(RE)CONSTRUCTING FEMININITIES AND MASCULINITIES
Norther n Portuguese students speak about their lives, desir es and dr eams

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This paper builds on research aimed at understanding how young adults construct citizenship and how they interpret educational policies. The nodal point is constructing femininities and masculinities within school, the family and the public arena, as permeable locations to the construction of citizenship. I argue that the lack of dialogue with young adults may lead them to develop non-reflective thought which, in turn, may foster the reproduction of social order, whereas dialogue may have opposite tendencies. This work is theoretically informed by the epistemological-methodological feminist and critical emancipatory traditions combined with the claim for democratic pedagogic rights and equality of condition as pillars for recognition and informed choice. The qualitative interpretivist approach is supported on focus group discussion and individual interviews.

Keywor ds: citizenship, femininities, masculinities

Intr oduction

Under the influence of the European guidelines that comprise *accountability, assessment,* and *responsibility* (Afonso, 2009), more than before education in Portugal has become concerned with the production of results that can be checked through formal assessment. Greater pressure has been introduced in schools, teachers, and students to produce and increase student results. The fact that these policies did not come together with the introduction of

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more efficient and inclusive ways of «making» education may put at risk the realization of the *democratic pedagogic rights – enhancement, inclusion*, and *participation* (Bernstein, 1996) –, which emerge as requisites in school to foster young adult citizenship. Hence, the political action in *lato sensu* doesn't seem to promote citizenship in *equality of condition* (Baker, Lynch, Cantilon, & Walsh, 2004), a situation that would give young adults the opportunity to be recognized; and school, family, and the public space don't seem to constitute a political space where they can express, feel legitimated and enact citizenship. If there is a risk that school work becomes increasingly more technical in detriment of the human side of the educational relation (Pacheco, 2006), young adults may also be endorsed the role of schooling products, shifting away from their rightful role as *education stakeholders* (Arnot, 2009), which affects other spaces where they construct citizenship.

The theoretical framework in use stands on three arguments. The first is based on the «feminist and critical emancipatory traditions» which defend the assertion of voice as form of collective liberation (Arnot, 2006). It states young adult right to put across their ideas and be heard as citizens today who can interpret and express the social order they live in (Ferreira, 2004). The second derives from Bernstein's «pedagogic democratic rights», and stresses young adult rights of inclusion – that does not involve the absorption of a majority rule, but rather social autonomy, respect for diversity set in a framework of universal equality beyond the structural divisions of class, and that encompasses being included socially, intellectually, culturally or personally «as an individual and a member of a group» (*ibidem*: 7) as key dimensions of social change; enhancement – the right to achieve «critical understanding and a sense of possibility» (Bernstein, 1996: 6) –, and participation – expressed as «the right to participate in the procedures involved in construction, maintenance and transformation of order» (*ibidem*: 7). The third argument builds on equality of condition (Baker et al., 2004) to establish a feasible setting for young adult citizenship and voice in constructing femininities and masculinities.

Feminist perspectives underlined that the silencing of women excluded them from citizenship as a barrier for the expression of their voices, views, lives, and history (Lister, 1997), which located women in subordination to male dominant culture. The critical emancipatory tradition used the same arguments with a focus on social class (Freire, 1999). These claims are reframed in the present research with a focus on young women and men, in line with Arnot and Reay. On the basis of the bernsteinian thought (Bernstein, 1990, 1996), and in their own research, Arnot (2006) and Arnot and Reay (2006a, 2006b, 2008) underline the need to work with a *differentiated notion of voice* when consulting young adults, which accounts for the differential of power inherent to gender, school performance, and territorial locations.

In a line of critical theory, Bernstein recognized the potential of education to create democracy, but felt that schools were not fulfilling its role in promoting equal opportunities,

as a basic principle of schooling a question that seems still to be pertinent nowadays. Schools did not contribute to transform life situations but to maintain and strengthen the dominant culture and the marginalization of others. The education system was a «public institution central to the production and reproduction of distributive injustice» (Bernstein, 1996: 5). With a focus on pedagogy, Bernstein's (1996) democratic pedagogic rights – enhancement, inclusion, and participation – provide useful insight to this discussion as he theorizes rights within school that would ensure young adults the possibility to make the best of their potential, to feel they belong and are recognised *by* and *within* the school culture, and to fully participate as crucial partners in school life. Baker et al. (2004)[1] focus on *equality of condition*, a concept they introduce to transcend *equal opportunity,* seen as the right to compete in even-handedness struggle for advantage. Equality of condition implies recognition, respect, and participation in the social world. Hence, the later authors amplify the scope of the *democratic pedagogic rights* and provide the conditions for its achievement. The enactment of equality of condition by young women and men in school would include: i) *resources* – the *opportunity* to have «a range of resource-dependent options that is of roughly the same value as those of others», to put in perspective financial, cultural social, and educational redistributive policies; ii) *respect* and *recognition* – the *opportunity* to «live one's life without the burden of contempt and enmity from the dominant culture»; iii) *love*, *care*, and *solidarity* – the *opportunity* of access to «ample scope for forming valuable human attachments»; iv) *power* – the *opportunity* «to influence the decisions that affect their lives»; and v) *working* and *learning* – the *opportunity* for «real choice among occupations that they find satisfying or fulfilling» (*ibidem*: 33).

This paper analyses the construction of femininities and masculinities by young adults in citizenship within school, family, and the public arenas. It recognizes young adults as citizenship construction actors and appeals to their capacity to interpret and transform their lives. The next section clarifies the methods used to gather and interpret data, followed by the presentation of findings and some remarks.

Methods

This is a *localized* research, inserted in a broader context of educational change, in which educational policies, such as secondary school rankings, acquire place. The study has a focus on a region of intermediate development of Northern Portugal, where industrial and commercial activity are found together with agriculture of subsistence and where the people's

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[1] The authors focus women in the labour market.

lives suffer the impact of wider processes of volatilization of the labour market – problems of insecurity and unemployment. At the core of this study are young adults from the scientific humanistic course in secondary schools and communities in relative disadvantage. Attending the 12th year, they've passed the scrutiny of compulsory education and are on the way to higher education or the labour market. Their lives are organized around school and educational success. This means, their lives are constructed within and contribute to build that system, in compromise or conflict with other contexts.

Seeking to make sense of wide range of dynamics and dimensions, the methodological (and theoretical) choice was not defined *a priori*. It resulted from a process of investigation, which deviates from technical-instrumental approaches perhaps more effective. The study moved through mutually challenging axes. The successive approximations to the field of research were matched up with the study of authorized academic discourses. This is a research that crosses multiple voices and concerns of various kinds. This implies the use of a multiple and multifocal method that is implemented at different levels.

Hence, a qualitative interpretivist approach supported on voice(s) was used. Thirty-one young women and 22 young men, 17 to 19 years old were consulted through focus group discussion (FGD). The first phases of data collection were developed with mixed groups, and the last phases, according to gender and school achievement (*average – C*; *good average – B*; and *high achieving – B+), as clarified in the table below*. Hence, the groups were composed of: nine young men with mixed performance; nine young women with mixed performance; three groups of three young men and three groups with three young women, according to the level of achievement; and, individual interviews with one member from each group. A questionnaire was applied to characterize the sample and Form 12 population in the school where the research was thorough. As shown in the table below, data collection had four phases: i) pilot consultation in a school with an average position in school rankings – to clarify consultation strategies and instruments and have a closer look at school life, which in turn allowed the identification of «burning topics» to be discussed in further steps of consultation; ii) exploratory discussion in three schools from the Northern interior semi-disadvantaged region, below average in school rankings – to clarify pertinent matters for discussion and gather opinions; iii) substantial focused discussion; and iv) individual interviews in one of those schools – to discuss and deepen specific matters. Data was subjected to content analysis with inclusive categories, which gathered the continuities and specificities, divergences and exceptions.

TABLE 1
Data collection

Phase 1 – Focus group discussion – pilot		
1 school: Alice Pestana		
1st session – large group	2nd session – large group	3rd session – autonomous
Mixed groups in terms of gender and achieving level		
Phase 2 – Focus group discussion – exploratory		
3 school: Maria Veleda, Beatriz Pinheiro, Virgínia Quaresma		
1st session – large group		2nd session – large group
Mixed groups in terms of gender and achieving level		
Phase 3 – Focus group discussion – substantial		
1 school: Maria Veleda		
1st session – per gender		2nd session – per gender and achieving level
1 group of 9 young women mixed achieving level *B+*, *B*, and *C*		3 groups of 3 young women Specific achieving level: *B+*, *B* or *C*
1 group of 9 young men mixed achieving level *B+*, *B*, and *C*		3 groups of 3 young men specific achieving level: *B+*, *B* or *C*
Phase 4 – Individual interviews – per gender and achieving level		
1 school: Maria Veleda		
3 interviews with young women		3 interviews with young men
1 *high achieving* (*B+*), 1 *good average* (*B*), 1 *average* (*C*)		1 *high achieving* (*B+*), 1 *good average* (*B*), 1 *average* (*C*)

The emersion of a typology

Young adult arguments about the way(s) they construct their relation with the *polis* have been interpreted under a theoretically informed lens leading to a typology that translates young adult forms of self-construction. This includes the notion of citizenship as political and cultural right, which I sustain on scholarly studies and also incorporates young adult forms of construction which conflict or mitigate citizenship, as they encompass processes of negotiation and assertion in the world sustained on uncritical reproduction of mainstream thoughts and culture. Hence, the typology includes forms of «citizenship», when young adult arguments fit in citizenship as a cultural and political right; «quasi citizenship», when citizenship is some-

how mitigated and far from being fulfilled but there is no deep conflict; and «non-citizenship», when young adults construct their relationships with the *polis* contradicting the assumptions of citizenship on the basis of rights in equality of condition.

Stoer and Magalhães (2001, 2005) and Stoer, Magalhães, and Rodrigues (2004) provide the theoretical grounds for this typology with the axis «ascribed» and «claimed» citizenship. To say it shortly, as they see it, whereas «ascribed citizenship» relates to rights and responsibilities, circumscribed to the state, in the light of Marshall (1950), «claimed citizenship» corresponds to the emersion of the vindication of rights based on differences. These can be matched up with the claims for identity and difference, sexual orientation, ecologic, and others that have been brought about by social movements. «Ascribed citizenship» is typical from modernity and is connected to myths such as political and social equality and cultural homogeneity, which seem to imply silence and invisibility under the abstract view of the ideal abstract citizen. In its turn, «claimed citizenship» is produced within post-modernity and is expressed by the fragmentation and miscegenation of identity. As it implies diverse types of claims, it also entails the assertion of voice. Hence, this quest for equality must emerge from the successful management of this tension so that differences are either annulled or transformed into inequalities (Stoer & Magalhães, 2005).

This doesn't comprise the social order experienced by many groups and individuals within a context of late modernity, where modernity and post-modernity match up in a conflicting manner. There is room for what can be named «unclaimed citizenship». This form of self-construction does not correspond to «ascribed citizenship» issued by the state to the *ideal* citizen but it is set within complex multilayered – below and above state – regulation of citizenship. Besides this, the notion of «ascribed citizenship» also needs recontextualizing due to the recognition of other entities in ruling citizenship. While encompassing self-silencing and dilution, «unclaimed citizenship» also shifts away from «claimed citizenship», which implies voice. These notions are clarified in the next section as I present some findings of the study and the forms of citizenship, quasi citizenship and non-citizenship that emerged.

Constructing «citizenship»

The following table summarizes the types and forms of young adult construction that were identified in the study and whose meanings are shortly explained below. These categories emerged from the researchers' interpretation of young adults' proffered texts, which were subjected to content analysis. Data that resulted directly from the research questions were crisscrossed with themes that were proposed and explored by young adults in using their voice(s).

As usual in *content analysis*, data analysis abided a process of detection of emerging themes and respective indexation. *Gender* constituted research criteria. The first and second stages of research involved mixed groups. Although their contributions were produced in dialogue, young women and young men narratives were put apart and only the most significant inter-gender talks were kept.

Regarding data of the later stages (3 and 4), conducted with specific groups in terms of gender and level of performance, beyond the steps already described, young adult narratives – produced in discussion groups and individual interviews – were organized in pre-categories and subcategories, according to units of meaning. Separate documents were organized according to gender, so that all narratives produced in different stages by all participants could be included in these categories. Narratives were indexed by research stage and student level.

TABLE 2
Between *ascribed*, *claimed* and *unclaimed* citizenship

	Ascribed citizenship (recontextualized)	Claimed citizenship	Unclaimed citizenship
Citizenship(s)		educational of rights educational of knowledge responsible alternative of leisure and conviviality self-invested work responsible of affection and care interdependent sexual	
Quasi citizenship(s)	school community induced withdraw sexual	mild alternative	unobtrusive
Non-citizenship(s)	straight set exhibiting sexual predatory sexual	transgression alternative	self-protection

Ascribed citizenship

«School quasi citizenship» (SQC) constitutes a form of mitigated educational citizenship. It stands on the assumption of the almost exclusive individual responsibility for learning and the elimination of the adult accountability, especially when it comes to failure. In its «rewarding»

form, SQC is invested of high performance with a view to the future. In its «minimal» version, school investment is reduced to the level of survival whereas other forms are emphasized. This form of «quasi citizenship», ascribed by the educational system and many families, frequently conflicts with the assertion of femininities and masculinities in the public world and in families.

«Community induced quasi citizenship» (CIQC) is ascribed and reinforced *by* and dedicated *to* the community niche. It stands on a strong relation with peers, the family, and the social world of belonging. Within this form of «quasi citizenship» the personal assertion and construction reproduce (without questioning) the values of that specific community. Volunteer work and leisure are frequently matched up in this form of «quasi citizenship». CIQC frequently comes together with the «self-invested citizenship» and has a neo-philanthropic dimension on a charitable/religious basis. CIQC is aimed at helping the community and passing the religious testimony to the young.

«Withdraw sexual quasi citizenship» (WSQC) is ascribed particularly by the family and the school and is rooted on discretion and silencing about sexuality. This incorporates the view of an «adequate femininity» aimed at protecting young women from bad reputation (Fonseca, 2008).

«Straight set non-citizenship» (SSNC) emphasizes the regulatory dimension of human relations. It stands on the myth of the need for (adult) domination and (young adults) subordination, which leads them to comply with their social obligation. Coming together with the vigilance over young women sexuality, it illustrates the conflict between the SSNC and the construction of «citizenship of leisure and conviviality» and «sexual citizenship», explained below.

«Exhibiting sexual non-citizenship» (ESNC) is ascribed – by the so-called «normal» young women – to younger women who transgress the norms of «withdraw sexual quasi citizenship». Implying the objectification of the own body, ESNC stands on girls' sexually provocative attitudes that make the rupture with the norms of WSQC.

«Predatory sexual non-citizenship» (PSNC), denying «sexual citizenship», stands on vertical relations between young men and women, is centred on sexual objectification, disaffected from affection and may include physical and psychological violence. It is socially ascribed to young man in the traditional construction of hegemonic masculinity in line with the reproduction of a certain gender *cultural heritage* (Perrenoud, 1982).

Claimed citizenship

Implying *voice*, «educational citizenship of rights» (ECR) prefigures the theoretical proposal sustained on democratic pedagogic rights (Bernstein, 1996), in equality of condition (Baker et

al., 2004), with particular emphasis on *voice* (Arnot, 2006). Going beyond school, sometimes it combines with the ECR, explained next.

«Educational citizenship of knowledge» (ECK) – that assumed particular dimension in the research and whose study was hence more developed – amplifies the right of participation (Bernstein, 1996) in defining and constructing knowledge. It matches up the bernsteinian thought with the movement *pro-voice* that assumed a particular role, especially in the UK, since the 1990s[2].

«Responsible alternative citizenship» (RAC) stands on the personal and critical interpretation of the school and social orders and in the creative formulation of the personal space within, through the strategic management of its tensions.

«Citizenship of leisure and conviviality» (CLC) consists on the assertion of the own voice and space and is basically developed among friends. It implies leisure, conviviality, common interests, and choice of activities. Frequently CLC conflicts with «straight set non-citizenship» and «school quasi citizenship» and it comes together with «citizenship of affection and care».

«Self-invested citizenship» (SIC) is based in the pursuit of self-enhancement. It is centred on personal choice and linked to desire. This form of citizenship is focused on present fulfilment and «profitability» of learning in the future. It is invested with the active and conscientious pursuit of personal learning with a sense of enjoyment and pleasure.

«Work responsible citizenship» (WRC) stands on concerns with economic autonomy and learning through work.

«Citizenship of affection and care» (CAC) stands on the theoretical basis provided by «care, affection and solidarity» (Lynch & Lodge, 2002). It can be expressed in the family, with teachers and among peers and has a communicational character. The cases at study required the distinction between the work-of-care traditionally ascribed to women so that they would perform unpaid unrecognized reproductive work in the family and the CAC, on the basis of solidarity and interdependence, and implying the construction of rituals of bonding. Affection and care do not always come in parallel and are therefore considered two sides of the same coin. The dimension of care in CAC stands on the assumption of the work-of-care within the family and the community, as theorized by Ruth Lister (2003, 2007) and recontextualized by Fonseca (2008) with a focus on social justice.

«Interdependent sexual citizenship» (ISC) stands on respect, recognition and the quest for mutual pleasure. In confirmation with Fonseca (*ibidem*: 341), it implies «sharing the responsibility of affection, focused on the consequences of sexual relations».

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[2] The work of Hart (1992), Atweh and Burton (1995), Ashworth (1995), Rudduck, Chaplain, and Wallace (1996) are examples of this.

«Mild alternative quasi citizenship» (MAQC) stands on the assertion of a reactive voice, claiming for an exclusive culture. It attempts to break with the *status quo*, and is disaffected from school. MAQC is endorsed to others by some young adults, none of the participants included.

«Transgression alternative non-citizenship» (TANC) also stands on the assertion of a reactive voice claiming for an exclusive culture, attempts to break with the *status quo* and is disaffected from school. It implies the use of violence and vandalism.

Unclaimed citizenship

«Unobtrusive quasi citizenship» (TQC) stands in the quest *for* or the acceptance *of* undifferentiating by young adults who are more or less integrated in school and comply with school and life in a minimal way. It may also include the acceptance of undesirable professions with a view to subsistence. This form of «quasi citizenship» shifts away from claimed citizenship as it incorporates the suppression of voice.

«Self-protection non-citizenship» (SPNC) implies the suppression of voice and stands in the extreme awareness of social risk and in the development of mechanisms that allow for extreme self-protection.

Sharing some findings…

On ascribed citizenship

The enactment of «school quasi citizenship» (SQC) is very relevant in all groups. It interferes in the quest for legitimacy. In all groups consulted, SQC frequently conflicts with young women «self-invested citizenship» and it also clashes with male and female «citizenship of leisure and conviviality», whose nature is explained below. The majority of young women justify their lack of participation with the lack of time resulting from school work, tests and exams. SQC leads to giving up of «certain things», working harder during the week to be able to cooperate with church or the conciliation of leisure and school performance.

Gender differences are substantiated in the personal assertion of femininities and masculinities in the SQC. If young men are more self-centred and bring into evidence the conflict among their forms of citizenship, young women show the tension between their SQC and the «unobtrusive quasi citizenship» they ascribe to young men. According to some young women, this is apparent in young men lack of initiative and investment in school and their dependency of them, a rule only broken by two non-typical boys. Young women also hetero-nominate a

gender undifferentiated group the «pretty ones» who would be the teachers' favourites. They have the good marks and flatter teachers – the «ideal model» of «school quasi citizenship».

Tensions are evidenced between the SQC in its rewarding version and young men construction of «citizenship of affection» and «sexual citizenship». Relations can be established between young men citizenship «options» and their performance levels. Under the pressure of marks, *high achieving* young men tend to neglect their affection and «sexual citizenship» and express guilt in the opposite situation. Low achieving young men tend to do the opposite and show some disaffection from school.

In negotiating femininities and masculinities in the family, young adults emphasize fathers and mothers' investment in school performance (that substantiates «school quasi citizenship»), seen as *the* horizon and clearly present as a parameter of compromise. Questing for high performance, fathers and mothers, and sometimes others in the family, support studying. While families with low schooling level only incite studying and control behaviour, others help students with homework as well.

The construction of «community induced quasi citizenship» (CIQC) is quite powerful for small number of young adults in constructing femininities and masculinities in the public space. CIQC confers spaces for participation, legitimacy, and action according to the beliefs of that community and introduces young adults to managing inter-generational relations and to greater understanding of social hierarchies of work. They experience volunteer work, inducting others in the catholic beliefs, managing or participating in the church choir, helping to organize the secretarial work, and organizing social events. They establish strong vinculum with their peers, with whom they also exert the «citizenship of leisure and conviviality».

The neo-philanthropic dimension of CIQC is expressed in helping the community and in passing the religious testimony to the young. In constructing femininities and masculinities in the public space, this dimension is preponderantly constructed by two young women and two young men, and is mildly enacted by a small number of young men. In this role, in her church, one young woman is the main catechist, choir coordinator, and member of the secretarial team; she participates in organizing catechism, the readers, and the acolytes. Though, her action – as the ones of the young men in similar situation – goes beyond self-investment as it implies generosity towards her community through volunteer work. In their functions, they are constituted as religious inheritors and contribute towards granting the young the heritage of a religious thought and of the community vinculum. One young man is a member of the national council of the churches. Within a spirit of charity-solidarity, he does care work for the institutionalized elderly and gives catechism to the young. Both activities prefigure the religious roots together with a sense of belonging, enhancement and relational wellbeing. Another young man volunteers in the church as reader, acolyte,

organist, and catechist. As he describes it, this leads him to update the teaching materials to motivate children.

Under the religious impetus, several young men develop this kind of religious training of the young, they cooperate with the parish as acolytes, readers, organists, and/or members of the church choir, as well as they care for the elderly. As they are *good* or *good average* students, the investment in the church together with the rewarding «school quasi citizenship» reduces the construction of the «citizenship of leisure and conviviality» to the limits of their communitarian niche.

«Withdraw sexual quasi citizenship» (WSQC) is expressed by one *high achieving* young man refers that he does not speak about sexuality with his parents because of their age, the way they were brought up and their narrow mindedness. An *average* young man constructs his WSQC strategically combined with «unobtrusive quasi citizenship» in the social relation, apart from his friends. He says that girls are the most spoken theme among his friends. He also assumes that people his age should have an active sexuality but ought to be able to hide it from others to avoid social criticism and recrimination, and that it is their responsibility to deal with sexuality, in regards to the use of condoms and the pill to avoid illnesses, pregnancy, and abortion, a question he is not sure about.

The induction of young women in WSQC is the most present in the family, independent from level of achievement and families' dialogic potential. Going beyond the reflection presented by most young women in what concerns sexuality, a *high achieving* young woman refers to the long term impacts of the «straight set non-citizenship» (SSNC) over «sexual citizenship». She locates individual behaviours in a larger social framework underlying how Salazar's totalitarian regime constrained and still constrains women sexual citizenship. Women in her family do not discuss sex. Several others also referred this dialogic limit to the discussion of sexuality.

«Straight set non-citizenship» comes frequently combined with young women focus on «school quasi citizenship». Under SSNC, young women assert girls' better results and reproduce the stereotypes of female organization, sense of compromise, focus, and will to work towards objectives… and young men's restlessness and rudeness, with some exceptions.

In constructing femininities and masculinities in the public space, SSNC is expressed in the limits imposed by some families, fathers in particular, to young women occupations and sociability. Data showed that some materializations of SSNC can be found together with the arousal of a «citizenship of affection and care» that has a communicational and flexible character. SSNC is expressed in the reproduction of the gender *cultural heritage* (Perrenoud, 1982), in traditional gender roles, such as the induction in a WSQC or in a «self-protection non-citizenship» in face of the male «predatory» impetus.

Young women who enact «exhibiting sexual non-citizenship» (ESNC) speak about their intimate parts and «offer themselves» to the boys. The ESNC contains the own objectification of the body. These young women are considered by others as «inadequate and badly behaved, they are dedicated to experimentation… and other "enjoyments" with young men» (Fonseca, 2008: 373), a perspective that is not alien to a certain moralism of religious origin.

«Predatory sexual non-citizenship» (PSNC) is endorsed to men by a young woman and to women by a young man. According to the young woman, young men hang out with girls just for sex and develop several strategies to reach it, whereas girls are more centred in girls' friendship, which incorporates solidarity and clarification about sexuality and its risks, such as boys' predatory strategies. These would be at the origins of the quest for «self-protection non-citizenship» in sexuality. In their turn, young men express views of citizenship that contradict this representation. While locating himself and his friends in the set of «interdependent sexual citizenship», one *high achieving* young man recognizes that some girls and boys only see the sexual dimension of the other. As he sees it, in high school girls are «even worse» than boys and use them like objects to throw away; a result of the dilution between the male and female roles.

On claimed citizenship

«Educational citizenship of rights» (ECR) has small expression. Only a few young adults claim for ECR in negotiating femininities and masculinities in the public space. One young woman claims for recognition at work; another expresses interest for the elections and politics and a young man invests in talking about politics, sexuality, affection and daily life. The ECR becomes apparent in young women's debate about sexuality, in the family and in school; in the quest for recognition of their problems as legitimate and of equal value to the ones of others; in the claim for civic behaviour in preserving school and respecting the most fragile people; and in the recognition of two *non-typical* young men whose behaviour differs from the one of most young men in the groups. A small number of young men claim for the right to think and decide about their free times, for a life out of school and the right to «be young».

Within the family the enactment or claim for ECR is also very limited. Among young women, it includes participation in the decision-making processes, and is connected to the rise or reinforcement of dialogue, particularly with mothers. Among young men, ECR includes dialogue and decision-making and, on the odd occasion, the experiencing of home as a place where they can enact interdependent solidarity in the redistribution of traditionally female domestic tasks.

«Educational citizenship of knowledge» (ECK) has small expression. In what concerns sexuality some *good average* and *high achieving* young women claim for ECK and try to com-

pensate their lack of information in the net. They regret that sexuality is not dealt with in a natural way both in school and in the family, which is inadequate for social life. They also refer that not many schools joined the sexual education program, many parents do not speak about it and do not want to see it discussed in school. This occurs in the prevalence of «straight set non-citizenship» that induces the «withdraw sexual quasi citizenship». As mentioned by some young women, this may have consequences for young women present and future lives, leading to loss of control at the university, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

«Responsible alternative citizenship» (RAC) is pretty rare in asserting femininities and masculinities. It is figured in particular by a *good average* young woman and a *high achieving* young man who claim for their right to identity and to feel good about themselves. In both cases it comes together with a certain investment in a distinctive look and good capacity to debate quite elaborate topics. Whereas the young man reinforces his «alternative» style in his group by the way he dresses and the «alternative music» he likes, she puts it together with «self-invested citizenship» with a constructive character, focusing the strategic management of her individual pathway.

«Citizenship of leisure and conviviality» (CLC) is the most quested for by young adults in constructing their femininities and masculinities in the public space, in which they invest and which they enact in greater or smaller conflict with other forms of citizenship. Many young women try to manage their lack of time and some young men tend to disconnect from school. Conviviality and chatting with friends, sports, and music are the most referred activities of leisure, together with cinema, camping, and occasionally visiting exotic places.

The tension between CLC and «school quasi citizenship» is evidenced by *high achieving* young adults. The enactment of the former is limited by the latter and generates guilt. For *average* young women this tension is less evident and it is almost null in the case of one young man who looks for immediate rewarding. A small group of young women surpass the gender barriers assuming some traditionally male leisure activities. One prioritizes CLC reserving time for conviviality, to go to the café, play cards and watch TV, read the newspaper, and discuss the news, which constitute informal out of school «educational citizenship». In some cases, CLC is subsumed to the «citizenship of affection and care» or to the «community induced quasi citizenship» in its neo-philanthropic dimension, for a small number of young adults who support church, and to the «work responsible citizenship» for a young woman whose work lies in between. Young adults evidenced that their need for CLC is not in the horizon of the social concerns as, besides time, they lack places to get together.

In constructing femininities and masculinities in the public space, «self-invested citizenship» (SIC) comes together with the CLC and sometimes with the «citizenship of affection and care». SIC is assumed with diverse intensities by different young women. One in particular

values her training as a model and her work with the church. Others participate in conventional activities such as choir practice or playing piano, or less conventional such as playing football, joining the fire department or dancing hip-hop. Among young men, SIC gains less expression. It is enacted in temporary actions which allow for the fulfilment of short term dreams like the school trip that might contribute towards the try-out of the «work responsible citizenship».

SIC overcomes the «citizenship of affection and care» (CAC) for a young woman that decides to follow her pathway even if it puts at risk her relationship with her boyfriend. As she sees it, a young woman must place her objectives first. In the family, SIC is frequently supported by mothers. Particularly one young woman has in her mother the model of an autonomous woman who stimulates her to go out, to participate in public activities, to work, and to take the driving license instead of just studying.

In the public space, «work responsible citizenship» (WRC) is merely assumed by small number of young adults. For one young woman it overwhelms the «citizenship of leisure and conviviality» but not the «self-invested citizenship» as she sees her work as valuable learning experience. The other combines WRC with «citizenship of affection and care» in temporary work with children. Her situation clarifies the articulation in entering the public space via work and negotiating femininity in the family. Her quest for WRC is constrained by «straight set non-citizenship» under the father's vigilance. Among young men, the pathway towards WRC centred in learning through work is expressed by a *good average* young man who invests in volunteer work, but is not yet motivated by economic autonomy. In his turn, a *high achieving* young man that also makes his entrance in the public space through church opted to work in search for learning and economic autonomy, against his parents' will.

The dimension of affection in CAC gains great relevance in negotiating femininities and masculinities in the family, on the roots of rituals of vinculum and sometimes the enactment of solidarity. This is particularly relevant for two young women whose fathers died. One is very protective of her mother that she considers in loss and the other has developed a very strong relation of communication and care for others. In the family, this dimension sometimes comes together with the «educational citizenship», being sustained on expressing, being heard, and participating in decision-making. This is the case of two young men. One, from a very large nuclear family with 13 brothers and sisters, gives particular value to his family and builds citizenship on his family roots; he has a very positive relation with his parents with whom he keeps an open communicational relation – the father as provider and the mother as «carer», in the traditional way. Another one values his positive influence in managing the family emotional life. An *average achieving* young man also values his mother a lot, investing in his «school quasi citizenship» in order to please her.

Among young men, this form of citizenship sometimes conflicts with «school quasi citizenship». Differences are found according to achieving levels. Affection is greatly valued and invested by *average* young men, and friendship is more valued than girlfriends by one *good average* young man due to its restricted character. Affections are also present as form of resilience and assertion of status within groups. Affection plays a collateral role for most young women in the assertion of femininities, but is quite central for a small number, combined with the «educational citizenship of rights». It is expressed in the appreciation of friends as people with whom they can talk without restrictions about school marks and sexualities. Most do not share these matters with parents but they discussed it quite openly during consultation, talking about their anxieties, love affairs, and passions. Affection is also expressed as a *locus* of comfort during boring uninteresting lessons in the absence of educational citizenship. Friendship among young women is valued as well and illustrates some gendered identities in all groups consulted. Whereas it comes together with the «citizenship of leisure and conviviality», affection is quite mitigated in constructing femininities and masculinities in the public space as only very randomly young adults have a chance to mingle out of school.

The mitigation of this dimension of CAC in the family is only apparent in the lack of openness concerning sexuality. Emphasizing gendered differences, young women are more open with their mothers but quite frequently they hide their affective lives from their fathers, who still see them as children or «angels». This illustrates the role of the «straight set non-citizenship» expressed in fathers' attempts to control young women's affective and sexual life, which sometimes leads to the strategic construction of the «unobtrusive quasi citizenship». In less common situations, dating is negotiated with parents, and the construction of a rewarding «school quasi citizenship» comes as trump. Though, a small number of young women refer to their fathers as their role-model, whom they admire and with whom they have a very particular relation.

In the families, where there are different levels of understanding and communication, some young women enact a feminine citizenship that goes beyond the work-of-care – that some avoid and devalue –, to include the dimension of affection sustained on negotiation – sometimes conflicting and difficult, but many times characterized by authentic open communication and complicity among women. For instance, one of the young women refers that in her family many other young women resource to her mother and grandmother to discuss any business, a situation that makes her feel privileged. This phenomenon of solidarity illustrates the strong presence of the gender dimension, within which older women prepare the younger ones to be more autonomous and knowledgeable in order to face the public space, managing their lives and the challenges they'll be faced with in the future (Fonseca & Macedo, 2009). This relation also includes the induction in a «withdrawn sexual quasi citizenship», which is developed below.

The quest for «interdependent sexual citizenship» (ISC) is tried out by one young woman, combined with the «citizenship of affection». Her arguments appear contradictory. She states that the decision about sexuality should be taken by both but finally it depends on the man's decision, according to his level of respect for the woman. Therefore, she assumes the power of men and locates women in subordination, shifting away from *interdependence* inherent to sexual citizenship.

The pathway towards ISC in negotiating femininities in the family is only expressed by one *good average* young woman who builds her relationship with the adult world with certain harmony. Her mother and father listen to her, give her advice, and alert her about dating. They also discuss other subjects, such as homosexuality and her own sexuality. They do not impose barriers to the autonomous management of her personal life, and – as a result – she seems to have greater level of reflection and reasoning than others, even with contradictions. She believes in love and accepts homosexuality, but is «disgusted» by it and thinks it should be introduced discreetly in the society not to cause damages. She says that sexuality should be dealt with openly as it has an educational and cultural framework, and she also says that, away from parents' control, she must be ready to deal with her sexuality.

Only very small number of young men prefigures the construction of ISC. In face of dating they express concerns about respect, love, and relative responsibility, with room for desire, affection and pleasure and without any type of violence. This is particularly expressed by a *high achieving* young man who refers that him – and friends – accept their sexuality as a normal dimension of their lives and that they see girls not only as sexual objects but as people they ought to love and respect. Similar view was expressed by other young men during the consultation.

Asserting femininities and masculinities, «mild alternative quasi citizenship» (MAQC) is seen by some young women as the induction of attitudes and fashions by the media, which becomes apparent on the use of earrings and baggy trousers, colours, and styles of «female type» by young men, and trousers of «male style» by young women. Self-named «normal» young women call «disgusting» to others who dress up to go to school, use make-up, wear expensive brands, and correspond to the Barbie model. *They* support themselves on the group and try to tease others. *They* are disaffected from school, and *they* show slight evidences of an exhibiting sexual behaviour. Some young men who are seeking for attention are described as the «pretty ones». *They* correspond to the Ken model and reinforce themselves in the group. The «metrosexuals» who take care of their bodies «like girls» and are more exuberant constitute another category.

Young men who self-nominate «normal» or «indifferent» also refer that the «disgusting» girls are just attention seeking and want prominence; the «*mitras*» – the male version of the «disgusting» girls – are quite pretty, want to show off, believe in their own power, are disaffected from school and from their marks, and sometimes disrespect teachers and parents. The «gang

of the colourful trousers» and Art and Sports students are easily rejected by the so-called «normal» as different people who belong to a world in the margins; people who should not be trusted because they break the rules of the majority.

Asserting femininities and masculinities, «transgression alternative non-citizenship» (TANC) – that does not include any of the participants – is endorsed to others. Young women criticize people who break rules, vandalize, or bully, and also the «worst» «undesirable» girls, whose TANC comes together with the assumption of exhibiting sexual behaviour. Not only they misbehave in school as they «offer themselves to the boys» and talk about their intimate parts. The use of drugs is also seen as problematic and as a result of bad life conditions and companies. Young men underline the group dimension of TANC, which results from the quest for protagonism and popularity, and peer acceptance, depending on the compliance with the dressing codes. Groups share a certain culture, «hang out», and look for power when rivalries arise. The «metal fans» who get involved in battering, the «rockers», and some of the «art gang», who grafted on the walls and promoted gatherings by the school, fit in TANC.

On unclaimed citizenship

In the personal assertion of femininities and masculinities, «unobtrusive quasi citizenship» (TQC) is expressed by young adults who accept or wish to be unnoticed by the adult world or even among peers. It includes the self-nominated «normal» or «indifferent», people that do not show off, avoid messing up, invest in the relations with peers, and sometimes also care to study. Many «normal» young women also fit in this form of construction, with some rebellion every now and again. They try to avoid the interaction with the «others» who construct citizenship in its transgression or mild alternative forms.

«Unobtrusive quasi citizenship» is the most present in a self-nominated «gang of the indifferent» who go to school and remain unnoticed. It supposedly includes young adults who study Science, Technologies, and Humanities. TQC is sometimes sustained on the appraisal of young adults' homogeneity and on devaluing or sanctioning other individuals or groups who follow differentiated forms of citizenship. TQC is expressed in young adult negative reactions towards the rupture with the conventional dressing code, the attention paid to body care – within «mild alternative quasi citizenship» – and the assertion of violence and vandalism – in the scope of «transgression alternative non-citizenship».

TQC is also present in the maintenance of the gender cultural heritage and self-silencing about emotional lives by some young women in face of their fathers. TQC is particularly notorious in an *average* young man who opts to keep quiet to avoid interaction and problems,

and in a *high achieving* young woman who hardly expresses in the discussion group. It is also present in the embarrassment about asking for help during lessons, mentioned by some *average* young women. The TQC can also be identified in a young man's assertion of masculinity in the family who, reproducing the gender cultural heritage, does not share family tasks and totally depends on his mother.

In the assertion of femininities and masculinities, «self-protection non-citizenship» (SPNC) is only embodied by one *average* young woman. The space out of the house is seen as locus of risk and fear. She is afraid of being alone, kidnapped or burgled, of the dark, of unknown dangers, and people, afraid of whatever may happen. A *high achieving* young woman assumes a mild version of this form of citizenship which she combines with «citizenship of affection» and a sexual behaviour sustained on gender inequalities and in the solidarity among women against male pressure. She thinks that the risks lead young women to look for safe dating that ends up in conflicts related to possession. Young men and young women would be the motive for discussions among the opposite sex.

Besides allowing for understanding the value given by young adults to their affection and sexualities, this illustrates the close reproduction of gender relations of former generation – the maintenance of the gender cultural heritage.

Final r emarks

This paper explores how young women and young men describe and interpret their lives and therefore was supported by an analysis of their voices. The aim is to understand which forms of female and male citizenship they build within the diverse spaces where they construct femininities and masculinities.

I started by identifying the social/school ambiance that informs young adult lives and traced the theoretical background that supports the analysis. Theoretical emphasis was put in the need to listen to young adult *voices* and to provide conditions for the rightful construction of citizenship today.

The discussion was theoretical supported by the bernsteinian conceptualization of democratic pedagogic rights – inclusion, enhancement, and participation. These constitute school requisites that still fall short of fostering young adult male and female citizenship as political and cultural right. Besides, young adult autonomy and diversity, which were captured by this study, do not have enough space to emerge, neither are young adults given opportunity to gain a *sense of possibility* or to participate in the construction, maintenance, and transformation of the social order they live.

Baker et al. (2004) provided the theorization of equality of condition, which establish the conditions for the fulfilment of the rights referred above, contributing to this study. Even if school opened its doors to populations that were formerly excluded, the political action in *lato sensu* doesn't yet seem to focus and promote citizenship building on young adults' recognition, respect, and participation in the social world. School, family, and the public arena do not seem to fulfil young adult needs to express, legitimate and enact their femininities and masculinities in citizenship. Resulting in the mitigation of their femininities and masculinities, their voice(s) have still small expression. This means their capability and right *as citizens today* to put across their ideas and be heard, interpreting and expressing the social order they live in is undervalued and/or misused. Hence, young adults' *differentiated voice(s)* and the differential of power inherent to gender, school performance, and territorial location – that inform the differentiated ways young adult build their femininities and masculinities do not seem to be taken into account in the diverse contexts of their lives.

The analysis of data allowed for a typology of citizenship construction that was explored around the assertion and negotiation of femininities and masculinities in diverse social contexts. It also allowed to understanding that the forms that prevail are more deeply connected with regulation and control at diverse levels. This becomes clear in the expression of reproductive thoughts. However, every now and again, small number of young adults shown the capacity to produce analytical and reflective thinking.

Even though gender power relations and some traditional gender roles still prevail, the study shows that, in that region and specific groups, some progress has occurred in the way young adults construct and affirm their femininities and masculinities. This was expressed in the ways they perceive themselves as male and female young adults in the relationships with one another, with school, the public world, and in their roles within families. In a context of obvious group heterogeneity, this is particularly notorious in young women, who tend to be more assertive and sure about what they want to do with their lives. Young men's most interesting change relates to their entrance in the private sphere of care as some of them referred that they assume – or step in – activities of care, traditionally devalued and attributed to women. Religious thought is strong and shapes the expectancies and moral believes of many young adults. Its initiatives provide for conviviality and shape the assertion of citizenship.

Young women and men look for legitimacy of their femininities and masculinities in very diverse intra-gender and inter-gender ways, which illustrate their great heterogeneity as *serial groups*. The diverse combinations of citizenship, «quasi citizenship», and «non-citizenship» in the construction, negotiation and assertion of femininities and masculinities allocate each participant the role of unique unrepeatable being.

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