The word ‘fanzine’ is a combination of the words ‘fanatic’ and ‘magazine’, whose origins date back to a magazine made by science fiction fans, as well as comics and music from the 1920s to the 1960s. However, they became more popular as a channel for ideological views with the growing production and distribution of fanzines associated to the emergence of the punk movement in the United Kingdom and the United States in the 1970s and 1980s.

Following up on this idea, the Do-IT-Yourself proposal was employed not only as part of music creation, but also as a form of action by agents involved in this scene, who freelanced in activities in their areas. This went from “making their own clothes to organising or producing a record”. This aspect also applies to fanzines, which were used as an alternative means to the traditional press to spread the movements’ ideologies and actions.
Fanzines appear for three main reasons: (1) as a space for expression and discussion among fans of a music genre (band or artist), who do not have space or are forgotten by the traditional music press; (2) serve to bolster an underground music genre (band, artist) whose audience is very restricted; and, finally, (3) they allow fans of a niche musical style to keep connected and enthusiastic.

Thus, fanzines function as a space of freedom of thought and Do It Yourself (DIY) creation, and as an alternative to conventional media, in which a free space is offered to develop ideas and practices, as well as a visual space that is not hindered by formal rules of design and visual expectations.

Although essentially male at the beginning, the female voice gradually gained ground in punk and has endured to today, with hundreds of bands following the musical genre and the spread of ideas of Riot Grrrl, a radical political and cultural movement that resisted the traditional roles of femininity, centred on encouraging girls and women to subvert male dominance in the production and distribution of printed and online fanzines.

This fanzine proposes an approach to these Grrrlzines as ‘communities’ founded on a cultural object that involves producing texts, photos and other materials on the participation of women in the punk scene in Portugal.

Figure 2: Global Riot Fanzine (1996). Source: KISMIF Archive.
PISS THE GRAMMAR. Sexism in grammar.

In Portuguese grammar, as well as many other languages, there is a clear predominance of the grammatical male gender, in which, in certain circumstances, it ultimately encompasses the grammatical female gender.

The male/female dichotomy is rooted in the idea of a biological assumption which served to naturalise and interiorise different valuations, that is, a strong sex and a weak sex, one virile and the other submissive, etc., in which the woman is seen as the “other”.

Writing itself can be seen as a privilege of the male gender, which may explain the reduced participation of women in fanzines, either as editors or as writers of articles or opinion pieces. Interestingly, and representative of what has been said before, when the term fanzine was introduced in Portuguese dictionaries, it became associated to the male article: ‘o’ fanzine (in opposition to the female article, ‘a’).

This issue has always been considered essential in feminist struggles. This is evident from readings of feminist fanzines. We can see the use of various tactics to overcome the perceived grammatical sexism: the use of @, of * or the use of slashes, i.e., used in double form (for example, “contrariadas/contrariados”),

1 Countless public and international organisations have guides to promote non-sexist language. See, for example, Abranches (2009), UNESCO (1999), European Concil (2007), HCE - Haut Conseil à l'Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes (2015), to name just a few.

2 In the X.cute and Sisterly fanzine.

3 In the!Mulibu! and Global Riot fanzine.

4 Zuvía, “Dizer não – porque não?”, !Mulibu!, No. 2.
instead of using the generic male form or the false neutral form (Barreno, 1985). This “alternative” grammatical resource (the so-called inclusive language) is very common, not only in feminist fanzines, but also in the corpus of interviews analysed, intended clearly to subvert grammatical sexism, and thus achieve equal symmetry and visibility in the representations of both sexes.

Ironically, it should be noted that in the article ‘Touradas’ (‘Bullfighting’) by Joana Duarte in the first issue of the X.cute fanzine, such concerns seem to have been forgotten. In a text that is clearly anti-bullfighting, the author questions “Why do men feel so comfortable in the use of their “intelligence” to face irrational animals, who only charge in legitimate defence?” (Joana Duarte, “Touradas”, X.cute, 2005). In this case, concerns with inclusive language were clearly abandoned, leaving however the full weight of the bullfighting blame on the male gender and, as we will see ahead, associating women to nature, to their position as the guardians of nature.

Ecofeminism emerged in the 1980s with the union of two social movements: feminism and ecology. (...) The similarities between patriarchal violence against women, other individuals, and nature were noted. It was then that feminism evolved into a much more enriched and revolutionary concept in which women’s liberation could not be achieved in isolation but rather from a broader struggle, a struggle for the preservation of all life on the planet. (...) There must be a radical and definitive change in this predominantly macho and capitalist mentality, so that the liberation of women and nature can be part of the future built and lived by the next generations (Maria, Ecofeminismo, X.cute, 2005).

This concept was introduced in 1974 by Françoise d’Eaubonne, in the book, Le Féminisme ou la Mort.
We can analyse here the confluence of several struggles, which at first sight could seem far apart, but which ended up sharing the same enemy and, consequently, creating connections to fight it. There is, thus, a focus on the evils of the patriarchy that, apart from provoking innumerable environmental catastrophes and a predatory relationship with animal life, also restrict the freedom of women, particularly with regard to control over their reproductive system (it should be noted that the fanzine dates from 2005 and the decriminalisation of abortion in Portugal only took place in February 2007, established in Law No. 16/2007\(^6\)).

The quote below crystallises what we have said before about bringing together several struggles, in this case, several oppressions, into one single fight:

MULHERES LIBERTÁRIAS *UNIDAS* NÃO CONTRA OS HOMENS, MAS CONTRA O SISTEMA PATRIARCAL E CAPITALISTA, QUE PROMOVE O SEXISMO, A REpressão, O RACISMO, A VIOLÊNCIA, O CONSUMISMO… (Editorial, Mulibu!, 1994).

(“LIBERTARIAN WOMEN *UNITED* NOT AGAINST MEN, BUT AGAINST THE PATRIARCHAL AND CAPITALIST SYSTEM, WHICH PROMOTES SEXISM, REPRESSION, RACISM, VIOLENCE, CONSUMERISM… (Editorial, Mulibu!, 1994).

Another issue, in which we can find an unconscious set of sexist values, is the association between women and nature, easy to find since the beginning of time, when all we have to do is open a book of poetry or prose. As mentioned previously, the male/female dichotomy is rooted in a dichotomised view of the world and, in this specific case, in the division between culture/nature, rational/irrational. Aristotle clearly emphasised the differences between

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6 During an interview with the band Satyagraha, the fanzine focused on a controversial issue at the time: the arrival of the Borndiep (Abortion Boat), belonging to Women on Waves, and subsequent ban by the Portuguese government in August 2004, barring its entry in territorial waters (for a more detailed analysis of this matter, cf. Duarte, 2007). When questioned, the band replied that these events were the result of the “fascist and extreme right tendencies of the current government” and “the backward state of the nation regarding this issue”.

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men and women, considering women more fragile physically and spiritually than men, and who should have authority in the domain of the oikos, i.e., the home (Ferreira, 2006/2007: 142). A socialisation of the biological and a biologisation of the social, in the conception of Pierre Bourdieu, which ultimately crystallises “the differences in nature, inscribed in objectivity (…) which contribute to their existence, at the same time as they are «naturalised», inscribed in a system of differences, all equally natural, at least in appearance” (Bourdieu, 2013: 22).

Interestingly, the postulated ecofeminism, despite being taken as a reinforced force in challenging the patriarchy, may unintentionally reproduce preconceived ideas and clichés on the association between woman/nature, of a feminine nature, and of a mystical relationship between both, which as such make the option for ecofeminism obvious, i.e., make women the guardians of nature (it is not coincidence that the fanzine advocates veganism).

Another link between feminism and nature can be found in the defence of natural and alternative medicines, in both X.cute and !Malibu!, understood as an answer to the western medical model. This cannot be disassociated from a complex process, already studied by Giddens (2005), of the growing distrust of scientific knowledge and expertise, and the manner in which technical knowledge is re-appropriated by laymen (or the downright rejection of scientific conclusions). The “demonopolisation of expertise”, as stated by Beck (2000: 29). And what better example of this demonopolisation of expertise than the following image: a small woman punching a giant doctor, apart from the obvious connotations with the biblical story of David and Goliath, is an excellent summation of a stand against western medical science.
To prove such assertions, they would propose several “remedies from nature” for throat soreness, flu, vaginal and bladder infections, tooth ache, etc. The movement values the earth and the rural, a clear alternative to contemporary society, and, above all, western science. Particularly interesting is the Cuecas Quentes fanzine, which in an issue with 28 pages, 20 are dedicated to natural remedies for a range of health problems, giving also “good reasons” to have and share the issue:

7 The Portuguese version of the English edition of Hot Pantz, edited collectively by Isabelle Gauthier and Lisa Vinebaum, a fanzine in the form of Digital Radio, about Cuecas Quentes, from the 1990s dedicated to “Do It Yourself” gynaecology. Among other matters, it discusses: what is a zine; feminist movements and Do it yourself; women’s cycles; plants and female health; the patriarchy and how to fight it. https://issuu.com/kindalarocha/docs/cuecas_quentes
AGAINST TYPICAL GIRLS. To be a woman in a patriarchal society.

A feature of these feminist fanzines is the criticism of society, understood as backward, misogynist and sexist, as well as reporting on the daily experiences of women in a society with these features, in certain cases, with very intimate descriptions of all the difficulties they experience.

I'm 20 years old and I'm a woman. I am constantly harassed when walking down the street. My mind and body are violated by comments, actions ... from strangers. Every day I am bombarded with images in ads, magazines, television, how I must be what is expected of me, my roles as a woman. (...) My life was deeply affected by this. I cannot ignore this sexist oppression that affects and has always affected my life. I have to talk about it, I have to release the anger, the frustration, even if you do not understand ... Respect! ... Respect is about looking at someone (human & nonhuman) as someone and not as part of a body. It's about communication and understanding (Global Riot, 1996, No. 2).

Often situations occur to which we must be peremptory in our response: NO! But situations often occur in which simply saying does not take excessive and dramatic proportions. (...) It also happens that diverse circumstances, and sometimes unrelated to our will, interpose and almost force us to take sides. Women often, and for reasons of social and cultural order, do not occupy themselves with 'saying no' a particularly active and safe role. I think that, in relation to this issue, it is important to stress that 'saying no' to sex (...) is still more difficult for many women to face the denial of an act which, for their partners, may be particularly regarded as a refusal in the face of their person and the whole relationship (Zuviya, "Say no - why not?", Mulibu !, no. 2).

I DO NOT SHAVE OR WAX BECAUSE ... I DO NOT WANT TO! I reject any and all pressure from anywhere, to make me change and follow the stereotype [sic] of 'acceptable' woman, created by the media and producers of beauty creams, waxes and depilatory creams, products for weight loss, to increase the bust, etc., etc., etc. ... Personally I still feel bad when I notice, in friends and acquaintances, that look of awe and disgust. But my conviction, that I'm all right, is stronger than insecurity and malaise is going to pass (NNAKU, I DO NOT SHAVE BECAUSE ...! Mulibu !, no. 2).
(…) What? 'The Riot' are there in their corner fighting for women's rights! Me? I'm here at the foot of the stage, with my favourite band singing 'vegan is my choice!' Or 'sXe proud!!'. Feminism is for girls. It is for all this shit that I question myself, to what extent is it that people are even what they say they defend! It seems that so many guys are the top of the World because they have a txirt [sic] to say 'Meat just do not eat' or 'Straight Edge X Poison Free' but later when talking about Riot Girl, they do not even know what to say and they go away thinking that only the girls must participate in this fight ... People of these who assume that they're there [sic] in front, shouting the choruses of the bands all happy but at the same time, give a groan to the girl of the long hair (!!), and at the same time wink and give the idea of 'want to go out there talk?', etc. ... this to me, it sucks (Inês, Feminism + women + men = feminism?, Sisterly, No. 2).

However, not all forms of asserting equality of gender are considered acceptable. For example, reporting on the possibility of women volunteering for military service, the !Mulibu! fanzine, in an article called “Tropa no feminino” (‘The army in the feminine’), considers this possibility to be counterproductive, since women can only say they are equal to men
if they act like men, running the risk of losing the essential attributes of “femininity” and questioning the natural right of men to positions of power; if they act like women, they seem incapable and unsuitable to the situation. 

(...) The army contributes nothing to the reduction of sexism, since women tend to become authoritarian. In fact, one of the reasons why some of the girls get ready is to try to overcome the feeling of inferiority caused by society and education in general, relying on arguments such as "I’m going to the army to be able to command men" ( ...). If compulsory military service disgusts me, I think the volunteer still frightens me more, because people are made to go to the army because of money, prospects, facilities and social benefits; becoming capitalist monsters with fascist and racist tendencies, "bourgeoisie" without attitude, who can see nothing more than their own well-being (Patrícia, “Tropa no feminino”, !Mulibu!, No. 2).
...CONCLUSIONS?

The production of Portuguese grrrlzines, notwithstanding their low number, have been decisive for the Riot Grrrl (sub)culture, because the readers become writers, consumers become producers, and the rise in girls who produce fanzines resulted in material and linguistic tactics to embrace and reconfigure traditions of young femininity and opened a space for female punk power.

There have been advancements in the spreading of their ideas, proposals and criticisms. With important reports on life experiences and information on interesting alternative topics for the female public, the Grrrlzines respond to the communities they relate with and these communities feed back into them, through production activities and the pushing of agendas.