Thirty years have passed since the height of the Greenham Common protests, but the impact of the women activists, and interest in their campaign, endures.

Professor Sasha Roseneil’s sociological research about the Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp and the anti-nuclear politics of the late Cold War period continues to attract attention. Recently, she has been consulted about a number of cultural and creative works about Greenham, including *Down at Greenham* – a forthcoming BBC film – and *Love and Fall Out*, a novel by Kathryn Simmonds to be published in 2014. Professor Roseneil has also been involved in curating a major exhibition about social movement culture that toured the US, and she continues to give interviews to journalists from around the world about the legacies of Greenham and about social movements more widely.

Professor Roseneil’s research has included an ethnographic study of the Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp, and a focus on the spatial practices, material cultures and cultural legacies of Greenham Common. She has collaborated with archaeologist Yvonne Marshall, among others, as The Common Research Group, to carry out archaeological investigations of the Greenham camp sites, and has contributed to policy debate about the conservation of Cold War heritage sites. She has also worked with artist Lucy Orta and architecture students from Bournemouth University to produce design ideas for a museum at the site of the former missile base.

The women-led protest began in 1981, when a group of campaigners set up camp outside the US Air Force base at Greenham Common in Berkshire to object to the British government’s decision to allow NATO Cruise missiles to be sited there. However, the gender inequalities of mainstream politics were initially replicated within the camp, as the women were sidelined (male protesters were approached for press interviews and their female counterparts were expected to carry out camp chores). This led, early on, to a decision to make the camp women-only.

Professor Roseneil said: “As part and parcel of this, a decentralised, non-hierarchical and feminist model of organising and making decisions developed. Over the years, many hundreds of thousands of women, from a variety of political and social backgrounds, made Greenham the focal point for anti-nuclear and feminist politics. Their activism had wide-ranging cultural and political consequences.”

Most significantly, the immediate objectives of the women were realised: Cruise missiles, which arrived at the base in 1983, were removed following the agreement of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987, the nuclear base was closed and the area was returned to the people as common land in 2000.

Professor Roseneil added: “During this period, Greenham women were part of the changing zeitgeist across Europe, which increasingly rejected the polarisations of the Cold War and contributed thereby to its end. Since then, many social movements, from the anti-road protests of the 1990s to Occupy in the 2010s, have adopted the Greenham ‘method’ of taking up long-term residence in public space, and seeking to operate according to the principles of non-hierarchy and collectivism which were pursued at Greenham. And while mainstream politics remains male-dominated at every level, there is now, thanks to Greenham, far greater recognition on all sides of the political spectrum that women’s voices matter and that women should have a say in global politics.”

Sasha Roseneil is Professor of Sociology and Social Theory at Birkbeck, and Director of the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research.

**Legacy of Greenham Common**

The women-only campaign against nuclear weapons in the 1980s has influenced artists and social movements since, says Professor Sasha Roseneil