the various global branches of Hollaback!. The event itself was free for local leaders, but the location of the conference in New York meant that many local groups could not attend as it was simply too costly to travel and stay there. According to Julia, Hollaback! failed to secure funding to sponsor travel expenses for groups outside of the US (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). Responding to these criticisms about the location of the conference, the Mothership then decided the next location would be London in 2015. While a slightly better venue, the expense of travel and accommodation was not considered for local leaders in other parts of the world, for example activists in South America, Eastern Europe, and Asia, all of which had chapters at that time. In addition, Julia claimed that local branches were again overlooked when decisions about speakers and conference proceedings

were made. Julia herself did not go to the conference, clearly frustrated by how it had been organised:

> So, they did it in London this time. But they did it on their own. They did it, the New York girls, who apparently studied in London. Because they have money, they organised it in London, for London. And we weren't asked. It was just like, 'Yay, it's gonna be in London this year, yay!'. And we weren't asked 'Would you like to give a talk? Would you like to give a workshop?' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin 2015).

From this quote, it was evident that Julia felt the hierarchal structure at work. From Julia's perspective, these privileged actors are the 'New York girls' who 'have money'; they have the resources, so, she argues, they made the decisions. Activists whose mobility was limited by a lack of financial resources were barred from accessing organisational events where networking, and ultimately other decisions, potentially occurred. The gatekeepers of the Hollaback network left out activists, even if unintentionally, who had insufficient financial capital, time, or resources; isolated and locked out of opportunities they were unable to collaborate or engage in a meaningful way with the Mothership. How financial resources were not evenly distributed between the local groups is an issue I explore in greater detail later in Section 6.2.3.

Despite being able to engage with the Mothership through email and closed Facebook groups, decisions continued to be made without consultation with the grassroots groups. As a result, hierarchal decision-making resulted in events that led to the exclusion of some local activists (New York) or side-lining their voices (London). This is another characteristic of NGO-isation, which 'privileges middle-class actors with access to more resources and entrée into corridors of power' (Runyan and Peterson, 2015: 243), and gives

'disproportionate voice to English-speaking elites' (Fraser, 201b: 223).

Grassroots activists, who often are less economically, socially, and physically

mobile (Runyan and Peterson, 2015), become further excluded, just as

networks run by, and including, more privileged members claim to be

advancing radical change. In the next subsection, I examine concerns over

(mis)representation raised by H!Berlin.

6.2.2. (Mis)Representation

Tensions over decision-making were not only about events and resources, but

also about representation. In 2014, in collaboration with film director Rob Bliss,

the Hollaback! Mothership released a video, *10 Hours Walking in New York as a*

Woman (Bliss, 2014). The creators used a hidden camera to film instances of

street harassment experienced by a young woman (actress Shoshana Roberts)

walking through the streets of New York over a period of 10 hours. The video

went viral and was shared hundreds of thousands of times on Facebook, Twitter

and other social media platforms and featured in numerous newspaper articles

and blogs (Hoby, 2014; Butler, 2014; Schilling, 2014). The video was heavily

criticised because it had been edited by Bliss to only show men of colour as the

harassers (Rosin, 2014; Wånggren 2016; Rentschler, 2017).

The video had been produced by the Mothership without consultation

with the local groups who were then asked to share it (Brilling, interview with

author, Berlin, 2015). Perhaps unsurprisingly, a significant portion of criticism

for the film came from local Hollaback! groups (Wånggren 2016), many of

whom, as Julia explained, received the bulk of complaints from their local

communities (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015). When critiques

about the problematic nature of the video circulated online, Julia explained how

it was the local groups that came under fire, not the Mothership, and had to

manage the criticisms and outpouring of complaints (ibid). The actions of the

Mothership not only overlooked the political climate in which local groups

operated (see Chapter Four), but it also re-created a white US-centric feminist

subjectivity, overlooking the experiences of women of colour in the movement

both within and beyond the US who experienced racist and sexist harassment in

the streets, often carried out by white men (Rentschler, 2017).

Julia, who has a background in anti-racism work, was particularly

frustrated with this video which insinuated that only men of colour were

harassers. She did an interview with German media outlet Deutsche Welle in

which she explicitly pointed out the problematic nature of the video (Brilling,

2015). In addition to local media criticisms of the Mothership, the release of the

film and the controversy that ensued prompted a number of local branches to

leave the international network. Indeed, at the time of my internship in 2015, a

Twitter debate erupted, levelling considerable criticism at the group in New

York and echoing Julia's sentiments about funding, group hierarchy and the lack

of deliberation with and recognition of local groups. During my fieldwork in

March 2015, I was on Twitter when I saw Julia re-Tweet former H!Boston

leader Britni de la Cretaz's criticisms about the Hollaback! Mothership in New

York.

Britni's Tweets, in which she dubbed the Mothership an 'oppressive

organizational structure' (@britnidlc, 25 March 2015), echoed earlier criticisms

made by Julia, voiced throughout my internship (Fieldnotes, 2015; interview

with author, 2015). The issues outlined included: lack of funding, the

Mothership taking credit for the work of local leaders, and not consulting local

organisers about major decisions, such as the *10 hours* video. This, according to the former Boston site leader, was 'the kick' they needed to leave the movement, which they been considering about a year prior to the video's release (@britnidlc, 25 March 2015). Some of the Hollaback!Boston Tweets were re-tweeted by other local branches, including H!Berlin, which indicated a shared sense of discontent amongst local groups. Indeed, during this time Julia repeatedly expressed her disillusionment with Hollaback! and pondered leaving the international network (Fieldnotes, 2015)

In response to criticisms over the racial bias in the *10 Hours* video, the Mothership released a statement, acknowledging its problematic nature while also highlighting how it was still successful in creating dialogue about street harassment: 'Many outlets have used the video to have conversations about street harassment that would never have happened even five years ago' (Hollaback!, 2014). Julia explained to me that there had been a discussion about the Tweets made by Britni de la Cretaz within the group and the Mothership had decided to hire a consultant to examine how local groups could be better supported (interview with author, Berlin 2015; Hollaback! 2019c). For a number of groups this was not enough to address the hierarchical decision-making structure of the Mothership: Hollaback!Belgium, Hollaback!Ghent, H!Boston, H!PHILLY, Hollaback!Ohio and Hollaback!Winnipeg all left the international network. Obliged to drop the name Hollaback! (an issue I discuss in Section 6.2.3), they began operating under new names, including: rebel.lieus (Belgium and Ghent), Safe Hub Collective, Feminist Public Works, People's Justice League, and Safer Spaces Winnipeg respectively (see Wånggren, 2016; Rentschler, 2017). When I followed up a year later with Julia, it appeared as if

not much had changed with the Mothership. In fact, Julia had mostly pulled back from the group and was concentrating her efforts on trying to work with local authorities and artists rather than the wider international network on projects (interview with author, Berlin, 2016).

Hollaback! has made attempts to address some of the criticisms raised by local groups in recent years. In 2016, following a consultation period, the network rolled out a new regional leadership model, which aimed to improve communication between local branches and the Mothership (Hollaback!, 2019c). This process itself left Julia somewhat sceptical because she felt hiring a consultant was a waste of resources that could be better used to help local groups (interview with author, Berlin, 2016):

> [I]t's still like five people who pay themselves and we don't know how much they get paid that decide everything...That's not a movement! They sit in New York and hire other people. We're all doing the work for free, and they make it impossible for us to be an organisation as well (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2016).

Her comment revealed her continued dissatisfaction with the Mothership's gestures towards addressing the issues raised by local groups. She highlighted how they continued to benefit from and 'pay themselves' for the groundwork carried out by local activists who were 'doing all the work for free'.

The regional leadership model offered a new role for local leaders: to represent a whole region or country as well as just their local city (Hollaback!, 2019). This not only added a greater burden to local leaders but risked re-casting the hierarchal structure of the Mothership within the national context;

one person was expected to represent the needs of their own group but also oversee numerous groups within an entire country or region.

These examples demonstrate that digital media, despite the ability to rapidly communicate and share information and tactics, does not remove the fundamental challenges that come with political mobilisation and organisation. The Hollaback! case illustrates how an international group who makes claims to be 'grassroots' and 'community-powered' is not immune to reproducing inequalities, not even with new technology and the opportunities for improved communication, access, deliberation and participation it may provide. However, the issues mentioned here are not unique to Hollaback! For example, research on other transnational movements, such as the Occupy Movement, revealed how despite the looser forms of collective action enabled by social media, groups still tended to engage in more 'conventional processes of collective identity formation' (Kavada, 2014: 883). Internal struggles over collective voice and structure persisted and may in some cases have been exasperated by social media platforms due to requirements for administrators, passwords and permissions (ibid).

The Internet, as Julia pointed out in Chapter Five, 'comes with the same mechanisms as any other space' (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). There is a clear power geometry (Massey, 1993) at work which, in this case, has granted North American activists, specifically those involved in the Mothership, greater mobility and access to flows of information and resources. In the next section, I explore how Hollaback!'s hierarchal structure and branding prevented local activists from accessing limited funding for local groups, further restraining their ability to organise non-digital community events.

6.2.3. Branding and Resources

Another large criticism of Hollaback! was the group's branding. Julia

characterised the Mothership's structure and practices as increasingly

'corporate'. By this she not only meant their new rigid organisational structure,

but how the headquarters in New York kept donations to themselves and

encouraged uniformity across local branches through their use of copyrighted

Hollaback 'branding' and materials (Brilling, interview with author, 2015). Julia

and H!Berlin co-creator, Claudia, were initially happy with the professionally

designed platform and network of support but as time went on, the financial

and material challenges of remaining part of the Hollaback! network began to

outweigh these benefits. Indeed, they felt the network's sleek digital platform

and professional branding obscured the material difficulties faced by local

branches.

Instead of creating their own group, joining up with Hollaback! appealed

to both Julia and Claudia, who were students at the time, because the network

provided both training and resources to support the launch. Julia felt the digital

storytelling platform and App, described in Chapter Five, was particularly

innovative. Creating a similar platform would have been complicated and

expensive for their grassroots group, but if they joined the network, they were

provided with this, as well as training, free of charge. As it was just the two of

them at the time, having a sleek, easy to use, pre-made digital platform meant

they just had to localise the website for Berlin, which was easier than starting

their own independent German group: 'You could just rely on it. It was just

there. You didn't have to come up with it. You didn't have to invent the wheel'

(Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015). Hollaback!'s 'branding' also had

positive aspects: it gave them a professional appearance and sense of credibility, which they could leverage when working with organisations and the media, stating that they belonged to an 'international organisation' (ibid).

Julia also found aspects of the structure helpful in the beginning for their clarity. For example, if she had questions, she could use the closed Hollaback! Facebook groups and as a local leader she could also discuss issues with the Mothership to seek help. All of this was important for a small group starting up without any resources:

> At that time it was kinda helpful...because really you could just draw on a lot [of] material. ...You had a structure. Technically they were doing it, ... they have someone who is programming it. If you have any questions you are directed to them. Now it's ... a bit like a franchise [laughter]. Right? (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015).

The comment at the end of this quote indicated her disappointment and sense that the network had changed: the sense of 'community' and support they initially felt was gone by the time of my research because of the increasing institutionalisation of the Mothership. Julia laughed when she compared Hollaback! to a 'franchise', or an American corporate entity that assumed a particularly neoliberal style of feminism (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). Wånggren (2016) similarly underlined the heavily Anglo-American culture of Hollaback!, pointing out how all training and materials are in English, which prevented those without a knowledge of English from getting involved in a 'global' movement. As of 2020, 7 out of 20 active local branches are operating in non-English speaking countries (Hollaback!, 2020).

The way the Mothership failed to evenly redistribute donations among local groups was a particularly contentious issue throughout my Berlin fieldwork and was also raised by former members of H!Boston (@britnidlc, 25 March 2015) and members of H!Edinburgh (Wånggren, 2016). Julia repeatedly highlighted that the only group with any funding was the Mothership in New York, which she claimed kept all the money (in the form of donations) for itself, rather than distributing it among the local groups (interview with author, Berlin, 2015; see also @britnidlc, 25 March 2015; Wånggren, 2016). Not only this, but the Mothership in New York receives donations from philanthropic organisations, while also asking local groups to fundraise for them and their 'global' projects (Wånggren, 2016). Indeed, in 2020, Hollaback! partnered with corporate sponsors L'Oréal Paris for their latest 'Stand Up Against Street Harassment campaign' (Hollaback! 2020). These practices recall Fraser's (2013) critiques of mainstream feminism's tendency to converge with marketisation (see Chapter Four). Under neoliberalism, some feminisms can risk 'becoming a trending hashtag and a vehicle for self-promotion, deployed less to liberate the many than elevate the few' (Arruzza et al, 2019). Julia understood these funding issues as intimately tied to the hierarchal group structure, which she claimed was exploitative of local leaders who 'do all the work' (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). This structure, where those in the US headquarters kept the money while local groups struggled to survive, risks becoming a form of neo-imperialist division of labour between the Mothership in the US and the free labour of women. As described in Chapter Five, local chapters must maintain the digital storytelling platform, host local events, and work with local authorities on campaigns and workshops. Julia frequently

expressed frustration with this structure, claiming that: 'We do all the work here. They have no idea. They profit from it with the name' (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). What she means by 'they profit from it with the name' is that the name Hollaback! and all the branded materials, including the digital platform, are owned by the Mothership, who are registered as a non-for-profit (Hollaback! 2019b). Requiring local groups to use uniform design, branding and materials allows the Mothership to claim the hard work of local branches, which in turn enables them to get sponsorships and donations that fund their salaries and selective conferences. Julia interpreted this structure as an appropriation of the labour of local activists who constitute the transnational network.

From the very beginning of my fieldwork, Julia pointed out that the Berlin group did not receive any funding, be that from the local government or money sent through the 'Donate' button that existed on the Berlin site: 'It's very hard with the funding...there's no funding. It's impossible to get funding; we don't have an organisational structure here. And it's also very difficult to do that because of the Mothership policy' (interview with author, Berlin, 2015). Apparently, at that point in time (2015), any money received through the 'Donate' button actually went to the New York head office (see @britnidlc, 25 March 2015; Rentschler, 2017). Julia also explained that if the Berlin group wanted to access local funding, then they would have to leave the international network and drop the name Hollaback!. In Germany, there is a different legal structure that exists for non-profit organisations. As Julia explained to me:

> J: The only thing you can do is a Verein [association].
> Eingetragener Verein [registered voluntary association]. This
> eingetragener Verein is the only option you have in Germany.
> And that's...pfsh...you can do it but it's just gonna be a lot more

bureaucracy...and you'd have to have a different name. And
then...just...and have Hollaback! as a...
L: They have the copyright on the name? Oh, ok...
J: Yeah, they have copyright on everything. They also take it.
There's been conflicts, especially since last year
(Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015).

Therefore, after investing in developing a team to manage stories, update maps,

and host local events, leaving the international network presented a

considerable obstacle: they could either stay with the Hollaback! network and

continue to struggle under its hierarchal structure, or they could risk leaving

the group and lose their materials, claims to their past work and the digital

storytelling platform, which was so central to the group.

H!Berlin's situation, ironically, was not how other groups and

prospective members viewed them. I came to understand the glossy,

professional appearance of the Hollaback! website and branding as obscuring

the lived and material realities of the Berlin group, making them appear to

others as if they were larger and better resourced than the group actually was.

The illusion of a large, well-funded group affected the expectations of other

groups, individuals and organisations that interacted with H!Berlin. This could,

at times, be used to the group's advantage, for example, when working with the

media. It could also result in greater demands being placed on members of the

group. For example, Julia stated that she was often invited to do workshops by

different organisations who would criticise her if she sought reimbursement

(interview with author, Berlin, 2015). It also caused confusion with new

volunteers. Julia explained how she was often approached by new members

who wanted to produce materials or new campaigns and were surprised to

learn that the local group received no resources to transform those ideas into action.

One such instance involved a new volunteer who suggested the group make some stickers and inquired as to whether the group had money to do this: 'Yeah I met her last week and what does she say? "You know? Do we have funding for stickers?" No, there's no money.' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015). When Julia explained that the group did not have the funds and suggested making some graphics instead, the idea was dropped. Clearly, the decision of the Mothership to retain all donations had a direct negative impact on the kinds of activities that local branches could host.

Ultimately, because of the ongoing ideological differences, resource challenges, and other frustrations with the Mothership, H!Berlin demobilised in 2016. I suspect their experiences are not entirely particular. The structure, misrepresentation, corporate branding, and lack of resources produced a strong sense of resentment and ultimately fragmentation within the Hollaback! network, such that, when faced with ideological and cultural differences, groups left. Several local branches of Hollaback! did leave, as mentioned in Section 6.2.2, following the release of the *10 Hours* video in 2014. More left after my field research in Berlin. Compared to the 92 chapters in 25 countries that existed in 2015, in June 2020, I counted 18 chapters in 12 countries (Hollaback!, 2019a)

The conflicts I have outlined in this section arising from Hollaback!'s attempt to build a 'global' hegemonic feminist movement reveal a number of key points about the geographies of feminist activisms in the digital age. On the one hand, the Internet has opened up and allowed feminist activists in different

locations to forge links, and share tactics and even models of activism, such as the open source, monitored digital storytelling and mapping platforms of Hollaback!. On the other hand, to paraphrase Julia's insight discussed in the last chapter, the Internet is only a tool: it can also reproduce inequalities and uneven power relations. International feminist groups and networks need to consider local differences, contexts and the very real, material challenges faced by activists in their localities.

The H!Berlin group was able to function for as long as it did due to the mutual aid of alternative activist spaces in the city. Autonomous political and activist spaces function according to non-monetary forms of exchange to provide activists who have few financial resources with spaces to organise and build networks (McArdle, 2019). In Berlin, numerous autonomous feminist spaces and queer feminist bars allowed activists to use their venues free-of-charge for organising political events and meetings. As mentioned in Chapter Two, many of these spaces have their roots in the squats and autonomous feminist spaces that emerged in the FRG in the 1960s and 1970s and resurfaced around the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989-1990) (Amantine, 2011; Vasudevan, 2016; see Chapter One). During my time with the group, we used a number of these spaces, which included FAQ Laden, K-Fetisch, and Trude Ruth and Goldhammer. In the context of Berlin, the squats, cafés, bookshops, pubs, and other activist spaces, alongside volunteer commitment, created a reliable environment that allowed H!Berlin to bridge the resource gap created through a lack of organisational financial resources from the Mothership. The existence of a culture of autonomous geographies again highlights the importance of place, in this case the specific geotemporal context and activist infrastructure of Berlin

for feminist organising. Through the free availability of feminist activist spaces in Berlin, as well as our own personal resources (money and time), and connections, the group was able to sustain itself, at least for a period of time, without financial support from the Mothership. In those autonomous spaces, which were transitory, they interacted with other groups and activists practicing forms of mutual support and care, and non-hierarchical feminist forms of organising.

Recognising how models of feminist activism disseminated by Anglo-American groups and networks, such as Hollaback!, helps uncover how 'global' hegemonies are maintained and reproduced within feminist politics. However, as outlined, groups reworked and resisted aspects of this model in their localities, in particular, as I argue in the next section, the reproduction of a white feminist subjectivity.

6.3. Challenging White Feminist Subjectivity in the German Context

As mentioned in Section 6.2.2, the Mothership's collaboration with Rob Bliss on the controversial *10 Hours* video in 2014 was a significant turning point in the organisation for several Hollaback! local chapters. Local branches expressed their political agency by repudiating the white feminist orientation of the Mothership; striking out on their own to form new groups, with some explicitly addressing the racial stereotypes the Mothership had helped to perpetuate. For Rentschler (2017), the video revealed the 'white feminist orientation to street harassment' of the Hollaback! Mothership that 'replicated white supremacist rape myths of racialised masculinity as a threat against white womanhood' (p. 567). Some of the US groups that left the Hollaback! network began to campaign

for anti-carceral and transformative approaches to justice to take into account

police brutality against the African American community (Rentschler, 2017).

However, in the German geotemporal context of 2014, the intersecting legacies

of racism, sexuality, and misogyny were expressed through an anti-foreigner,

Islamophobic, anti-refugee and anti-asylum rhetoric in the media, which was

also supported by lawmakers and politicians on all sides of the political

spectrum (Weber, 2016).

In this section, I outline how challenging racial stereotypes became

increasingly urgent among feminist anti-street harassment activists in Berlin in

the context of this growing racist rhetoric. In particular, I explore how H!Berlin,

despite being almost inactive by January 2016, acted as an important

counterpoint to rising xenophobia in Germany and challenged racialised

representations of violence against women in the public sphere. H!Berlin's

response both demonstrates and complicates the 'dual character' (Fraser, 1990)

of counterpublics I discussed in Chapter Two. In particular, H!Berlin focused on

engaging with wider publics, in this case the mainstream media, to challenge

the 'ethnicisation of sexism' (Dietze, 2016: 94) and to disseminate intersectional

feminist ideas. This section describes how, even within 'globalising' feminist

movements such as Hollaback!, specific placed-based struggles shaped the

orientation and activities of local activists.

6.3.1. Cologne and Public Discourse on Sexual Harassment in Germany

In 2014, the year the *10 Hours* video was released, the far-right anti-migrant

group Pegida emerged in Germany and the new far-right political party,

Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), won seats in the European Parliament. As

discussed in Chapter Four, following the mass harassment incident in Cologne

on New Year's Eve 2015/New Year's Day 2016, men of colour, in particular migrants and refugees, were depicted as harassers by the liberal and conservative media and by far-right, centrist and centre-left politicians. Both national and international media reported that the perpetrators were 1000 'North African' men, presumed to be refugees (Boulila & Carri, 2017; see Chapter Four). This incident was seized upon by politicians, judges, journalists, and other public figures to promote an anti-migrant stance.

When discussing these political and media representations with Julia of H!Berlin a few months after the 'Cologne' incident, she explained how, after returning from Dar Es Salaam on 31 December to spend her holidays in Berlin, she was unexpectedly inundated with press requests from large national media outlets, such as ARD and Focus as well as international broadcasters, such as Al Jazeera (interview with author, Berlin, 2016). During her over five years of activism against street harassment, Julia had never once been approached by any large German news channels or papers to discuss the topic. Despite the decline of the H!Berlin group, she felt a responsibility to challenge the emerging racist discourse around street harassment. She spent both January and February responding to press requests and ended up doing '10 really big [interviews]' (ibid). The lack of interest that the mainstream media had directed towards sexual violence and harassment up until this point reflected what Dietze (2016) refers to as 'a certain exceptionalism' in which sexism and racism were already deemed to be 'solved' in the German context (p. 94). This, despite the fact that H!Berlin and other feminist groups continually highlighted the widespread nature of street harassment since at least 2010.

Cologne has been described as unfolding 'in a climate of nationalism'
(Boulila and Carri, 2017: 287). However, Julia was not surprised by the blatant
racist media and political discourse that had emerged, nor did she see it as
representing a *new* extremism in German society. Instead, she understood
racism as systemic:

> No, they're just being very German. Just so you know,
> it's actually very established people speaking. So, it's not like...
> the crazy AfD [(Alternative für Deutschland), [they are] not the
> ones that are easy to be...dismissed as insane. No no, it's the
> middle of society' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin,
> 2016).

While she recognised that expressions of racism and Islamophobia were
becoming louder and more visible, she indicated that racist discourse was not
only expressed by 'the crazy AfD' but also by 'the middle of society'. Julia
understood the xenophobia and racism expressed in the narratives surrounding
Cologne as emerging from a more deeply seated problem in German society.
Her comments resonate with Weber (2016), who highlights how traditional
right-wing discourses became 'increasingly normalized in a range of political
positionings', including by members of the centre-left German Social
Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, hereafter SPD).

Racist narratives also existed outside institutional politics and within
what one might have considered progressive and even radical feminist and
queer movements. For example, veteran German feminist activist Alice
Schwarzer added her voice to the debate, blaming Germany's 'liberal' migration
policies for the attacks (Boulila and Carri, 2017). She argued that the influx of
male refugees would destroy the achievements of the feminist movement in

Germany. Within Berlin's queer spaces, Haritaworn (2015) pointed out how Islamophobic discourses, practices and exclusions were also reproduced through 'homonationalist' (Puar, 2007) representations of the 'homophobic Muslim'.

As someone who had studied critical whiteness and had a background in anti-racist activism, Julia was frustrated by the sudden public debate about street harassment which framed it as a 'new phenomenon' and sought to reproduce racialised tropes about the violent Muslim 'other'. It was evident to Julia that the only reason the media suddenly wanted to talk about street harassment was because non-white men had supposedly carried out the attacks (interview with author, Berlin, 2016):

> J: And that's what I did all January and February as well...and also international shows...Al Jazeera and like a Polish TV show...it was...it was big. So that happened...and that kinda brought the issue out...again on a bigger scale. It's sexism but of course only when connected to racism or it was like "it's the asylum seekers that are harassing our women".
> L: Did they ask things like that?
> J: Yeah. Always, always, always.

Rather than wanting to have a meaningful national discussion about sexism and violence against women, the focus was, as Julia states 'always, always, always' on the race, nationality and migration status of the attackers.

Before the Cologne events, the 'ethnicisation of sexism' – in which Muslim education and gender roles were singled out as only ever patriarchal – had already been identified in popular discourse as early as the 2000s, in debates over veiling in Germany (Ferree, 2010; Deb 2016; Weber, 2016b). In this context, H!Berlin's campaigns against sexual harassment since it launched

in 2011, and other movements, such as the popular 2013 German Twitter campaign #aufschrei mentioned in the last chapter, were either ignored or simply repackaged by the media. Instead, street harassment was presented as a so-called 'new' phenomenon brought over to Germany by foreign migrants. Reporters asserted these 'men' directly challenged Germany's supposed cherished principles of gender equality; some commentators even described Cologne as a 'terrorist attack' (Dietze, 2016; Boulila and Carri, 2017). Anti-migrant discourse was further justified through mainstream narratives and images. For example, on January 8, 2016, the popular magazine *Focus* published an image of a naked body of a white, blonde woman covered in black handprints (Focus, 2016), an image conjuring up German stereotypes and traditional nationalist narratives of *Rassenschande* or 'racial defilement' (Weber, 2016; Boulila and Carri, 2017). In contrast, the emancipation of women and LGBTQ people was frequently presented as a 'symbol of Western enlightenment' (Dietze, 2016: 95). Feminist discourse around street harassment then, was adopted into a normative nationalism at the expense of the 'other' (cf. Puar, 2007).

When speaking with the media Julia confronted dominant problematic narratives that street harassment was only ever carried out by violent, non-European others. She used the evidence gathered by H!Berlin, and her years of experience campaigning against harassment, to challenge the misconception that the influx of refugees since 2014, due to the civil wars in Syria, Afghanistan, and decades of conflict in Iraq, had resulted in a concomitant emergence of sexual violence. She also specifically pointed to events associated with German culture, such as Oktoberfest, that normalised sexual harassment, when white

German men act 'like jerks and get to be fucking sexist pieces of shit, and we never talk about this' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2016).

On 3 February 2016, Hollaback! (the Mothership) condemned the racist discourse emerging around the attack on its website. The letter was re-shared and translated by H!Berlin and included a specific response from the local branch that pointed out how street harassment was not a new problem, and that Germany has: 'an obvious sexism problem' as well as 'increasingly open racist movements' (Hollaback!Berlin, 2016). The open letter called on politicians, journalists, and lawmakers to understand 'the intersections of sexism and racism' (Hollaback!Berlin, 2016). The continued denial of racism and anti-feminist discourse from journalists fuelled attacks on feminist activists who were critical of the racist reporting about Cologne. Women promoting anti-racism were criticised for being too 'politically correct' and even a danger to national security (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2016; see also Boulila and Carri, 2017).

The highly racialised and sexist discourses that emerged following events in Cologne ultimately culminated in an amendment of German rape and sexual harassment law that linked it to the German Residency Act, as discussed in Chapter Four. I analyse feminist responses to this law in greater detail in the following section.

6.3.2. 'No Means No': Sexual Harassment, the Law and Racial Stereotypes

Through the 'ethnicisation of sexism' in Germany, the state deflected attention away from the fact that 'Germany doesn't have any strategies to fight sexism, sexual harassment and it also doesn't have the laws' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2016). In Chapter Four, I examined the outdated anti-rape

legislation in Germany and highlighted how there was no specific sexual

harassment law in place at the time of the mass harassment incident in Cologne.

Ultimately, incidents in Cologne were influential in passing the flawed 'No

means no' ('*Nein heisst Nein*') rape (and sexual harassment) law in 2016,

previously discussed. The lack of legislation that could have prosecuted the

attackers and the inclusion of deportation as a punishment for sexual assault in

the subsequent law (Boulila and Carri, 2017; Hörnle, 2017; Chapter Four)

highlighted the hypocrisy of the claims made about a German culture of gender

equality by politicians and members of the media (see also Weber, 2016; Dietze,

2016).

According to Boulila and Carri (2017), the Cologne events also created

awareness about harassment and were a contributing factor to Germany's

ratification of the Istanbul Convention and increased commitment to address

VAW. Julia, in contrast, argued that the law was 'not a strategy against sexual

violence' but was more likely to contribute to the criminalisation and racial

profiling of Muslim men and other minorities:

> You've been harassed by a male. It really does not matter
> where that person came from, or how long that person's been
> in Germany or whatever. He does it because he's a man and
> you're female or transgender. You're in a patriarchal
> framework which is what German society is based on
> (interview with author, Berlin, 2016).

Julia noted here the absurdity of tying violence to migration status: women are

attacked not because of 'where that person came from, or how long that

person's been in Germany', but because of the 'patriarchal framework' upon

which German society operates. Through projecting the issue of VAW onto non-

European others, the state avoided engaging with the complex historical roots of patriarchal violence while justifying restrictions to German immigration policy.

H!Berlin was not the only campaign to challenge the racist narratives around sexual harassment that were emerging post-Cologne. A number of feminist journalists, activists, artists, musicians and writers released a press statement calling themselves #ausnahmslos (#noexcuses), in which they also condemned the co-option of the discourse around gender-based violence by 'extremists' (#ausnahmslos, 2016). A Berlin queer feminist group She*Claim, one of the other Berlin feminist groups I researched (see Chapters One and Three), were also specifically founded in response to the racist discourse around Cologne (She*Claim, 2016). On their blog, the group announced they 'will no longer leave discourse about sexual harassment to racist journalists and politicians! We certainly do not need to be protected by white men who use the debate for their right-wing populist agenda' (ibid). The group promoted anti-racist feminist politics on both their social media channels and in their creative, place-based actions (Fieldnotes, 2018)

The new law in Germany was broadly viewed by German feminists, including new anti-racist feminist groups such as She*Claim, as operationalising gender-violence and demonising migrant communities by threatening them with deportation (Brilling, interview with author, 2016; #ausnahmslos, 2016; She*Claim, 2016). Julia was particularly critical of carceral modes of justice and sceptical of the actual impact legislation would have on preventing street harassment and sexual violence. Carceral approaches, favoured by neoliberal states, insist on legal penalties and frame the criminal justice system as the only

legitimate force for dealing with violence and gendered inequality, overlooking

the ways in which 'heterowhiteness is encoded into law' (Whalley and Hackett,

2017: 459). Black feminist geographer Ruth Gilmore (2007) points out that we

can instead look to solutions offered by social movements for society's

problems, rather than relying on imprisonment as the only option.

In Germany, a carceral solution was embraced by the state; exemplified

by a law that reproduced representations of 'Arab' men as always perpetrators

and white German women as always the victims. Such a narrative leaves little

space for migrant women's experiences of sexual violence while expunging

white German men of culpability. Aside from the obvious problematic nature of

the new law, Julia advocated for a fundamental social change, rather than legal

change, to tackle street harassment and sexual harassment:

> And the issue would be how do we teach people – the person
> who carries out the assault and also other people – that this is
> unacceptable. And we're not having a discussion. A law is just a
> law. A law does not prevent a crime, that is what comes in
> place after it was committed (Brilling, interview with author,
> Berlin, 2016).

Here she highlights the importance of education and community accountability

in tackling harassment rather than lobbying for potentially ineffective

legislation that not only fails to work but does little to actually 'prevent a crime'

in the first place.

Critiques of the criminal justice system by feminist scholars show how

survivors of sexual violence are often re-traumatised through humiliating

medical examinations, poorly trained police, and inappropriate court

proceedings (for example using a survivor's sexual history as evidence against

them) (Korkodeilou, 2016; Molloy, 2017). It is well established that most women do not report incidents of sexual harassment, including rape, and even fewer make it to trial (Kelly et al, 2005; Stanko, 2007; Chapter Four). The criminal justice system, as outlined in Chapter Four, remains deeply informed by patriarchal and white-supremacist attitudes. Its ineffectiveness in addressing VAW and how legislation and policing are often used to criminalise racialised, classed and sexualised others has led to calls from liberatory feminists for community solutions to VAW (Rentschler, 2017; Whalley and Hackett, 2017). Rentschler (2017) similarly points to a need to re-think strategies for dealing with women's safety based on transformative justice i.e., looking at root causes. These include: 'providing support to survivors, developing community accountability protocols, and doing prevention work that challenges everyday acts of racial and gender oppression, from verbal street harassment to non-consensual touching and other behaviours' (p. 567). Browne et al (2011) similarly note the limitations of legislation and policing on addressing violence and abuse among LGBTQ communities, pointing to the potential of informal safe spaces where survivors of abuse can work through experiences in ways that may be more appropriate and attuned to their specific needs than the criminal justice system. Hollaback! may be understood as one of these 'informal safe spaces', as argued in Chapter Five. However, critical engagement with the perpetuation of a white feminist subjectivity disseminated through the Mothership's actions was crucial to many groups.

Anti-street harassment activists that I interacted with in Berlin took a decisive stand against racism and the criminalisation of migrant communities that was encapsulated by the new legislation. The specific context in Germany,

where Islamophobic narratives were permeating both institutional and alternative political spheres, motivated anti-harassment activists, including those in H!Berlin, but also those engaged in She*Claim and #ausnahmslos, to make explicit commitments to anti-racist feminist politics. The struggle towards creating more inclusive forms of feminist activism continues in Germany, as it does elsewhere, and these groups have made steps towards seriously engaging with the intersections of multiple oppressions (Crenshaw, 1989). Again, the politics of place has informed this; the political context in Germany where Islamophobic discourse was becoming increasingly mainstream, played a crucial role in shaping the responses, priorities and critiques made by local feminist activists, including those of H!Berlin.

6.4. Conclusion

This chapter concurs with Wånggren's (2016) critical reflection, that any attempt at building transnational feminist activisms needs to consider the voices, stories, and experiences of 'the members, activists and educators in our own movements, to point out weaknesses in organising and to become better feminists' (p. 412). In this chapter I outlined how networks such as Hollaback! ignored its members voices and instead (re)created neo-imperialist and, at times, racially insensitive forms of feminist organising. Despite the possibilities of participatory, horizontal forms of organising that may be enabled by new technologies (Clark, 2016), Hollaback!'s hierarchal structures excluded local feminist activists in the (hegemonic, Anglo-American) bid to claim status as a 'global' feminist identity.

My data also builds on Kavada (2014) and Tuzcu (2016) to point out that practices which create unequal power relations within and between feminist movements have not disappeared with the development of social media and new technologies. Digital practice can enable moments of solidarity between activists in different locations, as described in Chapter Five, and as I will describe for the case of Dublin feminist activists in Chapters Seven and Eight. However, this chapter demonstrated how 'exclusionary practices we know from the offline world continue to exist online, despite, or even because the Internet is often seen as the great equalizer, as if it magically eliminates all differences and inequalities' (Tuzcu, 2016: 157). My data shows how the Internet may even aid imperialist forms of Anglo-American feminisms through facilitating hierarchal models of organisation and uniform 'branding'. Indeed, Hollaback!'s professional-looking branded platforms and Apps obscured the material struggles of local groups, who remained small and under-resourced. Therefore, the development of digital spaces does not simply replace the need for material spaces and resources where activists can gather, host events and forge networks. The free, autonomous feminist spaces of Berlin were critical to sustaining H!Berlin's work, as was the embodied labour that went into its digital practices. Without the representation of local activists' interests and concerns, and the redistribution of material resources, 'global' Hollaback! re-created exclusions and power relationships that devalued and appropriated the labour of local activists. My data revealed how the perceived failure of Hollaback! to respond appropriately by H!Berlin resulted in anger, frustration, and disillusionment with the network, and ultimately led to the group's eventual demobilisation.

Despite its decline, H!Berlin was able to use its position within and membership of the global Hollaback! network to speak to wider publics through the media and counter mainstream Islamophobic discourse. I outlined how the local Berlin branch confronted racist narratives emerging around VAW in the German public sphere at the time of this study. In the aftermath of 'Cologne', H!Berlin and other anti-harassment activists attempted to reclaim the narrative around street harassment from an intersectional feminist perspective and challenged the demonisation of migrants by the German media, politicians, and lawmakers.

As this and Chapter Five demonstrated, digital practice remains rooted in the embodied actions of activists who always speak from 'somewhere'. The possibilities for connection and solidarity provided through the Internet do not automatically move us towards creating more inclusive, non-hierarchal feminist politics. A geographical approach to feminist activism means remaining cognisant of differences within and between movements in multiple locations. It means valuing specific place-based struggles, materialities, socio-political environments and geotemporalities, and understanding space as hybrid (see Chapter Two). It also seeks to avoid the hierarchisation of scales that may result in homogenising geographical difference (cf. Conway, 2008).

In the next two chapters, I turn to a different set of actors, movements and geotemporal contexts to highlight geographical differentiations between feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces. Common strategies are identified; like their German sisters, within hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces, activists and artivists share stories, move boldly through public spaces, and create multiscalar relations of mutual support and care. However, in Ireland, the focus

of feminist activisms at the time of this study was predominantly shaped by a history of gendered institutional violence, including obstetric violence, resulting in some of the most restrictive abortion laws in Europe (de Londres and Enright 2018). In the next two empirical chapters, I describe how Irish feminists responded, by creating new hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces through which they resisted dominant narratives about women's lives, highlighted the state's legacy of violence and censorship, and challenged laws that continued to endanger women's lives. .

Chapter Seven: Performance and Embodied Resistance in Dublin: Home|work collective

7.1. Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I demonstrated how feminist activists in Berlin used hybrid digital and creative practices of storytelling, mapping, and street art to make visible a form of everyday violence, street harassment. Women shared their stories of being harassed digitally and wrote them (quite literally) into the physical urban landscape, creating counterpublic spaces of support, care, and boldness. Around the same time the Berlin activists transformed their neighbourhoods in empowering ways, in Ireland, feminist activists and artists also engaged in projects calling attention to VAW that included personal storytelling and creating alternative geographies of the city. Their creative, embodied interventions focused on breaking the silence surrounding Ireland's history of 'reproductive injustices' (Antosik-Parsons, 2019: 2) to challenge the dominant narrative that Ireland should remain 'abortion free'. Through performances of the Irish female body in public urban spaces, Irish pro-choice artivists sought to represent and restore the bodies of abortion-seeking people to the centre of the national debate.

     In this chapter, I examine artivists' use of performance art in Dublin and focus on the corporeal, political, and social potentialities of women's bodies (Antosik-Parsons, 2014), which, in the Irish geotemporal context, have been historically abused and mistreated (Chapters Two and Four). In Ireland, women's bodies, as outlined in Chapter Four, have been subjugated to a high

degree of surveillance, control, and even institutional violence. The combination of creative practice and activism has played a significant role in feminist struggles against Ireland's restrictive abortion laws (Antosik-Parsons, 2019; Calkin, 2019). In particular, feminist artivists have used the performing body as a site of resistance since at least the 1980s to challenge state and Church sanctioned ideals of Irish womanhood (Antosik-Parsons, 2014; 2015; Phillips, 2015). The re-emergence of the abortion debate in Ireland following the death of Savita Halappanavar 2012 (Chapter Four) resulted in numerous artistic projects exploring the ways in which women's bodies in Ireland were subject to religious, medical, and political control. These included artists Cecily Brennan and The Artist's Campaign to Repeal the Eighth's *Day of Testimonies* (2017), Jesse Jones' and Sarah Browne's collaborative project *In The Shadow of the State* (2016), and Jones' solo project *Tremble Tremble* (2018), to mention but a few. For artist and art historian Kate Antosik-Parsons (2019), through such works, the body again became an important tool through which Irish feminist artivists could 'manifest gendered histories, assert visible resistance and gestures of solidarity, and importantly, reveal hidden journeys for reproductive healthcare' (p 2).

In this chapter, I describe how powerful political meanings can be created through the performing body as it interacts in unexpected ways within everyday and symbolic spaces, revealing the emotional geographies of abortion-seeking people and creating transformative alternatives. In the next section, I introduce my case study, the pro-choice group home|work.collective. Their artistic work aimed to disrupt the narrative of shame surrounding abortion and provide moments of solidarity through hybrid counterpublic space. In Section

7.2, I analyse a performance by the forerunner to home|work.collective,

Perform for Choice, called *Metronome* (2012), that included silent performances

in the symbolic space of Dublin Airport. Responses to this piece, about silence

and self-censorship, led to the development of the performance *The*

Renunciation (2016), which I discuss in Section 7.3. I outline how, through this

piece, pro-choice artivists in Dublin combined site-specific performance art and

new technology to question the historical and continued subjugation of women

in Ireland. *The Renunciation* made the hidden stories of abortion-seeking people

visible and audible in urban public spaces. I also analyse the group's strategic

use of the voice and the performing body along the material and symbolic

spaces of the Irish 'abortion trail' (Rossiter, 2009; Calkin and Freeman, 2018). I

discuss how home|work.collective's artivism builds upon a tradition of

politically charged feminist performance art in Ireland (Antosik-Parsons, 2014;

2015; 2019; Phillips, 2015). Section 7.4 explores how these artivists used social

media and new technology to extend the possibilities of performing the

embodied politics of abortion by organising, collaborating, and encouraging

participation in public performances at multiple venues and times beyond

Ireland. Overall, this chapter argues that the home|work.collective's performing

bodies in public spaces reclaimed the city for women by creatively transforming

an emotional geography of shame to one of resistance.

7.2. home|work.collective: Performing Silence

This section introduces the work of artist Siobhán Clancy, the founding member

of two feminist participatory performance art collectives, Perform for Choice,

and the home|work.collective. Perform for Choice resulted from a series of

meetings and workshops between Siobhán and activists from ARC in 2012, and as this work evolved, with subsequent performances, projects and workshops, the collaborative evolved to become home|work.collective in 2016. Here I discuss their first performance piece, *Metronome* (2012), and in the next section I describe a later piece *The Renunciation* (2016) that evolved from the earlier work. For both, the artivists involved in these collectives used the performing body as a site of resistance, transforming it from a locus of control and shame to a site of feminist struggle (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Moreover, home|work.collective describes itself as a 'non-hierarchal space' guided by the principles of participatory artistic performance (Clancy, 2016). Unlike other pieces of pro-choice art that took place within gallery spaces, Perform for Choice and home|work.collective boldly performed their works in public urban spaces, including streets, train and bus stations, and even Dublin Airport. I argue that this site-specific public performance art elucidates the ways in which the performing body gives place meaning.

In our interviews, Siobhán (2016; 2018), reflected on how the tendency to silence oneself when discussing abortion influenced the development of *Metronome*. The topic of calling attention to self-censorship was an important part of the artistic process that resulted in the creation of both of the performances described in this section. Visual and performance art, literature and film that discussed issues that were considered 'indecent' were heavily censored in Ireland under the Censorship of Publications Act (1929), specifically any reference to contraception and abortion (O'Callaghan, 1998). This censorship also included non-artistic materials, such as any publication or group that shared information on abortion (Quilty et al, 2015; McAuliffe,

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2015b). Thus, the silence associated with abortion stigma was influenced by both its criminality and public discourse (Kumar et al, 2009).

The main goal of *Metronome* was to draw attention to the hidden nature of abortion in Ireland, which continued to happen, albeit through travel. Since 1980, 12 women living in Ireland were forced abroad each day to access safe and legal abortion services (IFPA, 2018; Chapter Four). Figure 7.1 is an image I took of one of the early performances of *Metronome* during the March for Choice in 2012. 12 female performers dressed up in red coats and wheeled suitcases with 'Aer Abortabroad' travel tags through the streets and various transport hubs en route to Dublin Airport. The visual impact of the piece is quite striking. The cabin-sized suitcases are symbolic of a short trip to England, with the travel tags referring to specific airports (including Manchester, London and Liverpool) across the UK where abortion-seeking people will travel. The red coats recall the red skirts worn by the women of the Irish Women's Abortion Support Group (Clancy, interview with author, 2016), a group of Irish women living in London who helped other Irish women access abortion in the UK (Rossiter, 2009). These activists would greet women arriving at UK airports by wearing red skirts, allowing themselves to be identified. In *Metronome*, the group used silent performance and these symbolic elements because silence around abortion had resulted from state censorship, the Church's moralising narratives, and an Irish society actively colluding in its maintenance. Silence was an enduring legacy of the 'shame industrial complex (Hogan, 2019; see Chapter Four) described in Chapters Two and Four.

Following performances of the work around Dublin, the group felt that *Metronome* did not really have the impact they had hoped for (Clancy, interview

with author, Dublin, 2016). Siobhán explained how the first of these performances strategically took place in Dublin Airport. However, they were disappointed because 'after we spent the whole day doing this piece about this controversial issue, barely any people had taken any notice of us' (ibid). The group felt that their silent bodies wrapped in red moving through this public space was no match for the entrenched cultural silence around abortion, or the sensationalist tactics of the 'pro-life' movement and their extensive ad campaigns, one of which featured prominently within the airport. Moreover, it seemed as though people just didn't care:

> And there was a security guard like...twenty yards away from us while we were performing in the middle of Dublin Airport and being videoed. And he had his eyes on the football game that was happening on this day (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

'Barely any people' had taken notice of the group, or perhaps ignored them. This was most apparent to Clancy when the security guard was more interested in the football game than a group of 'strange women' with a camera in red coats performing co-ordinated movements in the middle of an international airport. Siobhán said that people simply went about their journeys as though the performers were not there.

The lack of response frustrated the group and made them reflect on what that meant: what exactly was the value of staying silent in a country that had silenced and rendered invisible those travelling for abortion for decades? How useful were silent performances when people continued to ignore the issue or speak about abortion in hushed tones?

> [T]he fact that the performance was silent, very much said a lot
> about the place I was in because while I was kind of directing
> the concept of the performance, nobody else proposed that we
> use sound. It was a silencing of my voice and of the others
> because it was a fear of talking about abortion ... like it really
> was from the place I was in at that time. And I'd say the context
> culturally that we were in at that time (Clancy, interview with
> author, Dublin, 2016).

When Siobhán says 'from the place I was in at the time' she is referring to her own experience of travelling to the UK for an abortion. Before she became involved in the campaign and in creating pro-choice art, she travelled to Liverpool to get an abortion, which she kept a secret until 2018 (interview with author, Dublin, 2018). She felt that *Metronome* was a manifestation of her own hesitance to speak about abortion and an example of the self-censorship that many like her found themselves engaging in. While both this performance and, as I discuss below, *The Renunciation* were about calling attention to social silencing and shame, *Metronome* came to symbolise re-silencing through the act of self-censorship.

The fear that Siobhán refers to above, however, was not solely about shame. At the time the group was making and performed this piece, in 2012, the debate on abortion had not yet reached the kind of critical mass that it reached between 2016-2018, when a referendum began to look like a possibility. Siobhán expressed a genuine fear that there would be repercussions when the group made public art about abortion. She expressed concerns about being followed or physically threatened by militant 'pro-life' activists:

> because anything that I had read in the past was Youth Defence
> coming out with hurly sticks to beat people who were
> advocating for abortion. And I felt really, really vulnerable
> (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

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The threat of physical violence and intimidation was a fear that others I spoke to also expressed, which I return to in the next chapter. Such feelings were not about being controversial, but a very real fear that speaking up about abortion in Ireland was dangerous. The vulnerability felt by activists speaks to the extent of stigma that shaped public discourse on abortion at the time. It also shows the significance and bravery of the group's choice to engage in a piece of *public* art.

Although the group primarily expressed disappointment regarding the impact *Metronome* had, the piece has been re-produced several times since 2012 by pro-choice activists at a variety of events. For example, the image of the suitcase in Figure 7.2. is from the March for Choice 2014. At the protest, there was a call out to those attending to bring suitcases and wear red clothing, while volunteers handed out these suitcase tags. Those wearing red and with suitcases were instructed to go to the front of the march for visibility. Whether they always recognised the origins of the performance or not, multiple activists and artists have reproduced, engaged with and drawn inspiration from the piece throughout the years, working elements of it into multiple local and national actions. Even as recent as 2019, artivists have created similar performances in Belfast and London, where women silently walked with suitcases through the streets to protest the continued restrictions on abortion in the North of Ireland (see Corr, 2019; Magra, 2019). In this way, *Metronome* took on a life of its own beyond Perform for Choice's original intentions, an aspect which resonates well with Siobhan's motivations behind engaging in participatory art, a discussion I return to in Section 7.4. However, despite this success, the feelings that the performance provoked around 'self-censorship' in

both Siobhán and other members of the group resulted in a move away from silent performances.

7.3. The Renunciation: Performing Stories along 'The Abortion Trail'

In 2015, with those who participated in Perform for Choice and other ARC pro-choice activists and researchers, Siobhán created the home|work.collective. On a post on the ARC website, the collective explained its name: 'home|work refers to domestic policies of the Irish State that affect the reproductive and sexual lives and health of residents. It's also a nod to the traditional sphere of work by women in Ireland and the practice of making change from within (including within oneself)' (ARC, 2015).

home|work created their first piece, *The Renunciation,* in 2015-16 (ibid). This time they would not be silent. *The Renunciation* is a performed public reading of 12 different stories which illustrated the challenges people faced when attempting to access abortion in Ireland. The performers spoke aloud women's abortion stories, amplified with a megaphone if needed, to literally break the silence surrounding abortion in Ireland. In this way, the piece could not be ignored in the same way they felt *Metronome* had been. As illustrated in Figure 7.3, which depicts a 2016 performance in Connolly Station, a central station in Dublin city centre, this time they called attention to themselves, with passers-by looking and even stopping to witness the performance. The collective created *The Renunciation* again to address censorship and self-censorship in Ireland (Clancy, 2016), and challenge the geographies of shame surrounding the female body. After I describe the performance in more detail, I discuss how different iterations of their performances revealed the emotional

geographies of solidarity and care for abortion-seeking people and how this was communicated and made visible in public urban spaces as well as through social media locally, nationally, and internationally.

7.3.1. Raising Their Voices: Storytelling

As Zebracki (2020) emphasises, the function of public artivism is to challenge 'social inequalities and dominant uses of public spaces that have invisibilised the socially marginalised' (p. 26). For feminist public artivists, such practices are specifically about confronting systematic attempts to silence women and/or the spatial confinement of women's art (Vanina et al, 2018). As discussed in Chapter 4, travelling abroad for an abortion had become the status quo in Ireland, to the extent that 'going to England' was a popular euphemism for the procedure among Irish women (Cole, 1993). 12 women a day passed through the locations along the abortion trail, their suffering invisible to those around them. Hence, revealing this hidden history was an important motivation for the artivists of home|work collective. Personal abortion stories, then, were the foundation of *The Renunciation*. The piece anticipated the outpouring of personal testimonies that took place during the referendum campaign period in early 2018.

As discussed in Chapter Four and briefly above, in Ireland the long-established narrative of shame around women's sexuality was perpetuated by the Church-State nexus. A system of Church-State run institutions, recently described as 'the shame industrial complex' (Hogan, 2019; Chapter Four), carefully concealed and managed the sexuality of Irish women. Irish society inherited this culture of abortion stigma, which included a legacy of hiding and silencing, creating what veteran pro-choice activist Ailbhe Smyth has referred

to as 'a deafening silence' (Smyth, 2015: 130). Perhaps not surprisingly, storytelling about this hidden aspect of women's lives played a central role in the campaign against Ireland's strict abortion laws (Kennedy, 2018; Calkin, 2019). Pro-choice scholar and activist Sinéad Kennedy (2018) argues that storytelling was crucial as a strategy in the campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment, but was also an important way for women in Ireland to affirm their rights in a country that had continually silenced them: 'For a country which had derived much of its identity from telling stories about women, the repeal referendum afforded women a unique opportunity to tell their own stories' (p 28).

The personal stories that formed the basis for the performance script were shared with the group, and included the members' own personal stories, or those gathered at participatory workshops with ARC (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016; 2018). The collective then rescripted the personal stories into a 'performed reading' that closely followed the structure of a Catholic prayer called The Angelus. The Angelus is a prayer with deep cultural significance in Ireland, broadcast everyday by Ireland's national radio and television station, RTÉ, at 6:01pm (Cormack, 2005). In *The Renunciation*, a woman's personal narrative replaced the Biblical phrases usually spoken by a male Priest and were responded to with a 'refrain' where all members of the group answered in unison, similar to a hymnal call and response in Catholic mass. Figure 7.4 shows an example from the piece taken from, what Siobhán calls, 'the blue prayer books' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016), and Appendix 6 provides the full script.

Described as an 'intervention in the reflective space offered by the modern-day Angelus' (Clancy 2016: 6), the piece plays with Catholic ritual in a number of symbolic and material ways to indicate the significant role that Catholic teaching had on women's reproductive choices. Like the Angelus, which is supposed to be a call to prayer and a moment in the day where everyone pauses in religious contemplation (Cormack, 2005), home|work collective publicly broadcast women's stories and called on Irish citizens to stop whatever they were doing and engage in reflection about their society. As creative actions that intervened in the daily lives of those passing through transport hubs all over the country, *The Renunciation* called on them to pause and reflect on the treatment of abortion-seeking people in Ireland. Their voices, like the peal of the Angelus bell, intruded on the daily commute of citizens and passers-by. Unlike their earlier silent performances, this one resulted in varied audience reactions, sometimes according to where they performed, ranging from disinterest and frustration to support and enthusiasm (Clancy, interview with author, 2016). In one instance, in Connolly Station, the group was confronted by an angry security man who attempted to stop the performance.

Performances of *The Renunciation* generally took place at 6:01pm to coincide with the Angelus. Each member (if there were twelve) read a verse (see Appendix 6). The twelve (usually women's) different voices of the performers were critical to the performance. Each verse told of the personal suffering many people experienced as they attempted to access abortion services, often under the most difficult of circumstances. The group both provided testimony that abortion continued to happen in Ireland and built a call to action into the very text of *The Renunciation*. The voices were woven together

in unison through the collective refrain that demanded 'People of Ireland, raise your voices'. For Siobhán, the voice was a central aspect of the piece, it was, as she states, 'so valuable, just hearing that many female voices altogether' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin 2016) because women had been systematically silenced in Ireland.

As outlined in Chapter Two, storytelling has been used by feminist activists as an important political act and has a history of being used to de-stigmatise abortion (Frevert, 1989). Towards the run-up to the referendum, the power of personal narratives became particularly apparent through social media, including *In Her Shoes*, which shared abortion stories that attracted over 112,000 followers on Facebook in 2018 (In Her Shoes, 2018). A number of notable public figures and ordinary women also came forward to share their abortion stories through the mainstream media, including comedian Tara Flynn and journalist Róisín Ingle (Antosik-Parsons, 2019; Olund, 2020). Indeed, the power of storytelling in the campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment was confirmed following the referendum: it was the personal stories of pregnant people's encounters with the Eighth Amendment, that people heard and listened to, that were given credit for winning the referendum for the 'Yes' side (McShane, 2018). Women's voices publicly telling strangers about the hidden stories of abortion was a powerful element of *The Renunciation*. But so too were the public spaces in which each performed reading took place, which, as I describe in the next section, became a critical symbolic part of the piece.

7.3.2. Reclaiming Space and Changing the Narrative

Abortion generates difficult emotions, especially in countries where it is criminalised, mostly as a result of the complex and unsafe conditions women

face rather than the procedure itself (Aiken et al, 2016). One of the negative emotions often associated with abortion, as mentioned earlier and in Chapter Four, is shame. Shame is often produced through the process of having to travel alone and in secret to another country to access abortion (Aiken, 2016; Calkin and Freeman, 2018; see Chapter Four). This has resulted in an emotional geography of shame associated with what is essentially a state-sanctioned 'abortion trail' (Olund, 2020). Along this trail in public spaces, women had to confront large sensational images and shaming statements by Youth Defence's 2012 campaign, discussed in detail in Chapter Four, which can be read as an active attempt to contribute towards this emotional geography of shame through the representations it created of young Irish women as filled with abortion regret.

To challenge the emotional geography of shame, home|work.collective performed *The Renunciation* where Youth Defence's billboards and posters once stood. As Siobhán stated we wanted to perform the piece: 'around transport hubs where the [Youth Defence] posters existed at that time [2012]' (interview with author, Dublin, 2016). So, in addition to breaking the silence by performing testimonies of abortion-seeking people for the general public, the group strategically selected transportation hubs around the country to perform their co-ordinated readings. Rather than create a work for a gallery space where they would reach others who already shared their views, they wanted to take art into public spaces and reach new audiences.

The effect of *The Renunciation* on a local scale was to 'reclaim' the city for women by transforming the locations of the abortion trail targeted by Youth Defence from spaces of stigma and shame, to spaces of resistance. The spaces in

which the performances took place acted as an important part of the piece (Hein, 2006), not just the backdrop for action. The group showed through their performance and the stories that they told, that being forced to travel for abortion was the shameful practice, not getting an abortion. This creative intervention in public transit spaces challenged the image of abortion-seeking women as filled with abortion regret through literally speaking back to this representation through performance. In this way their work can be understood as an act of resistance in the 'battle over the visual terrain' (interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

As outlined in Chapter Four, the traditional representation of abortion used by 'pro-life' campaigns in Ireland (and elsewhere) tended to focus on images of the foetus or 'unborn child' with little or no attention paid to the actual woman on whom its life depends (Barry, 2015; Antosik-Parsons, 2019). This practice feeds into a 'foetocentric' understanding of abortion in which the personhood of the woman simply does not matter (Morgan and Michaels, 1999). However, Youth Defence decided against this imagery in some of their 2012 advertisements, and instead attempted to create a visual representation of young Irish women. Their posters and billboards often featured a young troubled-looking woman, her image, and presumably, her life, completely torn apart by having an abortion. The image of a young woman 'torn apart', both literally and figuratively, did not correlate with either Siobhán's own personal experience of abortion nor the experiences of others she knew. Instead, for Siobhán and others, this imagery resulted in a strong desire to actively protest this image of young women:

> [...] this was one of the first times that Youth Defence decided
> to use a model of a young woman and so what we all saw was a
> representation of what was meant to be us: young Irish
> women. And that's where the most vociferous protest came,
> from our age group, because we were misrepresented in that.
> And in trying to misrepresent us, suddenly they heard the real
> voices (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

She claimed that the representation perpetuated by Youth Defence of abortion-seeking women as riddled with guilt and shame was a significant contributing factor to the backlash that followed.

Siobhán recounted her own frustration upon arriving back in Dublin after some months of living in the US in 2012 and seeing one of Youth Defence's billboards in Dublin Airport. Her frustration soon turned to anger, especially when she was greeted a second time by the billboards after making her own abortion journey to Liverpool a few weeks later (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016; 2018). The posters failed to make Siobhán feel shameful about her own decision, but the attempt to shame her motivated her to act: 'I was happy with the decision I made and how things turned out, but I still had this anger and the anger was at that critical... that judgmental voice from the 'pro-life' side' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Indeed, the young women like Siobhán that Youth Defence were attempting to reach and represent through their campaign proved to be some of their most vocal opponents: they ironically motivated a new generation of pro-choice activists who no longer cared about being shamed (Doherty and Redmond, 2015; Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). A meeting in Dublin was quickly organised as a direct response to Youth Defence's billboard campaign: demonstrations were planned, petitions were signed (Doherty and Redmond, 2015). It was at this meeting that Siobhán found other activists who

were equally 'incensed' about the narrative of shame and stigma that these billboards and posters were perpetuating. Some of these women became part of home|work.collective (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). In their work, they seized on the productive and political potential of shame (Munt, 2009; see Chapter Four). Through artivism, these women transformed shame into anger and anger into motivating action as part of an intergenerational collective struggle for reproductive rights.

home|work's strategy of reclaiming specific public places where they encountered 'pro-life' billboards and posters was an act of solidarity, visibility, support and understanding for the twelve people a day who made the journey to access abortion abroad. As some members had made that journey, they wanted to create a piece of public art that would 'speak to others that might be in similar situations' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016) and let them know they were supported. The group's performances of a feminist Angelus of women's stories in the material spaces of the abortion trail – the airports, train, and bus stations -- can be understood as a symbolic 'node' of emotional support that helped 'de-stranger' or normalise the experience of travelling for abortion (Calkin and Freeman, 2018). Like other 'nodes' along the abortion trail, such as clinics, organisations, medical practitioners and the presence of other activists, their performances offered both practical and emotional solidarity throughout this emotional journey. home|work.collective activated the body as a site of resistance through performing in public space, challenging this geography of shame through their work. home|work.collective's practices were therefore 'transgressive acts' challenging normative understandings of public space

(Cresswell, 1996), specifically the established 'itinerary of shame' along the abortion trail (Olund, 2020: 182; see also Chapter Four).

When discussing *The Renunciation*, Siobhán expressed her concern that other people travelling for abortion might not have people in their life that supported their decision. They may not have had access to information or may have had to hide their decision from those close to them because of conflicting opinions on abortion. Therefore, she hoped the performance would reach: 'people that didn't have the benefits that I had, with access to another way of thinking or opportunities or money as well to get abroad -- a way of reflecting on their situation' (Clancy, interview with Author, Dublin, 2016). The group wanted to offer a source of support that many abortion-seeking people did not necessarily have in their lives. These people, abandoned by the state that denied safe and legal medical care and by the stigma surrounding abortion due to the moral influence of the Church, were forced to make the journey to the UK or elsewhere. Abortion-seeking people were often without family or friends, often burdened with debt to pay for the travel and the procedure. home|work's hope was that, through the performed readings of *The Renunciation*, people would reflect on what it might feel like for those travelling for abortions among them, and, for the people travelling for abortions, to see this performance and feel less alone; to know that others were thinking of them, saw them and acknowledged their experiences. Through public artivism, the group provided a space of meaningful encounter for the public, including those seeking abortion, to engage with the issue of abortion from a perspective that had traditionally been hidden and silenced.

7.3.3. The Performing Body: A Site of Resistance

home|work.collective's embodied performances drew attention to the Irish

state's continued denial of women's bodily autonomy. The group wanted to

reclaim the social spaces in which abortion-seeking people moved. They also

wanted to reclaim women's bodily sovereignty: 'we are talking about the female

body and its treatment in legal, political, and religious contexts and we are

trying to reclaim that' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Women in Ireland have, in many ways, been weighed down by cultural

meanings of the body; their bodies have been erased from mainstream

representation altogether. As discussed in Chapter Four, women's bodies are

often cast as 'abject' or 'other' and this has been used to justify state violence

against them. But can women's bodies also be sites of rebellion against those

same meanings? The performing body is 'a physical and metaphorical site

where injustices occur' (Antosik-Parsons, 2019: 38), and therefore an important

site for creating art about feminist body politics. The artivists involved in

home|work.collective used their performing bodies as sites of feminist struggle

and resistance, rather than passively accept the state's attempts at controlling

and shaming (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Throughout the abortion debate in Ireland, the pregnant body was

historically missing or misrepresented (Antosik-Parsons, 2019). The popular

use of the ultrasound by the 'pro-life' campaign posters demonstrates this

point: where a foetus (or 'baby') floats in a dark space, the woman is erased

from view (Barry, 2015; Antosik-Parsons, 2019). Siobhán rejected the continual

misrepresentation of female bodies by 'pro-life' images. As she stated, these

images presented the viewer with a 'detached visual assessment external to the

woman's body' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016), which allowed people to distance themselves emotionally from the pregnant subject. The erasure of, and distancing from, pregnant women had very real consequences according to Siobhán: '[P]resenting the female body as an empty space is a violence against what we understand to be a woman's integral being' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Her words echo those of Iris Marion Young (2005) who highlighted the tendency to erase the pregnant subject's embodied experience of pregnancy: 'Pregnancy does not belong to the woman herself. It is a state of the developing fetus, for which the woman is a container' (Young 2005: 46). Siobhán understood this lack of representation itself as a form of violence in that it dehumanised women and, through her art, she made a direct link between this erasure and the very real violence that denying women's bodily autonomy can result in. For this reason, the home|work.collective used the body as a 'tool' with which to make activist art (Clancy, interview with author, 2016).

The group called attention to performers' bodies through the use of indigo blue scarves as the garment of choice during the performance. What was initially a separate project, called *Indigo Scarves,* became an integral part of *The Renunciation*. *Indigo Scarves* resulted from a workshop facilitated by group member Emily Waszak in which Irish-made cloth was dyed by the group using a traditional Japanese indigo dying process called Shibori (Clancy, 2016). The colour, materiality of the dye and presence of the textile is steeped in symbolism. Indigo-blue was a colour traditionally associated with the Virgin Mary and with purity (Jacobs and Jacobs, 1958). The Virgin Mary is a common visual trope that signifies motherhood and self-sacrifice (Buikema and

Zarzycka, 2012). Yet indigo dye itself was often used as an abortifacient because of its caustic nature (McKinley, 2012). Wearing Irish textiles died indigo blue, a colour associated with virginity and the Madonna, to perform a feminist Angelus text is a clear subversion of Catholic ritual; enrobing the bodies of women performing abortion stories, some of which were their own, provided a different understanding of traditional social constructions of Irish women as virgins and/or mothers. The group also wanted to use Irish textiles as part of their embodied protest because they have been traditionally devalued as a feminine craft and labour due to their association with domesticity (Fieldnotes, 2016). Draped in indigo blue scarves, the performing body combined with locations along the abortion trail to draw attention to formerly abject or 'shame-ridden' bodies of abortion-seeking women, who instead occupy and boldly move through those spaces with support of the witnessing public.

Róisín Kennedy (2018) points out how Irish artists tended to avoid topics relating to the body in art because of fear of censorship. However, as Esche and Bradley (2007) point out, in places where there is a 'tightly controlled discourse' certain images and topics can take on 'a transgressive power' (p. 10). Through feminist artivism, the body, as the site of resistance and struggle, became the most immediate 'tool' to fight back with. I argue that the performing bodies of home|work.collective and the public spaces in which they performed co-constituted each other. Bodies engaged in performance can serve as a powerful example of how places are given meaning and brought into being through embodied practice (Johnston, 2006). To rephrase Doreen Massey's definition of place: places are part of the stories told about the body thus far (Massey, 2005). In place, the debate about reproductive rights was reframed as

a battle over public space and, as Siobhán called it, 'a battle over the visual terrain'. home|work represented and revived the body through performance, situated that performing body in public spaces, and in this way communicated the lived experiences of those in crisis pregnancy situations. Through their embodied performances, they brought the symbolic spaces of the abortion trail into being, drawing out the meanings the journeys had for the twelve people a day who were travelling to access abortion. They enacted the contradictory emotional geographies of the abortion trail (Calkin and Freeman, 2018; Olund, 2020) through their embodied presence within those material-symbolic spaces and through, as discussed earlier, storytelling. The body was activated through the voice and the symbolism of textiles was used to centre and ground the body within space.

7. 4. Performing Loose Coalitions Across Hybrid Space: Social media and Site-based Creative Practice

In addition to their material interventions into the public places associated with abortion travel, pro-choice artivists used social media and new technology during the referendum to engage and mobilise people across a range of spaces and places. The participatory nature of social media, as discussed in Chapters Two and Five, presents new possibilities for engaging feminist counterpublics (Salter, 2013; Wånggren, 2016). Social media played a significant role in pro-choice activism in Ireland, helping engage, organise, and coordinate activists at least since 2012 (Doherty and Redmond, 2015). Later, during the referendum campaign, the critical role of storytelling took place on various social media platforms (Kennedy, 2018; Calkin, 2019). For example, the Facebook page and

storytelling platform *In Her Shoes: Women of the Eighth,* mentioned previously, became such a popular resource for the pro-choice campaign in Ireland that it became the target of a concerted cyber-attack by 'pro-life' campaigners (Martin, 2018).

I have argued that the corporeal actions of home|work.collective in material spaces were central to the performance. But it was through social media (in this case Facebook) that I first discovered *The Renunciation*. I soon learned that home|work used social media to co-ordinate their multiple site-based performances. In this section, I analyse *The Renunciation* according to a hybrid digital-material spatial lens, paying attention to the ways in which the group combined creative site-based practice with social media to open up their work to other places via participation and collaboration. home|work.collective used social media to share and internationalise their work. They demonstrated how activists might connect in solidarity with others across borders through 'looser coalitions' rather than through enforcing hegemonic feminist activisms (Mohanty, 2013) such as those described in Chapter Six. Through hybrid practices and spaces, these artivists extended the political potentiality of the performing body, sharing their creative interventions with others across space and time, allowing them to adapt and re-work the piece in the public spaces of their specific geotemporalities.

7.4.1. Co-ordination and Participation

In January 2016, an event called '*The Renunciation: Simultaneous Readings in Ireland and the UK*' appeared on Facebook. The description for the event explained that to celebrate St. Brigid's day (Feb 1st), people were invited to take part in a simultaneous reading of *The Renunciation*. The event was planned for

this day because St. Brigid is often described as Ireland's patron saint and most famous abortionist (Clancy, 2016; Fletcher, 2017). Attendees of the event were instructed to: email the group or access a link to download a PDF of the file containing the reading; wear something blue; choose a location where they would like to read the piece; make a video or photo of them doing so; and, share it on Twitter using the hashtag #TheRenunciation (home|work.collective, 2016). They were also encouraged to share their location on the Facebook event page if they would like to read with others and co-ordinate themselves. On 1 February 2016, small groups of people gathered at Connolly Station in Dublin, Colbert Station in Limerick, as illustrated in Figure 7.6, Paul Street in Cork, Shop Street in Galway, and Kings Cross Station in London. At 6:01pm, the time of the Angelus, they began their performance.

This coordinated performance invited people into a creative feminist hybrid counterpublic space, reaching people that may not usually engage in artistic practice. Siobhán maintained that social media can be used to encourage people to participate in creative practice: 'if access to art is an issue, I'm interested in making artwork accessible' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Siobhán described social media as participatory in nature, hence combining it with artistic practice is understood as a way of extending the possibilities of artivism. Art can often be charged with elitism (Davis, 2013; Siedell, 2015). Through combining social media with artivism the group attempted to eliminate some of the barriers to art while simultaneously making it easier to discuss abortion. Art to Siobhán is a:

> way of reaching the whole person. The sentiment involved in
> that, the experience involved in that and how you capture that.

> And I think that a huge amount of work has to be done on
> stigma and our internalised stigma. And I also know that this is
> ... a huge milestone in a long-term struggle (interview with
> author, Dublin, 2016).

The group wanted to appeal to the empathy of others, to 'the whole person', by combining participatory creative practices in hybrid spaces. For Siobhán, doing this in many places simultaneously, extended their work, which attempted to tackle the 'internalised stigma' of both those travelling and those occupying the space in which others travel for abortion.

Similar to the scholars and activists discussed in Chapter Two, Siobhán understands social media as strongly associated with a fourth wave of feminist activism. Yet Siobhán did not use fourth wave to define either the group's work or contemporary feminist movements in Ireland. Rather she held the fourth wave up as a goal – as something that feminists will achieve when they truly fulfil the aims of intersectionality:

> the fourth wave will be there, when we ARE intersectional. And
> if we are, then that is absolutely characterised by participation.
> And the media that has come to define the way in which fourth
> wave activists will operate, is social media - - and that's about
> participation as well (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin,
> 2016).

For her, the fourth wave is about intersectionality and participation, with social media as a potential tool for creating more inclusive movements, so long as non-hierarchal principles guide such practices. Intersectionality meant building movements that attended to the ways class and race shaped abortion experiences. Yet the emphasis communicated through her expression 'when we ARE' implies that feminist activists have not yet successfully achieved this. She describes the fourth wave as an 'idealised stance' which also suggests that her

understanding is not about categorising feminisms into what they are/were, but perhaps using them as a guide to what could be. This speaks to literature that describes waves not as rigid categorisations but rather as identities that help mobilise different generations of feminists (Henry, 2004).

Whether fourth wave or not, social media enabled the co-ordination of performing bodies across space: participants on the St. Brigid's day performance were able to organise among themselves on the Facebook event page and meet to perform the piece in their various locations. It also afforded the performers the ability to synchronise to the minute, so that their actions took place in Limerick, Dublin, and London at the exact same moment, in multiple places. In this case, embodied performance was extended through hybrid space in a loosely affiliated way, engaging bodies in multiple sites, and allowing local activists to make strategic choices over the direction and location of performances. In the next section I move to describe how home|work used digital technology to engage public participants in collaborative practice across international boundaries, expanding its participatory nature beyond the Republic.

7.4.2. Performing the Local and the Global

home|work.collective built upon the success of the St. Brigid's Day performances in Ireland and the UK to interact with other international pro-choice activists for another simultaneous participatory public performance in 2016. Thanks to the networking opportunities created by the Internet and social media, the group connected with a variety of artist and activist groups in Bangkok, New York, and Berlin. Through these collaborations, they were able to share and adapt *The Renunciation* for a variety of performers and audiences.

Despite these opportunities for international solidarity afforded by new technology, Siobhán still maintained an ambivalent attitude towards social media for several reasons that I explore here.

The second international performance of *The Renunciation* took place in Bangkok, Thailand, at a conference called the Inroads Global Members Meeting in March 2016. Inroads describes itself as a global network of 'advocates, scholars, health providers, and donors' that aim to transform narratives around abortion 'creating a world free of abortion stigma' (Inroads, n.d.). Two members of home|work.collective , Emma Campbell and Jacinta Fay, went to Inroads' inaugural meeting in Bangkok to perform *The Renunciation* with people 'from Europe, Africa, Latin America, Asia, and North America (Fay quoted in Clancy, 2016: 9). This was also the first time that the *Indigo Scarves* were worn in public (Clancy, 2016). Ten women, men and genderqueer people took part in the performance. According to Jacinta of home|work.collective, the reaction to the piece reduced both the international audience members and participants to tears (ibid). The piece resonated with people from different cultures who were also struggling, with various levels of severity, against restrictive abortion laws worldwide. The performance was further shared via Inroads online forum and on Twitter, which included images of the group of international performers wearing the scarves which were Tweeted with the hashtag #wemakeinroads (Clancy, interview with , Dublin, 2016; Clancy, 2016).

home|work.collective also collaborated in a distinct way with the *Reproductive Freedom Festival*, which was also held in March 2016 in New York and internationally. The festival, developed by American pro-choice activist Cindy Cooper, is described as a digital event that connects pro-choice activists

all over the world through hosting live-streamed events (Reproductive Freedom Festival, n.d.). The festival also included 'short interviews with experts and artists' and allows participants worldwide 'to join in by Twitter and instant messaging' (ibid). A group of American performers, directed by Brazilian performer-director Thais Flaitt Giannoccaro, carried out an interpretation of *The Renunciation* as part of the festival programme in TACT studio, New York and live-streamed it from there (Clancy, 2016). home|work.collective sent the blue prayer books to the group and set up a Twitter account so that they could encourage people in Ireland (and abroad) to tune into the performance. The artists in New York adapted the piece for an American audience by slightly tweaking its wording, removing the refrain 'People of Ireland, Raise your Voices' (Clancy, interview with artist, Dublin, 2016).

Siobhán appreciated that the piece was broadcast all over the world, reaching new audiences, but this event ultimately left her sceptical about the potential for social media to genuinely engage people in activist-art. Firstly, the performers did not really interact with the group back in Ireland before and following the performance. This meant that Siobhán was unsure what the group were planning to do with the piece, which was, in her view, a missed opportunity to connect in a meaningful way through the performance. Secondly, very few people who followed home|work.collective's Twitter actually tuned in for the live stream of the event via their feed:

> [A]ll those people who connected with us, again within a very
> short period of time, based on the news that we were going to
> have this performance streamed live from New York … so few
> of them actually tuned in to the performance (Clancy,
> interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Siobhán argued that the socially mediated performance and broadcast viewing created a superficial type of engagement with the artwork: 'people like to be seen to connect to something, but don't necessarily want to do the work then' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Here she suggested that social media is not necessarily real activist 'work' that might change people and inspire them to act. Yet in other comments, Siobhán, maintained that social media was a labour-intensive activity, so much so that it was one of the reasons the group did not engage with it as much as other pro-choice artists and activists at the time (Clancy, interview with author, 2016). Of course, the 'once off' digitally mediated iteration of *The Renunciation* with performers in New York was only a small part of home|work's larger participatory process-based artwork that took place in many hybrid public spaces at different times and/or simultaneously. Siobhán's comments may have indicated her disappointment with the way social media facilitated a rather one-sided relationship with the New York-based group, who did not work in the same participatory way as home|work.

Despite scepticism about social media, home|work.collective continued to engage with other groups and individuals through the use of new technology. For example, the group made the blue 'prayer' books available in PDF form so that they could be shared with others in different locations, printed off and read. Siobhán also recognised the significance of social media, particularly Facebook, in the re-emergence of the pro-choice movement in 2012 (Clancy, interview with author, 2016). However, creating artistic, activist work was always the priority for home|work.collective, whereas social media was secondary – it was a 'tool' that could support the dissemination of their work

but was not necessarily a crucial aspect of the performance itself. The politics of place and geotemporal context were also critical to the performative and participatory nature of the artwork as described above. In cities like Dublin or Bangkok, in which reproductive rights did not exist, the presence of people seeking abortions in spaces where it was not allowed was moving for audience members as well as performers. The same affect seemed not to have been the case for the New York performance, at least from Siobhán's interpretation of events.

I learned that Siobhán's ambiguity in relation to social media did not suggest a rejection of using digital practice to internationalise the work of home|work.collective. At the end of the interview with Siobhan in 2016, I suggested bringing *The Renunciation* to Berlin. To my surprise, she was enthusiastic about another international collaboration possibility, despite her disappointment with the performance at the *Reproductive Freedom Festival*. Her enthusiasm related to the very different relationship between us which contrasted to that between her and the unknown performers in New York. We had a shared experience of the abortion context in Ireland and had developed a rapport through both research and shared activism. It also reflected our joint emphasis on participation and collaboration: mine in relationship to the research process and hers in relationship to the artistic process (see also Chapter Three).

We performed *The Renunciation* at Berlin Ireland Pro-Choice Solidarity's (BIPCS) fundraiser, or 'soli-party' (a German term), called '*Thank God for Abortion'* on 17 June 2016 in a venue called Bei Ruth in the Berlin district of Neukölln, as illustrated in Figure 7.8. The purposefully controversial name of

the fundraiser was inspired by pro-choice artist and performer Viva Ruiz, who was flying from New York to Berlin to perform. By coincidence, the name of the fundraiser fit perfectly with the style of *The Renunciation*, which as outlined earlier, playfully subverts Catholic ritual to critically comment on the Irish Church and state's strict regulation of women's bodies. Money collected from the fundraiser was donated to the Abortion Support Network, a London-based group that continues to help women access abortion in the UK (Abortion Support Network, 2019). The complex network of solidarity we created together with international pro-choice groups and artists was part of the artivist process of creating a feminist hybrid counterpublic space together: an Irish performance artwork taking place at a pro-choice event in Berlin, organised by Irish migrants, for a fundraiser named after an American pro-choice artist, who were fundraising to support a group in the UK which offered abortion services to women travelling from Ireland. Social media, in this respect, enabled activisms to transgress boundaries through transnational events in place, empowering activists from different groups in different parts of the world to horizontally co-ordinate embodied artistic practices, share tactics, and even transfer financial resources. The loose coalitions between these various groups differed markedly from the kind of hierarchical forms of organising that emerged in Chapter Six. This hybrid form of artivism also allowed for a high degree of openness and spontaneity; in a way similar to how activists might mobilise around a hashtag -- without necessarily being part of a formal campaign or group (see Clark, 2016).

The technologies that contributed to the shareable nature of the piece and our ability to communicate in real time made the performance possible. At

first, Siobhán and I organised the performance via email, but soon moved to Facebook messenger to communicate in the last 48 hours leading up to the event (Fieldnotes, 2016). Siobhán posted the prayer books and the scarves to the group in Berlin, and Figure 7.7 illustrates the care that went into the package she made for us. A Tweet accompanied this action; spreading awareness of the performance in Berlin via the home|work.collective Twitter account. Unfortunately, the books and scarves did not arrive in time for the event. When the group in Berlin realised this, I was able to message Siobhán who directed us to the PDF file of the prayer books that we could download and print for the performance (Fieldnotes, 2016). Although we did not have the indigo blue scarves, the venue technician used a blue light to illuminate the stage, as can be seen in the image of the event in Figure 7.8. In this instance, we used a combination of different technologies to acknowledge the symbolic resonance of the artwork but created our own unique interpretation of the piece. home|work.collective, through relinquishing their ownership of the artwork, had encouraged group and individual adaptations and as a result, activists in different locations could make the piece their own.

On the night of the event, which included in its line-up artists from Ireland (DJ Princess 4Q), Poland (pro-choice performance artist Zdrada Palki), New York (pro-choice visual artivist and rapper Viva Ruiz) and Israel/Lithuania (feminist music group Vagittarius Rising), we knew we would have to adapt the piece for an international viewership. I asked members of the audience to take part and the result was a very international group of performers: participants were from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Poland, Chile, Germany, and the US. As a result, we decided to modify the refrain/call to action 'People of Ireland, Raise

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your voices' by allowing each performer to insert his/her country of origin (Fieldnotes, 2016). Performers from these countries were either still fighting for abortion access at the time (Ireland, Northern Ireland, Chile) or struggling against recent attempts to roll-back on women's reproductive rights (Poland, the US, Germany). In this way we spontaneously adapted the performance to incorporate transnational connections between pro-choice activists, while calling to action feminists in the countries in which we lived. Preparing for the event had been light-hearted as we were excited yet nervous. When we did perform *The Renunciation*, it was a sombre moment and reminder of why we were all present: a moment of reflection and call to action, as the work was intended to be (Fieldnotes, 2016). The way that activists from a variety of countries were able to participate in and adapt a piece of Irish activist-art, relate to both its message and symbolism, and recreate it together in Berlin, spoke to the possibility of co-creating feminist counterpublic spaces that reflect a 'global' sense of place (cf. Massey, 1990). Throughout the performance, other members of the Berlin group took photographs and videos, sharing them via Twitter and Facebook and Tweeting them back to home|work.collective. Their mediated audience responses connected members of the Irish diaspora in Berlin, and also German and international activists present at the performance.

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined how Irish pro-choice artivists engaged in innovative embodied, place-based practices to challenge the myth that Ireland is 'abortion free' (Calkin, 2019). As discussed, the particular form of public performance artivism used by home|work.collective functioned at different and intersecting scales. On a local level, the collective's creative, corporeal actions sought to

transform the normative meanings of transportation locations along the 'abortion trail' (Rossiter, 2009). Strategically using streets and transport hubs to become performance sites in *Metronome* and *The Renunciation*, home|work.collective contributed to breaking the silence that surrounded abortion in Ireland. This was valuable not only to the artivists themselves, but, as they hoped, would offer understanding and support to those seeking abortion. Through materially and symbolically reclaiming these spaces from dominant narratives of shame, they hoped to act as a source of solidarity to those who may be travelling through. In this way, bus, train stations and airports were not merely the locations of performances, but a symbolic part of them: the embodied creative actions of these pro-choice artivists enacted and transformed the symbolic spaces of the abortion trail.

Through this, the group also transformed the 'shameful' aborting body into the most immediate site of resistance (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016) and returned women's bodily autonomy to the centre of the conversation about abortion. The significance of such work should not be understated: in Ireland, women's voices, stories, and bodies had been rendered invisible. The experiences and voices of women in crisis pregnancies travelling for abortions had been systematically silenced. Public artivism, then, functioned as a way of opening up a discursive space for the personal stories of abortion-seeking people, a practice that would later play a valuable political role in the referendum campaign.

In many ways, home|work.collective follows a tradition of using embodied performance to challenge state-sanctioned understandings of womanhood in Ireland (Antosik-Parsons, 2015; 2019). When we consider how

spaces continue to be gendered (McDowell and Sharp, 1997; Chapter One) and the particular context in Ireland, where women were systematically relegated to the private sphere (see Chapter Four), the performing female body in public space becomes all the more significant as a means to confront normative, masculinist understandings of Irish public space. Siobhán's discomfort with social media, described by her as another 'generation of thought' (interview with author, Dublin, 2016), did not prevent her from recognising the significant contribution it could make to participatory forms of art, including *The Renunciation*. The hybrid actions of home|work.collective brought the performance piece to multiple locations in Ireland and beyond, connecting pro-choice activists and artists from various groups in solidarity with one another across time and space. The piece, in turn, made the hidden stories of abortion in Ireland visible to a variety of audiences at multiple scales: be they passers-by in Connolly Station, or an audience of German and international pro-choice activists at a party in Berlin. The piece had transnational resonance, which was enabled through technology and travel, leveraging the opportunities for 'horizontal' organising (Clark, 2016) that can be made possible through social media.

The group used technology and loose international networks to cross geographical boundaries and to make the personal experiences of abortion-seeking people in Ireland visible on an international scale. I argued that through combining political public art and performance with technology, new possibilities for solidarity, visibility, and public participation in advancing reproductive rights emerged. Cross-group scale-jumping solidarity actions are critical not least because they make the experience of abortion-seeking people

visible in Ireland, but because the piece could also be adopted, adapted, and appreciated by international activists who felt it also communicated their struggles for bodily autonomy. It was not simply the digital practice that connected people, but the power of artistic performance in place.

This chapter highlighted the multiple ways of working with new technologies and how hybrid feminist counterpublics are heterogenous. home|work.collective used technology to disseminate their art and co-ordinate bodies across space, yet the group maintained an ambivalent attitude towards social media as a means through which to build community. This can be compared to H!Berlin in Chapter Five, where social media was used to forge communities of support and where material artistic interventions were directly informed by, or performed in anticipation of, digital mediation. In the following chapter, I build on the arguments made here about the political potential of participatory pro-choice art. I focus on Maser's 'Repeal the Eighth' mural and how technology transformed the possibilities of this piece of street art by overcoming censorship. As a direct political intervention in public space, it revealed the normative power relations shaping the gendered political landscapes of Dublin.

Figure 7.1: Aer Abortabroad/Metronome by Perform for Choice/home|work.collective. Source: Author, 2012

Figure 7.2: Aer Abortabroad/Metronome labels were given to members of the public at the March for Choice 2014. Source: Author, 2014.

Figure 7.3. The Renunciation, performance in Connolly train station. Source: home|work.collective, 2016 (with permission).

Figure 7.4: Excerpt from 'Prayer Book'. Source: The Renunciation, 2016.

Figure 7.6: Performance of the Renunciation on St. Brigid's Day 2016 in Colbert Station, Limerick. Source: home|work.collective, 2016 (with permission).

Figure 7.5. A performance of The Renunciation at the Talking in Circles Seminar at A4 Sounds Studio, North Dublin. Source: home|work.collective, 2016 (with permission).

Figure 7.7. Tweet showing the books being posted to Berlin. Source: home|work.collective 2016 (with permission).

Figure 7.8. Performance of The Renunciation in Berlin, 2016. Source: Author, 2016.

Chapter Eight: Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' Mural: The power of digitally networked street art

8.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated how the combined site-based performance art of home|work.collective called attention to the hidden nature of abortion travel in Ireland through storytelling, the embodied presence of women in public spaces, symbolic material elements, and digital practice. They created hybrid counterpublic spaces that invited collaboration and engaged new publics, both at home and abroad. In this chapter, I consider hybrid feminist activist street art and digital practice to campaign for reproductive rights in Ireland and reveal the contested nature of public urban space in Dublin.

On 8 July 2016, the 'Repeal the 8th' mural, as illustrated in Figure 8.1, was unveiled on the exterior wall of The Project Arts Centre (Project Arts) in Temple Bar. This piece was commissioned by feminist website, The HunReal Issues (HunReal), and produced with the support of Project Arts (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018). Just over two weeks after its unveiling, the mural was taken down (25 July) following an order from Dublin City Council Planning Committee, which stated that the mural 'violated planning law' and that the committee had received 50 letters of complaint (Linehan, 2016; O'Sullivan, 2016). Two years later, on 9 April 2018, after a national referendum had been called about the Eighth Amendment, the piece was returned to the outside wall

of the Project Arts Centre; the artist was now allowed to display the image without planning permission because exemptions are made to planning laws for 'ads' in the run-up to Irish elections and national referenda (Hosford, 2018). However, less than two weeks later Project Arts was again ordered to remove the artwork, this time by the Charities Regulator who stated that the mural put the centre in breach of the 2009 Charities Act, as the piece was considered 'political activity' (Holland, 2018).

Street art is about accessibility and communicating with the 'broader "lay" public' (Molnár, 2017: 389). This may or may not be political in nature (ibid). However, I contend that Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural was more than political commentary through street art: it was an example of 'street artivism': activism informed by street art as a distinct form of public art (see Chapter Two). Through its transformation from a piece of street art on a wall in Temple Bar, to a broader symbol of the pro-choice movement, the mural can be understood as an example of when 'art seems to relinquish its status as a reified set of objects in the aesthetic arena of street protests and to assert its role *as* politics (Tunali, 2018: 378). In this chapter, I discuss how the mural revealed the contested nature of public urban space in Ireland's capital city, encouraged new forms of public participation and directly contributed to the campaign for reproductive rights in Ireland. .

In Section 8.2, I begin this chapter by exploring the impact of the mural and the subsequent attempts to censor it. I outline how the removal of Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural uncovered the contested nature of both reproductive rights and public urban space locally. The mural can be understood as fitting within a long-standing history of artistic censorship in Ireland (see Chapters

Two and Four). Despite the existence of other artistic murals at The Project Arts Centre (Project Arts) historically, attempts to censor the piece by state agencies illustrated how art dealing explicitly with abortion and women's sexuality was not tolerated within the urban landscape. I also expand on how the mural's collaborators envisioned it as a form of public art that might move the conversation about abortion beyond traditional activist and academic circles, and function as an act of solidarity with those travelling for abortions. I consider how the project realised these goals through the aesthetics of the mural, its public nature, and the strategic use of social media to extend the mural's reach.

In Section 8.3, then, I turn to the value of the mural to the pro-choice movement, specifically how this piece of street artivism encouraged new kinds of public participation and engagement. I argue that its hybrid nature and appealing aesthetics invited audiences to engage with the piece in new and innovative ways. The mural created a hybrid counterpublic space where pro-choice activists could come together to discuss topics of mutual concern, primarily abortion access and censorship in Ireland. Following the successful national referendum in May 2018, the conversation started by the mural and its subsequent removals continues to inform debates around planning and street art, by raising concerns about the censorship of political art in Ireland (ICCL, 2018), especially as related to reproductive rights. Taken as a metaphor for the larger issue of abortion politics in Ireland, I maintain that both the original mural and its material and digital reproductions resisted the dominant power structures shaping the Irish landscape at multiple scales.

8.2. You Can Paint Over a Mural: Censorship, Public Space and Engaging New Publics

In an interview, Cian O'Brien, the director of Project Arts, a national arts organisation located in central Dublin, situated the censorship of Maser's mural within the long history of artistic censorship that included the Irish state's treatment of women and girls (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018), a history I briefly outlined in Chapters Two and Four. However, Róisín Kennedy (2018) points out that visual arts may have mostly escaped the censor because of its perceived audience and location: those of a higher education and social class were most likely to view it within a private gallery. Once visual art was moved outside of the gallery space, it was considered a threat to society and a prime target for censorship (ibid). However, as other political murals historically have been tolerated by Dublin City Council, the censorship of Maser's mural offers a case study about how women's sexuality remains subject to intense scrutiny in Dublin's public spaces. In this section, I situate the mural within the particular context of how artistic censorship played out spatially in the streets of the city.

8.2.1. 'If it's up there on the wall, there's no denying it': Making the Private Public
The spatial context of Maser's mural can be understood as one of the main reasons why it experienced such considerable backlash by local and national government authorities. The controversy created by Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural not only succeeded in being what Sarah Pierce, Chair of the Board of Project Arts, described as 'a reminder that art matters' (quoted in O'Sullivan, 2016) but also serves as a reminder that, as geographer Doreen Massey (2005) argued, space matters too.

Project Arts' transgressive role in the Irish art scene is related to the

centre's history. Engaging with political and socially engaged art since its

foundation, the centre has a long-standing history of challenging state

censorship: as Cian explained, 'it's in our DNA' (interview with author, Dublin,

2018). The centre was established following a two-week festival at the Gate

Theatre in 1966, when writer Edna O'Brien, known for writing about sexual and

social issues during the particularly repressive 1950s, came over from London

to talk about the censorship of her work and the work of others in Ireland

(Sweeney, 2008; O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018; Project Arts

Centre, n.d.). Following this, Project Arts has supported artists, topics and art

forms that have been controversial and/or marginalised in Irish society, the

latter of which includes dance, performance art, community projects, spoken

word, alternative theatre, multi-media works, murals, among others.

Maser's mural was also not the first time the centre had experienced

censorship. In 1978, when the Project Arts hosted *The Gay Sweatshop*, a piece

about the male gay experience, the centre was threatened with closure

(interview with author, Dublin, 2018). However, Cian felt that the backlash that

they received for the Maser mural was different. He related this not only to the

mural's public and digitally mediated form, but more explicitly to the special

stigma that surrounded abortion in Ireland (ibid; see also Rossiter, 2009; Quilty

et al, 2015). He made reference throughout the interview to the specific fear

that many people still had when it came to expressing their views about

abortion because of its long history of censorship in the Republic, and due to the

divisiveness of the 1983 national referendum to implement the Eighth

Amendment (see Smyth, 1997; Field, 2018). As discussed in the last chapter,

artists such as Siobhán Clancy experienced anxiety over potential reprisals for creating a piece of pro-choice art. For Cian, because Maser's work approached the issue in a particularly public way, it put the centre on the receiving end of a vitriolic response:

> I suppose that fear that exists [...]and that shame that exists around this particular topic or... is actually... what has informed...what has impacted on... our business, in a sense, because a state body is reaching out and censoring Maser (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018).

As previously discussed, abortion in Ireland happened clandestinely and abroad, despite its illegality, and despite the 'fear' and 'shame' (Chapters Four and Seven). It was permitted as long as it remained hidden and unspoken (Rossiter, 2009). In a similar vein, as Cian notes, art was permitted to discuss abortion so long as it did not become too visible, too public.

Several well-known Irish artists, such as Sarah Browne, Jesse Jones and Cecily Brennan, engaged with the issue of abortion in their work in recent years, including at Project Arts (see Chapter Seven). Similar to Siobhán Clancy's work with home|work.collective, the combination of the subject matter of abortion and the public form of the mural, distinguished Maser's work from gallery pieces. However, the backlash to Maser's work was far greater and I argue that this relates to the contested historical politics of urban public space in Dublin. In a way that recalled strategies used during the 1983 referendum campaign, both shortly before and immediately following the public outcry over Savita Halappanavar's death in 2012, well-funded 'pro-life' groups, including Youth Defence (see Chapter Four) and the Pro-Life Campaign Ireland (later LoveBoth), began to dominate the streets and public spaces with posters and advertisements containing evocative imagery; attempting to control public

discourse about abortion (Barry, 2015; O'Hara, 2016; 2020). Maser's mural changed this; until 2016, it appeared that only those who could afford a large advertisement campaign, such as the 'pro-life' lobby, had the ability to represent abortion through centrally placed images that dominated the urban landscape. While pro-choice activists participated in defacements, petitions and even demonstrations against the 'pro-life' monopoly over signage, I argue that Maser's mural marked an important turning point in the visual representation of the pro-choice movement within the Irish landscape, as evidenced by the response to the artwork. The transgressive creative actions by modern pro-choice activists that commissioned the work, The HunReal Issues, the artist, and Project Arts, called attention to what were considered the 'normal' geographies of public urban spaces as socially constructed.

HunReal and Maser got permission from Project Arts to paint the mural, but it was clear from the way Dublin City Council responded that the mural had broken an unwritten rule on what was and was not acceptable to paint in the street. Objections to the mural and its eventual removal by Dublin City Council (DCC), in 2016, and again by The Charities Regulator, in 2018, revealed the hegemonic powers shaping the Dublin landscape. For those who had made complaints to DCC, for the council members themselves, and for the Charities Regulator staff, abortion was still seen as something that did not belong in the streets – an issue, like many issues relating to the lives of women in Ireland, that had 'no place' in the public realm (Smyth, 2015). The mural publicly confronted those who had the power to decide what was allowable in public space, what could be put into view in public space, and the heteronormative masculinist meanings embedded in the Irish urban landscape.

The 'out of place' (Cresswell, 1996) nature of this specific mural becomes particularly evident when compared to the recent history of political murals that previously featured outside of Project Arts without censorship. Cian pointed out how the exact same wall had hosted a mural supporting the Marriage Equality Referendum in May 2015. The Marriage Equality mural was created by street artist Sums1, and part of a project led by gay activist and street artist Will St Ledger. This mural caused no controversies, nor was Project Arts asked to remove it. One can assume that very few or no complaints were sent to DCC about its presence on the streets of central Dublin. In contrast, the main argument put forth by Dublin City Council regarding Maser's mural was that it 'changed the character of the street' and, for this reason, required planning permission. For whatever reason, previous murals on the same location, such as Sums1's work, did not require planning permission (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018). The inconsistency in the way planning laws were applied in the two cases, both tied to controversial national referenda, suggested that the topic the mural dealt with, namely, repealing the constitutional amendment outlawing abortion, was the issue, not the fact that the mural changed the street's character. For Andrea Horan, one of the founders of HunReal (that commissioned the mural), the decision to remove the piece was clearly indicative of the way the government continued to silence debate about abortion: 'even if it is by the letter of the law, essentially it was a politically motivated silencing' (interview with author, Dublin 2016).

Through censoring the 'Repeal the 8th' mural, and not the previous political pieces either inside or outside of Project Arts, Dublin City Council and later the Charities Regulator, ultimately decided that visual art dealing with

abortion should remain where it is considered to be appropriate: behind closed doors, inside the art gallery, for a limited audience (cf. Kennedy, 2018). Maser's street art was considered subversive due to its highly accessible nature and possible appeal to publics that would not usually engage with more traditional art forms (Molnár, 2017). Street art asks for no permission: it leaps out of the walls and surprises people as they go about their daily routines. It forces those who pass it by to consider it. This spontaneity is critical to street artists who often disregard laws, both written and unwritten, that govern public urban space. As 'a tactic of the dispossessed' (Cresswell, 1996), street art challenges the assumed authority of government institutions who manage urban space. Street art disturbs hegemonic notions of order. Unlike other forms of art, if someone walked on the pedestrian street along Project Arts, there was little choice over whether or not one would see Maser's piece. As Cian explained:

> I think it's a major part of it... [Y]ou make a choice to go into a gallery, right? And that's the argument they have around planning permission... something like that [the mural] changes the character of the street and so therefore it needs ... to be regulated and the permissions need to be got to make sure that it falls within the guidelines that they've set (O'Brien, interview with author 2018).

Its specific location on a wall in the centre of Dublin's most valued cultural quarter (see Rains, 1999) and central tourist destination for both domestic and international visitors (Griffin et al, 2012), Temple Bar, disrupted the carefully constructed image of Irish culture that Dublin City Council wanted to project.

Similar to *The Renunciation,* discussed in Chapter Seven, the piece took the issue of abortion, something constructed as a highly stigmatised, private matter of women (Kumar et al, 2009; Smyth, 2015), and quite literally put it into the streets in an attempt to de-stigmatise it. But unlike other forms of

temporally specific public art, such as the performances of *The Renunciation*,

Maser's mural rapidly became a fixture of the Dublin landscape for two weeks

in July 2016, with people coming from all over the country to visit the mural and

interact with it in a variety of ways. As Andrea of HunReal stated: 'if it's right up

on the wall, there's no denying that it's there to talk about (Horan, interview

with author, Dublin, 2016). Even after its first removal, she explained that the

impact of the mural on the urban landscape could already be witnessed; the

mural was commemorated by tour guides, who brought tourists to the former

site of the mural to tell them the story of its removal (Horan, interview with

author, Dublin, 2016). DCC's enforcement of the mural's removal also resulted

in an enduring debate about street art and the inconsistency of planning laws in

Dublin city. These discussions have since inspired street artists, such as those

that make up the group Subset, to pursue a new controversial street art project

that highlights the issue, now known as *The Grey Area Project* (Subset, 2018).

Similar to Maser, Subset's murals defy the boundaries between what counts as

art and what counts as 'public nuisance' (Byrne, 2018) and align their work

closely with activist causes in the city. For example, the group painted a mural

accompanying the occupation of a building during the Take Back the City

housing movement in September 2018 (Archiving Irish Street Art, 2018).

Moreover, following the 'Repeal the Eighth' mural's second removal, tour

guides, as well as the general public, can still see a trace of the controversy. As

of July 2020, at the time of the final revision of this PhD, the watermelon-shaped

trace of the mural, left following its final removal in April 2018, remains on the

exterior wall of Project Arts.

Visual art, particularly street art, can be used as a powerful tool for activists: it can 'capture the hearts and minds of the broader public and come to symbolize a movement' (Rohlinger and Klein, 2012: 172). Perhaps because of the way the mural was removed from its material location, activists adopted the colours and heart as a symbolic image for the pro-choice movement. I return to the public's use of this icon in Section 8.3 in relation to the role social media and new technology played in disseminating the mural's image. In the next subsection, I first discuss the aesthetics and communicative function of the mural that engaged new publics in the abortion debate.

8.2.2. 'Throwing glitter on serious issues': Engaging New Publics

Andrea Horan of HunReal explained how one of her personal motivations for commissioning the Maser mural stemmed from the difficulty she experienced accessing traditional pro-choice activist spaces: 'there was no way for me to be vocal or to...share things or to talk about it [abortion] in a way that felt right for me*.'* (interview with author, Dublin, 2016). During the general election in February 2016, Andrea was alarmed to speak to so many women who had no idea what way to vote or what policies various parties had, particularly in relation to reproductive rights. Her experience motivated her to start The HunReal Issues, an online feminist magazine, in Summer 2016. In an attempt to engage and politicise new publics, Andrea used new media and pop culture as a means to communicate feminist ideas, specifically those relating to reproductive rights.

She recognised that there were cohorts of people who were not engaging in the debate over the Eighth Amendment, particularly young women and men (interview with author, Dublin 2016). With a background in communications,

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her goal was to find new ways to speak to them, engage with them, and mobilise them. Andrea explained that both her website and her motivations for collaborating on the mural were about making feminism 'accessible and glam' (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). 'Glam' here was not about making feminism more palatable or more 'acceptable', rather she understood HunReal's projects, including the mural, as trying to speak with a different voice to a different audience, to 'talk to the unconverted' (Horan, interview with author, 2016). Andrea echoes sentiments expressed by several feminist scholars, who state that social media and the Internet may serve as important pedagogical tools which help raise awareness and introduce complex feminist concepts to publics who may have previously been unable to access, articulate or engage with feminist theory (see Guillard, 2016; Zimmerman, 2017; Chapter Two).

Andrea described how HunReal used popular culture to communicate socially and politically relevant topics by 'throwing glitter on serious issues' (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). She hoped to reach new publics through popular forms of communication, through mass media, fashion, and art. Such strategies are not new, according to co-founder of popular feminist publication, Bitch Magazine, Andi Zeisler. She states that pop culture has been used for decades to translate feminist ideas, issues, and concepts into 'everyday language' to make them more relatable (Zeisler, 2009). HunReal collaborated with Irish celebrities like model Vogue Williams to influential gay rights activist and 'Queen of Ireland' Panti Bliss (see Horgan, 2015) in advocating for abortion rights. In the immediate run-up to the referendum, Andrea also set up a podcast with journalist Una Mullally called *Don't Stop Repealin'* (Horan and Mullally, 2018) to encourage people to get involved in canvassing and campaign to repeal

the Eighth. Through this, she leveraged pop culture and new media to provide

people outside of typical political and activist communities with a variety of

routes into the debate about reproductive rights in Ireland -- to give them a

'voice' or a way to get involved. Rather than joining up with an existing pro-

choice group, she felt there was a need for a variety of approaches and voices to

attract new people:

> more different voices are better than one louder voice, because
> I think one louder voice makes people hear something twice as
> hard, the same people. Whereas different voices reach different
> audiences (interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

For Andrea, the most important aspect of any content, artwork or other

project that HunReal collaborated on was that it had to be 'positive'; to distance

it from the dark imagery, scaremongering and gore that was the hallmark of

'pro-life' ads and posters (interview with author, Dublin, 2016; see also

Chapters Four and Seven). Therefore, she wanted the mural to contribute

towards destigmatising abortion in Ireland: 'if you're talking about an abortion

mural, then it makes it easier to say the word in public as well' (interview with

author, Dublin, 2018). Recognising how abortion can be an emotionally delicate

topic for many, Maser's colourful, playful approach to issues of social concern

matched Andrea's philosophy. Brightly coloured murals featuring decorative

lettering are Maser's trademark. The Repeal mural was also not Maser's first

foray into commenting on political matters in his work. In 2009 and 2010 he

created a number of murals that commented on the financial crisis (see

Underware, 2012) and in 2012 he collaborated with fellow street artist Will St

Ledger on the Famine and Byrne Ladies outside the Bernard Shaw pub in

Dublin, a piece which commented on the uneven effects of the economic recession on the Irish population (Loeffler, 2012).

It is clear from the style of the mural itself what Andrea meant by 'positive'. While the piece is striking, it is a bright, cheerful work of art: a colourful mural consisting of a bright red 'cartoon-style' heart with a white border on a blue background with 'Repeal the 8th' written across it in white. It is a simple, straightforward piece which requires very little visual analysis in order to unpack its message, which is self-evident in the text 'Repeal the 8th'. The image of the heart features repeatedly in Maser's various murals, however Antosik-Parsons (2019) describes it in the context of the Repeal mural as symbolising 'love in relation to bodily autonomy' (p. 15). This echoes what both Andrea and Cian stated: that the piece was also about expressing solidarity and understanding to those seeking abortions: 'it was about care and it was about love and it was about cherishing equality' (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018).

Cian, who has been an art curator and director of Project Arts for 7 years, stated that one of the most important aspects of the mural was its simplicity and positivity. For him this was key to its ability to communicate what is so often a complicated issue in such an accessible way (interview with author, Dublin, 2018). In this way, the mural can be understood as an 'urban form of popular communication' (Christensen and Thor, 2017) and a piece of street art that creates 'moments of learning' (Schuermans et al, 2012). It was about raising awareness of Ireland's restrictive abortion laws in a way that could engage multiple publics, 'even the street artist lads who follow Maser' (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Pieces of street art, then, become

'communicative events' (Christensen and Thor, 2017: 594), not only through the specific message a piece may convey (in this case, 'Repeal the 8th') but also what they reveal about power, politics and space. This develops my earlier points about the politics of public urban space and who has the authority to shape it; what behaviours (and types of art) are understood as acceptable and which ones are 'out of place' (Cresswell, 1996). In the digital age, however, the communicative potential of street art is no longer limited to the streetscape, as also discussed in Chapter Five. In the next section, I examine how the hybrid nature of the mural encouraged participation, engagement, and extended the life and impact of the piece beyond its immediate location.

8.3. 'You Can't Paint Over an Issue': Engagement and Participation through Hybrid Street Art

As argued in Chapters Two and Five, I understand public space as materially and digitally 'hybrid'. An important motivation behind the Maser mural was to bring the debate on abortion to new publics, mobilise them, and do so through public spaces. The artwork's message was accessible to both those at the location passing through Temple Bar and those who experienced the work digitally, which strategically broadened the mural's reach beyond its immediate physical context. Its hybrid digitally mediated and material nature, therefore, contributes to my earlier point about making 'feminism accessible' (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Public art is public because of its location outside of the gallery and because of its impact on the 'public sphere': 'the arenas where private individuals come together -- "as a public" – to discuss matters of mutual concern' (Radice 2018: 57). In this case, the 'publicness' of the mural was related to its merged material and digital existence.

In this section, then, I discuss the effects of the mural's strategic combination of social media and artivism. First, I examine how those collaborating on the Maser mural combined street art, activism, and new technologies to transform viewers into co-producers (after Zebracki, 2017). Audiences resisted the mural's removal by recreating and transforming the artwork through new material and digital forms that existed in multiple space-times. I then consider how social media allowed users to take ownership of their transformed works, changing the mural from an artistic object to a symbol of collective identity. Taken together, activists created feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces for the pro-choice movement that provided group consciousness, solidarity, and a sense of belonging.

8.3.1. 'Taking ownership': Activist Street Art, Digital Engagement and Participation

Vilar (2019) points out how contemporary artists have tried to overcome the 'problems of artistic circulation' by using street art, video, performance, and digital art 'not only to represent reality, but to engage in transformations, mobilizing and inspiring the viewer' (p. 3). Social media extends the potential of street art by empowering audiences to have a voice, either individually or collectively, to stimulate social change (cf. Frostig, 2011). As Molnár (2016) explains, the Internet and new technology have significantly changed the way publics interact with street art. She highlights the significant growth in the popularity of street art emerging alongside the expansion of Web 2.0 and the development of Smartphone devices, noting the latter's built-in cameras as being particularly salient (ibid). Up until this point, people encountered this form of public art often 'not intentionally but by chance alone' (ibid: 401), which

meant they could only really enjoy street art on a temporary basis in limited venues.

Maser's mural was more than political street art: it drew people into the creative process and mobilised them to engage in direct action. The artwork intentionally made use of social media engagement, embraced participation, and encouraged the reproduction of the piece as part of political campaigning. Moreover, the 'publicness' of Maser's mural was initially tied to both its physical location in the street and to its digital image online, enabling users to discuss the concerns the artwork raised, in particular abortion access, through a range of public spaces. This was possible because the artist originally conceived of the mural as a digital image for The HunReal Issues' website (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Through removing copyright and allowing counterpublics to re-create, adapt and alter his image, Maser let go of his claim to ownership over the piece. This action allowed people to engage with the artwork and re-produce it in both digital and material forms. In the six months coming up to the referendum the piece was transformed into multiple configurations by activists. Versions of the mural were painted on people's nails, adorned T-shirts and high-vis vests worn by people canvassing in different neighbourhoods and tattooed onto people's bodies. The mural adorned stickers, banners, profile pictures, doughnuts, and was even made into Christmas baubles. A young woman at an Amnesty international Repeal the Eighth direct action I attended dressed up as the mural, quite literally embodying its message, as illustrated in Figure 8.2.

Pro-choice activists used the painted/digital mural to re-create their own works in multiple material and digital forms, which were circulated and

shared, and inspired other new works. Many of these re-created pieces can still be viewed on Maser's public Instagram account, @maserart. The artist often shared pictures featuring the work of people who re-used the mural's image, from a giant projected version of the mural created by Generic People in Cork to a small embroidered 'Repeal' heart sewn on to a young woman's T-shirt or to trade union UNITE's recreation of the mural on their headquarters, as illustrated in Figure 8.4. The HunReal Issues also made T-shirts, badges and jumpers featuring the mural's image, the profits for which went directly into funding for the repeal campaign. Through reproducing the mural digitally and on bodies, the piece became mobile, moving beyond its original material location and temporality. For example, Figure 8.5 shows a young pro-choice activist in rural Ireland wearing one of The HunReal Issue's jumpers in 2018, just weeks prior to the referendum.

Andrea and Maser understood the process through which people adopted and re-created the mural as empowering because it allowed them 'to feel part of something' (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Images of the murals' reproduction that featured on the artist's Instagram account were often accompanied by the caption 'taking ownership' (@maserart, 2016), showing his support for adaptations of his mural. This was one of the central motivations behind the piece: encouraging people to interact with a piece as they wish, or as Maser stated 'with public art people will take ownership of it and the message will spread. And it did' (Maser quoted in Duffy 2016). Thus, as a form of street artivism, the mural specifically encouraged the co-creation of artistic pieces and blurred the boundaries between artist and audience/user.

What Andrea and Maser might not have expected was that the 'Repeal the 8th' heart became a symbol of collective identification for the Irish pro-choice movement. Cian felt it was Andrea's mastery of social media and her role as a 'social media influencer' that played such a critical role in the mural's popularity (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018). As a visible icon of the pro-choice movement in public spaces online, on people's bodies in the streets, and on walls, car bumpers and banners all over the Republic and beyond, perhaps not surprisingly, the digitally mediated and copyright-free image of the mural also resulted in somewhat less-desirable versions of the piece. The artwork could now be adapted and repurposed by anyone, even by those who clearly did not agree with the mural's original pro-choice message. For example, in 2016, a 'pro-life' website called Life News hosted a version of the mural on its website which featured the words 'Abortion Stops a Beating Heart' where the words 'Repeal the 8th' normally appeared (Life News, 2016). Surrendering copyright mostly encouraged pro-choice participation, but this small example highlights how digital mediation can also lead to unforeseen manipulation of the artwork's original message. This example can be interpreted as a 'misuse' of digitally mediated art, where publics may adapt images beyond their original meaning or context (Zebracki and Luger, 2019).

The public nature of Maser's piece allowed collaborators and pro-choice activists to digitally engage and mobilise people, but it also resulted in increased scrutiny by state agencies, as outlined in Section 8.2. Yet by encouraging accessibility and participation through its digital qualities, the Repeal the 8th mural enabled the artistic team and multiple publics to challenge official attempts at censorship. In the next section, I show how digital practice

combined with creative practice led to the mobilisation of new publics, ultimately helping the mural resist censorship.

8.3.2. 'Making feminism accessible': Hybrid Forms of Resistance

One of the innovative qualities of digitally networked public art is that it allows a piece to 'live on' digitally once its material form has been removed (Zebracki, 2017). Digital interactions have also become intertwined with temporary material artworks which are not necessarily an intentional part of the artwork as conceived of by the artist (ibid; Zebracki and Luger, 2019; see Chapter Two). I reveal how the feminist emancipatory potential of hybrid street artivism, evidenced by the 'Repeal the 8th' mural, expands research into the activist potential of street art because it challenged ideas of hierarchy, the public/private divide, and the digital/material.

Rather than silencing the pro-choice movement, the mural's removal created a hybrid counterpublic space for further debate about abortion rights. One of the first public acts of defiance against the censorship of the mural appeared on the day of its first removal, on 25 July 2016. The words 'Repeal 8th' appeared in the window of a building opposite the site of the mural (Brophy, 2016). At the same time, Maser made the mural copyright-free and encouraged people to reproduce the image in multiple forms as an act of resistance against its removal (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Within a matter of hours, people began to change their Twitter and Facebook profile photos to images of the mural. A 'twibbon', or digital badge, of the mural was created and circulated for use on both Facebook and Twitter, as can be seen in Figure 8.3. Twibbons are commonly attached to people's profile pictures as a way of displaying a sense of 'collective identification' and solidarity with protest

movements (Gerbaudo, 2015), in this case the pro-choice movement protesting

censorship. These digital actions also supported embodied in-situ protest. The

very next day, a group of activists held a demonstration at the former site of the

mural on 26 July, painting themselves blue and holding up printed images of the

mural (Devine, 2016). Here, social media complimented 'existing forms of face-

to-face gatherings (rather than substituting for them)', leading to 'the creation

of new forms of proximity and face-to-face interaction' (Gerbaudo, 2012: 13).

For Andrea, the mural helped people who may not have self-identified as

activists become politically active in the pro-choice campaign in Ireland in

another way. After the removal(s) of the mural in the city centre, activists'

versions of the work went viral. The piece provided them with something

tangible that they could rally around within the wider struggle for reproductive

rights. She argued that:

> people need smaller things that they can achieve and get angry
> about. So, the mural coming down, people felt like they could
> change that and that it could go back up, so it mobilised people
> (Horan, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

People's remaking and recirculating of the iconic image in hybrid counterpublic

spaces gave activists, both new and experienced, a rallying point and a sense of

collective identity, as witnessed by the multiple ways in which activists claimed

the mural as their own.

As social media was an inseparable aspect of the mural from the

beginning, it was one of the reasons that, as Cian pointed out, the mural went

'far and wide' (interview with author, Dublin, 2018). The mobility of the iconic

heart artwork became evident in the way the piece was adopted as a collective

protest symbol by the Irish diaspora. Its image was reproduced in multiple

locations beyond national borders. For example, as part of Repeal Global's, a

network of Irish pro-choice activists living abroad, solidarity demonstrations

with the March for Choice in 2016, activists reproduced the image on their

banners in cities such as Glasgow, Montreal, and Berlin. Downloading the image

from Maser's website and tracing it on to banners and signs made this possible.

Figure 8.6. shows a banner featuring the image of Maser's mural held up by

activists at the March for Choice solidarity demonstrations in Berlin,

Templehofer Feld, in September 2016. Other murals also appeared which were

clearly influenced by Maser's work, for example a pro-choice mural featuring a

heart with the words 'Solidarity with Irish Women' appeared in Porto, Portugal

in 2017. The image of the mural in Porto, re-tweeted by the Abortion Rights

Campaign, turned out to be painted by Berriblue, a Polish-Irish artist, who

created the piece originally as a banner for Porto's Repeal Global solidarity

demo in 2016 (@repealglobal, 24 September 2016; @freesafelegal, 11 April

2017).

Technology played another significant role in defying the censorship

imposed upon the 'Repeal the 8th' mural. Following its initial removal in 2016,

Andrea wanted to get it back up as soon as possible in any way, shape, or form

so that it could continue to serve as a source of solidarity with those accessing

abortion services. While they could not get the mural back up physically until

2018, they came up with an innovative substitute: an Augmented Reality (AR)

version of the mural that people could access with their Smartphones (Horan,

interview with author, Dublin, 2016). Placing a QR code, or barcode people scan

with their phone, on the wall where the mural originally stood, allowed people

to click on a link and then hold their phones up to the code. The mural would then re-appear on the wall once viewed through their phone. This innovative method of returning the mural to the wall was literally and figuratively a merging of digital and material space. I interpret it also as a form of 'screenic seeing', what Heidi Rae Cooley (2004) defines as a 'material experience of vision' where 'hands, eyes, screen, and surroundings interact and blend in syncopated fashion.' (p. 145). People could be physically present in the place where the mural once stood, with their attention split between the physical wall and the screen of their Smartphone, as they experienced the virtual mural in situ. Screenic seeing is an embodied experience of using technology that recalls earlier scholars' arguments, such as Haraway (1991) and Hayles (2006), urging us to consider the more fluid relations between the body, technology, and art, as discussed in Chapter Two.

These examples illustrate how the combination of digital and artistic practice can 'increase speed, scale and tenor of reactions to and against an artwork' (Zebracki and Luger, 2019: 900). Reactions to Maser's artwork were both positive and negative. Digital practices allowed the piece to overcome censorship and mobilised new publics, yet the use of social media was arguably one of the reasons that the mural, and Project Arts, underwent such intense scrutiny. Andrea's use of social media in popularising the 'Repeal the 8th' mural both before and after its removal(s) drew significant attention to the Centre's role in hosting the mural, meaning that Project Arts received the bulk of criticism. Cian expressed how the first time the mural had gone up he'd simply not been prepared for the backlash:

in the wake of the first time we did the mural I personally
really struggled with the levels of abuse … Project got some,
but I really … [received negative responses] personally. It was
very difficult. And … I was more prepared for that the second
time around, so it didn't bother me as much. But there was a
certain level of vitriol that comes at … that came at me, me and
the institution' (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

Social media, therefore, created both representation for the pro-choice

movement on multiple scales, but also resulted in contestation to its claims to

public space. On one hand it helped spread the mural's message far and wide

and opened it up to participation, but on the other hand it also meant that the

centre, and Cian personally, became subject to critique and harassment. This

point extends arguments outlined in Chapter Two and revisited in Chapter

Seven: social media can be simultaneously emancipatory but also expose

activists to significant risk.

Cian mentioned that this was the first time the centre had ever exhibited

a piece of work that so strategically used social media (O'Brien, interview with

author, Dublin, 2016). The experience made Cian realise the power of digital

practice. As a result, he was better able to prepare himself when the mural went

back up and was even able to harness its potential 'the second time around' to

make a political point about censorship of the arts. When the Charities

Regulator ordered the second removal of the mural just a few weeks before the

referendum in April 2018, the Centre decided that, rather than challenge the

decision in court, they would present their defence as an artistic act of 'defiant

compliance' (O'Brien, 2018). With support of the artist, they turned the mural

and its removal into a public performance piece that would be broadcast via

social media. Project Arts felt that it would be more beneficial for the campaign,

and for the Irish art world in general, if they brought the debate about artistic

censorship into the public realm.

> We [at Project Arts] don't have the legal resources – the
> financial resources – to engage in a lengthy legal battle. And
> actually what we do have is the ability to communicate to a
> wide base of people... and by staging the painting over as we
> did (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018).

Before a crowd of people who had gathered to protest the mural's removal on

23 April 2018, Cian stated that 'through its absence this political artwork lives

on in the thousands of people who have taken its heart into theirs. You can paint

over a mural, but you can't paint over an issue' (O'Brien, 2018). Cameras rolled,

and both staff from the centre and members of the public tweeted and shared

images and videos of the removal (Holland, 2018). For Cian:

> It was performance art. We staged it on purpose because it had
> a much greater reaction. A much greater impact and ultimately
> the same conversation will happen, but it will happen in public
> now. So, it means that it won't be us on our own battling ... and
> engaging in this conversation. Now there's multiple agencies
> and multiple organisations involved at a very high government
> level but also at a kind of grassroots, sectoral level as well,
> which is really important (O'Brien, interview with author,
> Dublin 2018).

After finishing the speech, Cian, in a blue jumper, the same shade as that used in

the mural, lifted up a paint roller and painted over most of the mural, as seen in

image 8.7. Project Arts' defiant performance again highlighted the distinctly

hybrid nature of the mural, combining both street art and embodied public

performance art with digital practice.

 The impact of this action resonated within the chambers of institutional

power. The media reported that Taoiseach Leo Varadkar repeated the words

Cian uttered during Project's act of 'defiant compliance': 'while you can paint over a mural you certainly can't paint over an issue' (quoted in Halloran, 2018). As Cian explained, this was not the only instance in which the piece was mentioned on the Dáil floor: 'it was raised by Labour ... it was raised by Ruth Coppinger [People Before Profit TD]' (O'Brien, interview with author, Dublin, 2018). Through the second attempt at censorship and the performance defying it, the mural's activist and political potential exceeded even its own collaborators' expectations – not only mobilising pro-choice activists, artists, and members of the public around its defence and message, but also provoking a response from politicians. By the time Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced the referendum date, the Yes campaign had claimed the mural as one of its symbols. Regional branches of Together For Yes, the official civil society campaign for a Yes vote, were using the image of the mural on their literature, posters, T-shirts, and social media outlets.

The material mural was an important feminist activist intervention in public space, but technology and the digital mediation of the piece played a significant role. Social media therefore made the mural mobile, bringing its message beyond a street in Temple Bar to new audiences, and invited engagement. Audiences became active agents of the mural's artistic production. The result – multiple material and digital forms – ultimately helped the mural resist its own physical removal through its extended lifespan in public (hybrid) space.

8.4. Conclusion

Maser's mural was an overtly political piece of street artivism which, through its bright colourful style, its public location, and its collaborators' strategic use of

social media, sought to make the topic of abortion in Ireland unashamedly visible in the material/digital public realm. In this chapter, I argued that the removal(s) of Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural reflected the Irish state's history of censoring art about the lives, and particularly sexuality, of women, and revealed the contested nature of public urban space in Dublin. The topic of abortion was judged to be 'out of place' in particular spatial contexts by public bodies, including Dublin City Planning and The Charities Regulator. Government authorities involved themselves in discussions about what constitutes art and what topics it can approach, as well as where the most 'suitable' place for art, especially political art, is: the gallery, not the street. State agencies may have been successful in removing the mural from its physical location in Temple Bar twice, but the mural's hybrid presence in public space empowered people to 'take ownership', to use Maser's words.

I have argued that street artivism, a form of socially mediated public art, enabled activists to create hybrid counterpublic spaces through which artist-activists expanded the discursive realm. Social media and digital technologies transformed the possibilities of the mural as street art by creating other expressions of its materiality and developing new ways for audiences to engage with artivism. The circulation of the mural in hybrid counterpublic spaces opened up avenues through which activists engaged with their political representatives in new and creative ways. By re-producing the mural in multiple forms, activists transformed their rights to be present in public spaces through their significant acts of resistance against censorship and in support of reproductive rights. The hybrid and participatory nature of the artwork had significant effects. Maser's street artivism affected political discussions, reached

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beyond the 'usual' activist and academic circles, and also brought new audiences into public debates about controversial topics by offering a voice to people who may otherwise have felt they could not engage with political issues. Evidenced by the sheer breadth of responses to the artwork, it can be considered a moment of 'critical awakening' (cf. Tunali, 2018) for the Irish public.

Scholarship around the broader political potentialities of such 'empowering' interactions and the geographies of digitally mediated public artivism remain scarce (but see Zebracki and Luger, 2019). Therefore, this research provides an important empirical case study that adds to existing knowledge about the possibilities and digital geographies of public art. Projects such as Maser's pose new questions about the possibilities of public participation in advancing reproductive rights. Through digital practice 'art can be "stretched"' (Zebracki and Luger, 2019: 890) to extend engagement beyond the site-specific context of a piece. As evidenced through Maser's mural, new audiences were welcomed into the creative process and made their own artworks, even if these audience/users/collaborators may not have considered themselves artists or producers of art, and/or otherwise self-identified as activists. The process of downloading and creating unique pieces of pro-choice artivist work, be it a T-shirt, tattoo, sticker or badge, meant that activists, digital 'users', and new publics were transformed into politicised subjects, engaged in a national debate.

All of these qualities helped to transform the 'Repeal the 8th' mural from a painted artwork and digital image to become a symbol of the pro-choice movement in Ireland. This significant piece of feminist street art challenged the

hegemonic masculinist meanings assumed to structure the use of urban

landscapes in Dublin. In a country where women's bodies have been

systematically controlled and regulated by the state, artistic projects such as

Maser's mural are powerful works that transformed dominant power structures

shaping the meaning of Irish public spaces at multiple scales.

Figure 8.1. The mural in July 2016, Temple Bar, Dublin, Ireland. Source: Author, 2016.

Figure 8.2. A young woman dresses as the Repeal mural at an Amnesty International pro-choice direct action, May 2018. Source: Author, 2018.

Figure 8.3. Twibbon of the Maser mural as applied to author's Facebook profile photo. Source: Author, 2016.
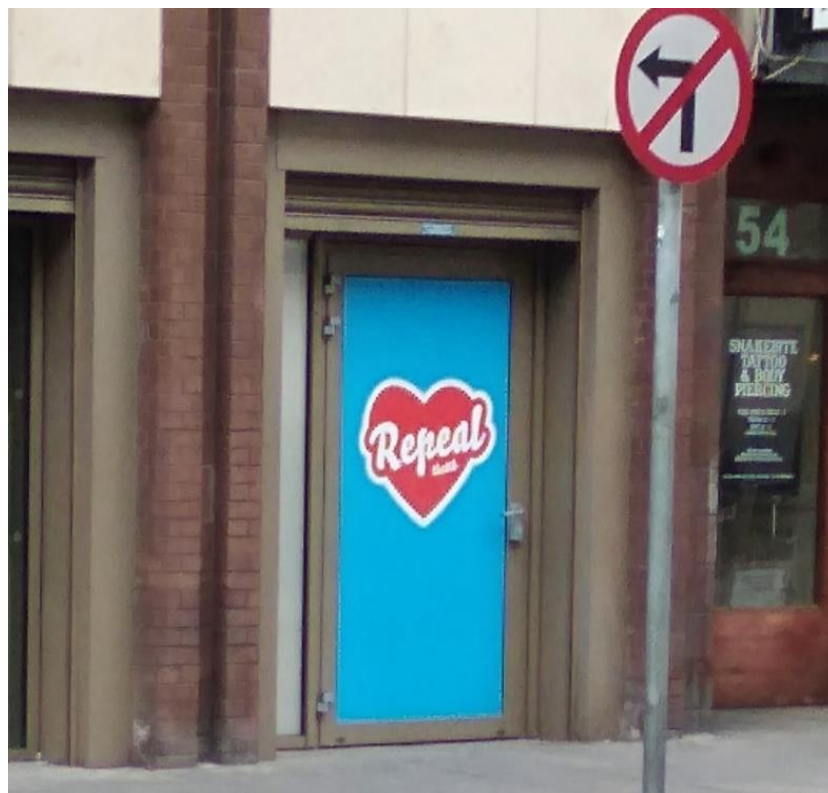
Figure 8.4. The 'Repeal the 8th' mural re-created on the front door of UNITE Trade Union, Middle Abbey Street, Dublin. Source: Author, 2016.

Figure 8.5. A young woman wears Maser's mural in rural Ireland. Source: Ní Bheoláin, 2018 (with permission).

Figure 8.6. Berlin Ireland Pro-Choice Solidarity/Repeal Global 2016 demo, Berlin: Source Nate Eileen Tjoeng (with permission).

Figure 8.7. 'Defiant Compliance': Cian O'Brien, director of Project Arts, paints over the Maser mural in April, 2018. Source: O'Malley (with permission).

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

9.1. Introduction

This PhD thesis offers a unique hybrid digital-spatial perspective that provides
insights into the intricacies of modern feminist activisms that call attention to
Violence Against Women in European cities. My feminist geographical approach
examined 'everyday' forms of VAW, namely street harassment and obstetric
violence, and feminist activisms in Berlin and Dublin from 2015 to 2018,
situating them within the particular political, social and physical contexts of
Germany and Ireland. I explored how activists created hybrid feminist
counterpublic spaces that communicated women's experiences, provided care
and support, and resulted in alternative understandings of the city. My research
provides new concepts and a unique hybrid digital-spatial perspective that will
be of interest to feminist and urban geographers, feminist historians and
sociologists, and media studies and public art scholars.

By way of concluding this dissertation, in this chapter, I identify the
distinct theoretical and empirical contributions of my research, reflect upon the
challenges of this study, and identify possible future avenues of research. In
Section 9.2, I return to my research aims and objectives in order to explore
some of the main theoretical and methodological contributions resulting from
my feminist geographical approach. In addition to indicating the conceptual
benefits of using a feminist geographical framework to analyse everyday forms
of VAW, I reflect on the richness of my empirical research, which demonstrated
multiple activist responses to VAW challenging the control of women's bodies in

the specific contexts of Berlin and Dublin. In section 9.3, I reflect on what I learned from the feminist activists I researched, their tactics and about confronting VAW in these two cities. This section therefore considers additional empirical and theoretical contributions of the PhD thesis within existing geographical and multidisciplinary research on feminist activisms, VAW, digital practice and public artivism. In Section 9.4, I conclude by reflecting upon the limitations of my PhD thesis and outline potential avenues for further research.

9.2. Violence against Women, Feminist Activisms and Artivist Hybrid Interventions

The main aim of this PhD was to analyse geographies of feminist activisms that call attention to everyday forms of VAW in the European capital cities of Berlin and Dublin. This aim was achieved through three research objectives: to develop a geographical approach to understand everyday VAW; to examine feminist activisms confronting this violence; to explore the hybrid digital, embodied and place-based interventions of activists/artivists and their effects across scales. This section now details each research objective and how my feminist geographical framework and original empirical research contributes to contemporary thinking within feminist geography and beyond.

9.2.1 Geographical Approaches to Violence Against Women

This thesis responds to recent calls by geographers for more research into forms of violence women experience daily (Brickell and Maddrell, 2016) that are often deemed 'acceptable' (Kelly, 1988) or 'apolitical' (Pain, 2014). I sought to avoid the hierarchisation of VAW which obscures forms of everyday violence which contribute to environments in which other violent actions are deemed

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'tolerable' (Tyner, 2012). Instead, by focusing on the geotemporal contexts de-limiting what female bodies were acceptable in Germany and Ireland (Chapters Two and Four), I highlighted the 'common underlying character' (Kelly, 1988) of all forms of violence as forms of social, political, and spatial control. Such continuum thinking (ibid) also helps to move us beyond the public-private divide which has rendered multiple forms of violence invisible (Brickell and Maddrell, 2016).

Highlighting and problematising particular forms of violence that women experience daily is a vital component in ending all forms of VAW (Tyner, 2016). Street harassment is, to a certain extent, accepted as the reality of being a woman and living in the city (Gardner, 1993; Kearl, 2010). As a routine form of violence, it is often dismissed as trivial, despite the impact it has on how women experience and move through the city (Koskela, 1997; Laniya, 2005; Fileborn & Gray, 2017). Meanwhile, obstetric violence shapes birthing experiences in the spaces where people expect to receive care (Sadler et al, 2016; Kukura et al, 2018; Lévesque et al, 2018). Reproductive coercion and control within medical settings have been maintained through attitudes towards, and representations of, pregnancy which ignore the pregnant subject's embodied experience and prioritise the foetus (Morgan and Michaels, 1999; Young, 2005). As a result, the birthing experience for many women is one in which their bodily autonomy is routinely overlooked, creating a unique stigma for those who wish to terminate their pregnancies (Young, 2005; Kumar et al, 2009).

Both street harassment and obstetric violence remain under-researched by geographers, quite possibly because their seriousness is minimised or

trivialised more broadly (see Chapter Four). And yet these forms of violence

continue to pervade a range of social spaces and create barriers to women's full

political and social participation (UN General Secretary, 2006). Through

providing a geographical approach to analysing these two forms of everyday

violence, which appear unrelated, my research has illustrated how women's

bodies continue to be tightly observed, controlled, and regulated across a range

of spaces, be that by individual men in the streets (through street harassment)

or by state actors in maternity wards (through obstetric violence). As artivist

Siobhán Clancy explained:

> '[W]e have had to fight. We have had to fight to fend people off
> from pinching our arses sometimes, and we've had to fight
> when to control when we become pregnant or how we give
> birth' (Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016).

My research therefore advances new ways of thinking about everyday violence

through drawing upon activists and artivists own conceptualisations of, and

discussions about, their violent experiences that focus on the body and how

female bodies have been controlled and disciplined in particular contexts.

The assumed 'normality' of these two specific forms of violence is directly

related to behavioural expectations that shape the very locations in which they

occur. For example, Berlin activists who mobilised around street harassment

expressed how this form of violence was such a common experience to them as

they moved through the city, that it went practically unnoticed until they gained

access to the language and discussions that problematised it (see Chapter Five).

Meanwhile in Ireland, the abuse and ostracisation of women in crisis pregnancy

situations became so commonplace that it resulted in its own distinct

geography of mobility/immobility embodied by the abortion trail (see Chapter Seven). It is through defying the geographies of fear and shame projected onto women's bodies that activists and artivists confronted the daily manifestations of VAW and the normalisation of attitudes that enable violence across a range of spaces, as I move to discuss in the next section.

9.2.2 Confronting VAW in Place: Feminist Activisms

Whereas women's emotional geographies of fear (Valentine, 1989; Pain, 1991) and geographies of shame (Olund, 2020) may have limited women's participation and mobility within the city, these geographies did not go uncontested. Feminist activists resisted local manifestations of violent spatial control through re-mapping, re-telling and re-imagining public urban space. The particular forms of violence that groups and projects addressed, and the specific ways they confronted them during the period of my research, reflected the priorities of activists and artivists and the unique socio-political contexts in which feminisms emerged. I therefore rejected homogenising chronological wave models of feminisms that label modern day feminist activisms as 'fourth wave' and primarily reflect the limited experiences of a selective version of Western Anglo-American feminism. I instead drew inspiration from transnational feminist scholars who have long problematised the 'Western' notion of progressive time encapsulated by wave theory (Fernandes, 2010) and even questioned 'Western' as a coherent label (Kaplan et al, 1999; 2013; Mohanty, 2003; Swarr and Nagar, 2010). These feminist scholars have argued instead for an examination of cross-cultural feminist work that takes account of 'the micropolitics of context, subjectivity, and struggle, as well as to the

macropolitics of global economic and political systems and processes'
(Mohanty, 2003: 501).

Geographers, who understand both space and social relations as processual (Massey, 2005) are well-positioned to draw out how feminisms are made and remade within specific places at specific times. Therefore, as a major theoretical contribution of the PhD, I utilised a geotemporal approach, which drew on the work of queer geographers Mizielińska and Kulpa (2011). I adapted their geotemporal lens used in their analysis of LGBTQ activisms in CEE to explore how feminist activist groups and initiatives in two 'Western' states, Germany and Ireland, responded to a complex variety of social and political factors at multiple scales. Extending Mizielińska and Kulpa's arguments (2011), I contributed to troubling conceptualisations of 'Western' activism as homogenous by also asking: 'where is "West"?' (ibid: 19).

In Chapters Two and Four, I outlined how feminist activisms vary over time and across space within Western European nation-states, using secondary literatures about anti-VAW feminist activist groups and projects in Germany and Ireland as evidence. I demonstrated how neither Germany nor Ireland fit the normative ideal of inclusive Western democracies that claim to have equal rights for all citizens, regardless of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, or nationality. Instead, I drew attention to the problematic national narratives, legislation, forms of censorship, and media stereotypes that normalised and excused violence against women and, in the case of Germany, linked VAW to unwanted 'Others' through racist stereotypes about who experiences and carries out violence. My geographical critique of a 'fourth wave' of feminist activisms in Chapter Two outlined instead the distinct trajectories and

spatialities of feminist activisms emerging at the confluence of unique historical, social, and geopolitical contexts in Germany and Ireland. Moreover, the activisms I analysed in this PhD thesis ultimately demonstrated how feminist activists resisted 'global logics' and engaged 'in politics that are actually very rooted in their specific social, economic and cultural locations' (Harcourt and Escobar, 2002: 13).

This contextual sensitivity is central to the methodological contribution this PhD thesis makes. Recognising the complexity of feminist activisms in their unique socio-political environments led to the organic development of a feminist methodological approach with more flexibility. I had initially intended to implement the same Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) approach (Reid and Frisby, 2006; Langan and Morton, 2009) across case studies. However, responding to the reality of carrying out research with artists and activists in different places meant that I had to review and adapt my methodological goals. I follow McArdle (2018) in recognising how methods may need to respond to the 'alternate timescales of activists' and artists' lives' (p. 306). If my research was to truly take the (feminist) politics of place seriously (Swarr and Nagar, 2010), then my research approach would have to be more sensitive to the contexts in which activists were working. I developed what can be termed (following Browne et al., 2017) a transnational feminist research design which re-worked methods to suit the specific contexts and requirements of feminist activists, artivists and projects. The specific methods I used embraced flexibility rather than enforcing 'comparative sameness' through using the same methods across different case studies (Browne et al, 2017). I considered both the unique rhythms of activists and artists lives, contextual

specificity, and feminist ethics to devise a more holistic feminist research approach. Treating activists as experts in their own right, my methods emerged to meet their needs and requirements, reflecting the ever-shifting geographies of feminist activism in both Berlin and Dublin. I return to activists' expert insights in Section 9.3.

9.2.3. Feminist Hybrid Digital, Embodied and Place-based Interventions and Effects

My transnational and geotemporal feminist approach supported my third, perhaps central, research objective: exploring the similarities and particularities of the hybrid digital, embodied and place-based tactics created by activists to confront VAW, support women and realise new possibilities in the cities where they live. The spatio-temporal variations of hybrid counterpublic spaces are evident throughout this PhD, from selecting and implementing my choice of research design, to the analysis that constitutes each empirical chapter. Findings from my three major case studies allowed me to document similarities and divergences in how activists generated digital, embodied and place-based artistic initiatives, while my methodology responded to the shifting nature of different groups/projects in each city. Activists challenged expectations of fearful (Berlin) and shameful (Dublin) women; acknowledged their experiences in ways that were healing and mobilised action; enabled forms of mutual care and support; and empowered their alternative urban feminist spatial imaginaries. In both cities, activists combined digital technology with creative practices in material locations, empowered activists within their communities, and provided the potential to engage in

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international acts of solidarity. Their work demonstrated the co-constitutive qualities of digital, material, and emotional geographies.

These empirical findings led me to revisit the existing literature, as no single concept captured the complexity and hybridity of their work. A hybrid geographical approach emphasises the spatio-digital-embodied aspects of modern-day feminist activisms by paying attention to discursive, performative and material practices. I developed the concept of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces from a synthesis of relevant scholarly writings on subaltern feminist counterpublics (Fraser, 1990; 2014a), new media and the creation of digital feminist counterpublic spheres (Salter 2013; Wånggren 2016; Rúdólfsdóttir and Jóhannsdóttir, 2018), understandings of the impact of Web 2.0 on public urban space, embodiment and art (De Souza e Silva, 2006; Zebracki and Luger, 2019), and feminist writings on hybridity (Haraway, 1985; 1991; Hayles, 2006). My concept of feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces thus refocuses recent feminist scholarly engagement on digital feminist activism and the theory of counterpublics by considering the material and embodied nature of digital practice. My research therefore is crucial in understanding how the Internet can provide spaces of consciousness raising, support and justice traditionally denied to women when they seek redress through the criminal justice system.

Feminists may share information and tactics more rapidly than before through new digital media, producing new forms of knowledge, activist possibilities, as well as forms of solidarity. However, my geographical approach highlights the heterogeneity of feminist activisms and their spatial strategies. The different types of hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces that emerged were determined by their particular sociocultural-political contexts, the specific

struggles of activists in place, resources and the influence of transnational feminist political networks and campaigns whose members may be connected to these activists relationally.

In Berlin, activists mobilised around forms of sexual harassment (Chapters Five and Six). H!Berlin activists specifically confronted the lack of words, legal discourse for, and general awareness about street harassment, by illuminating the widespread nature of this everyday form of VAW in the city through a digital platform that enabled new spatial imaginaries of their city. They used digital storytelling and feminist participatory mapping, combined with creative interventions, in the very spaces where women had experienced harassment, transforming them into places where they could boldly walk. Re-telling and re-mapping the emotional geographies of women's fear and defiance through digital, embodied, and material practices, online and in the streets, were crucial strategies (Chapter Five). Despite the struggles faced by the group within what they understood as a neoliberal, Anglo-American structure of the international Hollaback! network, H!Berlin, alongside other activist groups in the city such as She*Claim, countered racist, specifically Islamophobic, narratives of sexual violence emerging in Germany following what was termed 'Cologne' in 2016 (Chapter Six). H!Berlin in this way confronted hierarchal power relations within what might be understood as a 'globalising' feminist network. They called attention to the patriarchal, sexist, and racist power relations within their city.

When considering Dublin in 2016, I was again confronted with the local realities of feminist politics detailed in Chapters Two and Four. After learning that the local branch of the 'global' Hollaback! network in Dublin folded, I

refocused my research around important feminist activisms locally as they emerged during my fieldwork. Irish feminist activists' energies were overwhelmingly directed towards the fight for bodily autonomy and challenging a long history of Church-State control and abuse of women's bodies. Their specific interventions offered important insights into the significance of place-based politics of feminist activisms struggling to gain reproductive rights. My work builds on recent works about the geographies of abortion in Ireland, including geographies of abortion travel (Calkin and Freedman, 2018) and emotional geographies of abortion (Olund, 2020), by highlighting how activists confronted these spatial patterns of control over women's bodies. I found that forms of public artivism, from home|work.collective's embodied performances to street artivism such as Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural, played an important role in making the hidden experiences of reproductive control visible in spaces of abortion travel (Chapter Seven) and in busy inner city cultural hubs (Chapter Eight).

These participatory public artivist projects broke the silence surrounding abortion and challenged enduring narratives and geographies of shame (Rossiter, 2009; Smyth, 2015; Olund, 2020). The defiant bodies of artivists, loudly performing abortion stories in public locations that dotted the abortion trail, recovered the political debate surrounding abortion for the bodies, subjectivities and voices that were long erased. Therefore, the temporal, embodied performances of *Metronome* (2012) and *The Renunciation* (2016-18) by home|work.collective conveyed the emotional experience of travelling or being unable to travel for an abortion. Meanwhile, the aesthetic design, publicness, and mobility of Maser's 'Repeal the 8th' mural unexpectedly gave the

pro-choice movement an enduring symbol that they could adopt as a way of expressing *their* feelings towards abortion and a sense of collective identification (see also O'Hara, 2020). In both cases, it was not merely the communicative potential of digital practice that connected people, but the transformative power of each artwork in place that empowered participants to action. In both projects, audiences became active producers of artworks through their participation in multiple time-spaces. Activists performed simultaneous live performances of *The Renunciation* in major transportation hubs around Ireland (and in other venues in other cities). In the case of Maser's mural, people downloaded and co-created new forms of the artwork which appeared on bodies, in streets, and on social media. These artivist pieces were collaborative, engaging new publics through hybrid spaces in ways that invited meaningful discussion about reproductive rights, shame, censorship, and the politics of public space in Dublin and beyond.

My research about how activists resisted multiple forms of everyday VAW provides 'exposure and support to resistance efforts to bring about meaningful change' (Brickell and Maddrell, 2016: 172). My work also contributes to literature that explores how women defy geographies of fear, violence, and shame by occupying, reclaiming and transforming urban spaces (Koskela, 1997; Mclean & Maalsen, 2013; Whitson, 2018). Overall, my concept of feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces of activism provides a new way of theorising how feminisms are made and re-made in place, including how they are enacted and performed across spaces through technologies. The distinctive hybrid counterpublic spaces created by the activists and artists of this study provided communities of support that challenged emotional geographies of fear

and shame, and instead offered forms of place-based care. All this was made possible through engaging with activists in each place, on their terms.

9.3. Learning from Feminist Activists/Artivists

My work provides insights that emerged through engaging directly with activists within their communities. Existing research on activisms that address VAW, including groups such as Hollaback!, focus primarily on online activities (see Dimond et al, 2013; Fileborn, 2014), rather than the particular geotemporalities of feminist activisms. As I illustrated throughout this PhD thesis, paying attention to the multiple historical, political and social contexts of feminist activists avoids recreating the idea of women as a homogenous group (Mohanty, 1984; 2003; Swarr and Nagar, 2010), which may lead to less effective and even less inclusive and therefore disempowering forms of organisation (see Chapter Six). I argue that it is of critical importance to listen to activists and how they comprehend their actions, as these can challenge initial expectations based upon scholarly research and/or journalistic reports.

My unique geographical approach to analysing modern feminist activism developed from observing the actions, and listening to the voices of, activists on the ground. The thesis evolved from the unique insights and critiques of activists to recognise different ways that groups and projects prioritised social media and creative practice, how they evaluated their value and impact, and how different varieties and combinations of creative practice and technology could be used to mobilise people and further activist causes. Through 're-embedding' the tactics of activists in their localities, we see how place-based politics is rooted in, rather than detached from, the 'material lives' that activists

are seeking to change, providing us 'with a vantage point from which we might develop potentially transformative solutions' (Harcourt and Escobar, 2002: 12). Opportunities for solidarity, networking and participation were made possible through the development of social media and Smartphone technology. This is certainly not unique in the history of feminist activism but rather ideas, tactics and data may have become more mobile with the development of new media forms and technologies, which have opened up new ways for more people to engage with feminist politics (see also Wånggren, 2016; Zimmerman, 2017). At the same time, notwithstanding these technological developments, my empirical research demonstrates how digital practices remain embodied and emplaced.

How activists and artists deployed the mobilisation of place, bodies, storytelling, artistic practice and use of new technologies, alone or in combination, varied. For H!Berlin, their formative and foundational activities were digital storytelling and mapping; artistic practices and collaborations with other feminist groups enhanced their alternative digital platform. The hybrid communities and counterpublic spaces of support, boldness and care they created led to transformative possibilities to reclaim the city and streets where women experienced violence. In contrast, for home|work.collective, social media was secondary in relation to artistic practice; primarily used to support the dissemination of their work and encourage participation. New technologies were not critical to the performance/s, which would have taken place, albeit in a more limited way, without an online presence. Nonetheless, the way home|work.collective used art to engage in non-hierarchal forms of collaboration and participation, including by sharing artworks digitally, can be

seen as an innovative way of connecting feminist activists in 'looser coalitions' (Clark, 2016) around artworks (see Chapters Seven and Eight). Their emphasis on inclusivity, spontaneity, and openness in the formation of loose coalitions can be contrasted with the hierarchal, Anglo-American centric organisation of the Hollaback! network (see Chapter Six). In comparison to these two case studies, collaborators supporting the first iteration of the Maser mural relied upon a distinct combination of social media and place-based artistic practice from the artwork's inception. Its symbolic and communicative potential lay in both its public location in the centre of Dublin city and the strategic use of technology to bring new people into the fold, and to mobilise them to campaign for reproductive rights and against state censorship of artivism. The contrasts I am drawing between the use of social media by activists in Berlin and Dublin indicates differing and complex relationships to new media and how they are operationalised in creating feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces.

Secondly, for all three main case studies, there was a strong recognition among all of my participants that a significant amount of planning and embodied labour goes into maintaining social media campaigns and actions. Their insights specifically challenged narratives that devalue digital activist practices as 'slacktivism' (Kritsofferson et al, 2014). Julia Brilling of H!Berlin highlighted the 'hard activist work' that constituted digital campaigning (see Chapter Five), while Siobhán Clancy of home|work.collective was wary of burdening members of the group with the additional work of managing social media interactions with their artistic works (see Chapter Seven). For Maser's mural, Cian O'Brien of Project Arts clearly identified the critical role of Andrea Horan (of The HunReal Issues) in publicising the mural and its message through

her social media expertise. Understandings and attitudes towards new media were therefore quite complex, confronting popular expectations of a supposedly universal 'tech savvy' 'fourth wave' of feminist activism that employs social media with ease and speed, an assumption that undermines the strategic use, labour and new knowledges produced by feminists.

Finally, by examining the material and digital co-constitution and co-production of activist art in public urban spaces, my empirical work provided insights into creative geographies (Hawkins, 2013). My PhD thesis specifically contributes to existing literature on digital geographies of public art and artivism (Palmer 2018; Radice, 2018; Zebracki, 2020). I build on Zebracki and Luger's (2019) research into 'digital public art as politics' (p. 906) through examining the political potentialities of two distinct forms of public artivism, particularly feminist street art and performance art. My research revealed the multiscalar effects of artivism as a function of feminist hybrid counterpublic spaces. For each case study, public artivism was operationalised by women to render different forms of everyday violence where they lived visible; to confront hegemonic masculinist understandings of women's lives and to transform and re-imagine public urban space.

In Chapter Five, I argued that practices such as chalk-walks and street art, informed by digital mappings and storytellings, allowed women to 'speak back' to their harassers and re-claim the narrative around their experiences of street harassment at multiple scales. Collaborative forms of street art, enabled by the networking possibilities of new media between activists in H!Berlin and New York based artist, Tatyana Fazlalizadeh, empowered women to occupy the city spaces where they may have felt fearful or frustrated and physically transform

them. Through combining street art with social media, they shared moments of community with those in the streets and connected in solidarity with other activists elsewhere – creating forms of social co-presence through hybrid artistic practice. Public artivism within the hybrid counterpublic space of H!Berlin offered women an immediate way of creatively and boldly inserting themselves and their experiences into the public urban landscape, confronting narratives of women as fearful victims and/or passive objects of the male gaze. Meanwhile, in working collaboratively with activists and artivists across the globe through digital practice, they could confront the invisibility of street harassment on a much larger scale. I discussed a different form of street art in Chapter Eight, exploring how the Maser mural, as a form of 'street artivism', strategically employed digital technology from its inception to bring the mural, its message, and the ability to engage in artistic practice, to wider publics. As well as providing a way of transforming audiences into co-producers of a piece, digital practice also helped the mural resist official state censorship twice. In this way, the mural can be understood as a form of artivism which opened up a new (feminist) political (hybrid) space (cf. Zebracki, 2020) for those not previously concerned with topics such as abortion and/or artistic freedom of expression in public urban space in Ireland.

In Chapter Seven I explored how the public performances of home|work.collective used the productive aspects of shame (Munt, 2009) to create powerful pieces of pro-choice art in streets and transportation hubs that challenged the hidden and silenced experiences of abortion. These artworks confronted geographies of shame along the abortion trail (Rossiter, 2009; Olund, 2020) across hybrid space. They engaged in digital practice to co-

ordinate bodies, share their art with pro-choice activists in other locations, and create loose coalitions in which activists could connect in solidarity through engaging in artistic practice.

My PhD thesis therefore offers a specifically feminist perspective on digital geographies of public art, outlining the potentials for engaging in emancipatory politics through participatory forms of public art. My work elaborates on how hybrid forms of artivism employ multiple technologies to empower individuals, expose new publics to artistic practice and feminist politics, resist forms of censorship and strategically campaign against forms of gendered oppression. I also demonstrated how feminist artivism transforms cities through challenging masculinist meanings built into public urban space as well as forms of public art conceived of as masculine, such as street art. Overall, my empirical research demonstrates the value of attending to feminist activism in multiple ways and on activists' own terms. In particular, it highlights the richness that emerges when we recognise embodied ways of knowing, local knowledges and how activists articulate their actions – giving us a fuller picture of the (feminist) politics of place.

9.4.   Limitations and Avenues for Further Research

My research centred on the voices and perspectives of activists and artivists in their communities and respective cities. However, activists are positioned differently in relation to national and global flows of information and resources, allowing them more or less mobility and socio-political capital. Even though it was not the intention of my research to create exclusions, I want to recognise the limitations of my research, and make suggestions for further investigations

that might better capture the range of experiences of those most at risk from violence.

Despite my attempts to critically engage with the multiplicity of feminist activisms in Berlin and Dublin, and to remain aware of the way in which women are positioned differently at the intersections of multiple violences, the experiences represented in my PhD thesis are partial and may have unintentionally re-produced a white Eurocentric feminist subjectivity. At the national level, for Ireland, the richness and complexity of feminist politics, including feminist activisms in Northern Ireland, could not be addressed in this thesis. Further research, therefore, could contribute towards existing work that considers the North's unique geopolitical and social contexts in ways that deepen understandings of institutional and political VAW across the island of Ireland. The role of sectarian violence in the lives of women, and how activists respond to this and create distinctive hybrid counterpublic spaces, would be a significant further area of research.

For both cities, a significant absence are the voices, perspectives, and knowledges of feminists of colour and migrant activists. My research reflects the experiences of predominantly white, educated feminist activists that I engaged with and analysed in this PhD. I found it difficult to operationalise intersectionality through my research praxis, becoming aware of the limitations of recruitment strategies such as snowballing through my pilot work with H!Berlin. Nonetheless, even 'cold calling' had its limitations. I suggest that my inability to operationalise intersectionality as part of my research reflects a wider problem within feminist movements themselves which often neglect, overlook, or strategically avoid engaging with issues such as racism, classism,

homophobia, transphobia and ableism. For example, in Berlin, following

incidents in Cologne in 2016, I had hoped that by approaching the group

She*Claim, who had positioned themselves as a pointedly anti-racist feminist

group, I might be able to record the experiences and voices of feminists from a

number of different backgrounds, ethnicities and races. I had wrongly

presumed that a race-aware feminist group would have women of colour with

direct experiences of racism as well as sexism among their members. In Ireland

MERJ (Migrants and Ethnic Minorities for Reproductive Justice), a group that

formed in 2017, pointed out how mainstream Irish pro-choice groups

overlooked the experiences of migrant, working class and Traveller women

during the official Together for Yes campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment.

The group stated that it formed because they were 'tired of seeing Savita's

face being used as a symbol of a movement but no women who looked

like Savita speaking in the movement' (MERJ, 2018).

Therefore, future research is required that centres the voices of migrant,

Traveller, ethnic and working-class women whose experiences are often side-

lined. Indeed, MERJ are engaged in both timely anti-racist campaigns and

important research on the intersections of gender, race, and/or migration

status and abortion access in Ireland. In late 2018, the group released an edited

volume containing contributions from primarily migrant, ethnic minority, and

Traveller women in Ireland (see MERJ, 2018). Further geographical research

into feminist activisms at the intersections of race, gender, class, and sexuality

could draw on this valuable resource, as well as emerging scholarship on race

and racism by ground-breaking black Irish scholars across other disciplines

(see Joseph, 2018; 2020; Dabiri, 2019). Such analysis would better reflect the

experiences of women at the intersections of multiple forms of oppression. This brings me back to a question posed by geographer Phil Hubbard about who exactly should carry out research with marginalised groups: 'is it possible, or even desirable, to attempt to document the lives of these generally silent groups in the geographies that we write, structuring their experiences within the confines of academic theory?' (p 230). After informal discussions with migrant and minority women active in pro-choice and anti-racist activism in Dublin, I increasingly feel this research would be best done by those traditionally marginalised within academic and activist circles. How this research is done, then, requires a more widespread effort to hold space for, include and support black, migrant and Traveller scholars in Irish geography as a whole.

Despite these shortcomings and the need for more research in key areas, my research does move towards a more geographically and temporally rooted analysis of feminist activisms which values the lived experiences of activists and how they respond to violence within their localities. Whalley and Hackett (2018) argue that such community-based approaches can intervene and 'disrupt violence' and strengthen 'cultural norms that disallow violence from happening in the first place' (p. 467-68). Browne and Bakshi (2011) also point to the importance of informal safe spaces for marginalised groups, enabling the provision of knowledge and support, which can help survivors work through the effects of violence. While I recognise that such 'safe spaces' are often contested and incomplete (Valentine 1997; Browne, 2009; Hanhardt, 2013), my PhD thesis has demonstrated how, through these hybrid counterpublic spaces of support, grassroots activists disrupt underlying assumptions shaping dominant representations of VAW and defy moralising discourses around

women's bodies that contribute to the normalisation of violence and stigmatisation of abortion. Gathered from a small number of cases, my analyses of the geographies of feminist resistance and struggles can be extended. I call, with Pain (2014), Tyner (2016) and Brickell and Maddrell (2016), for more geographical research into documenting both everyday forms of VAW and geotemporally specific responses to it, in particular research about street harassment and obstetric violence, and the impact of such violence on women's experiences of the city.

Specifically, further research into obstetric violence, both geographical and otherwise, is needed in the Irish, and indeed European context. Latin American countries have been at the forefront of research and activism relating to the dehumanising treatment of women during pregnancy, and yet it is increasingly clear that this form of everyday violence is occurring widely in countries traditionally considered part of the so-called Global North, for example North America (see King, 2013; Garcia, 2020). In Ireland, forms of reproductive coercion and control were not overtly labelled as obstetric violence during the campaign to repeal the Eighth, rather, it was, as I outlined, artists that articulated these practices as a form of systemic violence. However, women's health scholars Cara Delay and Beth Sundstrom (2019) have since called for more research into how 'systematized obstetric violence has characterized Ireland's modern history' (p. 97).

As other material locations of emancipatory politics become increasingly eroded in the neoliberal city (McArdle, 2018), hybrid feminist counterpublic spaces become an even more critical presence. Activists and artists created such hybrid counterpublic spaces to develop collective responses which were

described by the local experts of this study as 'therapeutic' (Brilling, interview with author, Berlin, 2015; Clancy, interview with author, Dublin, 2016). In other research, spaces of support where women could seek validation for their experiences were noted as critical and missing from criminal justice approaches to VAW (Fileborn, 2014; Rentschler, 2017). Hybrid spaces of 'feminist witnessing' (Rentschler, 2017: 568) enable women to support each other and practice a politics of care through digital technology and, as I have outlined, creative, embodied and place-based participatory practices.

Therefore, as part of, but by no means a replacement for, legislative and policy change, I suggest further research that draws upon activist understandings of VAW and their place-based approaches to creating hybrid safe spaces for inspiration, witnessing and the development of empowering forms of spatial confidence. Any approach to VAW should always centre on feminist activist's knowledges and understandings of violence, safety, and justice. Doing so would mean to direct resources to feminist activist groups, while allowing activists to maintain the autonomy of the informal spaces of support and empowerment they create.

Finally, given the import of the digital, and its increasing relevance during the COVID19 epidemic and lockdown as I completed this thesis, more research is needed into how activists engage/d social media and material practice during initial COVID responses and beyond. This needs to work across a range of spaces to address multiple injustices, including, but not limited to, violence against women. While my research focused on the creative digital and material responses of a limited selection of activists and artists, working directly with women who have experienced either or both forms of everyday

VAW may reveal important insights into how spatial injustice works. Scholarly research can contribute to confronting different forms of violence during 'normal' times and when facing a global pandemic that has geographically specific expressions.

9.5.   Conclusion

The presence of violence and the fear of it permeate the everyday lives of women so thoroughly that it has been referred to as: 'the wallpaper of everyday life for women and girls' (Lewis et al, 2017: 1479). However, gender-based violence and the attitudes contributing to it are not inevitable: activists and artivists make visible, define, and challenge VAW, specifically violent behaviours that have been normalised as merely part and parcel of the experience of being a woman, be that in moving through the city or attempting to access basic healthcare. Where human rights organisations and governments have failed to provide solutions, feminist activists in the present, as in the past, have stepped in to provide women with vital spaces of support and empowerment. Activist knowledges, experiences and understandings are therefore crucial to any attempt to end VAW.

In studying feminist activisms in two European capital cities, this PhD thesis has offered insights into the hybrid material and digital geographies of contemporary feminists resisting everyday VAW. My research synthesised literatures about feminist activism, new social media, violence against women, and public urban space from a distinctly multidisciplinary approach that emphasised a feminist geographical lens. It drew upon history, media studies, art history, feminist, and social movement theory, and German and Irish Studies

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scholarship, and advanced an alternative way of thinking about feminisms across time and space that questioned discrete chronological waves. The concept of hybrid counterpublic spaces offers scholars a geographically sensitive way of considering the powerful effects of feminisms, and indeed other social movements, that takes account of their digital, material, and embodied actions at multiple scales. Mobilising across digital and material space, the hybrid counterpublic spaces created by activists in this thesis empowered them to formulate their own understandings of their identities and needs. Feminist activists resisted and opposed normative official patriarchal classifications of the role of women in their respective societies. They forged communities of care that empowered them to re-imagine and transform public urban spaces. The differently located groups and projects made women's hidden experiences of everyday violence visible and provided support through storytelling, mapping, and creative actions. Moreover, these actions empowered activists to transform the physical locations in which women experienced violence, fear, and or shame: performing boldness and engaging in forms of place-based care. In both Berlin and Dublin, activists reclaimed narratives around VAW and those who experienced violence by defying geographies of shame and fear imposed upon their body/selves through street art and public performance. These activists and artists provided space for women to share their personal experiences and testimonies where they have been silenced, providing important counter-narratives to official and popular understandings of what violence looks like.

We are living in a moment of intense political and technological change and feminist geographers have much to add to debates about the impact of

social media on both grassroots and institutional politics. This thesis

demonstrated the value of interrogating the increasing co-constitution of public

urban and digital space through analysing feminist activisms. Activists work

across digital and material space to confront old hierarchies, mobilise people to

engage in emancipatory politics and encourage the co-production of socially

engaged art. Interrogating the normative heteropatriarchal discourses and

spatialities that frame understandings of VAW offers insights into the

maintenance of power relations that render women's bodies invisible and mute

women's voices. My research illustrated how, even in an era of increasing

digitisation, the role of the body and place remain as relevant as ever to feminist

geographical and geopolitical understandings of politics. Feminist activisms and

artivisms that contest official and widespread representations of VAW carve out

spaces for women's own definitions of their experiences. Their work of creating

alternative hybrid feminist spaces provides society with new knowledges and

spatial imaginaries that help (re)create more just cities and worlds.

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Appendix 1: Copy of learning Contract for Hollaback!Berlin (2015)

GY822: Professional Development 2: International Internship (10 GREP credits)

Instructors: Karen Till, Julia Brilling and Julia Pfannschmidt, Hollaback! Berlin

Email: berlin@ihollaback.org

Semester 2, 2015

<u>Module Overview</u>

This Professional Development Module recognises the importance of the theoretical insights, concepts, geographical imaginations and ways of knowing that local experts offer. It uses the model of learning by doing, as the student will work as an intern on a range of projects defined in collaboration with Maynooth Geography and partner instructors to learn how a civil society organisation uses creative practices, grounded expertise, networks, and alternative imaginations to achieve the organisations' stated goals.

In this module, students work on 'real world' projects as developed with Maynooth Geography staff and a partner organisation through an internship teaching and learning framework. Upon completion of the module, and having successfully completed all practial tasks and written work and learning tasks, students will learn about: a civil society organisation's goals and strategic activities by working on projects; through reflexive writings, link these to key theoretical concepts; become familiar with the theoretical and practice-based debates with respect to publicly

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engaged research approaches, including participatory and action research design; develop a reflexive understanding of one's own critical lens on the world through this application and by working with local experts and other professionals; gain experience in applied empirical research, creative and/or activist practices; and gain experience working collaboratively on a research project defined in collaboration with Maynooth Geography instructor/s, student/s and a civil society partner working on geographically relevant topics.

Specific module details and learning objectives for instructors and student/s will be written in collaboration with Maynooth Geography instructors, student/s and civil society partner organization.

Assessment:

Portfolio including: Learning Contract (with learning objectives); Fieldnotes and Memos; Final Placement Report (5000 words), including work completed, progress towards achieving learning objectives, and reflection on how placement will inform research; and Final Product for Partner.

Contact Hours and Assessment:

200 hours total of student work, to be evaluated through continuous assessment, including through:

- Attending and taking notes of initial internship meetings (with instructors and student);
- Drafting of learning contract with learning objectives (to be approved by supervisor and partner organisation; for the latter, the process of which may vary, but may include approval by a board or director/president of

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organisation, and agreement on at least one main project partner supervisor/instructor) (to be negotiated two months before the start of the internship);

- Orientation to the partner organisation (within first week of internship);
- Internship work on specific tasks agreed upon by Maynooth Geography staff and partner organization (of at least 80 hours work);
- Keeping fieldnotes and writing memos throughout the internship to be reviewed at least three times during the period of the internship by the Maynooth Geography instructor, and discussed with that instructor and the student;
- Meeting at least twice during the internship for 'check ins' with Maynooth and partner instructors to discuss progress, and to make adjustments to work plan if needed;
- Completing final product/s for the civil society partner to be agreed upon by instructors and student;
- Writing a final reflective essay for the Maynooth University Geography instructor;
- Attending and helping organise a final meeting with instructors and students to evaluate and discuss outcomes (at the close of the internship).

Specific module details:

Student: Lorna O'Hara

Instructors: Karen Till, Julia Brilling and Julia Pfannschmidt, Hollaback! Berlin

Emails: karen.till@nuim.ie and berlin@ihollaback.org

Location: Berlin, Germany

Semester 2, 2015 (February-June 2015)

Pre-requisite prior to placement: GY811: Methods 1: Qualitative and Feminist

Methodologies; approval from Maynooth University Research Ethics Form.

Learning Objectives (drafted by student (1/12/14), with revision by Karen Till

(12/12/14 and revision after suggestions by Ciara Bradley, Maynooth University

International Internship Programme Director 28/12/14) and as approved by Julia

Brilling and Julia Pfannschmidt):

As an intern, I, Lorna O'Hara hope to realise a work plan that realises learning

objectives for this module, in collaboration with Dr. Karen Till of Maynooth

University Geography and Julia Brilling of Hollaback! Berlin. In negotiation with

Maynooth Geography staff and Hollaback! Berlin partner/s, I hope to assist H!BLN

with such tasks as helping: organising and coordinating Hollaback! events, managing

H!BLN social media networks, reviewing H!BLN public relations stories, and working

on H!BLN grant proposals. A more detailed work plan will be created by February

2015. Through feedback and check-in mechanisms in March, April and May,

additional and/or different tasks will be discussed as needed with Maynooth

Geography staff and Hollaback! group co-ordinators to make sure learning objectives

are realised and professional working relations created. An overview of Hollaback!

Berlin and the context of this international internship are provided below.

Specific learning objectives include:

- To gain a better understanding of the aims and objectives of Hollaback!
  Berlin, as well as to gain insights into challenges faced and opportunities
  arising, through assisting with core tasks of the group and their day-to-day
  functioning.
- To learn about the internal workings of the group, including what best
  practice is when it comes to reviewing Hollaback! Berlin stories for public
  distribution, for example, how the Anti-Discrimination Directive works;
- To learn about the effects and impacts on the sharing of Hollaback! Berlin
  stories with its members;
- To learn about the challenges, effects and impacts of running local events;

- To learn about the challenges, effects, impacs and opportunities of managing social media networks.
- To learn about how the group works within in a international context, including how Hollaback! Berlin co-ordinates international campaigns, trains members and staff, writes grants, and through other means;
- To learn about the perception, nature and frequency of street harassment in Berlin, a major European capital city, based upon the work and member stories of Hollaback! Berlin;
- To learn how Hollaback! Berlin uses technology, the internet and software to realise its goals (including in what format (technical and aesthetic) shared maps, stories, and information are presented; how these work online/in virtual space; how these work for users; and how often and in what formats these are updated) and the ways in which virtual/online/software spaces have "real-world" impact?
- To learn how online communities such as those created by Hollaback! Berlin provide support to its users, in particular women who experience harassment?
- To learn more broadly, using the above lessons learned through Hollaback! Berlin's experience, how women (and the general public) about interactions with virtually- and materially-lived social spaces.

Overview of Community Partner

Aim of Hollaback!: According to the website, to goal of Hollaback! is to "fight back".

They see the internet as an important tool for this:

The Internet gives us the opportunity to build shared networks. Every time you experience harassment in a public space, you can talk about it here and thousands of people will listen to you and learn to understand what it means to be exposed to daily harassment. Others do so that they are not alone and that it is not their fault if they are exposed to violence. Your story can help company and the community enforcers to take these attacks more seriously and develop a sensitivity which leads to greater safety in our city [...]Your stories can help to change the world. It all starts with a simple gesture: You hollaback!

Like all Hollaback! branches, Hollaback! Berlin (H!BLN) is mainly an online feminist network. Its many online users view interactive maps that include the locations and stories of street harassment. Users submit their stories through the app or online, which are then reviewed manually by the two local leaders of the Berlin group, according to their Anti-Discrimination Directive (berlin.ihollaback.org/share-your-story/anti-diskriminierungs-richtlinie/#sthash.gM1CS6t0.dpbs).

When submitting the story, users select the area in which the instance of street harassment occurred by placing a pink pin on an interactive map, which, after approval, can be viewed by other users online on their website or on the app itself. Bystanders who see street harassment happening to a woman and want to report it, can place green pins on the map and contribute to the Hollaback! "Got Your Back Campaign".

General users click on the pins on the interactive map to read the various stories. Once they are reviewed, the stories are then shared on the website, (http://berlin.ihollaback.org/teile-deine-geschichte/#sthash.GxvQdgtr.dpbs) the Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/hollabackbln?fref=ts), the Twitter account (https://twitter.com/HollabackBerlin) and tumblr account (http://hollabackberlin.tumblr.com/).

In addition, H!BLN also organises offline events and creative practices, including: the "My Name is Not Baby" exhibition (held in June 2014) and featuring the work of anti-street harassment artist Tatyana Fazlalizadeh (info here:

http://berlin.ihollaback.org/my-name-is-not-baby-ausstellung/#sthash.cCw1uimB.dpbs), and "Chalk Walks", such as the one carried out as part of LaDIYfest 2014. The following is an explanation from the LaDIYfest 2014 programme: "Hollaback! BLN invites to common reclaim the streets. We 'chalkwalk' through the area, visiting places where attacks took place and write our own empowering messages on the sidewalks. All are invited to come along and especially to bring their stories. Let's reclaim the Streets!" (LaDIYfest, 2014: http://www.ladiyfest.net/ladiyfest-2014/workshops-2014/). Example of the result here:

https://www.facebook.com/LaDIYfestBerlin/photos/a.891720837523684.1073741832.111022702260172/891723114190123/?type=3andtheater. Chalkwalks are a common practice by Hollaback! groups internationally. In Berlin these began in 2013.

Finally, H!BLN also have a zine:

http://berlin.ihollaback.org/files/2013/12/Zine_HollabackBLN.pdf

Draft Learning Contract, to be modified and added to by student and instructors.

Community-Based Learning Contract: Participants' Agreements

For community-based learning partnerships to be effective and beneficial for all parties involved, it is essential that basic rights and responsibilities be outlined and understood.

As a community-based learning participant, I, Lorna O'Hara (STUDENT), enrolled in GY822 with Dr. Karen E. Till (INSTRUCTOR'S NAME) and working in partnership with Hollaback! Berlin (PARTNER ORGANISATION) with Julia Brilling and Julia Pfannschmidt (PARTNER INSTRUCTOR'S NAME) agree to the following:

1. I will work for a specified length of time with a community partner organisation during the semester as agreed upon between myself, Julia Brilling and Dr. Till, on a specific workplan agreed to by all partners that realise the learning objectives stated above.

2. I will attend all meetings, orientation/training sessions, and reflection sessions as deemed necessary by Dr. Till, Julia Brilling and Julia Pfannschmidt.

3. I will schedule at least two midway 'check-ins' and one end-of semester feedback meetings with Julia Brilling and Dr. Till to: discuss how the project is going, get feedback on how I am doing, and discuss any concerns or problems with the project.

4. I will be punctual, responsible, appropriate, and professional. I will make arrangements for absences with my organisation as far in advance as possible. I understand that agencies do not know the details of my academic schedule (papers due, classes, vacations, etc.) unless I convey this information to my organisation partner instructor. If I am unable to show up for an appointment or scheduled event due to illness, I will call my partner contact person as promptly as possible. I understand my absence will be noticed since community partner work is very relationship oriented.

5. I will respect and follow the confidentiality, ethical practice and safety guidelines as laid out in the guidelines provided through the Maynooth University Research Support Office, Maynooth University Department of Geography, and as communicated to be by my community partner, Hollaback! Berlin.

6. I will adhere to the rules and regulations and other requirements of Hollaback! Berlin in accordance with town, city, county and nationally mandated policies and procedures.

7. While under the direction and supervision of Hollaback! Berlin, I will recognize my obligation to serve as an ambassador for Maynooth University and the Department of Geography by upholding the mission of the university.

8. I will treat individuals I come into contact with Hollaback! Berlin and related project participants with respect by challenging myself to keep an open mind, by examining and questioning my values and beliefs, especially while interacting with people different from myself in terms of race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, age, gender, and sex.

9. I will notify Julia Brilling, Julia Pfannschmidt and Dr. Till of problems or concerns as soon as they arise.

10. I will complete an evaluation of the internship learning experience at the end of the term.

11. I will agree to a final outcome that is specified to meet the needs of Hollaback! Berlin to be delivered to Julia Brilling and Julia Pfannscmidt that may be different than the final reflective research paper or requirements for Dr. Till.

Dr. Till of Maynooth University Department of Geography and Julia Brilling and Julia Pfannschmidt of Hollaback! Berlin agree to the following:

1. To provide as accurate as possible information on the internship (opportunities, requirements, and contact information).
2. To provide assistance in identifying work tasks that meet the student's interests, availability, and logistical constraints.

3. To assist in finding resources or solving problems as the need arises.
4. To assist in locating an alternate work tasks or partner internship if this internship does not work out.
5. To provide reflection sessions for the student to attend to discuss her internship experiences and help her begin to see the connections between the internship learning experience and her academic course concepts.
6. To provide an opportunity to evaluate the internship learning experience at the end of the specified period of time, and exchange ideas on what worked and what can improved with the respective partners and student involved.

I have read and understand the above agreement.

       Lorna O'Hara
       1/1/2015
Lorna O'Hara, Student's Signature   Date

       Karen Till
       1/1/2015
Dr. Karen Till, MU Instructor's Signature   Date

       Julia Brilling   1/1/2015
Julia Brilling, Hollaback! Berlin Instructor's Signature   Date

Appendix 2: Sample Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little about yourself. What is your role in this group?

2. Why and when did you become involved with this group?

3. How you understand and define the group and its projects?

4. What aspects of the group do you find most important?

5. What tactics/materials/methods do you find work well and not so well for the group or project?

6. How do these approaches differ from other feminist groups?

7. What is the role of social media in your group and what impact do you feel it has?

8. What is your overall assessment of the group or project, such as its impact on the local community, and even international community?

Additional questions may be added when suggested by the participants themselves.

Appendix 3: WPR Framework 'What's the problem represented to be?': The

WPR framework's six analytical questions (Bacchi, 2012).

1. What's the problem represented to be in a specific policy?

2. What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?

3. How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?

4. What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences?
Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?

5. What effects (discursive, subjectification, lived) are produced by this representation
of the "problem"?

6. How/where is this representation of the 'problem' produced, disseminated and
defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?

Appendix 4: In vivo codes and categories

Example of codes grouped by categories (codes colour-coded in text).

'Building a successful group'	Organisation/being organised
	Communication
	Community building
	Facilitating others
	Collaboration
	Non-hierarchal principles
	Reflecting/thinking critically
	Leadership
	'Holding space'
'The role of art in campaign'	Utilitarian (banners, posters, signs)
	Admiration: other artists/activists
	Ownership/authorship
	Access
	Participatory
	Cultural symbolism
	Audience reactions pos.
	Audience reactions neg.
	"Failure"
	Future plans for pieces

	Digital dissemination Healing/restorative Storytelling Art as revolution Emotion Music/singing/voice Art as communication
'Challenges of activism' (resources)	Supporting the arts Role of state (Financially) supporting self Voluntary unpaid work Precarity
'Challenges of activism' (physical/psychological)	Emotional support Undervaluing self Demands energy Lack of time Lack of space Undervalued labour Finding a balance Burn-out Guilt

	Responsibility to group
	Sense of failure
	Self-care
	Personal experience

Appendix 5: Examples of Ethical Information and Consent Form, and Ethical Approval

Appendix 5.1 Consent Forms

Lorna O'Hara: Maynooth University, Department of Geography.
Consent and Information Form for Research Project

Project Title: *'Geographies of Fourth Wave Feminisms in Europe: Challenging violence through social media and public art in Berlin, Dublin and Paris'*

My name is Lorna O'Hara and I am a PhD student in the Department of Geography at Maynooth University. I would like to invite you to participate in a study about "fourth wave" feminist movements and projects that challenge violence, such as through social media and public art in __Dublin__ [enter name of city as per case study]. This information sheet provides an overview of the project and my contact details.

I am interested in learning more about how feminist groups and artists work. To do so I would like to attend group meetings, observe actions and performances, interact with members, and also participate in public projects. If time permits, I hope also to volunteer for projects and actions, where appropriate, to gain an insider's perspective. In addition I would like to interview organisers and group members.

As a ___member of this group_____ [member participating in this group in some way -- or as an artist engaged in a creative project], I would like to ask for your voluntary participation in this study by learning about your work and through informal conversations and/or interviews about the group and its actions. If you would like to participate, I would like to ask you to respond to open-ended questions, such as how you understand and define the group or project, why and when you became involved, what parts of the group or project you participate in, what aspects of the group you find most important, what tactics you find works well and not so well for the group or project, how it may differ from other feminist groups or projects, and your overall assessment of the group or project, in particular such as its impact on the local community, and even international community.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You can answer as many or as few questions in any way that you wish. As these will be open-ended discussions, you can also talk about related topics and ideas. If there are any questions you cannot or wish not to answer, that is fine; we will move on to the next question. Please also ask me questions! At any time you can decide to discontinue the interview. I will do my best to maintain confidentiality and anonymity during the research process and in subsequent research outputs. Unless you wish your name to be identified, all personal information for the study will be masked. I will modify any photographs so that you cannot be identified, unless you decide otherwise. I will keep the data in an encrypted format in a secure place at the Geography Department, Maynooth University for five years following the end of this study. If I wish to use the data for comparative studies or follow-up projects (such as a post doctorate project), I will inform you about this and you can decide if I can use the data generated from your participation. It must be recognized that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances the University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent.

The results will be used for publications, scholarly articles, PhD dissertation, academic presentations, and educational purposes. I am happy to send you a digital copy of these outcomes if you provide me with your address.

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner. You may also contact my PhD supervisor, Dr. Karen Till, at karen.till@nuim.ie, or through mail at the Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland. You can also contact me any time: Lorna O'Hara Lorna.Ohara@nuim.ie or by mobile phone: 0851519271.

If you wish to participate, please sign two copies of the consent form on the back of this page. One form you can keep and the other I will keep for my records. Please indicate if you give permission for your name and images to be used and if I have permission to record the interview. Thank you.

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information form provided and agree to participate in this study.

Name (printed) _____

Name (signature) _____

Date _____

I would like my real name to be used: Yes ☐   No ☐

I would prefer to have a pseudonym used: Yes ☐   No ☐

I agree to have the interview digitally recorded: Yes ☐   No ☐

[Please note that after the interview is transcribed, your name will be masked unless you chose to use your real name (as above)]

I agree to have pictures and video taken of my contributions/participation in the public

actions/performances: Yes   No ☐   ☐

Pictures and videos may be taken, but please mask my identity: Yes ☐ No   ☐

If there is a follow up study, I consent to allowing Ms. O'Hara use the results of this

study, per the information above: Yes   No ☐   ☐

Appendix 5.2. Photographic Consent Form

INFORMATION FLYER:
PHOTOGRAPHS OF PUBLIC EVENTS

My name is Lorna O'Hara and I am a PhD student in the Dept. of Geography, Maynooth University.
I am studying fourth wave feminist activist and artistic projects and would like to document these through p
hotographs. May I take your picture as part of this project? **Your participation is completely voluntary.**I
will provide you with a digital copy of the photographs via email. **Once you have recieved a copy of the
photographs, you can identify yourself to me and opt whether or not you would like any identifying
features to be masked.** In the event that you do not respond to the email, your features will automatically
be masked as a precaution. At this point you can also withdraw consent for your photograph to be
used. If you wish to participate, please check the form below to indicate you give permission for your photo
graph to be used.

Please feel free to ask my any questions at this time or in the future. If during your participation in this study
you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any wa
y, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the National University of Irelan
d Maynooth Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie or +353 (0)1
708 6019. *Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.* You may also con
tact my supervisor Dr. Karen Till at any time through email: karen.till@nuim.ie; phone: +353 (0)1 708
4550; or mail: Rhetoric House 19, NUI Maynooth, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

Thank you for your generosity in participating in this study! Lorna O'Hara

Name: _____

Email address: _____

I agree for my photographs to be used in this study: Yes ☐ No ☐

454

Appendix 5.3. Ethical Approval

Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee
Maynooth University,
Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland

Dr Carol Barrett
Secretary to Maynooth University
Research Ethics Committee

16 October 2014

Lorna O'Hara
Geography
Maynooth University

RE: Application for Ethical Approval for a project entitled:

Geographies of Fourth-Wave Feminisms in Europe: Challenging violence through social media and public art in Berlin, Dublin and Paris.

Dear Lorna,

The Ethics Committee evaluated the above project and we would like to inform you that ethical approval has been granted.

Kind Regards,

Dr Carol Barrett
Secretary, Maynooth University Ethics Committee

SRESC-2014-045

Appendix 6: The Renunciation (Text of 'Blue Prayer Book's)

1

Performer: At 27, she does not want to be a mother. She lives with her boyfriend and they agree.

All: She has overcome obstacles to abortion before and ten years later she faces the same ones again. A Woman.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All : We are all worthy of our right to choose.

2

Performer: He is transgender and spent 3 hours at Dublin Airport to make them understand why his passport states he is female.

All: The contraception failed once and he had to explain his life to a stranger. A Man.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All : We are all worthy of our right to choose.

11

Performer: She was against the idea of abortion until she needed one herself. She told a friend who supported her choice

All: They travelled to England together. She told everyone they were going shopping. A Woman.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All : We are all worthy of our right to choose.

12

Performer: She needed an abortion but had no money to travel and no time to smuggle pills from the North.

All: She found a cheap backstreet abortion but it has cost her health and fertility ever since. A Woman.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All : We are all worthy of our right to choose.

5

Performer: Bhí sí ag staidear agus ag sabháil airgid don ollscoil nuair a rinne sise agus a leannán botún.

All: De bharr botúin amháin, caithfidh sí leath a cuid coigiltis a chaitheamh ar ticéad eitleáin. Bean amháin.

Performer: Muintir na hÉireann, ardaigí bhur nglórtha.

All : Is fiú agus is feidir ár rogha fhéin a dhéanamh.

6

Performer: She is 23 and had a baby. They are both living with HIV. She is a recovering addict. Every day is a struggle.

All: She knows she can't afford another baby. She can't even afford this. She borrows money to travel. A Woman.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All : We are all worthy of our right to choose.

7

Performer: She had to travel all the way to London from Northern Ireland: a second class citizen despite her UK passport.

All: Even though she had paid her taxes just the same, she was not afforded cover by the NHS as others are. A Woman.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All: We are all worthy of our right to choose.

8

Performer: She was an asylum seeker, arrived pregnant after being raped. She tried to get to England but was sent back by the powers that be.

All: She found help online, ordered abortion pills and had them delivered to her from the North. A Woman.

Performer: People of Ireland, raise your voices.

All: We are all worthy of our right to choose.