

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS  
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF  
WOMEN'S AND GENDER ACTIVISM  
AND SCHOLARSHIP**

**SITE: ITALY**

**Transcript of Camilla Ranauro  
Interviewers: Bruno Grazioli, Lauren Duncan**

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**Camilla Ranauro** was born in 1994 and has been a LGBTI+ activist and feminist since the age of 17. She has been active in both collectives and formal associations. She is currently the vice president of Cassero LGBTI+ Center in Bologna, Italy. Her principal interests are education, political protest, and planning and preparation of European project proposals.

**Bruno Grazioli** is the Resident Director of the Italian Studies Program for Dickinson College in Bologna (Italy). He has studied in Italy and the UK, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and French, an M.A. in Pedagogy and Promotion of Italian Language and Culture at the University Ca' Foscari of Venice, an M.A. and Ph.D. in Italian Studies. For over a decade he was faculty in Italian at Smith College and twice served as academic director for study-abroad programs in Florence (Italy). Since 2018 Bruno directs the Italian Studies Program in Bologna where Dickinson students deepen their knowledge of the Italian language and culture. He developed and taught a course on Italian Activism combining traditional instruction in class with volunteering/community engagement work in local organizations. He has published "Social activism Italian style: building a community of practice through language immersion and civic engagement while studying abroad" for Routledge (2021) and co-authored "Crisis as Opportunity: Reimagining Global Learning Pathways through New Virtual Collaborations and Open Access during COVID-19" for *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* (2022). Currently Bruno is co-writing a book chapter titled "Building A Practice of Hope in International Education" for a two-volume publication for Cornell University Press.

**Lauren Duncan** is the William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Psychology at Smith College, in Northampton, MA. She obtained her Ph.D. in Personality Psychology and a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She teaches courses in the Psychology of Women and Gender, Political Psychology, and the Psychology of Political Activism. Her research focuses on individual motivation for participation in collective action, particularly among women and LGBTQ+ individuals. While at Smith, she began studying the Italian language and culture (Dr. Grazioli was her first teacher, who became her friend and collaborator) and was able to extend her research on the psychology of activism to conduct oral histories with Italian feminist and feminist LGBTQ+ activists. She has recently written about "Better policy interventions through intersectionality" (*Social Issues and Policy Review*, 2022), the childhood origins of Gloria Steinem's feminist activism (*Journal of Personality*, 2022), "Psychology and political participation" for *The Oxford Handbook of Political Participation* (2022), and "Power, gender, and collective action" for *The Palgrave Handbook of Psychology Power & Gender* (2023).

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**Lauren Duncan: We would like to begin with a conversation about your childhood, and, in particular, about your family. What do or did your parents do?**

Camilla Ranauro: So, I am the second daughter of a Southern Italian family, I come from Campania<sup>1</sup>—let's say interior, I don't know how to say, that is, the Campanian Apennines<sup>2</sup>, not from the coast. I come from Benevento<sup>3</sup> and my father graduated from high school with a surveyor certification and is mainly a gardener, but he also does a bit of other things like, he's a bit of a designer, I don't know how to define it because actually he doesn't have a degree in that field, but sometimes, for example, he does interior design of places and things of that nature. My mother, on the other hand, is a teacher right now, she's a teacher in a private school and also a sign-language interpreter, so she does interpreting jobs both for personal assistance and also in contexts like school or conferences, political meetings, things like that.

**LD: Do you have brothers, sisters?**

CR: Yes, I have a brother who's two years older than me—Angelo Antonio, 27 years old—and a brother 8 years younger than me, so now he's 17, he just turned 17. And my younger brother, the 17-year-old, goes to high school and lives with my parents, while both my brother and I live outside, one in Florence<sup>4</sup> and the other in Bologna<sup>5</sup>.

**Bruno Grazioli: Can you talk a bit about the relationships between you, in the family?**

CR: Yes, so, let's say, in principle, it's always difficult in any case to define family relationships [*laughs*] but in principle what is certainly objectively true is that I have a closer relationship with my mother than with my father. The relationship with my father is limited, almost non-existent, let's say, that is it has more or less always been, well, probably not during my childhood, but the memories linked to childhood aren't really vivid. As far as I remember I didn't ever have a close relationship with my father: little communication, no common interests where we could find a place to connect, even a bit of lack of respect on my part, a series of things with respect to him... The feeling that it was mutual. And instead,

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<sup>1</sup> Campania is a southwestern region of Italy, known for its gulf cities of Naples, Salerno and Policastro and the islands of Capri, Ischia and Procida. (See "Campania." Wikipedia.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campania#Geography>. Accessed May 1, 2022.)

<sup>2</sup> The Apennine Mountain range stretches 750 miles along peninsular Italy. (See "Apennine Mountains." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apennine\\_Mountains](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apennine_Mountains). Accessed May 1, 2022)

<sup>3</sup> Benevento is a city and *comune* (administrative division) in the Campania region of Italy. (See "Benevento." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benevento>. Accessed May 1, 2022.)

<sup>4</sup> Florence is the capital city of the Tuscany, a central Italian region. (See "Florence." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence>. Accessed May 1, 2022.)

<sup>5</sup> Bologna is the capital city of the northern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna. ("Bologna." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bologna>. Accessed May 1, 2022.)

I have a very nice relationship with my mother, very close. That is obviously I know people who have relationships with their own mothers which look much more like friendly relationships, you know? Mine isn't quite at that level, however I feel very comfortable talking with my mother about many things, we share a bunch of ideas and then anyway there's communication, there's an expression of affection, so from this point of view, that is, in the end I feel as if she was the one who basically raised me. She's also the person who takes care of the kids, takes care of the house, but she also takes care of—let's say—the more material things, in the sense that my mother is the main wage-earner in my family, it has always been like that and so basically, she does everything. My father is a bit of an absent figure, a bit like someone who's there but not there, in the sense that he isn't worth much to me, that is for my personal growth he didn't have this great value so, I don't know... And with my brothers, my brothers too or just my parents?

**BG: Yes.**

CR: With my older brother, being older by only two years—that is, in childhood we were rather close—we kind of grew up together, we used to play games together, games with our cousins, mutual friends and birthday parties, etc. Then obviously I got away a bit in adolescence. What I regret a little is that fundamentally this adolescent estrangement, which is something rather natural from what I see around me, especially going by stereotypes between a brother and a sister—this adolescent detachment can be normal and actually it has never been resolved. That is, we have taken different paths, my brother is really another person than me, that is, he is a sports lover, of any type of sport, in particular basketball, but actually he's an all-around sportsman; on the other hand, I have absolutely zero—I have never participated in sports, I'm not interested, I was more interested in books, studies. My brother never wanted to study, he just never had this kind of intellectual interest, he's someone with much more, let's say, other interests. So, this distance hasn't ever healed after adolescence unfortunately, and so actually, now we live in two different cities, we don't see each other often if ever, and we don't have this great relationship, let's say, that is really we share nothing. But yes, in the end anyway, I think about him with respect, trust, and family affection, but there isn't a great relationship.

**BG: And with the younger one?**

CR: With the younger one, on the other hand, yes, because being little, so he was the only brother. I had some younger cousins, but he was the only brother who I saw grow up, really from when he was little, in a conscious way, because I was 8 when he was born, so obviously I grew very fond of him. I was very happy that my parents decided to have a child when we were already pretty big. Decision that wasn't totally expected, but it was just a decision and so I was really happy. I raised him together with my parents and it was

really—that is, now I still feel really close to him. He’s going through adolescence right now so the worst of the worst. He’s rebellious, doesn’t study, all the problematic things that a mom, a mother wouldn’t want, but anyway, I remain very close to him, even though we’ve lived far apart for 5 or 6 years, unfortunately.

**LD: Are there other important relatives in your growth?**

CR: What? Excuse me?

**LD: Are there other important relatives present in your growth?**

CR: Yes, absolutely, my grandmother, that is, among my four grandparents, my maternal grandmother was a really important figure, she still is, in our childhood, both at a practical level and a personal growth level of values. My mother, being just like I said, is the one who takes care of the family, the kids, work, everything, has always relied on her mother to take care of us, to cook, to do various things. So we spent a lot of time with her during childhood, but both my brothers and I are all very close to her even now. She’s over 90 now but she continues, she’s still the one who cooks, etc. Therefore, my grandmother, definitely. Also my cousins, especially my maternal cousins, with some I have—in childhood our relationship was very very close. Yes, actually, I live in a building that has three floors built by my paternal grandfather to house his three children. So we live on the first floor and my aunt, my father’s sister lives on the top floor with her kids. Anyway, living in the same building with them we grew up together, in childhood, etc. In theory the other son was supposed to live on the middle floor, but he took another path and did other things, so my paternal family is all there, because then my grandmother lives really close, etc. My maternal family is a little more scattered, but in any case, a small town of 10,000 habitants, so it’s really very concentrated. So anyway, I spent a lot of time with my cousins, grandparents, uncles and aunts, etc. In my opinion, if I had to identify the most important figure in my whole family, first of all my grandmother, some of my cousins and some uncles and aunts.

**BG: Give us some information about the values of your family, both in the political and social sense.**

CR: Okay, like I said, I speak primarily about my mother, but actually, it can also be interesting to tell you how my father looks at things. My mother raised me with clearly leftist values, progressive and in some cases also very radical, that is she was the type of

mother who absolutely didn't let us watch Mediaset<sup>6</sup>, programs on Mediaset, poor quality TV series, things like this [*the largest Italian network of commercial television channels, whose major stakeholder is the Berlusconi*]. There wasn't any form of explicit prohibition, but she was always very selective about things and so let's say that she transmitted this a little. Sometimes I jokingly call it snobbiness, because she really is very selective about products, especially about the TV that she chooses to watch. But she's like this about everything, even food, she always taught us to eat genuine things, things where we know where they come from, etc. When we were little, she absolutely never bought Coca Cola, snacks, things like this. Instead, she always tried to promote—that is, no Kinder [*chocolate bars, part of the Ferrero multinational corporation*], but rather a cake made by Grandma, things like this. From a political point of view, yes, she always sends me leftist messages. I still remember hearing discussions, for example, about the legalization of marijuana or the acceptance of gay people, even if okay, it's another chapter, and things like this. Also, absolutely anti-Berlusconi<sup>7</sup> in her fundamental values and things like this.

Actually my father, compared with my mother, is less cultured, also he's a different person compared to her which means, to help you understand a little what type of person, right now he's been influenced a lot by the values promoted by the Lega<sup>8</sup> [*formerly Lega Nord, or Northern League, a far-right political party*], Cinque Stelle<sup>9</sup> [*Five Star Movement, an anti-corruption populist party that is sometimes anti-immigrant*], anti-immigration, that kind of stuff. So actually, in my opinion, his thinking doesn't even start with assumptions, that is not to justify, no, but he doesn't, in my opinion, actually begin from really racist assumptions, really violent toward others, because actually he's a generous person, welcoming, etc. But being a bit of an ignorant person, anyway little aware, little aware—he

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<sup>6</sup> Mediaset Italia S.p.A. was founded in 1987 by former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and has become Italy's largest commercial broadcaster today. (See "Mediaset." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediaset>. Accessed May 2, 2022.)

<sup>7</sup> Former Prime Minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi served for nine total years in four governments (1994-1995, 2001-2006, 2008-2011). Berlusconi was the leader of a center-right coalition, an alliance of political parties originated in 1993 by the Forza Italia party which merged into The People of Freedom party in 2009. Berlusconi also served as the controlling shareholder of Mediaset. In August of 2013, Berlusconi was famously convicted of tax fraud by the Court of Cassation, where he served his sentence through social community work. He died in 2023. (See "Silvio Berlusconi." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silvio\\_Berlusconi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silvio_Berlusconi). Accessed Dec. 23, 2023.)

<sup>8</sup> The Northern League for the Independence of Padania (Lega Nord) is a right-wing, conservative Italian political party founded in 1989 by Umberto Bossi as a federation of six regional parties from northern Italy. Lega Nord is currently led by former Deputy Prime Minister of Italy and former Minister of the Interior Matteo Salvini. Lega Nord promotes the secession of the North (Padanian nationalism) and Euroscepticism. (See "Lega Nord." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lega\\_Nord](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lega_Nord). Accessed May 2, 2022.)

<sup>9</sup> The Five Star Movement (M5S) is a populist, anti-establishment, big tent or catch-all party founded by Beppe Grillo and Gianroberto Casaleggio in 2009. Former Prime Minister of Italy Giuseppe Conte serves as the current leader and president of M5S. The M5S supports some right-wing policies including anti-immigration, while promoting left-wing policies such as green and environmental politics. (See "Five Star Movement." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five\\_Star\\_Movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Star_Movement). Accessed May 3, 2022.)

hasn't traveled much. Yes, he's very interested in culture, he's an artist, he loves nature, etc., he often watches a lot of documentaries, but he is in no way, for example, aware of his own privilege, he isn't aware of many things, and so fundamentally it is easy, I realize, to deceive him with political messages with no consistency, zero. And so anyway in the end it becomes very conflictual between them, between my parents, but fundamentally my mother is a bit, let's say, she has given up a little, in the sense that they've been together for 30 years I think, so there isn't much to do. Then anyway, in my opinion, the ideas of a person who reaches that age can only degenerate.

**LD: What types of messages did you receive about gender and sexuality?**

CR: Well, from a gendered point of view obviously I received an very normative involuntary education, in the sense that there is a difference in how my brothers and I are treated, and a difference in expectations, a difference... Yes, just in conversations that they had with us... There was this division of household chores—I was the one who had to clear the table, do the dishes; my brother on the other hand maybe at most my mom sent him to buy something at the supermarket or to take down “heavy things” in the garage—you know, these things. Often also extremely sexist messages, especially coming from my father. For example, I don't know, my father, my brother ever since he went out with his friends, at the very beginning in adolescence he was always busy with friends, always hanging out with them, etc. Every time, my father teased him by saying that he was going out to look for girls—that is, from about the age of 13—okay, it's a joke, but anyway, by repetition, it gets internalized. Then in any case, my father, sexism is just inside of him in the sense that he would totally never dream of helping his wife in one of the myriad things that she does, he totally enjoys all of the privileges of being the man of the house.

Then anyway sometimes I also heard him talking about other people, don't know, starting with family friends, my mother's friends, or women in general or even TV characters. I don't know like, okay, Litizzetto<sup>10</sup> [*a popular female comedian on TV and radio*] or even simply a female TV news anchor—and I'm not talking about sexually objectifying comments, I'm just talking about denigrating comments, but kind of joking, but really reflecting his true thoughts, a little unaware, so anyway always like this. Then also, obviously, homophobia, of course, obviously, without even mentioning it, not on my mother's part. My mother certainly—that is, the awareness came when I came out, so I began to tell her a little about things to make her think about certain things. But in general, she started with an open mind; my father a bit less. So, these were the messages, more or less, about this issue.

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<sup>10</sup> Luciana Littizzetto is an Italian television actress and stand-up comedian, most famous for her political and feminist comedy. (See “Luciana Littizzetto.” Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luciana\\_Littizzetto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luciana_Littizzetto). Accessed May 5, 2022.)

**LD: Messages about how to resolve social and political problems?**

CR: Yes, so this is connected to the earlier question about the values that I grew up with. My mother often discusses politics with me, she even did it when I was younger, maybe a bit like this during high school, etc. Anyway, she always—there was never any doubt about her values, simply always and exclusively leftist, against any authoritarianism, thinks like that. On the other hand, my father often, like I already said, especially lately, we could say in the last I don't know, 5-6 years (anyway, not very recently), he's always more, always talks more about the need for a dictatorship, things like that—even a bit unaware. But, anyway the fact that when a person makes a mistake you have to get rid of them—not physically—that is, in the sense of getting rid of them politically, and it takes a person who commands and it takes a strong person and so on. All things that obviously my mom would never approve of, so even on this, two completely different visions. And the same thing about minorities, migrants, social problems, everything.

**BG: What is the story linked to your coming out? That is, we are talking about how—the story that you created yourself—the narrative that you have created and that you use as a tool in your activism, sharing with others, the example, and so also a story where you have the authority to decide when, how to share it, and so also tell us if there were or are cases in which you decide not to share it.**

CR: Yes, I'm really thinking about the question, the way you asked me, what you underlined saying that effectively, being an activist, it's true that the coming out story isn't simply a personal story but becomes a narrative that can also be a tool. So, I think that my—I think that actually in whatever coming out story there are a bunch of educational elements that can be potential tools and I think that there are also in my... So I came out when I was 17, to my mother, in a deliberate and premeditated way, reckless, so to say, thoughtless, without giving much thought to. Because anyway, at 17 [laughs] had been with my first girlfriend for some months and that's it. We came out to my mother and, to help you understand the picture that I gave you about my mother, imagine, 1) that I respect her as a person; 2) she's a progressive, open, leftist person, so my expectation was—a very difficult step, very complicated to do, but that once I did it I would feel relieved and that I would find acceptance and understanding. Actually, it wasn't like this, because evidently my mother, despite everything, wasn't ready, like nobody ever is for something like this. So when I went there and told her this, she found herself totally unprepared—she said—first of all she showed really strong disappointment, as if the person injured was her, and then anyway she carried on a bit with random stereotypes, the usual things some say, “Oh well, maybe it's a phase, but you care, now that you do...blah blah blah.” So, it wasn't exactly the reaction that I expected. Anyway, I felt really really bad. I asked her to not tell my father. Or



actually, it seemed obvious to me that she wouldn't tell because I didn't want to come out to my father.

Despite this, some months later my mother felt the need to try to tell my father, but she didn't succeed because—that is, my father is a typical Southern man and a person who clearly doesn't know how to deal with his feelings, in the sense that he's a product of the most total heteronormativity and so I imagine my mom couldn't tell him something like this, she tried to do it, but she didn't succeed. So obviously what my father perceived was that “My wife has to tell me something, but she can't say it.” And so he created a mental film where my mother probably was cheating on him, things like that. So he reacted violently, not toward her, but—that is, like, he started to yell, to rant things—insults, picking up objects in the house, destroying them, smashing chairs and all these things here. So it wasn't an isolated episode, sometimes these fights happened and my father completely lost control, and in that case... I don't remember if I was alone in the house or if my brother was also home. Anyway, when my father left, at a certain point, I went to my mother who was in her room and I asked her what was happening, because I really didn't understand what was going on, that is, I only knew that my father had lost his temper and she said that she had tried to tell him and she wasn't able to do it and that. So, who knows what he was thinking and so he was reacting like that. Anyway, my mother was devastated, crying, etc., but not just about what had happened, but just about the fact itself. She had tried to keep it inside for months, but she wasn't able to do it, it was something that made her feel bad and, in that moment, she shared with me a bunch of her fears, about the fact that this fact this thing would make my life difficult, about the fact that, I don't know, that there would be people who wouldn't understand me, and so on.

And then, when my father returned, obviously, he hadn't gotten over it at all, and then he wanted to know what was the point. And so, I had to come out to him in that context to calm him down, that is to block this situation and, like I expected, as predicted, he obviously, once he knew what I was telling him, “Okay, you have to calm down now, I'm telling you something, mom simply wanted to tell you that I don't like boys, that I like girls.” And he was completely deflated, then obviously he began to rail against my mom, various insults, etc., blaming her for things and so on, but then the problem for him faded in the sense that his reaction to my coming out was, “Ah, it was just this?” Okay, and then he began to rail against my mom, because fundamentally, in the sense, probably in his head he was thinking “But who the fuck cares” [*laughs*]. In a sense this was more or less his reaction. Then from there the subject absolutely hasn't ever been brought up with him again. It's much better like that, also because when, because of *force majeure*<sup>11</sup> we find

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<sup>11</sup> The French term *force majeure* (superior force) describes an uncontrollable or unanticipated event or effect. (See “force majeure.” Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/force%20majeure>. Accessed May 5, 2022.)

ourselves in a situation where the conversation touches on the subject, that is, I really wish that he doesn't open his mouth because he only says wrong things, fundamentally, and so I don't want to put, that is personally I just don't want to think, I don't want to spend my energy thinking what my father thinks about what I am and what I do, because it makes me feel bad. Anyway, the thought that he passes harsh judgement on people like me makes me think—me too. So it's a subject that I don't bring up with him.

On the other hand, after this episode, so after coming out and this episode, there was a long latent period with my mother where the subject wasn't brought up. That is it was a little like, "Now I told you, I don't have to hide it," because not only don't we talk about it and above all, I had had a girlfriend for two years and she had continued to always treat her like a friend, to call her my friend, to pretend it was nothing. Fundamentally I was with her, I didn't make it a problem, but there was always a little of this veil of pretense, it wouldn't go any further. And then through a series of incidents my mother ended up—she became a colleague of one of my activist comrades, because at that time I had already started doing activism. I started at 17 with a group, a local collective, that we had founded together with other friends and so every Saturday, all year, I went to the city of Benevento [*the major town in her area*] to go to meetings and I was active. It also happened that, that is, it ended up in the newspapers, a little bit of everything, it was something very public, but we weren't talking about it in the family. Then it happened that my mother became colleagues with one of my activist comrades and through him, strangely, through my friend, there was a way to open up the conversation a little—so-so—and now I can say after quite a few years that there is a super-serene dialogue with her about this issue, also very open, also very productive discussion. That is, for an activist who has been in the community for at least a couple of years, etc., sometimes having a fresh perspective from the outside is also good, so I sometimes discuss certain political issues with her to see how an outside person thinks, but non-conforming, anyway non-homophobic nor discriminatory in her attitude.

So yes, this is more or less my complete coming out story and regarding the choice to share it or not, yes, because I am a member of the Cassero school group<sup>12</sup>. I don't know if you know it, I think so, for a year, but it's my first year in the school group and it works like this: when you join the school group you participate in school workshops as an observer, then if you acquire enough experience, you become a trainer. But then there is a third possible figure which is the visitor, it's called, who is a person who shares their own experience with the kids in the class, because the general rule is that a person from the Cassero school

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cassero.it/attivita/scuola/> This is the School and Training Project launched in 2002 by the Cassero LGBTI+ Center of Bologna, which was founded in 1982 with the aim to raise awareness for social and political rights of LGBTI+ individuals in Italy ("Cassero." Cassero LGBTI+ Center. <https://www.cassero.it/chiamo/il-cassero/>. Accessed May 5, 2022.) The project provides training programs for schools at all levels of education aiming at reducing bullying and prejudice in these settings.

group who runs a workshop in a school is an educator and not a gay person; that is, clearly they're a gay person, and they wouldn't do it if they hadn't had all of those experiences, that whole life, etc., but that life isn't put into play at that moment. That is the person goes there to facilitate an activity on a defined theme and they themselves are not put into play for a series of reasons both to really safeguard themselves and also just for the functionality of the activity. And so we use these figures, who are the visitors, when it's necessary to come to the schools and so, that is they come out, they tell their story, they expose themselves to all possible questions, sometimes we just collect questions on post-it notes and so on. Once I was asked to do this, to be the visitor and so I told this story that I told you to the coordinator of the school group and she asked me if I felt like sharing it and told me basically what the context would be and so on. Then actually it didn't happen—for logistical reasons, that workshop wasn't held, but yes, in that case, for example, it was a real choice to put into play your story as a narrative not of the truth, but of what your truth is, to use it like an instrument, an educational tool for the young women and men at the school.

**LD: How do you think that your childhood and the relationships with your family influenced the person that you are, in particular with regard to your activism?**

CR: I think that they had a strong influence both, being as my family, I imagine like many Italian families, is a family where some values were foisted on me that I find, if nothing else, a bit constricting from the point of view of gender roles, of the absolute invisibility of some realities like, for example, the existence of gay, lesbian people. That is, however, this still leads you to perceive the necessity of getting out of that environment, first of all, to get to know an environment where certain things can be discussed and then try to change society to make tomorrow's family a little more open from this point of view. From a more "positive" point of view I think that, I repeat, the figure of my mother was very very—that is, being a person who I respect and who I take as a model, anyway, she really influenced me in my political activity. She too was a political activist in the past, she was also a candidate for local government in my town, she was the president of a cultural association. They did various types of activities, like, I don't know, local folklore or carnivals, things like that. They also opposed a certain type of town government that they didn't agree with and so the whole environment around my parents was rather like this. And so yes, in this sense I don't feel like I am a bit like some of my friends tell me, the opposite of my parents, definitely opposite of my father, that's just a question of the person, but with respect to my mother I feel like I follow in her footsteps a bit, let's say, from some points of view, definitely not all, but—

**BG: Your first political action?**

CR: So yes, when you asked that question I had to think a little because I don't know exactly if I can identify a first political action, but the memory that came to mind when I thought about it was "Spirit Day"<sup>13</sup> of 2013, I believe, or 2012, I believe 13, but it was the day of the spirit that is celebrated, it seems to me, in November, October, I don't remember any more. Anyway, it's an international anniversary which commemorates victims of homophobia and the spirit, the color of the spirit is purple, so the people dress in purple, something is done that involves the color purple, etc. We started with our collective, a collective which then became an association, but at that time it was only a collective, to celebrate Spirit Day every year and so the first political action that I am able to remember, if I'm not mistaken from a chronological point of view, was 2013 Spirit Day. We participated in the Volunteer's Day, something like that, in my city of Benevento, and there were these various stands, and we took up one stand, and we distributed flyers a bit, intercepting passersby. We had this large white bedsheet where the passersby could leave messages, and in fact I remember that something that we also talked about in the following years, it stayed with us, these young people who took the marker and wrote "Go away, shithead fags" *[laughs]* on this bedsheet, but there were also so many messages of support, tons, so many people who stopped and inquired. And so actually it was really nice, because in my city there is nothing—that is, I lived in a small town in the countryside of this city that is "provincial," even though it's a Regional County Seat and absolutely nothing exists, before the collective, absolutely nothing existed regarding LGBT issues, absolutely nothing, totally zero. So basically, anything we did, even hanging up a bedsheet, was a political action and had pioneering value, let's say. So this is probably the first.

**BG: Do you live in Bologna?**

CR: Yes.

**BG: Since when?**

CR: I've lived in Bologna for 2 years, but I left home when I was 19 and lived in Milan<sup>14</sup>, initially, for 4 years.

**BG: Student?**

CR: What?

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<sup>13</sup> Spirit Day has occurred since 2010, on the third Thursday in October, during National Bullying Prevention Month as a day of visibility for bullied LGBTQIA+ youth. (See "About #SpiritDay." GLAAD. <https://www.glaad.org/2016/spiritday/about>. Accessed May 5, 2022.)

<sup>14</sup> Milan is a northern Italian city and capital of the Lombardy administrative region. (See "Milan." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

**BG. Did you study in Milan?**

CR: Yes.

**BG: What did you study in Milan?**

CR: I studied languages in Milan, at IULM<sup>15</sup>, which is a private university, and I lived there for four years because I finished the 3-year undergraduate degree and I worked for a year and a half in a company where I had done an internship, and then I worked. The company deals with organizational support for European projects. European projects—billions, like—that specific type was a project aimed at high school kids, not academic high schools, but what we call vocational schools, like professional and technical, let’s say, in various European countries and who come to Italy to do an internship. And our company was giving organizational support, so many people who knew languages were needed and so I worked there for a year and a half. Then, because I had finished my degree, there was a possibility to continue to work there, but the conditions didn’t economically satisfy me, but I decided to change environments, so I came to Bologna and now I’m registered in the Master’s level program to teach Italian to foreigners at UNIBO<sup>16</sup> [*University of Bologna*]. This is my second year and so theoretically I’ve finished, but probably I’ll graduate in March, because I still have to take some university exams.

**BG: During your undergraduate program in Milan and even now...during your undergraduate program apart from the activism at Cassero that you do outside the university, did you participate, were there first of all LGBT groups, did you participate in these groups, like...give us some information.**

CR: Well, the short answer is no. At IULM there wasn’t a very lively student association environment, in particular there wasn’t an LGBT group and I believe there still isn’t one now. In the first year I was added to a Facebook group called “IULM Against Homophobia” that wasn’t ever active, and I never did anything, I don’t know if maybe it had been active in the past, but totally zero. There wasn’t university activism at IULM. However, I came in

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<sup>15</sup> The University Institute of Modern Languages (IULM) was founded by Senator Carlo Bo and Professor Silvio Baridon in 1968 as the first Italian university centered on the study of languages. IULM is in Milan. (See “History and Mission.” IULM. <https://www.iulm.it/en/iulm/chi-siamo/storia-e-missione>. Accessed May 5, 2022.)

<sup>16</sup> The University of Bologna (Italian: Alma Mater Studiorum -- Università di Bologna) was founded in 1088 in Bologna, Italy by a small group of students. The University of Bologna has spanned from the Middle Ages to the present-day, making it the longest established research university known to the Western world. (“Our History.” Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna. <https://www.unibo.it/en/university/who-we-are/our-history>. Accessed May 5, 2022.)

contact with university LGBT activism, for example, through Milan universities at Bicocca<sup>17</sup> and then the State University<sup>18</sup>—so, other universities, and never in a very involved way. Let's say that in my Milan period my commitment to activism was lower than usual. I did some things with Arcigay Milano<sup>19</sup>, but not—the milieu of Milanese LGBT activism was always a bit difficult for me, maybe a bit because of a series of personal circumstances, too. But anyway, in that period, when I did activist things, I always did them without getting too involved, let's say in the associations, collectives with whom I did them, but now in contrast in Bologna it's totally different, I am very very involved within Cassero, in various groups, etc. In responsible roles, but not with the university. I'm not involved in the university LGBT environment.

**LD: Ah ok. In your opinion, what are the factors that pushed you to become an activist?**

CR: Ah, ok... I don't know. I think maybe a basic personal attitude...

**LD: Personality, life experiences, etc. The factors that push you and there are also people who have had similar experiences but who don't become activists. In your opinion, what distinguishes you from them?**

CR: So, first of all, maybe a general sense of social justice that maybe the person perceives not only as an abstract value, but when in fact you perceive it as something you really care about, at that point you are willing to commit your time and energy to it. So not in the sense of "All men are born equal," things like that... "Yes, I agree, but okay I'm committing myself to making something happen." So, a bit like this. Then, surely the environment, the oppression of the environment in which one lives is a strong factor that, in my opinion, triggers reaction. Having lived in a village, in a small town of a provincial city in the South; in my high school, gays didn't exist in theory and in the family, we didn't talk about it, in the countryside there's nothing, not in the city either, so the oppression of the surrounding environment pushes you to react. Then also the knowledge, when you come in contact with certain things, you begin to educate yourself, to know, to understand, to read, to study

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<sup>17</sup> The University of Milano-Bicocca (Italian: *Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca*, UNIMIB) is a public multidisciplinary university founded in 1998, as a result of splitting from the University of Milan. (See "University of Milano-Bicocca." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University\\_of\\_Milano-Bicocca](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Milano-Bicocca). Accessed May 5, 2022.)

<sup>18</sup> The University of Milan (Italian: *Università degli Studi di Milano*), founded in 1924, is an acclaimed public research university in Milan featuring ten schools spanning several disciplines. (See "University of Milan." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University\\_of\\_Milan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Milan). Accessed May 5, 2022.)

<sup>19</sup> CIG Arcigay Milano is Italy's first and largest LGBTQIA+ non-profit founded in 1980 and headquartered in Bologna. Arcigay is made up of over 400 volunteers supporting the Milanese community and is currently led by President Flavio Romani. (See "About." CIG Arcigay Milano. <https://www.arcigaymilano.org/about/>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

certain things or simply to inform yourself with newspapers and so on, then you being to gather a bit of data about a situation that isn't just your personal experience, your personal anger, or your personal will for social justice, but it's a bit of the systemization that pushes you to say "Okay, there's something not right in my society and I really want to work to change it." So yes, I would say these may be the factors. Then surely also a bit, I believe, it might be a question of—actually, I think there was a question among those you sent to about the importance of relationships, right?

**LD: Yes.**

**BG: The next question.**

CR: Ah yes, exactly. I think that it is also an important factor, because I came in contact with LGBT activism through, let's say, in an almost casual way, in the sense that the first time I heard talk about stuff like this in my town was when one of our classmates, who was in school with my girlfriend, told us that there was a flash mob in Benevento about something. It wasn't clear what, probably I didn't even have the vocabulary to understand what it was at that time, so nothing, we went to this flash mob, it was something against homophobia. We went to the flash mob, it was actually May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia<sup>20</sup> and, at that flash mob, I realized that the person who had organized it was a guy I knew in various contexts—you know, a small town—he had come to Catechism<sup>21</sup> with me. So then I looked for him on Facebook, I added him, and we started to talk and from there, it was he who introduced me to this world, because that flash mob was just a sort of beginning point for this collective that he had founded because basically he also realized that it was a total desert here. That is, he had gone from being a "very popular" boy in his high school, who had a girlfriend, to being targeted because he had ended up falling in love with a boy. So he decided to say, "Okay, so things are like this, it is how you say," and he realized, however, that this could be the inspiration for other people. So he put together these people and anyway, he trusted me a lot at the beginning, and in sum, he involved me a lot in the process of creating this thing. But then he left because he moved to Milan after high school, and so actually he left us with the responsibility for what he had created. So it was thanks to this, this hook from a person who I knew, a friendship, obviously in this

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<sup>20</sup> The International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (May 17) was first conceptualized in 2004 by Louis-Georges Tin – centering its mission on fighting homophobia. In 2009 transphobia was attached to the campaign along with biphobia in 2015. May 17<sup>th</sup> is especially celebrated in Europe and Latin America where street marches, parades, and festivals are held in support of the LGBTQIA+ community. (See "International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Day\\_Against\\_Homophobia,\\_Transphobia\\_and\\_Biphobia#Goals\\_and\\_activities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Day_Against_Homophobia,_Transphobia_and_Biphobia#Goals_and_activities). Accessed May 9, 2022.)

<sup>21</sup> Catechism summarizes the central beliefs of the Catholic Church through the illustration of religious doctrine, traditionally taught to children and converts. (See "Catechism." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechism>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

environment you create other friendships, you create friendships that have a value that you don't find in other friendships, both in what you share deeply relating to certain experiences, also the experience of coming out, a very unifying experience, anyway going through the same oppression is something that permits you to have a ton of common experiences, a series of things, even stupid things, or that maybe don't actually have value, but in that moment you begin to hang out with people like yourself and from that point of view, given that it is really difficult in an oppressive environment to recognize, to know and recognize yourself, when you begin to do it—you create a network and so then this network pushes you to continue to—also to move forward, because obviously I think that activism is something that is also a value for those who do it, not only a sacrifice for society, it's a part of your life and so obviously all the people that do it with you are part of your life.

**LD: In your opinion, how is the relationship with other groups of activists in the society and the political system?**

CR: So, it's a complicated question, because obviously we don't really know what the LGBT movement is, in the sense that it's many things that have different relationships with other groups in society. So, if for example, a certain part of activism in which I have always took part and with whom I identified, has a relationship of, not repulsion, with respect to institutions and also to the party system, there are parts of the movement that have a total repulsion for everything that is the system, the Institution, the party, Politics with a capital P, etc. And so, let's say that I can talk about what I am and what I see, that is, in Italy the LGBT movement, a little like in other countries, tries to obtain a series of recognitions from politics, which is normal in a democracy, and so it sometimes finds itself to be excessively, justifiably, associated with particular political parties. Certainly I also think that as a question of intersectional reasoning the LGBT movement doesn't position itself on the right, that is, no way, because obviously the left, in theory, in how we conceive it, should be for the acceptance of all of the minorities... *[there is a 12 second gap in the recording]* ... right, even if it isn't absolutely true in some cases.

Anyway, I think that the relationship with the parties is very complex and one thing is politics, another thing is the parties. It's one thing to be apolitical, one thing is non-partisan, one is never apolitical, if one does activism it's absurd to think so, but the relationship with the parties can be frustrating, limiting, complicated, and so, in my opinion, a lot can be harmful, in my opinion, for the LGBT movement in some cases. Certainly from a politically pragmatic point of view it's sometimes necessary, because you can't ignore the fact that, for example, a party like the Democratic Party<sup>22</sup> in Italy has a minimal LGBT agenda *[laughs]* at

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<sup>22</sup> The Democratic Party (Italian: *Partito Democratico*, PD) is a social-democratic, Christian leftist political party in Italy founded in 2007 through the merging of multiple center-left parties including the Democrats of



least on the part of the Party proper which advances—with very few results in the last government, but at least something was achieved and in any case a recognition by the law in Italy is really very poor; we had a law for trans people<sup>23</sup> and civil unions<sup>24</sup>, end of story. Essentially politics ignores us, so the relationship is definitely complicated, frustrating like I said from this point of view. With other groups in society, preferably it would be a very close relationship, intertwined, always attending to intersectionality, and it isn't always so, that is, there is always that question of—being LGBT doesn't count, doesn't have value or it's invisible in the community—I don't know, migrants, being migrant doesn't count, it's invisible in the LGBT community, which is faulty reasoning, but unfortunately it is so. For example, with Cassero we worked in some contexts with Piazza Grande<sup>25</sup>, which deals with homeless people, poor people, below the poverty line. Many homeless people identify as gay, they are part of the LGBT universe, but it's a complicated intersectionality, there are groups that are able to establish some honest relationships between different movements, or in any case, different environments, but it's definitely very complicated.

**LD: If you had to choose one important point in your story from which other people could learn, what would it be? Is there some message that you want other people to understand about your story?**

CR: So this question puts me in a bit of difficulty, because I don't know if I would like to choose a moment that I would like other people to know. Maybe the first thing that comes to mind that can be actually, that can have a message, is my experience of coming out, it made me understand that... Fundamentally, the role of a person who finds themselves a minority in a society is inevitably a role... *[gap in audio]* ... of having to tell us, of having to expose ourselves, of having to make us instruments of a change that includes us, etc., it should be a duty for a person who is in the minority, but the facts show that everyone—

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the Left and The Daisy. (See “Democratic Party (Italy).” Wikipedia.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic\\_Party\\_\(Italy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_(Italy)). Accessed May 9, 2022.)

<sup>23</sup> In 1982, Italy became the third nation to allow transgender people to legally change their gender (Law 164/1982). This law has been criticized for its requirement for transgender persons to undergo gender-affirming surgery when “necessary”. (See “LGBT Rights in Italy.” Wikipedia.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT\\_rights\\_in\\_Italy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Italy). Accessed May 9, 2022.)

<sup>24</sup> On May 11, 2016, the Italian Chamber of Deputies approved the civil union bill which provides a type of legal recognition similar to marriage for same-sex couples. This law has been considered discriminatory, being civil unions are not the same as same-sex marriage, while additionally not allowing a person in a same-sex civil union to legally adopt their partner's biological child. (“Italy Approves Same-Sex Civil Unions.” New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/12/world/europe/italy-gay-same-sex-unions.html>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

<sup>25</sup> *Piazza Grande* is an Italian grassroots newspaper which was first published in 1993. The newspaper served as a platform for marginalized individuals to share their stories, to provide financial support to those individuals, and to combat exclusion and affirm the rights of homeless persons. The newspaper has since become an established organization providing services including housing, social services, and counseling. (See “Newspaper Serves Italians Experiencing Homelessness.” The Streetlight.

<https://thestreetlight.pages.tcnj.edu/tag/piazza-grande/>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

that is, I expected my coming out to be a moment of arrival and instead I realized that it was simply opening of a door and finding a world that doesn't understand you and to whom you have to explain what you are, who you are, why it isn't a problem, etc. So fundamentally, yes, it's something you can fight against, but that in some way needs to be accepted, that is our lives are not taken for granted, they aren't taken for granted, they raise questions, doubts, maybe even rejection, hate, fear, things like that. And you have to make up for it, take it on, or if you don't want to take it on, you need to find spaces and support, let's say, to carry on your own existence in peace, but not that you can expect that everything goes smoothly. Even to become a bit the parents of your own parents in some cases, that is, to take them by the hand and accompany them to a world that they don't know and that we hope, let's say, we can pass as normal.

**BG: Tell us your definition of activism?**

CR: A definition of activism?

**BG: Of your activism; what activism is for you.**

CR: So, my activism is definitely feminist activism, transfeminist, LGBTQIA and it's definitely political activism, not party, it's a "grassroots" activism, in the sense that... I like this aspect of activism that is something, it's a world where you build things yourself, that is they aren't there and you build them, because if you don't build them, nobody else does it. So, yes, probably my activism is this, creating things that aren't there in our society, that can be spaces, that can be cultural products, that can be events, that can be associations, anything, that aren't in our society because they aren't given and so you do it for yourself, your minority subject who needs it. This, in my opinion, is the sense of activism, that is, creating the conditions for you and people like you to feel better in an oppressive society.

**LD: What does the word feminism mean to you?**

CR: The word feminism means to me *[laughs]*, it's definitely a quintessential value, a quintessential value starting obviously from the fact that I am a woman, that is, I identify as a cisgender lesbian woman, and as such I suffer the oppression that my gender suffers and so I feel really strongly the need for this value and I think that it's a value that must inform all of my activism. So that as a lesbian activism I am a feminist, but I am also one in general, in my life, it's a really important value for me. Like I said earlier, it is always an issue of intersectionality, that is, I can't forget about suffering this type of oppression, simply because I am fighting for a different question that then intersects. That is, homophobia is a

bit of a generic word, but exactly like the ex-Arcilesbica<sup>26</sup> lesbian activists in Bologna taught me, lesbophobia has some of the peculiarities that are intersections with female oppression. So for me, feminism, in this sense, is a fundamental part of my battles.

**BG: So, one last question. Tell us how important the language is for you and what you think also of these expedients that could be used for a more inclusive language. Actually, in certain contexts probably they cause the opposite reaction, that is a contrary reaction.**

CR: Yes, so, first of all, as a language student, also as an aspiring Italian language teacher, the language is very important to me. I am aware that, when we talk about these things, things like gender, LGBT, it's a language with huge limits and its data, that is, not intentional, but limits of the language itself and I think that there are two levels of action to change the language. The first is what I mentioned at the beginning, that is, the fact that we have named a series of things, words that would be absurd, incomprehensible, for a person who isn't a part of certain environments, who doesn't have particular interests, who didn't maybe make a minimally interested study of these themes, this is true. But this is only the lexical<sup>27</sup> level. On the other hand, from the point of view of the morphology of a language it is much more difficult, in my opinion, to act, in the sense that while—you can fight for some words to enter the language, in the common use through diffusion, through extensive use, also through training and so I don't know how to say when we go in the schools with the Cassero school group, we explain what a transgender person is, but we explain that there's another word, too, cisgender, that describes what for them is the norm. So giving names to things, naming them, spreading them for the knowledge in this sense: it's the lexical level.

At a different level, the morphology of the language is much more complicated because the Italian language is a gendered language in all aspects and so we can definitely find expedients. There are expedients which I personally also try to use, in the spoken language sometimes it is harder, obviously. In the written language I practically almost always try to use the asterisk, to avoid putting on the final vowel ending, etc. Yet they are limiting, in the sense that from a communicative point of view they can create confusion and can become pretentious—it's difficult to act in that environment, in my opinion. I don't know, for example, very often in some contexts we support using the feminine political plural. In a non-feminist context, I would create confusion. That is, it can give me an involuntary sense

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<sup>26</sup> Arcilesbica Nazionale, founded in 1996, is a non-profit dedicated to defending lesbians from discrimination and promoting lesbian culture. The current president of Arcilesbica is Cristina Gramolini. (See "Arcilesbica." Wikipedia. <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arcilesbica>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

<sup>27</sup> Lexical is an adjective meaning, "of or relating to words or the vocabulary of a language as distinguished from its grammar and construction"; in this context it refers to the fact that this level is merely about the word itself. (See "Lexical." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lexical>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

of exclusion of men, in that moment, in that conversation, and so practically speaking this expedient is a bit limiting from a communicative point of view. From the point of view maybe of writing and especially of communication within the LGBT movement it can work, but it's necessary to realize, like I was saying earlier, that very often certain things we talk about don't exist for the outside world, so when we talk about it there's this necessity to dilute the level of complexity, unfortunately, and so, yes, it's a language—we use a gendered language, binary and all the rest, we try to use loopholes to not do it, but *[laughs]* this is—

**BG: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us that you haven't said?**

CR: No, actually no, more than anything else I wanted to ask you what motivated you to be interested in this parallel with the United States, why do research that puts together the experience in Bologna with the experience of the United States? That is, it seems like a very interesting thing, but I wanted to know what exactly prompted you to do it.

**BG: The choice of Bologna, actually, is very random, because actually I am here, that is I moved a year ago from the United States, to begin this new job with another college that has a history similar to where I worked before; also, we wanted to collaborate; also the fact that Lauren has been studying Italian for some years. So there were some convergences that brought us here. All in all, I believe Bologna was an excellent choice because—**

**LD: Yes.**

**BG: The people we contacted responded very positively.**

**LD: Yes, quickly.**

**BG: And you were even interested in doing this interview from so far away, with Zoom, it's almost 2020!**

**LD: Yes, the activists are very "active" and also very interested, very different from... Last summer I was in Rome for the same thing and you all are very interested, very different from the activists in Rome.**

**BG: And then this week we talked...you are the seventh...very different voices.**

**LD: Yes, different.**

**BG:** And indeed, there are essentially different voices, age, and experiences, so the interest in this sector was interesting to us to understand what is behind it, because you all arrived here. And in my opinion, there are points—obviously, there are common points of contact...

**LD:** Yes, I really like the question about language. It is something we talk about in the United States, but it is easier in English because it's more popular, but it is something very very important for my students. Smith College<sup>28</sup> is a women's university and there are a lot of trans activists and many other activists.

**BG:** In that context where I work, and so actually also when I worked there, it was an Italian department and the language was taught to students who would then spend a period of studying abroad, for a semester or a year. One question a student asked me the other year was "In Italian, if I want to use 'they' pronouns, can I use 'loro'<sup>29</sup>?" No, actually, I didn't really have an answer, you can't use "loro" because actually the conversation on these issues in Italy isn't yet at those levels. And then because there are other expedients, actually, I didn't yet know about the "u..."

**LD:** Yes, it's interesting also because the students—it's a question of identity at this age and so questions—

**BG:** So it's not difficult to find students, who at 20 years of age identify themselves as activists above all, I must say, especially LGBT activists, but then as you have often said, you already show at this age an intersectionality of interests... Two or three of you spoke about the intersectionality between social justice in the rights of migrants. This is our problem, our situation, in the United States, but for very different reasons, so in the conversations with the students a lot emerges, but it comes out more with regard to the rights of minorities, so women, questions about sexual freedom, of police violence, of authority, also family violence, the problem of LGBT teens who are homeless, the incidence is much greater in the United States compared to Italy. She [*turns to Lauren*] is a psychologist, she explains it as a different social value, but also with the cultural value of family.

**LD:** Yes.

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<sup>28</sup> Smith College, founded in 1871, is an all-women's liberal arts undergraduate college located in Northampton, Massachusetts. (See "Smith History." Smith College. <https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/smith-history>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

<sup>29</sup> (English: they)

**BG: It's easier in the United States to send teenagers away because they are LGBT. So there's a lot behind this research, like language, culture, history, different stories of activism because... Today we didn't talk about it because it wasn't appropriate, but one question I have is "what is activism?" I introduce it saying, "In my opinion, activism doesn't exist in Italy," but it just doesn't exist linguistically. If you Google "activism," no, the first results that we find aren't the activism that we talked about today, they are pedagogical<sup>30</sup> activism that more or less revolves around theories from the 1920-1930s, and to define different types of activism we have to resort to other words: militancy, social activism, volunteerism, active citizenship, which all express a different aspect, and it's for you all, your activism translates literally into American activism. So, all of these interests come into play.**

CR: Okay, very interesting.

**BG: We hope to share something with Bologna in about a year, because the goal is that it would be nice to share these data we are collecting with others.**

CR: Certainly, it would be interesting, in this sense I think that I can't speak for Cassero, because it's a gigantic association as you know and complex as a whole, but it would be nice if this situation could also involve Cassero, it would be very interesting and easier.

**LD: Yes.**

**BG: Men's point of view would also be interesting, maybe next year we'll also have men...**

**LD: There aren't any men... [they laugh]**

CR: OK.

**BG: Thanks.**

**LD: Thanks.**

**BG: Can we ask you what you're doing now, where you are?**

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<sup>30</sup> Pedagogical is an adjective defined as, "of, relating to, or befitting a teacher or education". (See "Pedagogical." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pedagogical>. Accessed May 9, 2022.)

CR: I'm in Slovenia, In the Slovenian mountains on the border with Austria for an exchange on LGBT activism.

**LD: Yes, I see the flag.**

CR: Yes, this is in the office, we are here with 36 young people from 6 different countries: Slovenia, Italy, Spain, Greece, Latvia and I don't know, I forgot someone—ah, Bulgaria—and there are five people from every country and we are all more or less engaged at different levels, some a little less, some a little more and all part of the community and we think about what activism is, how to do activism, what are the tools of activism, etc. So, it's related a bit...Very...

**LD: Which language do you speak?**

CR: English... English.

**BG: Have a nice stay and good work, thanks for taking a couple of hours, an hour and a half.**

CR: Thank you to you.

**LD: Thanks.**