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*MayDay Rooms Pamphlets: 01*  
Camera Forward!

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## MayDay Rooms Pamphlets: 01 Camera Forward!

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### *Series Introduction*

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For centuries the pamphlet has been the medium of choice for agitators, poets, ranters and revolutionaries. Wherever people have needed to spread ideas cheaply, quickly, and outside of the official press, they have made their own short-form publications. Most often pamphlets are produced for the moment: dissenting ephemera to be quickly consumed, and then passed on or cast away. Today, as frictionless pixels glide across scrolling backlit screens, the fluttering of paper leaves might seem leaden. Yet the pace of contemporary media is determined not only by its immense speed of production and its cacophony of voices, but also the speed with which things are trashed, or disappear, as the crowd of each moment falls quickly into the silence of high-tech historical forgetting.

Returning to the pamphlet is a gesture of defiance. Our archival work returns so often to the pamphlets of past struggles. Returning to the pamphlet means salvaging the materials by preserving them in a world that would otherwise hide them from view; keeping hold of documents that were never supposed to last; and reading them outside of their time. But here we are returning pamphlets in order to make something new: writing and making once again in this tradition, against an official press. If once that official press was the newspaper and the book, today



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it is the monstrous monopoly platforms that guarantee that everyone can speak but nobody can be heard; media that reduce thinking and action to instantaneous opinion, always ready to be washed away by the steady flow of the next day's news. We hope that these pamphlets offer an alternative historical time: bringing moments of the past into the present, and making some critical space in opposition to capitalism's pointless and unceasing dynamic of creation and destruction.

The MayDay Rooms Pamphlet Series brings together reproductions of documents from radical history while offering a space for extended engagement and critical reflections on their contemporary relevance. Each pamphlet will contain newly created content – including essays, poems, and illustrations – set alongside reproductions of materials to which they are responding.

The first two pamphlets in this series arose from an open call for submissions. These have been grouped thematically: the first centres on histories of activist film and photography in the 1970s; the second on the material production and design of printed radical ephemera. Both interrogate the histories of social movements that have disappeared from view, as they were defeated, left by the wayside, or pushed underground. In unearthing this important material, and once again presenting it to the public, we hope to fashion a perspective that allows new social movements to find courage and inspiration in the struggles of those who have come before them.

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## *MayDay Rooms Pamphlets: 01*

### *Camera Forward!*

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#### *Introduction:*

#### *Images After the Spectacle*

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The left of the late 1960s confronted a world of images. Photographs brought news of both atrocities and revolution; advertising increasingly determined the time and motion of a consumer society. Some opposed the 'society of the spectacle' in absolute terms, seeing control increasingly concentrated in the hands of the few, with the image becoming the foundation of all social relations. Others armed themselves with Super 8 film, second-hand gestetters, and slide projectors.

It was a time of rebellion and promise: solidarity ranged between student uprisings, the victories of decolonisation, soldiers broken by imperialist wars doomed to lose, resistance to Soviet troops in Prague, workers' struggles emerging before the precipitous decline of industrial production in the West. At this very moment, the reality of class society seemed to have been exchanged for an all-encompassing mediascape, as a newly inaugurated sphere of fate. History appeared reduced to the adoration of the image for the sake of the image; the world a cinema with even its moments of action an invention to placate its viewers, to sate their boredom, their horror, their discontent. A stream of mass-produced fantasies, designed to screen off both the experience of labour and the possibility of a life free from it.

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Some became iconoclasts, trying to tear down the image, only to discover that the very images of their iconoclasm were the most powerful adversaries of all. Others took the image into their own hands; no longer was the image to be projected from some machinery behind people's backs. Putting cameras into the hands of normal people meant resisting the slick productions of conglomerated enterprise. In the following decade photographic and cinematic projects proliferated on the far left. The images that were produced forged a new perspective: photography and cinema gave new views of everyday lives: of struggles, of street life, of informal worlds, of which image-making was a part. Against the spectacle's lie – that everyone, everywhere, is always a consumer – these images bore the marks of their own making.

This pamphlet tours some of the histories of photographic and cinematic life within this fracture of the spectacle. These media were put to work for different causes: as new forms of self-representation; as weapons; as the bringers of news good and bad; as evidence – both in the courts of law, and in the great tribunal of history. Some films were made to tell stories of struggles with the hope of sparking others, others were made simply so that people could express elements of their lives that were hidden by society's violence.

These new forms of photography and cinema worked themselves out into new social forms. Many became the lifeblood of social movements, which promised that history would be changed by their motion. Others displayed the stubborn reality of life, asserting marginal views from which the world seemed already to have moved on and hoped to forget. Even more endured as elements of a counterculture, or within a persistent underground that stood against the social order, hoping to gain strength. The essays in this pamphlet tell some of the stories of these images, and the lives and struggles of which they played a part.

Lotte L.S' piece – part essay, part poem – addresses the works of Cinema Action, placing them in the history of radical newsreel-style art films. During the struggles of 1968, several significant filmmakers in France created cinétracts: unedited shorts, often without sound, shot on a single reel. These films, which documented struggles, were often shown

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extremely quickly: as impetus, analysis, and sustenance for a revolutionary movement. Cinema Action was born out of this moment, and would continue for a number of years to create newsreel-style films, most often on a larger scale. Lotte L.S' poem-essay returns to this film poetics, made in and for revolutionary movements, with screenings taking place 'at committee and union meetings, university assemblies, on factory floors – aiming to take the cinematic medium outside the realm of entertainment and transform it into militant action.' Her essay attempts, on the one hand to recontextualise these efforts in the great history of struggles and calamities of this moment; and to excoriate against a present in which art-making at the service of collective action has been supplanted by the monetisation of working class struggles, with the invention of ever more terrible communities in place of explosive social antagonisms. This in turn becomes the basis for an inquiry into the conditions of revolutionary poetics, set within social movements, in a world that has never ceased to aestheticise revolutionary struggles as a means of undercutting and undermining them. The course of this inquiry travels from France to the UK and back; out into a world of manifold violences and equally manifold resistances. It traverses the eye and the bomb. It strains between the provisional promises of the news of the past, and the inevitability which seems to have made the whole world old once again.

Freya Field-Donovan's essay takes as its subject Wilf Thust's film *Where is the Gaiety?* and associated materials he produced during the early 1970s. The film documents an adventure playground in Notting Hill. At a time of social strife (not far from the social antagonisms that led to the prosecution of the Mangrove Nine) Thust turned his camera to the strange realm of the playground: full of children, who have their own views on the antagonisms of the world in which they find themselves; a place viewed sometimes with suspicion from beyond its fences. Thust's film enters into the lives of children allowing them to offer a perspective from within this scene on their divided social world. Field-Donovan's essay offers a presentation of the precise work of the film, in which, within this world-within-a-world, questions of image-making draw upon theories of radical pedagogy. She describes how such questions arose within Thust's own life – in his trajectory from working on education in Germany, to becoming a part of the Four Corners collective, who



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workshopped community film in London throughout the 1970s. She also draws out some of the theoretical lineages of educational theories from which Thust's film draws, giving new readings of the film's images, allowing them to speak in a difficult poise between documentary and essay. The play-ground offers a marginal perspective onto a world of social strife: society enters its boundaries, as a place in which social humanity and social inhumanity can be seen all the more clearly through the uninnocent eyes of children.

Johanna Klingler's essay offers a comprehensive view on to the work of radical photographer and historian Terry Dennett, who is today best known as a close collaborator to photographer Jo Spence. Klingler's essay shows how his various artistic and propagandistic practices developed through the combination of inquiry into the history of image-making from below, and collaborative social intervention in his own time. Dennett's image-making is newly placed within the trajectories of long histories of the avant-garde worker photography movement in 1920s and 1930s, and the Labour Album – topics that he researched and built archives around, while trying to reanimate them in his own time. Klingler shows how these perspectives allowed Dennett to develop his own ideas for a radical photography, including creating 'social archives' and 'crisis projects', that gathered evidence of the degradation of normal human existence at the hands of capital and the state. In all cases, Dennett was particularly interested in making the technologies of photography accessible – teaching children who couldn't afford cameras how to make their own out of old wellington boots; teaching workers how to 'use the camera as a weapon' by making propagandistic slide-shows of their struggles. Klingler's essay seeks out the range of people and groups with whom Dennett collaborated, showing these collaborative relationships to be the productive force in his work.

Jack Booth's essay locates itself in a now-demolished squatted row of houses in West Kentish Town. It takes as its cue a cartoon that was published in the countercultural newspaper the *International Times*. The first half of Booth's essay describes how the *International Times* became a media site in which conflicting and contrasting political tendencies on the left coalesced in the wake of the uprisings of the late-1960s. In one sense the movements of this time

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imagined their impulses to be the formation of a New Left, contrasting themselves to the autocracy of the Communist Party, especially after Hungary in 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968, Booth sees a second movement that starts to separate itself from the New Left and its obsessive entanglements (however negative) with the Communist Party. This new politics is concerned with culturalism, urbanism, third worldism, and the efforts to carve out niches for itself not in opposition to the state, but in zones from which the state is deterritorialised: in short this new politics inaugurates a new communitarianism. Alongside this, Booth describes attendant processes and theories of 'feedback' and nihilist psychology that developed informing this new politics as a theory of new media. The second half of his essay looks in detail at one such community, closely examining the community film production in West Kentish Town that would become the London Filmmakers Co-op. Films are made both to defend squatted, informal ways of living in the city, as well as to document and intervene in the life of the community. Booth goes on to consider how the development of this new communitarian cultural politics became the site of the birth of a new 'third sector' and of community arts companies, the history of which continued to exist long beyond the clearances and demolitions of all the squats.

Taken together, these essays offer a view of a history of confrontation and the negotiation of terrain. The fear of a world made into an image was matched with a bravery and perseverance of those who took the making of images into their own hands, with their own eyes seeing anew. A story is told in which activists, artists, filmmakers, and community workers started to chip away at the capitalist monopoly on vision. What they produced over the course of a decade contained not only their own images of a world, now seen from below, in views freed from authority, but visions of those darkened spots that the spectacle had obscured in its terrible glory.



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Camera Forward!

: *text no. 1/4*

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Ici et Puis<sup>1</sup>

LOTTE L.S.

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What role can cinema play  
towards revolution? How to unlace the relationship  
between documenting struggle & struggle itself,  
the way they rub up against one another  
in the darkly lit aisles of the auditorium. What is  
the distinction between revolutionary cinema,  
& a kind of cinema that aestheticises revolution? That feeds  
the parasites of the art world through its representation  
of riots, of struggle, of revolution(ary) impulse –  
represented & sold back to us to consume. & how  
can it remain for 'us', by us –  
when intelligibility is something to fear  
as much as desire. How can 'we' remain  
unrepresentable, yet armed with the cinematic tools to share in struggles  
across real & imagined borders – to think, do & act together, then  
& now?



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*I could choose to write of shots of people prying paving stones from the street with an iron bar.*

*I could choose to write of shots of people throwing water from their windows to ease the tear gas.*

*Shots of daffodils slowly unfurling, only to be trampled by the cops, running.*

*Shots of manning one barricade, then another...*

This was not the abstract view of a remote future. It is 07:55. It is the Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail announcing they have begun a factory occupation strike. Everyone goes towards the canteen. More than 122 factories occupied by workers. A journalist awakes and asks:

“Did you sleep well? Because here is what happened in your own town last night.”

June, 1968—next to the Sorbonne, the home of Ann Guedes and Gustav (Schlacke) Lamche is raided; they are interrogated and along with 500 others, driven in armoured cars to the German border by the French state, who state that their further presence in France ‘is not conducive to the welfare of the French nation.’ From Germany they go on to London and form Cinema Action, a left-wing film collective.<sup>2</sup>

In the wake of ‘68, several later members of Cinema Action had also been in Paris, filming and participating in demonstrations and strikes. Marc Karlin, who joined Cinema Action in ‘69 and went on to form the Berwick Street Film Collective, had met the French filmmaker Chris Marker in Paris, who at the time was making *cinétracts* – a collaborative (and individually uncredited) effort by filmmakers in France to document the movement of ‘68 while actively taking part in it. The films – each between two and four minutes – were also an attempt to ‘democratise’ film and create autonomous, anonymous networks for production and distribution. Marker had already formed the film anti-war film collective SLON, influenced by Soviet agitprop films and aiming to provide counter-information on what was happening on the streets, and made *Far From Vietnam* (1967) in collaboration with Jean-Luc Godard, Alain Resnais, Agnes Varda and others.

Made in May and June of ‘68, each ‘tract’ could be quickly and cheaply shot on a single reel of 16mm black and white film, using a rostrum camera to animate still images with pan and zoom effects, without sound or editing. Photographs of the events were intercut with newsprint, advertisements, posters and other texts – a montage style influenced by Soviet filmmakers Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov – that when seen together, created meaning to identify a ‘we’ beyond the borders of nation state: alongside images of protesters and police in Paris, we see Vietnam, Che Guevara, bodies covering up on the beaches of Franco’s España. Images were inscribed with text subverting their original meaning, echoing the Situationist International’s ideas of *détournement*. Made collectively and left unsigned, *cinétracts* were often made one day and screened the next – at committee and union meetings, university assemblies, on factory floors – aiming to take the cinematic medium outside the realm of entertainment and transform it into militant action.



• *Cinétracts* (1968)

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to Chris Reeves at Platform Films for letting me trail round central London asking endless questions about the '70s and Cinema Action (and for the surrealness in King's Cross,) and for creating the invaluable Cinema Action website (where several images and quotes from members used here are taken from.)



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Cinétracts (1968)

Also, 1968—

~ Bombs damage buildings of diplomatic missions: the Spanish Embassy, the American Officers club in London, the Spanish, Greek & Portuguese Embassies in the Hague, the US Consulate in Turin, the US Embassy in Madrid, the Spanish ambassador's residence in the Hague [claimed by the First of May Group].

~ Anti-Vietnam War demonstrations in Warsaw, Tokyo, Algiers, Rome, Paris, Berlin [100,000 march past barricaded shops & offices from the Embankment to Hyde Park Corner in London].

~ Incendiary devices ignite in Moabit Criminal Court & a major department store in West Berlin [claimed by a group that later goes by the name Red Army Faction].

~ The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine hijack an El-Al airliner.

~ Bomb attacks in Paris on offices of three US multinationals: Chase Manhattan Bank, the Bank of America & Transworld Airlines.

~ Ten million workers strike across France, occupying factories, plants, offices, airports, universities: the Sorbonne, Sud-Aviation, Renault, Théâtre de l'Odéon, Citroën, Nanterre University, The Saclay Nuclear Research Centre, Rhodiacéta, a provincial Rail Sorting Centre [31 of factories in Hauts-de-Seine; 20 of 40 factories in Boulogne-Billancourt; 16 of 26 in Malakoff].

~ Italian general staff establish a training camp in Western Sardinia, where fascist Avanguardia Nazionale members receive CIA-sponsored training in terrorism & ideological indoctrination, under the NATO 'Gladio' plan requiring member states to establish national security to 'fight communism' [within 4 years more than 4,000 people – predominantly neo-fascists – undergo training in Sardinia].

~ Tanks from Russia, Poland, Hungary & East Germany invade Czechoslovakia, & Czech Communist Party hardliners are established in power. Tens of thousands take to the streets of Prague to protest Soviet occupation.

~ The Imperial War Museum in London is firebombed.

~ The West German Foreign Ministry is firebombed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The selected chronology of 1968 was adapted from the back of Gordon Carr's 1975 book, *The Angry Brigade: A History of Britain's First Urban Guerilla Group*.

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Soon after their formation in London, Cinema Action took a French film about recent events in Paris – riot police clashing violently with student demonstrators – to workers at a Ford factory in Dagenham. "There were about four people looking and three of them were thinking about how to get to the pub," a collective member later said. "But one of the four was able to arrange a big showing at one of their main meetings. So, we had all of a sudden 2000 people looking at the film, in French!" Soon those who had come to screenings began to come to Cinema Action meetings. Reimagining film production as a collective and non-hierarchical creative, and militant, practice centred on class struggle, the films challenged another kind of collectivism: the traditional cinema audience in which 'otherwise violent social tensions temporarily "disappear".' Arguments ensued on the factory floor: heated discussions over the convictions of the film, and how strategies shown could be taken up or abandoned. Not to, as with traditional 'documentary' cinema, capture an objective and fixed image of the world, but instead film towards a transformation of it.



# THIS WEEK! 'HARLAN COUNTY'

In 1973 the coal miners of Harlan County, Kentucky USA were up against a group of notoriously ruthless exploiting employers – the Coal Bosses. For years the employers had fought tooth and nail to keep the miners under.

But in 1973 the miners went on strike for more money, for better health and safety conditions, and for the recognition of a workers' most basic rights – the right to strike, and the right to belong to a Union.

The strikers met huge opposition from the bosses and from the armed thugs they hired to beat the miners down. Armed goon squads arrived on the picket lines and miners were shot and killed. But the miners were not cowed. They fought back against the bosses' violence. And in the front line were the women of the mining communities. They played a key role on their picket lines.

One woman in the film – a veteran of the workers' struggles of the 1930s – says:

"They may shoot me, but they can't shoot the Union out of me!"

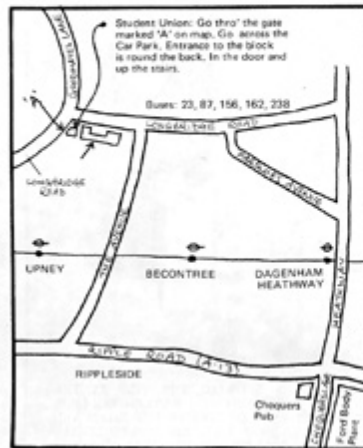
If this film was fiction, you would say it was unbelievable. But it's not fiction – it's real, it's the history of one working class struggle of our time. And it won an 'Oscar' for its director, Barbara Kopple.

We urge all Ford workers to see this film if you can – you won't get to see it on TV!



WE WILL BE SHOWING THE FILM IN THE STUDENT UNION BUILDING, BARKING COLLEGE AT THE CORNER OF LONGBRIDGE ROAD AND GOODMAYES LANE, BARKING, THIS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12th. WE AIM TO START AT 7.30pm SHARP. DON'T BE LATE!

## FORD WORKERS FILM SHOWS



### To All Ford Workers:

Up until now the Ford Workers' Group ("The Combine") has produced leaflets, newspapers etc in order to keep you regularly informed about the progress of wage claims, local issues in the various Ford factories etc.

The Dagenham branch of "The Combine" is now going one step further.

Everyday the bosses' ideas are shoved down our throats, from the newspapers, the radio, the TV – from every side. The country's leaders tell us that unemployment is right, that its right to cut the living standards of the working class; and that we should prepare to go to war. Racism, sexism, prejudice, war-mongering... a load of anti-working class crap!

But every day the working class also fights back – all over the world, as it always has done, struggling for a better life. Sometimes we go up and sometimes we go down, but always we struggle. And in all those struggles there are lessons to be learnt, and new ideas to be listened to – workers' ideas.

For this reason "The Combine" is now organising a special series of films for Dagenham workers. They will be films about the working class struggle all over the world. They will be films that put the working class idea, over and against the bosses' idea. They will be films about socialism.

We hope to show a film regularly every fortnight (depending on Henry's layoffs etc!). Each film will be announced by a leaflet handed out beforehand.

For the moment we are showing the films at the Student Union, N.E. London Polytechnic, Corner of Longbridge Rd & Goodmayes Lane, Barking.

See over the page for the time and the room. Admission is open to all Ford workers and families. There will be drinks and refreshments available.

ORGANISED BY THE DAGENHAM BRANCH OF THE FORD WORKERS' GROUP

• Flyers from film screenings organised by the Dagenham Branch of the Ford Workers' Group

4 Anne Boyer, *The Undying* (2019)

'What does the hard look do to what it sees? Pull beauty out of it, or stare it in?' the poet Denise Riley asks. What is the difference between seeing & aestheticising? When the words

'idea', 'theory', 'perspective'

all share a common etymological root:

to look. When 'revolution'

necessitates a seeing things for how they truly are. Yet

when intelligibility is as much to be feared as to be desired,

to be recognised also means to be tabulated, monitored, regulated:

disciplined: 'visibility doesn't reliably change the relations

of power to who or what is visible except insofar as the

visible prey are easier to hunt.'<sup>4</sup>

After May '68, the French filmmaker Chris Marker dedicated more

& more of his time to the collective he had created –

in opposition to individual authorship – SLON

('Society for launching new works', or *elephant* in

Russian). Inspired by the filmmaking

practices of the Soviet filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin,

SLON's objectives were to make films

& to encourage industrial workers to create

film collectives of their own. In '67, members of the

collective were invited to the Rhodiacéta textile

factory in Besançon – eastern France – to document

the struggles of the workers on strike (the first in France since

1936). Over 3000 workers occupied the factory,

many of them sick of working the '4/8' – a seven-day

schedule shared by four teams who worked staggered

8-hour morning, afternoon & night shifts: two

morning shifts followed by two afternoons, then three

night shifts, & finally two days of rest

before the cycle began again (interviews with workers –

especially one who performs the same gesture at a machine

244 times during an 8-hour day with bandaged hands – makes me

think of people I've met in the town where I live, who rise

at 4am to begin singular movements in 12-hour shifts

at nearby factories). In *À bientôt, j'espère* (1967–68)

'we' hear the perspectives of the strikers

themselves: their everyday life, their struggles,

their demands, their victories. The terms of the strike

in the Rhodiacéta factory weren't restricted to demands

related to hours, pay or working conditions (At one Citroën plant,

a leaflet made by workers on strike makes no mention of

wages: their demands are political, social, cultural – not economic).

One of the most prevalent demands of the strikers in Besançon was

access to 'culture' – 'not as a utopian slogan but as a pragmatic political claim.'



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A shot in *À bientôt, j'espère* rests on a poster during the occupations that reads, 'Centre culturel populaire de Palente-les-Orchamps demands BREAD for all, but also: peace, laughter, theatre, life.' One worker declares: "For us culture is a struggle, a claim. Just as with the right to have bread & lodgings, we claim the right to culture – it's the same fight."

But culture isn't a 'right,' it's a real living force. When many workers in Argentina were faced with the shuttering of their factories in the early 2000s, they retook them – creating spaces inside for a cultural centre, theatre and print-making workshops, a free health clinic, a people's lending library, an adult middle and high school education program, and a University of the Workers.



• *À bientôt, j'espère*  
(1967–68)



## KEY DECISIONS

- let audio-visually disenfranchised groups be the organising voices and minds of our narratives
- support democratic and socialist struggles
  - make films with and for working class communities
  - learn and pass on how to make and market working class film
- form or join cinema development lobbies
  - defend the right and habit to assemble as cinema-users
  - promote the spread of national, regional and local grant aid
  - support experimental and innovative films + screenings
- initiate a distinctly defined schedule within which cinema action's unconventional and non-profit distributing mode of production can be accommodated in a manner supplementing the basis of existing industrial agreements: the workshop declaration

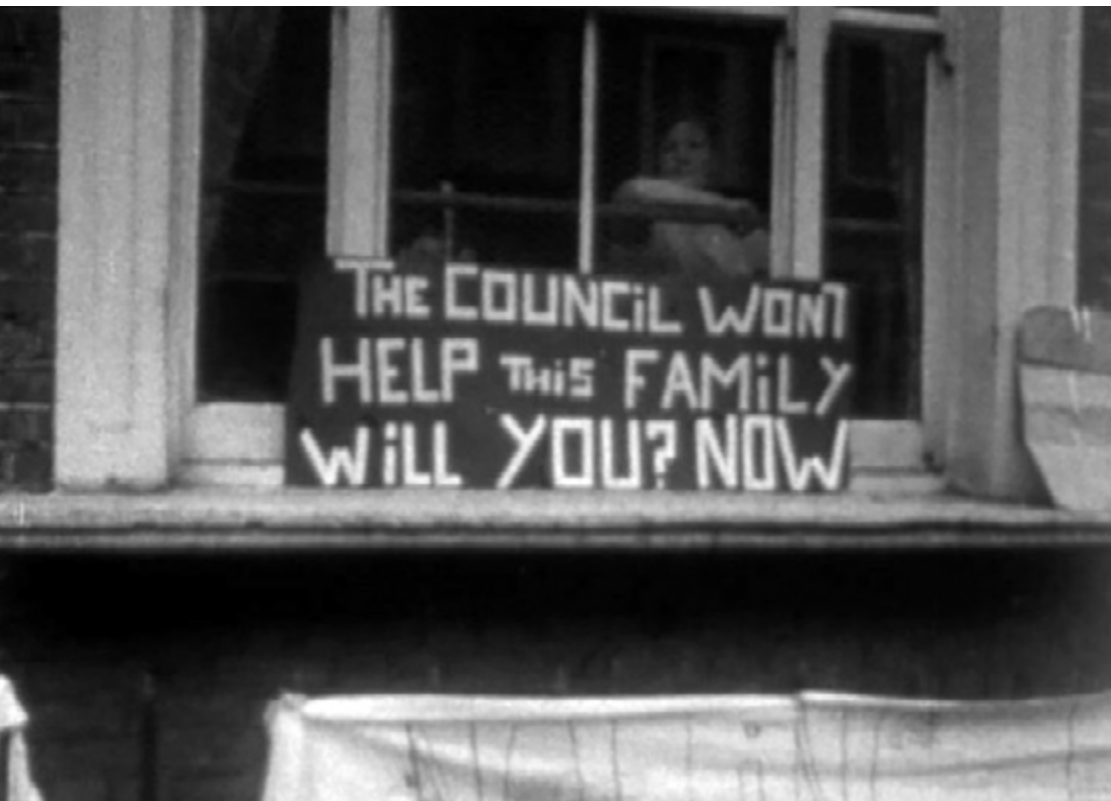
## EDITING

- let the disenfranchised be the organisers: eschew commentaries
- incorporate the dynamic potential of the project group, with and without craft skills into the rough cut.
- learn from those without skills and pass on how to edit non-authoritarianly.
- our films are then cinema action films, when they have obtained the status of unanimous fine cut approval by our members.



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Cinema Action was many different things to many different people. “About giving voice to working people and militants involved in struggle,” said one collective member. “A call to action... more interested in an enabling action rather than in giving a particular line,” said another. “The core of our strategy was to bring about better solidarisation – improved solidarisation of the dispossessed,” a third spoke. “A lot of us thought the revolution was round the corner and it was time to start arming the masses and Cinema Action was part of that arming,” another stated. “You weren’t trying to record history. You were trying to make history. And it was set in a context as part of a debate – not entertainment, not an illustration, not a portrayal of the struggle – but part of the struggle.”



• *Squatters* (1968–70)



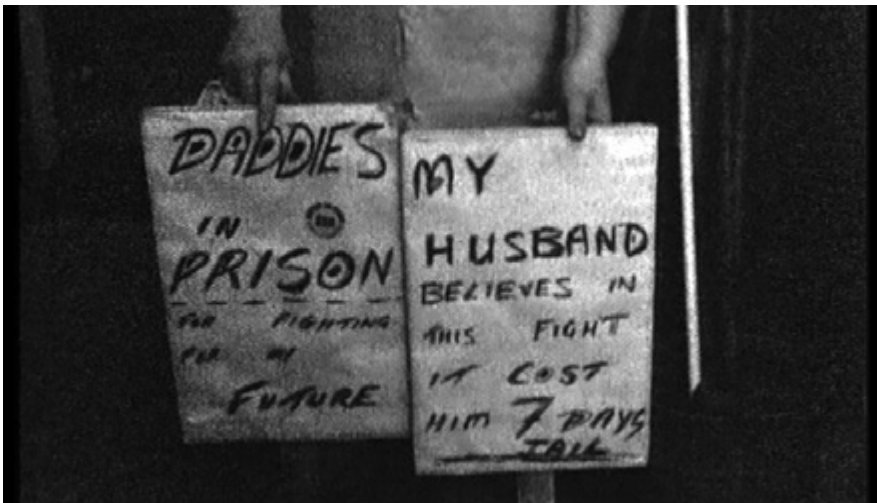


• *Upper Clyde Shipbuilders* (1971)



• *People of Ireland* (1973)

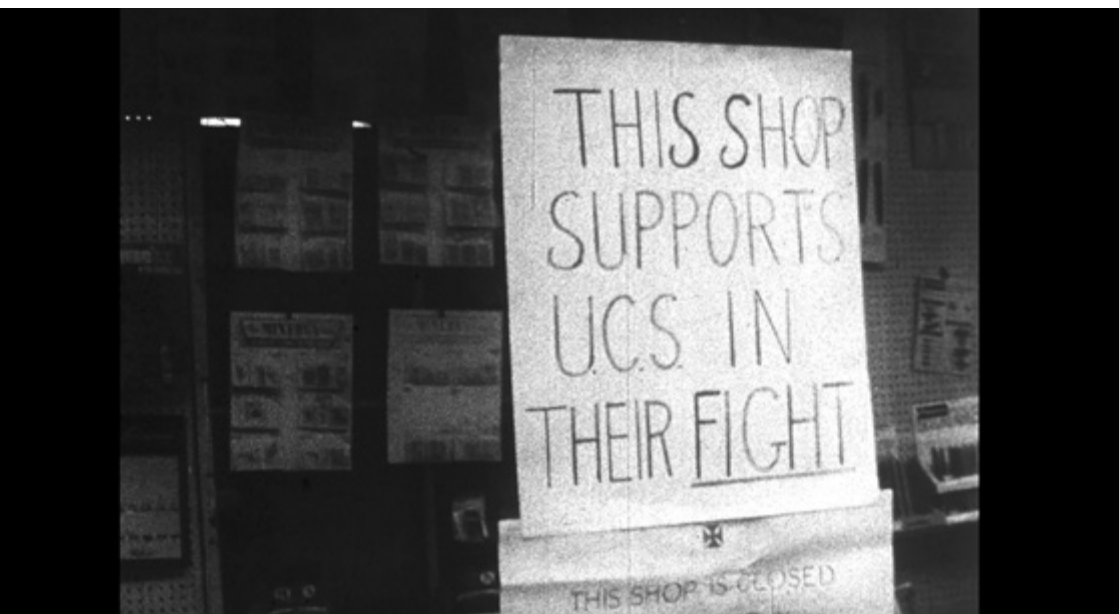




• *The Miners' Film* (1974/5)

• *Viva Portugal* (1973)





• *Rocking the Boat* (1983)

These films give an idea of the reach of Cinema Action's preoccupations: from squatting campaigns, to workers strikes, to miners' meetings, to escalating demonstrations across the country, while acting in solidarity and conversation with struggles further afield – from anti-authoritarian resistance in Portugal, to armed struggle in Ireland, to the barricades of the *enragés* in France.

A preoccupation with the possibilities of *seeing*: of what it might mean to be armed with the ability to glimpse back at ourselves, our struggles, our subjectivities – to enable us to see the parts of our lives in new arrangement – rather than an unconditional commitment to cinema or filmmaking as a form on its own.

But what marks the movement from subjectivity to subject? A friend tells me they plan to write and stage a play based on a poem-essay I wrote, about the death of a friend killed in a Turkish airstrike while fighting against the Turkish state in Rojava. The still-alive friend tells me: "This is my contribution to the struggle... to spread awareness." He seems surprised when I don't jump at the idea. Who will be involved? Who will fund it? Who will it be spreading awareness to? I feel some kind of pressure to know who should be asked for permission to do it. But who to ask – a friend that could at best tokenistically represent the 'community' or struggle being portrayed? The words, his death – in stage directions, punctured with dialogue, little annotations and abbreviations, on the page and in the voices of performers – reduced to language, to art, to 'cause'. "Why the need to transform or *do* something with every feeling or experience we have," another, still-alive, friend asks: "What might happen if we just left it alone?"

Is there a distinction between 'culture' and 'art'? And when 'art' is a historical and political set of processes to be produced, purchased and consumed – and culture is just being alive – is art something we can opt out of? People will scratch out poems on the walls of prison cells if they have to without reading a single book, paint without ever seeing a painting, sing without hearing song. To think otherwise is to believe that we are unable to know – or imagine – what is flickering at the edges of our own eyesight. 'If "the people" have only ever existed as a spectral figure for the benefit of the state – under the pretence of outsourcing authority, or power, or blame, or desire – or as a seemingly homogenous mass of "ordinary" people: those not backed by wealth or particular passports, can there be "a people" of art, a people of cinema?' In collectivity there may exist less discrepancies between 'culture' and 'life' and 'organising' – or rather, these discrepancies are more able to pull and push and flounder in more-than-passive relationship to one another – and so in Cinema Action. It's much harder to capitalise, to recuperate a moving, shifting thing. And so community becomes culture.

"There is no part of yourself you can separate out  
saying, this is memory, this is sensation  
this is the work I care about, this is how I make a living  
it is whole, it is a whole, it always was whole  
you do not "make" it so.'

Diane di Prima, 'Rant', 1990.



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But a real distinction exists between culture & conditions;  
between culture, conditions & 'community'. (O, *community* –  
a word so often appropriated by funding applicants, academics,  
& those who are admitted the vantage point to look inwards  
from the outside; whose existences live in sharp separation  
from who they talk about, not a bargepole of distance  
but of bedrooms, *boulangeries*, bank statements.)  
'There'd be workers who work. & bourgeois  
who bourgeois,' states the voiceover  
at the beginning of Godard's 1972 *Tout Va Bien*.  
7 years later, the preface of *Photography/Politics: One*  
notes the sinister beginnings of many photographic projects  
later branded 'art': Matthew Brady's Civil War negatives  
kept by the US Signal Corps; Henry Jackson's plates  
of the Far West in the Bureau of Reclamation;  
many of the Depression photographs of Evans, Lange & others  
found filed & indexed in the Library of Congress  
as part of the work of the Farm Security Administration.

Their 're-presentation' as 'art', in 'art' books and 'art' shows<sup>5</sup> came later. But the art show has never been democratic, has never been for all. The origins of galleries were areas in royal palaces, castles, country houses – the private property of the wealthy, made partially accessible to 'the people' during periods when the owners were away – when art collections could be viewed by those who wore 'appropriate' dress or were able to tip a housekeeper. Cinema Action screened their *cinétracts* in factory canteens, union meetings, lunch hours, bus depots, shipyard assembly areas, building sites. Place – the question of *where* – can aestheticise as much as any other factor. Take, for instance, the recent 'strictly limited' UK premiere of Pere Portabella's 1974 film, *El Sopar (The Supper)* at Brixton prison. Portabella's documentary takes place on the night of the execution of the militant anarchist, Salvador Puig Antich, by Franco in the Spring of 1974 – filming a conversation between five freed political prisoners over dinner. To protect the film's participants from persecution, production was coordinated in secrecy, notices of secret shooting locations sent to technicians and participants at staggered times; but in 2019, £17 got you in, got you a buffet dinner 'prepared by prisoners'.

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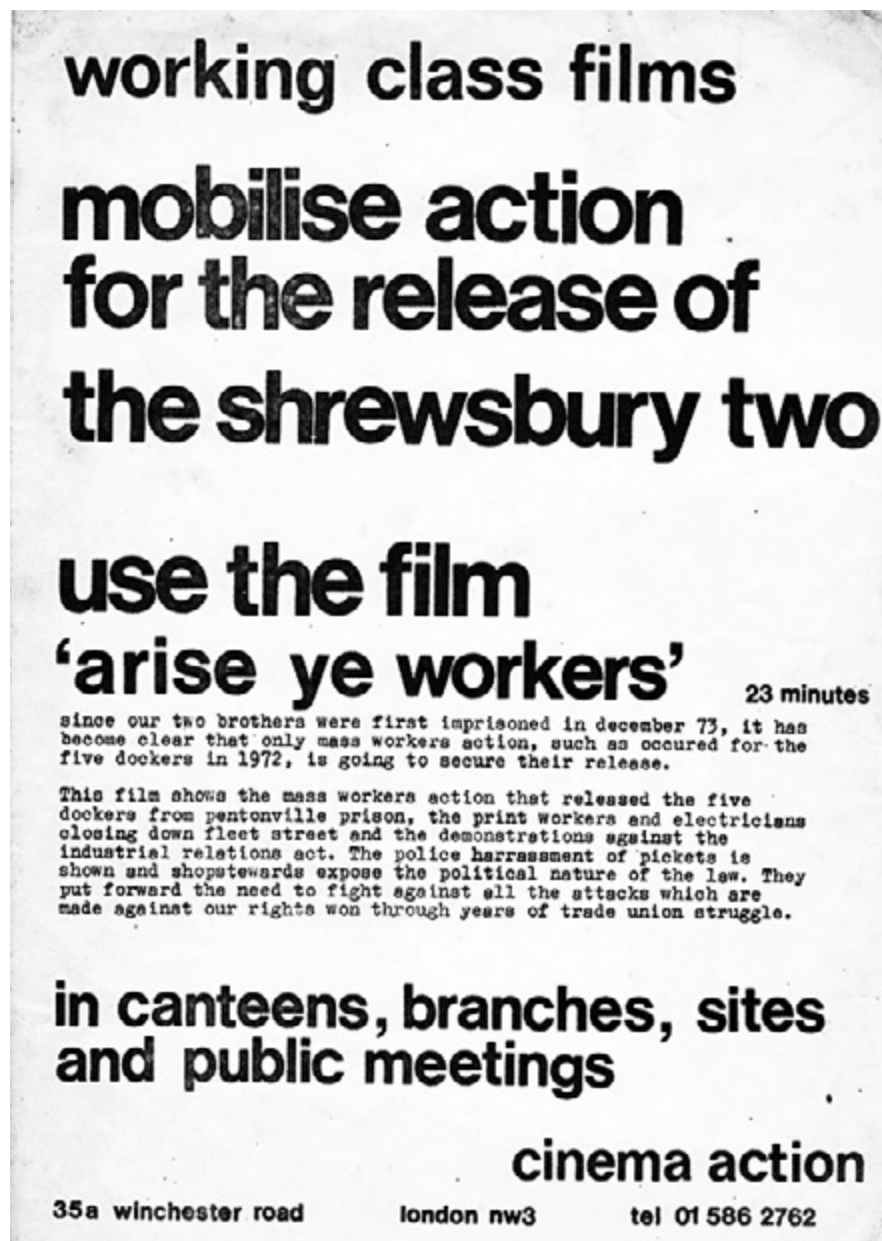
There is a difference between being denied art – and having culture censored, reappropriated and sold back to you – and choosing to disown art and the worlds that buoy it. In April '68, Philippe Garrel won the top prize at the Festival du Jeune Cinéma at Hyères for *Marie Pour Mémoire*. On accepting, the 20 year old announced that he was 'finished' with cinema. If film was to have any meaning, he said, "it should resemble a brick thrown into a movie theatre". He began to make films with a small group – *Zanzibar* – after a trip made to the then-Maoist country by some of the group's members. Their work was funded by the French heiress Sylvia Boissonnas, who it's claimed would sit at a table at La Coupole on Boulevard du Montparnasse in Paris and write checks on the spot to whoever's ideas she liked. Likewise, Cinema Action were funded and resourced by wealthy sympathisers: the owner of a corporate film company in Mayfair, his wealthy friends (including landowning Lords), the daughter of the owner of a Texan oil company. Such is the common 'anti-capitalist' take on trickle-down economics: the upper classes finance the middle classes, who in turn claim to make resources – and the power they consolidate – accessible to the working classes. Despite how dominant approaches to 'identity politics' render the question not *what* you do but *who* does the doing, proximity to the subject matter of a film, or poem, or play; if in fact it is not a 'subject matter' but the very life of the person doing the creating – then does a difference in class foster aestheticization? As Trevor Stark writes of Marker's paradoxical time filming in Besançon: 'How to translate the workers' struggle into cinema such that the filmmaker would not simply reinscribe the relations of domination between those who have access to culture and those who do not, between those who have the power to represent and those who are simply represented?' And why is this more often deemed acceptable in 'art' than in political organising?<sup>6</sup>

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5 Terry Dennett & Jo Spence (eds.),  
*Photography/Politics: One* (1979).

6 Trevor Stark, in 'Cinema in the  
Hands of the People' – Chris Marker,  
the Medvedkin Group, and the Potent-  
ial of Militant Film' (2012). The essay  
also informed much of my writing  
about SLON and Marker's time in  
Besançon.





• Poster for action:  
*arise ye workers*  
(1974/5)

But after all, it was me who wrote the poem-essay that inspired the idea for my still-alive friend's play. I proofed the words, sent them to the editor, later thought about the ones that no longer felt true or applicable or desirable. I was paid \$200 to do so, by a literary foundation that I later discovered are funded by stocks from a multimillion-dollar pharmaceutical company. When my 'I' implicates a collective 'we', where are 'we' left? How to write, or make films, or produce plays that refuse to feed the deadening academisation and petrification of past and current struggles, then and now? To dodge the deathwish of a political economy disguised as aesthetics.

To abandon an essay that presents a subjective summary of a single year's 'struggles' – to leave out Warsaw, Martin Luther King, Tlatelolco Plaza, mass protests against Ayub Khan, the occupation of Hornsey College of Art, the Rodney riots. To reduce struggle to such a specific, singular event: *May '68*.

Few of my friends would call themselves a 'writer' or a 'poet', but everyone around me does write, I discover: friends sending me poems past midnight, penning essays in secret, journals stacking up on bedside tables. It is too easy to forget or dismiss the everyday practice of culture, to which everybody has a claim. Different to those who forge careers from the discrepancies between politics and aesthetics; those who have the almost-admirable audacity to call themselves 'theorists' – as if theory was anything other than our lives.

And what of Cinema Action? "The group began to drift apart as members sought their own individual ways and production", said Pascale Lamche, the daughter of Guedes and Schlacke. "This was partly economic – it became difficult to sustain a living organising facilities for other filmmakers; partly political – it was difficult to retain a coherent political core around a younger generation that were keen to find their way as film producers, writers, cameramen or actresses rather than militants, and around forms of production that required an entirely different set of priorities (i.e. feature films require identifiable director, good marketing and exhibition strategies, etc.)." Previously, theirs had been an approach uninterested in and consciously opposed to the individualism of art or culture in bourgeois society, in private property that lent a room to the purported people's gallery, to hierarchies of 'expertise' and 'specialism'. Remember the *cinétracts* of which you are the director, producer, editor, cinematographer, distributor all at once. "Today is the reign of technicians", declares a fake Godard film released on YouTube in 2018: 'Supermarket technician, mobile television technician; audiovisual technician, police technician... Technique took over gesture.'



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Over a decade on from Cinema Action's formation, *So That You Can Live* (1981) was a "different type of film" said Ann Guedes. Cinema Action still lived and worked as a collective centred on class struggle, but their analysis of "how best to continue the struggle" was changing. *So That You Can Live* follows three generations of one family – Shirley, Roy, Diane and Royston – in South Wales, as the local area faces pit and factory closures. Shirley, a union convener at the GEC factory loses her job, and subsequently her union card, after spending parts of 1976 on strike with over 400 women to demand equal pay. The film took five years to make; it included the staging of specific shots, and readings from 'The Country and the City', a text written specifically for the film by the late Welsh Marxist critic Raymond Williams – techniques that differed in tone and practice to Cinema Action's earlier films. Historical processes, and their present, pressing feelings, are drawn out through Diane's O-level Economics questions: 'What factors influenced the location of manufacturing industry?' and the drift of the camera along the endless rows of books of the South Wales Miners' Library. With a steady, slow-moving eye on the landscape – shots in which we watch people watch the landscape that surrounds them – the film reflects on questions of gender equality and organised labour in the workplace, class and 'community', and the changing environments of city and countryside in Britain as capitalism quickens its pulse. There seems no specific 'message' to the film, no clear call to 'action' or campaign that *So That You Can Live* desires to drive the audience towards. Rather, there is a textured knowingness – clear in the film's title itself – of lives lived within the conditions that seek to end us, and the culture – the songs, the relationships, books and laughter – that enliven us to live beyond them. 'What do you mean, "history"?"



• *So That You Can Live* (1981)



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Working Together  
: *archive supplement no. 1/4*

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# The Film & Photo League

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From 1934 to 1935 the (Workers') Film & Photo League represented a grass-roots manifestation in Britain of the Communist International's cultural politics, during the period of the 'left turn'. Guided by the 'united front from below' strategy, the League articulated the Comintern's 'class against class' policy through the means of agitprop. This involved using filmmaking, photography, exhibitions and screening events as tools for mobilising working-class politics. MayDay Rooms holds a collection of materials from the Film & Photo League, which also provides a powerful visual record of the conditions of working people's everyday lives and related Communist campaigns, such as the National Unemployed Workers' Movement. The material was collated by the photographer Terry Dennett in the 1970s for a study 'of the cultural politics of the interwar period'. This informed his own subsequent work, examples of which can be found in another MayDay Rooms' collection: The Worker Photographer. We have reproduced for this pamphlet two photo collages Terry made from FLP material.

# MANIFESTO of the WORKERS FILM AND PHOTO LEAGUE

## Films

The last twenty-five years have seen the spectacular development of the cinema from a raw mechanical curiosity into a recognised art. Embracing as it does all other forms of art, the film has greater possibilities for depicting life than any other art. It appeals, therefore, to the greatest number of people. It is thus a potent propaganda medium.

But up to now the making of films in this country has been almost entirely monopolised by the capitalist class. What have they done with this monopoly? They have used it to give us a capitalist view of life; to show us life from a distorted angle. They have used it to glorify and justify their own parasitic existence. Above all, they have used it to make us forget our own lives.

Obviously, most people go to films to be entertained or to learn something. But there is nothing entertaining or instructive in the empty, hysterical love affairs of decadent Society women and their gangster or gigolo lovers—the subject of most commercial films.

We have only to compare any of the great Russian films like "Potemkin" or "General Line" with any English or American commercial film to prove that there is more real heroism and real drama in the daily lives of our class—in the class which is making history—than in anything the capitalist class can show us.

Workers' Film and Photo League thinks the time has come for workers to produce films and photos of their own. Films and photos showing their own lives, their own problems, their own organised efforts to solve these problems.

For this purpose there must be joint co-ordinated activity by all working-class film and camera club organisations, all individual workers, students, artists, writers and technicians interested in films and photography.

Workers' Film and Photo League exists to provide this co-ordination.

## Activities

The League will produce its own films giving a true picture of life to-day, recording the industrial and living conditions of the British workers and the struggle of the employed and unemployed to improve these conditions.

It will produce news-reel magazines of current events of working-class interest.

It will popularise the great Russian films and endeavour to exhibit them to the widest possible audiences.

It will carry on criticism of current commercial films in the Press and in its own literature, and expose films of a militarist, fascist, or anti-working-class nature.

## Photos

There are thousands of workers in this country who own cameras, but who only use them for taking an occasional snapshot. If even a number of them were to photograph the conditions around them—in the factories, workshops, dockyards, railways and countryside, in their own streets—we should have an invaluable record of working-class life, which would enable workers in different branches of industry to understand each other's problems. This vivid understanding of the problems of other workers will help to bring the workers in different branches of industry and in different districts closer together. It will thus actually become a weapon in the struggle of the whole working-class.

## Activities

The League will hold exhibitions of photographs all over the country. It will invite exhibits from workers of other countries, and arrange for British workers' photos also to be exhibited and published abroad.

It will organise competitions of photographs of working-class interest, which will be judged as much on their social value as on their technical merit.

It will arrange for shop-window displays of news-photos and endeavour to distribute these photos to the widest possible sections of the Press both in this country and abroad.

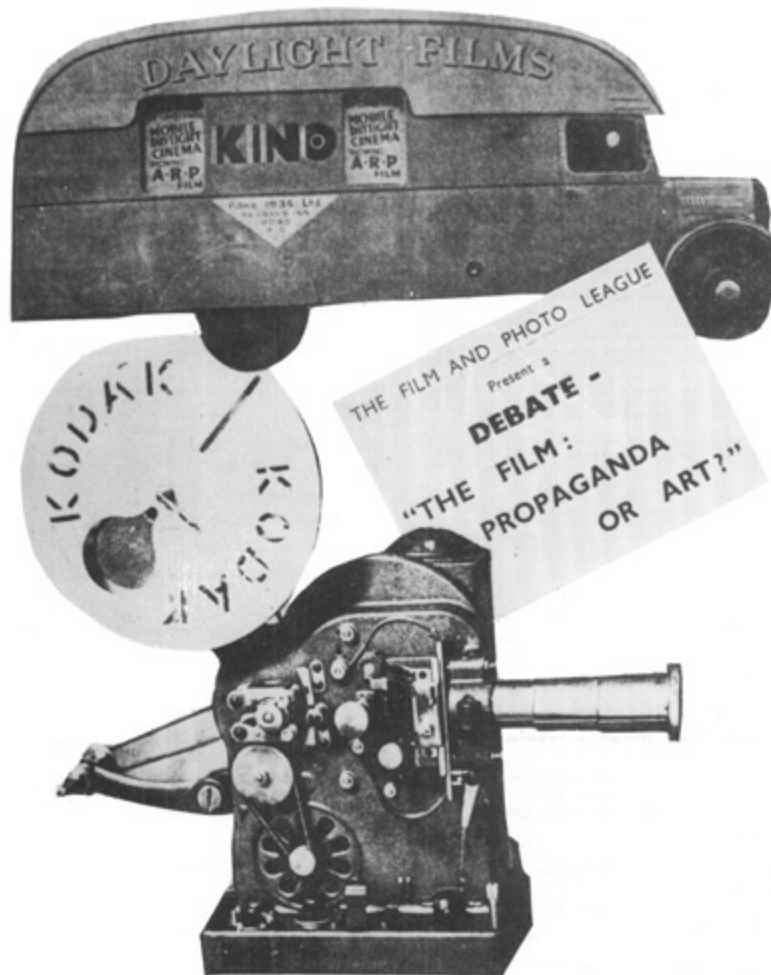
It will arrange popular lectures both on films and photography to working-class organisations and societies.

It will assist local production groups to obtain film and photo apparatus and technical instruction.

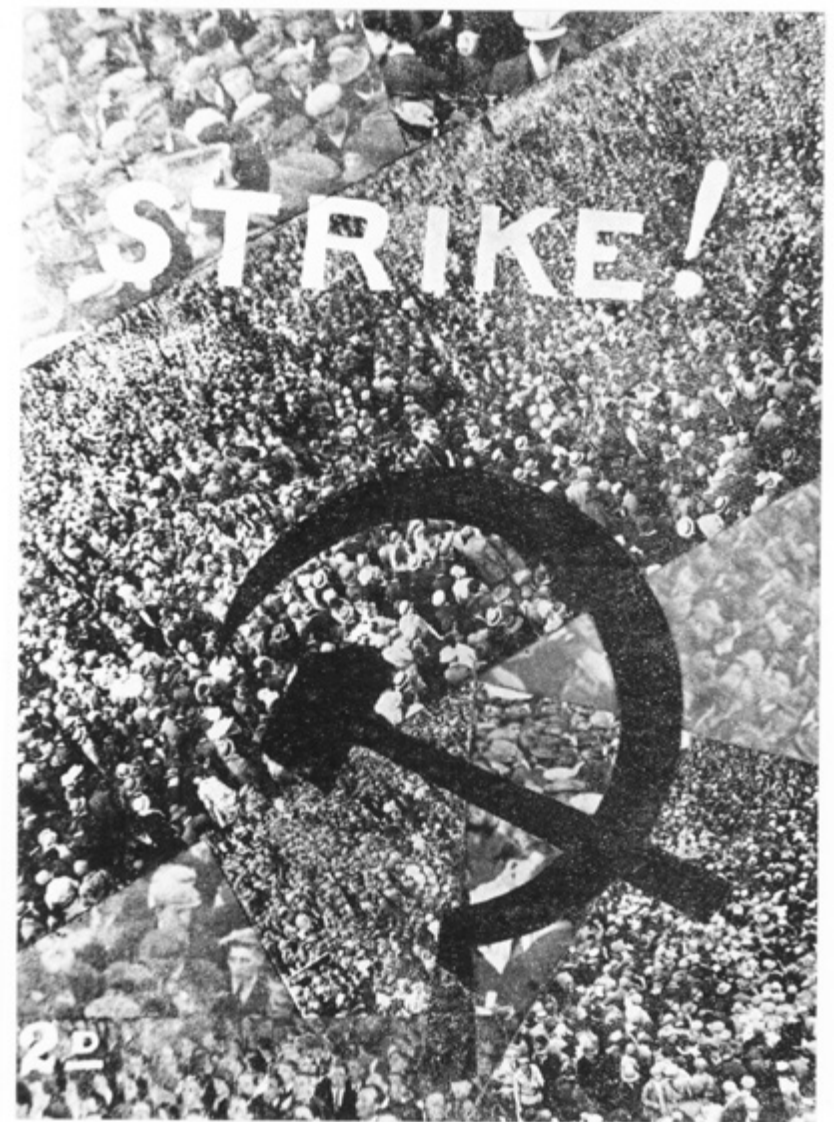
JEAN ROSS [Secretary]

86 Grays Inn Road London W.C. 1.









Cover of C.P. Pamphlet design by JERRY ROSS



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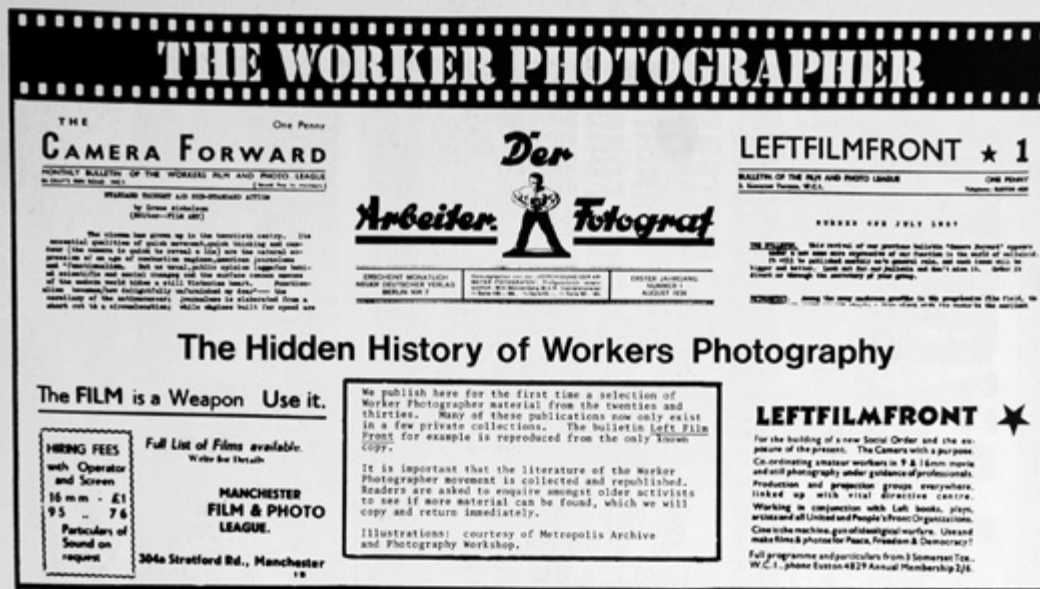
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# The Worker Photographer



The Worker Photographer was a project initiated by Terry Dennett in the late 1970s. It explicitly set out to provide a partisan representation of working-class perspectives through the medium of photography. This approach took inspiration from Communist agitprop of the interwar period, such as the work of *Der Arbeiter Fotograf* and The Film & Photo League. As well as the industrial struggles of workers at Ford, themes addressed included safety in the workplace and the depiction of class relations in the bourgeois press. MayDay Rooms holds a collection of materials produced by *The Worker Photographer*.



## The Hidden History of Workers Photography

The FILM is a Weapon Use it.

**HIRING FEES**  
with Operator  
and Screen  
16 mm - £1  
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Particulars of  
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Full List of Films available.  
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**MANCHESTER  
FILM & PHOTO  
LEAGUE.**

304a Stratford Rd., Manchester  
18

We publish here for the first time a selection of Worker Photographer material from the twenties and thirties. Many of these publications now only exist in a few private collections. The bulletin Left Film Front for example is reproduced from the only known copy.

It is important that the literature of the Worker Photographer movement is collected and republished. Readers are asked to enquire amongst older activists to see if more material can be found, which we will copy and return immediately.

Illustrations: courtesy of Metropolis Archive and Photography Workshop.

**LEFTFILMFRONT** ★ 1

For the building of a new Social Order and the exposure of the present. The Camera with a purpose. Co-ordinating amateur workers in 8 & 16mm movie and still photography under guidance of professionals. Production and projection groups everywhere. Linked up with vital directive centre. Working in conjunction with Left books, plays, articles and all United and People's Front Organisations. One to the machine, gun of ideological warfare. Unread make films & photos for Peace, Freedom & Democracy! Full programme and particulars from J Somerset Ltd., 40, C.I., phone Euston 4829 Annual Membership 2/6.

TOWARDS A NEW WORKERS FILM AND PHOTO LEAGUE

### EDITORIAL

More than forty years have elapsed since the publication of a journal by a worker photographer group in England. Such a lengthy period without any organized focus or public platform for the photographic art and ideas of working people has undoubtedly had its effect on the cultural aspirations and development of the working class as a whole. Clearly this is, at least partly, responsible for the current political and ideological lack of awareness shown by much of the population (including political activists) to the reactionary visual imagery we see around us today, and the way in which we have been conditioned to interpret and accept it.

An examination of many of the photographs taken by politically active workers in the past shows, in most cases, that they were imbued with at least a degree of class understanding. Today this is an exception: the pictures that workers now make for themselves are usually taken with the eyes and mind of the middle and upper classes whose ideas and values have been built into the methods and approaches of contemporary photography. Hence, even in organizations frequented by working class amateur photographers, such as workers' camera clubs, photography is seen merely as entertainment or escapism, as a means of producing portraits, pictorial photo journalism, or nudes and still lifes of bourgeois significance.

This widespread failure to understand that culture is not neutral but is the artistic expression of a class viewpoint (in this case the capitalist values which dominate all 'mass' and 'popular' culture) is most strikingly reflected in the pictorial content and text of many contemporary Left cultural journals. Few of these express a consistent socialist message, have a practical base, or the primary working class readership which characterized earlier attempts at a socialist literature in the mass circulation politico-cultural journals *Der Arbeiter Fotografie*, *A.L.C.* and *Vote Factory*, or publications such as *New Masses*, *Photo Notes* or *The Camera Forward*.

One reason for this is undoubtedly the current policy of the Left to universally appeal to all classes at the same time.

The Worker Photographer (as its title suggests) has rejected such a policy: just for a change it is a publication that is unashamedly addressed to the working classes. We hope it will be the first of many in the battle against bourgeois ideology in the field of culture.

### WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Worker Photographer is pledged to help working people master the art and craft of film and photography in order that they may both be used to further the struggle against capitalist oppression.

We have set ourselves four tasks:

1. To provide a regular low cost publication which expresses working class views on photography, and uses photographs and writings made by people in struggle.
2. To publish investigations and information on the earlier traditions of Socialist photography: such as the work and writings of the pre war *Arbeiter Fotografie* and *Film and Photo League* movements.
3. To embark on an analysis of photography without which no practical progress can be made towards an understanding of capitalist visual ideology (both in images and language) and its working class alternatives.
4. To organize periodic photo schools and discussions at which people may acquire the necessary skills and theoretical background to enable them to use photography as a weapon in the class struggle.

People who use photography in political struggle, or wish to do so, can contact us for further information by writing, c/o the following address:

W.P. Publications Project  
c/o 152 Upper Street,  
London, N1 1RA, England.

### THE FORD GROUP TALKS ABOUT ITS POSTER

We are a group of socialists working in and around Ford-Bagenham. One of our activities has been to look into the question of WORKERS' PHOTOGRAPHY. For some reason (wonder why?) capitalists do not like workers photographing their own place of work!! Now, if we are Socialists, we believe in taking over those places of work... so why not start by asserting our right to take pictures of them?

The difficulties of this were well shown when Jack Sprang was sacked out of B.M.C.-CANLEY for taking in Cinema Action's film crew to film the real facts behind the dispute there in 1976 (see his published pamphlet).

Our activity is taking three forms:

1. Recording struggles.
2. Recording conditions in the plants.
3. Gathering history.

Let's start with HISTORY. We went to a few places and asked for pictures of Ford workers in struggle in past years. The Morning Star thought the old pictures had

been junked. The Evening Standard library said they could supply pictures of Mr. Ford, or of Ford cars, but Ford workers would be a hard one. The Keystone Agency treated us like we wanted nuclear secrets! And the comrades at the left-wing REPORT photo agency said they had almost nothing at Fords.

So... we've started collecting all the pictures of Ford struggles we can, from papers, magazines etc. And we've also started taking our own. Just to build up some sort of archive that will be useful in pamphlets etc.

Now, the STRUGGLES. In June-July 1977 there was the big layoff dispute at Dagenham. During the dispute we were able to break through the "psychological barrier" against photographing fellow workers (after all, Ford management had been using their own secret cameras in the Body Plant, and the Press photographers were all over the place). We took a whole lot of colour slides of the dispute - including a memorable meeting when the Union official was chased off the platform. These colour slides have been turned into black and white pix, and have been used in leaflets etc. Also a slide show has been made out of them, showing some of the lessons of the struggle for the Guaranteed Week (available for showing).

Finally, the CONDITIONS. This is much harder. Photos of car factories are not easy to get - especially Fords. In the USA United Auto contracts of 1976, Ford was the employer who refused to sign the clause allowing shop stewards to photograph dangerous working conditions, under the health and safety provisions. As we all know...they've got a lot to hide! There have been people who have taken pix inside the Car plants - eg the book 'CARWORKER' by Sarah Cox and Bob Golden - but these don't get to the heart of the struggle (and anyway, Fords would not allow Cox and Golden into the Dagenham Engine Plant).

The questions of workers being able to photograph their own conditions of work and struggle inside the plants is something that we are still working on. So far we have come into contact with a number of amateur photographers, and this has yielded interesting results.

There's no doubt that a CAMERA is an essential part of a militant's equipment. Not only can we record struggles for posterity (for future militants, grandchildren etc!), also we can take photographic evidence, eg hazardous condition. A camera can be useful on a picket line, in the event of trouble from police or scabs. It will also provide materials for leaflets, publications etc. And it provides good snapshots for passing round the plant! AND TAKE IT FROM US - YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN EXPERT TO DO IT! We're the biggest bunch of amateurs going!



Please address all enquiries for The Working Photograph to  
W.P. Publications project  
c/o 132 Upper Street  
LONDON N1

## THE CAR WORKER'S LAMENT



## LAYOFFS 1976: FORD'S HEAVY PRICE



"The two main diagrams of our struggle were: WE ARE NOT CASUAL LABOUR and 80% OF BASIC PAY WITH THEIR WORKING FOR NOT. This battle goes back for years and years.

The Body Plant accepted, against Ford's lockout policies, October 1975. "The Company thinks that they can kick us while we're down—but just wait till we're back on top. Then we'll be kicking them!"

## A BATTLE PLAN



## BLOCKADING THE GATES

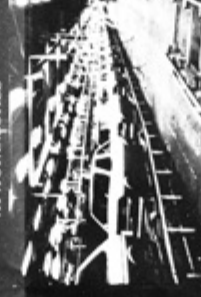


"We had to hit them - and hit them hard. So our first job was to put on pickets and stop all incoming barrels and supplies."

At the start it was tough and go. "The Company tried to destroy us by keeping whole sections on pay, while we were standing outside doing the picketing. We won through

The Body Plant lady was also laid off. They marched round the plant with loud hollers and called a meeting. They voted to occupy the Body, and set up forklifts as barricades.

## A HOME-FROM-HOME (Shannon 1993)



## A WHIFF OF SELL-OUT



"Would you believe it? The middle of June! When we were picking it was raining, and when it wasn't raining it was bloodin' cold. Pickin' hats are set up, at key points, to keep

Millions of pounds of machinery brought successfully to a standstill by effective picketing - so effective that plants as far afield as Haleswood, Cologne and Valencia were threatened.

Mick Murphy Esq., TG&U district official arrives at the picket line to tell the strikers (1) they've got no chance of victory; (2) they'd better return to work. Up yours Michael! was the

## THE OCCUPATION CENTRE



## COMMUNICATIONS (continued)



Any active strike needs a *revue*, there's the Body Plant cartoon, occupied for the duration of the PTA dispute—a focus for meetings, discussions, a film-show and a warm

Feed's rail links are a vulnerable point. After a (slightly failed) attempt to dig up the rail lines with a backho, the strikers asked for (and got) railway workers' permission

In order to coordinate all 5 picketing points, a Flying Picket service was essential, ready for the slightest hint of trouble.

#### COMMUNICATIONS (4)



## HOW TO WIN



A night's work with paint, brushes, and a bit of old canvas, makes good posters which inform all workers what is going on. Good information helps a democratic strike.

Gardex-Chloride workers, just down the road, had been in occupation for 7 weeks. Body Plant and PFA workers marched down and held a solidarity meeting outside their gates.

A strike has a chance to win when it's run, democratically by workers and shop stewards. This was the message near the end of the strike, when self-out TGWTU official Frank



# Make Your Own Agitprop Slide Show

## MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED

The camera: 35mm equipment is best, but an Instamatic will do. Other types of cameras are not recommended as they won't be compatible with the most commonly used projectors. A reflex camera is best (SLR), particularly if you have to photograph artwork such as cartoons and photographs. What you see in the viewfinder is what you get in the final picture. An exposure meter is essential; sometimes this is built into the camera. If it's not, then buy a Boots brand hand meter at around £5. If for any reason you haven't got a meter, most films come with an instruction sheet which contains an exposure table. This is adequate under normal daylight conditions but useless indoors. If you have to take pictures indoors, or in bad lighting conditions, electronic flash can be invaluable. Many very good and cheap models are on the market. Computerized flash guns are best as they automatically give you the correct exposure without any calculation beyond setting the film speed on a dial. If you are taking photographs in large indoor situations such as in a factory, you will find that the light of the flash will just not carry far enough (and maybe you don't want to advertize your presence). Use the highest film speed you can get (about 500 ASA) and always brace yourself against something solid like a wall before you take the picture. You could also use a device called a table tripod - this should enable you to give exposures of up to one second.

**The projector:** a slide presentation can be produced with a projector costing as little as £8, though for this you won't be able to have the slides arranged in a magazine, and each slide will have to be put in individually. The least troublesome sort of projector to use is one that will hold the slides in a magazine, and you should bear in mind that most slide presentations need at least forty slides, so the projector should be able to take a magazine that will hold at least fifty (a tray magazine), or 80 in the case of the Kodak Carousel which is often found in public halls.

**Film:** you will need colour slide film. Kodak Kodachrome and Ektachrome films are both good. Fuji and Agfa also make slide film. When choosing the film you are going to use it is worth considering which lighting conditions you are going to be photographing in. You not only need to consider the film speed, but you also need to take into account whether you will be photographing out of doors or in artificial light, as these can't be mixed up on the same film without the use of filters. Film speed is a measure of how much light the film needs to take the picture. A film with a low film speed is slow and needs more light than a fast film which has a high film speed. The film speed is given by its ASA number (eg 25 ASA).

At present the only black and white slide film available is Agfa Dia Direct. This is bought with the processing paid for in advance, and comes back to you complete with slide mounts.

**Collecting images:** the agitprop slide show does not only have to contain pictures from 'real life'. It can include a variety of images from magazines, newspapers, leaflets etc. The German workers' magazine of the 1930's 'Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung' (Workers' Illustrated News) was very good at using this technique of juxtaposing photographs taken in factories with company reports/profits, or bringing images published in different places together as a way of bringing out the contradictions of wealth, power, oppression. All this can be done very well in a slide show and you can get more sophisticated the more images you collect and the more you gain experience at editing and analysing pictures and the ways they work best together.

## PLANNING A SLIDE PRESENTATION

It is important to have as much planning done in advance before you start taking photographs or recording, otherwise you will waste time and money. Get all the people together who are going to be involved and talk out ideas, writing things down as you go along. Once you have decided what needs saying and how it is best said, write notes or a script covering the narration or interviews, and what pictures you will need to take to accompany them. Bear in mind that you will want to change the slide every 10 or 15 seconds (if the picture stays on the screen much longer it gets boring), so think of taking photographs from different angles and with different lenses - eg. general views and then into a close up. This may be a difficult choice if you are a meeting, a picket or a demonstration, so try to work out how to situate yourself (and be able to protect yourself and camera if necessary) and not get in the way. A good idea is to watch a film or tv programme and try to work out where the camerapeople stood to get their shots, how they changed viewpoint and angles with each shot. If you want a picture of somebody speaking it is quite acceptable to use a long (close up) lens in order to get a large image; even cutting the top off the head is quite acceptable, and often adds impact. Try to vary the pace as much as possible if you can. Take general shots which situate the event before moving in to pick out specific details.

**Editing the slides:** the number of slides you will need depends on the amount of information you are going to put across, and if you have to fit into a time slot, say at a meeting. Unless you are using two projectors, with the slides fading into one another, you will not want to change the slides too rapidly as this can cause quite a distraction. You should change the slides every 10 to 20 seconds. It takes about 3 seconds for the slide to actually change.

You will need some form of light table to arrange sequences. These can be bought but are expensive - it is much easier to make one. Simply make a box or use a drawer, put a fluorescent tube in the bottom, or a few light bulbs, and place a piece of frosted glass/perspex over the top. Easier still is just to use a piece of frosted glass or translucent perspex and to stick little ledges along it for the slides to rest on, and then just hang it in front of a window. Once you have worked out your sequence try it out in the projector.

**Copying artwork:** if you plan to make a large number of slides from artwork, drawings, maps or photographs, you will need a simple copying set up. At its simplest, this means taping the artwork to the wall, making sure there is an even light on it, and photographing it. But if you plan to do a lot of copying it is a good idea to either have a copy stand or use an inverted tripod with the artwork placed on a flat base. An even light can be produced either by two lights on either side of the artwork at 45°, or by setting up by a window and using the window light to light one side, with a reflector (a piece of white card or tinfoil) to light the other side. Unless you plan to copy fairly large pieces of artwork you will probably find that your lens will not focus close enough. Most lenses don't focus much closer than two feet, and this makes it difficult to photograph anything smaller than about 12 x 8". To get closer you can use one of many techniques. A close up lens can be very cheap and efficient, or a lens reversal ring. This can be useful if perhaps you want to photograph an announcement in the press, or a piece of information which is hidden away in the midst of a mass of print.

## CONCLUSION

In our class-divided society we are taught to think of 'amateur' photography as being either of the 'snapshot' variety (family groups, holidays), the 'camera club' variety (sunsets, kittens and girls' tits), or the 'artist' variety (landscapes, rose-tinted views of the lives of others, and 'aesthetic' nudes) - in other words things that are almost totally divorced from class struggle. Agitprop can break through all this: it is not our role to entertain (but we must be entertaining), it is our role to agitate, organise and explain. To do this we can usefully incorporate all sorts of imagery, and in particular to use our own photographs taken in the course of work and struggle.

(We are extremely grateful to MIKE ABRAHAM for allowing us to abstract from his very helpful article on tape-slide presentation.)

**USEFUL READING**  
THE USES OF SLIDE TAPE  
TJACOBSON  
and slide direct from:  
Michael Norton,  
34 Saltram Crescent,  
London, W.9.  
£1.95 plus postage (and  
from some bookshops)

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
Nationalist Guidelines,  
Greenhill/Murray/Spence  
£1.95  
useful demystification  
of professional photography - good practical section.

# THE WORKER PHOTOGRAPHER

## SOCIALIST PHOTOJOURNALISM

Means Worker Photographers and Worker Correspondents

Who represents who in society, how they do it and for what purpose, is central to every political and cultural question. This is especially true with regard to the opinion-forming mass media.

In capitalist society at large, the working classes are expected to remain as silent participants in all media relations - whether as reporters or consumers. Their life and struggles must be presented to their fellows indirectly through the mediation of specially trained bourgeois experts (journalists, press photographers, social workers, sociologists, psychologists etc.). Socialists have long opposed this type of cultural class oppression; bringing into being in the process many political-cultural bodies designed to ensure that working people have the organization and skill to speak for themselves. One such body is the subject of this present issue on the *Worker Correspondent* movement, a world wide association of ordinary workers whose political task was to become amateur journalists for the left press during the early thirties. This novel method of collecting information arose at first on a spontaneous basis but was subsequently developed by the theorists of the Communist International into the main form of Socialist Journalism in the U.S.S.R. photo-journalism employed "photo-labors" that is photo-worker correspondents during the period of the Comintern's "Left turn" (1928-34). This form of Journalism is not practiced as a basic structural policy by the left press in Britain today, at best all we see is the occasional campaign issue which appeals to readers for ideas or information, leaving intact the "them" and "us" relationship which is so characteristic of the bourgeois and Left press today. This is a pity, for a concerted effort to revive and develop this earlier Socialist photo-journalism could mean hundreds of worker correspondents and worker photographers, all over the country, supplying the left press, not just as at present a few overworked (and often elitist) supporters of a "professional" left journalism and image-making.

For every member of the working class in struggle it is sometimes or other a potential correspondent or photographer for Socialism. The young, the old, male or female, black or white, working or unemployed, all have a tale to tell that is as vital and as moving as any that falls from the pen of the skilled bourgeois reporter.

More than this, such people constitute the most numerous and best informed group of reporters that could be wished for. They are to be found in every street, every enterprise and institution in the land. Why then are they not officially working for the left press? The answer in some cases seems to be that today's "New Left" is totally unaware of the real theoretical advances and modes of organization worked out by the "Old Left" of the twenties and thirties. History and its lessons have not even been learned, let alone forgotten. Sympathetic left journalists we have spoken to have been amazed to discover that a distinct Socialist practice existed in the field of journalism and photography. For them the only possible model for their work has until now been the "Fleet Street system", suitably modified to fit in with the micro economics and political line of their group or party.

In other cases, unfortunately, "Left" journalism seems to mean only the opportunity to build the full-time career denied to them by Fleet Street, or more often than not, a case of "moonlighting"

between Fleet Street and the Left press, bringing into the movement along the way the reactionary structures and ideas of the professional "closed shop" and NUJ-card-only political reportage. Such people of course are not interested in developing a socialist practice of photo-journalism and will undoubtedly do all they can to prevent "amateurs" such as worker photographers and worker correspondents freely publishing their work. However, without such "amateurs" there can be no real revival of a viable Socialist photo-journalism in Britain. Only a further flood into the movement of politically unreliable middle class professionals and grant-deprived Arts Council fed "community photographers", anxious to find a new "market" for their work.

We ask all serious members of the Socialist movement (whether they produce journals or not) to see that these questions are debated within the organizations to which they belong, with a view to putting Socialist practice back into Left journalism and photography in Britain. A slide show and exhibition is now available. We are also prepared to hold small workshops for groups. Such practical sessions are essential for it is impossible to fully explain in any text the essential "know-how" which underpins this work.

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## NOT THE FLEET STREET DOPE SYSTEM







LESSONS  
FOR THE  
SWINISH MULTITUDE  
OR,

## LESSON 1. WHO WE SHOULD DISAPPROVE OF.



People who want decent pay and are prepared to fight to get it.



ONE PENNYWORTH

PIG'S MEAT:

1997年12月15日

To provide among the Librarian, Part of Blackbird pro-  
gram them of their situation, at their frequency, and a  
near right.

That their behavior constitutes bias has not been seriously considered and, therefore, we need not go further.

Pic's most rare subtitle

in 1793

collected in 1979

---

but we first  
take care of our  
own people, and  
then we can help  
others.



**LESSON 3.**  
"Britain" is apparently made up only of 'decent people' – part



THE IDEOLOGY OF THE EMPLOYING CLASS IS PRESENTED BY THE "NATIONAL" PRESS IN:

1. Their selection of what to report
2. Their decisions on what to leave out
3. The impression they give that their view is the only possible one.
4. Their use of pictures and language to support their view of the world.

HOW "FREE" AND "INDEPENDENT" IS THE BRITISH PRESS?

By 1974, 80 per cent of British newspapers (over 120 daily and Sunday papers) were owned and produced by only three companies. These are: International Publishing Corporation (*Daily Mirror*, etc.), Rupert Murdoch's *News International*, and the Thompson Organisation. The remaining monopolies are the Pearson Longman Group with the *Financial Times* plus 11 provincial daily papers; Associated Newspapers with the *Daily Mail* and 14 provincial daily papers; and Beaverbrook Newspapers with the *Daily Express* etc.

## THE WORKER PHOTOGRAPHER

In this third issue of the Worker Photographer we have tried to raise just a few of the questions we think should be central to any socialist discussion of the media: questions about representation, structure, and

Many left organisations publish journals, but few bother to involve their readers in a discussion of these topics, and few, unfortunately, have shown any awareness of the tactical importance of the worker correspondents structure as a factor in the development of a socialist press in Britain.

So little attention has been paid to these questions that we can find direct 'yes' and 'no' answers to the following questions: What is the system and that of the left presses? And yet a vastly improved and infinitely more democratic method of journalism has been possible since the late twenties; we refer of course to the powerful correspondent structure, a method theorized and pioneered by the international socialist movement. A method which, in fact, constitutes a new stage in the development of journalism. This brings us to the readers and full-time staff, whose attitude towards the extensive special press, the press of the Party, the workers' press, is capable of revivelling the experience of even the largest of the bourgeois papers. We leave it to the editors of the left to explain why they have ignored the talents and potential of their readers. It is perhaps also pertinent to ask some of them why valuable space is used up every day to uncritically reproduce, without special comment, such things as the programme schedules of radio and television, or far too often to discuss the latest Soviet

Finally, it is essential that an index of worker correspondents be compiled. We therefore ask all those individuals and groups who have, or would like to take up this work, to write to us with details of their activity and the problems encountered. We would also be particularly interested in the outcome of any discussions that take place about these matters with organizations.

The double-page spread in this issue is deliberately "unfurnished" with no text, no illustrations, no commentary, no local examination of the media. Just a series of images, each with a title, that are intended to be read or subtextually some of your local news for the images used, add text and make it into your own political poster - perhaps even treat it as a later newspaper (in subject you will be dealing with in a later issue). We want you to use this issue, not just read it.

Now we'll turn to the second part of the issue. It's called "The Future of the Future" and it's a dialogue. It's a dialogue of what you do as we that we can continue a dialogue.

\* At the time of going to press we have received one exceptional publication which does show a real awareness of these questions. "THE REVOLUTIONARY PRESS IN BRITAIN AND WHAT IS TO BE DONE TO REBUILD IT" which is available from C.W.N. c/o Box 84, 182 Vicar Street, London, N.1.



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ing to:  
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c/o Upper St., London

1











# Photograph that hazard

This article assumes some prior experience of photography and is primarily intended to equip the average amateur user with a basic set of working methods which will enable him or her to accomplish all the tasks required of a health and safety photographer. When writing this piece we were very conscious of our inability to also compress into the space available a good introductory guide to photography for the complete beginner. As a partial compromise we are recommending two books<sup>1</sup> which give sufficient background to allow even the inexperienced to follow all the methods given.

For those who feel unhappy about teaching themselves from books there are often friendly amateur photographers around. Failing that many adult evening institutes run short courses on photography. Here you can learn the technical background but don't expect to be taught about photography from a militant working class point of view.

# Tools of the trade

35 mm camera metric scale  
Flash gun job record book  
close up lens 6 foot rule  
screw converter masking tape  
film blue tack  
table tripod torch  
lens reversal ring

Because of its wide availability we have adopted as standard equipment the automatic 35mm single lens reflex camera. This does not mean that good work cannot be done with many other types of equipment including the Instamatic and 110 size cameras—it can.

As a start we recommend the following basic outfit. This will fit into a small plastic tool box or can be carried in pouch pockets sewn into the lining of a coat. Film and accessories can also be carried in a body belt (money belt). This leaves your hands free and helps hide the fact that you are a photographer.

You will notice our kit includes a table tripod. This can either be used against the chest to hold the camera steady for up to 1/2 second, or placed upon a static surface such as a wall or table; we have also fitted our tripod with an adaptor to hold a portable flash gun. For routine work include a metric reference scale.

Place it next to the subject so that identification details can be recorded on the negative. A job record note book, plus pencil, masking tape, plasticine, and a roll of 15 amp fuse wire for sticking and holding things into position, white chalk for drawing diagrams, a pocket torch (both for use as a light in dark places and for photographic use) complete the outfit. In some situations a small compass is also useful to show exact location on the negative.

**Class Consciousness**  
You won't find this item for sale in the camera shop but it needs to become part of your equipment if you want to produce pictures that get to the root of the matter. In this respect you can always learn a lesson from the boss and his supporters who always have a consideration for their class interest uppermost in their minds. Do as they do, use your time and photographic talents to promote the political and social interests of your fellow toilers. Become a worker photographer.

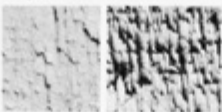
**Learn Lighting Control**  
An understanding of the principles of lighting helps you visualise the final effect before you press the shutter. This

means a higher percentage of usable pictures, important if you are short of money or asked to get pictures of unrepeatable events.



The diagram explains two basic ways of using light. The *Tone Light* for soft, almost shadowless lighting of machines, oil stains, bruises, burns, and all subjects which consist of tone and colour only.

The *Texture Light*: a strong side light which throws all surface detail into sharp relief, shows skin conditions, damaged floors and similar subjects very well. These principles also apply to the effects seen in sunlight.



Effects produced by changing the position of a single light

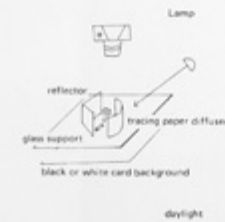


Get a torch or small lamp and try out each light position until you understand the effects and know which subject it suits best.

**The Photography of Samples and Specimens**

You will frequently be called upon to record the condition of various objects such as damaged tools, samples, chemical waste etc. Much time can be saved if you adopt the 'gross specimens' set up of the medical and technical photographers.

Two versions are shown here. Others, and a complete discussion of the best methods to use will be found in the medical book given in the bibliography.



White plastic bucket used as a substitute lighting set up for samples and specimens.



Although a great deal of work has to be done under existing lighting conditions, this need not be a problem if you carry out trial exposures under typical situations in your environment. Indoor lighting is becoming more standardized especially in factories, offices and shops owned by large monopolies. This usually consists of banks of fluorescent tubes which give very good light but need a filter correction for pictures on colour film. Windows also provide very good light, especially for portraits and copying.



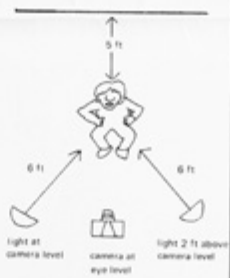
Use of window lights for portraits



Two windows used as substitute technical and medical lighting

Outdoor light is often very changeable in Britain but a lot of professionals such as newsmen, wedding photographers etc. learn to cope with it. So don't forget sunlight as a possibility (a slightly sideways position gives good results) or bright cloudy conditions for portraits and pictures of tools and equipment. A similar lighting effect is produced in the shady side of a building on a sunny day.

Standard technical and medical lighting system



We have discussed things so far in a way that might suggest that every body will welcome the health and safety photographer with open arms. Unfortunately this is not always so. There are still people about who will do all in their power to prevent you from documenting unsafe conditions and the effects of an unhealthy working or living situation. The only solution to this is

Clandestine Photography



A mass of ideas on the subject will be found in the book *How to Focus* by Carl Glassman. ISBN 0 531 09350 7. Good luck.

**Basic Filter Set**

1 x green Darkens red objects, makes skin abrasions and bruises appear in good contrast.  
Polarizing Reduces glare on metal, glass and liquids; darkens sky in colour photos.

**Further Reading**

<sup>1</sup>Photography, Macdonald Guidelines, Greenwich, Murray, Spence—£1.25

<sup>2</sup>The Photographer's Handbook John Hedgecock, Ebury Press 1977

Continental and Industrial Photography David Charles, Chapman Hall 1955

Photography in Medicine A Smolowski and D J Currie, Charles C Thomas 1960

Basic Police Photography Kodak Publication no. M.7

Photographic Evidence S G Ehrlich and L V Jones MacLaren 1967

Camera Copying and Reproduction O R Croy, Focal Press  
Kodak Master Photographic

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c/o 152 Upper St., London N1  
Hazards Bulletin

£1.50 for 5 issues including post send to: ILO/WHO  
Work Hazards Group  
9 Poland Street, London W1.

**Recommended Films and Developers for General Work**

Film	Developer	Comments
Tri X or HP5 black and white neg ASA 400	Kodak HC 110 Dilution B (1 plus 7) 7 min at 20 C	This is our recommended combination for high quality at normal rating
FP4 (Tri X in Promicoid also good with Tri X at 800 ASA) black and white neg	Promicoid (May and Baker Ltd) 1 x 4 24 min at about 20 C	High Speed Fine Grain combination with good sharpness and detail. Set to 250 ASA (FP4)
Pan F or Panatomic X black and white neg	Agfa Rodinal 1 x 10, 5 min at 20 C	Slow, very sharp. Combination gives superb tone rendering. Use for copying and photographing samples etc. Set to 16 ASA.

**Special Purpose Combinations**

Tri X or HP5	HC 110 (Kodak) Regensilver 1 plus 10 at 20 for 8 min See Popular Photography May 1976—'Nuts and Bolts' section.	Maximum Speed Combination for use in very poor light. Set to 3,200 ASA
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# Camera Forward! : text no.2/4

# Working Together

# Creating Social Spaces – The Praxis of Terry Dennett

JOHANNA KLINGLER



Today Terry Dennett's (1938–2018) work is only marginally known. He is most often mentioned only as the curator of the Jo Spence Memorial Archive, or as one of her collaborators. While Jo Spence's work received public attention and, in time, became relatively established, it is rarely explicitly understood that from early on, their practices and methods evolved in a collaborative process.

This essay will trace Terry's work, which largely evolved as part of this collaboration. It will give an overview of Terry's practices, focusing particularly on their political dimensions, as well as detailing his activities as a social historian, photographer, activist, radical pedagogue, and significant figure in the reception of working class history. This perspective is crucial to understanding his photographs, collages, and publications in terms of their underlying relations of production, distribution and perception.

Exchange, solidarity and collective processes lay at the heart of his practice. In taking these social processes into consideration, his artistic work must be understood as necessarily stemming from politically engaged activities. In this way, his practice differed from much self-proclaimed 'political art', which acts solely to produce political effects within the exclusive, self-referential artworld.



Terry and Jo developed many of their methods and political statements together. They considered the 'study of specific apparatuses and the economic point of production as central to any understanding of history'.<sup>1</sup> Under this shared rubric, Terry's work focused on urban crisis and social exclusion,<sup>2</sup> while Jo produced work about women in class society in relation to reproduction and domestic labour as well as the (ill) body as a political site of struggle.

Together they helped to found the Half Moon Photography Workshop Collective, which produced *Camerawork* magazine. But due to political disagreements they did not remain in the collective for long. Jo and Terry repeatedly tried to introduce a discussion of class issues into the magazine and the projects of the Half Moon Photography Workshop. When this was rejected, they split from Half Moon acrimoniously. In the editorial to *Photography/Politics: 1*, published a number of years later, they explicitly state their political aims, which can be understood as an emancipation from the policy at Half Moon.

From this point onwards, they produced work together under the name *Photography Workshop Ltd*. Photography Workshop was an independent educational, research, publishing and resource project, founded in 1974.<sup>3</sup> Based in their home at 152 Upper Street, London, it was the initiative under which most of their activities and productions were distributed, and later, under which almost all of their archival material was held (and stamped.) From here Terry and Jo published various teaching kits, posters, the broadsheet *The Worker Photographer* (three issues) and edited the books *Photography/Politics: One and Two*, which they considered to be the 'first serious collections of essays on photography, history and politics in this country'.<sup>4</sup>

The photographic projects Jo and Terry started together – such as *Remodelling Photo History* and *The Crisis Project* – produced visual content, including photographs and collages, which were put on display in several art institutions. Yet they were only interested in the category fine art peripherally, since they did not primarily identify as artists. They both worked '9–5 jobs': Terry as a photographer at the London Zoo and Jo a high-street photographer, with their political and artistic activities taking place around that. Jo described her struggles in defining an identity for her activities and came up with the terms 'cultural worker' and

1 Jo Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.76.

2 Terry Dennett and Jimmy Merris: *ECONOMICS 101* accessed March 2020, <https://spacestudios.org.uk/exhibition-programme/terry-dennett-and-jimmy-merris-economics-101/>.

3 *Ibid.*, p.89.

4 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.89.





## A STATEMENT FROM PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

This annual, the first of a number of publications planned by Photography Workshop, is essentially a continuation of the work we originally attempted to initiate through Half Moon Photography Workshop. As co-founders of the Workshop and its magazine *Camerawork* we felt it crucial for us, as socialists, to call into question various institutional photographic practices, and to do everything possible to engage in the widest possible debate of the politics of visual imagery. Important also we felt was the urgent task of attempting to raise from obscurity, and re-examine, the earlier traditions of left wing photography, before they became elevated and rarified as part of the bourgeois 'documentary tradition' within various art establishments.

In the event, these attempts proved to be premature, for members of HMPW's other co-founding group, Half Moon Gallery Limited, looked upon such activities as "time-wasting", "obscure", or "too theoretical". This rejection of our theoretical and political practice eventually led to Photography Workshop's total exclusion from HMPW and from *Camerawork*, and to the artificial closure of the debates which were just beginning to emerge in embryonic form in that journal.

Traumatic though these events have been for us personally they have, nonetheless, had a positive outcome in that our present programme is now more broadly based and is entirely self-supporting. Our thanks to those people who helped us in various ways during this difficult period.

The production of this annual has presented us with many difficulties, not least of which has been the fact that all editorial and production work has been carried out entirely in people's spare time, in addition to their normal work. Finance has come from a variety of sources; from our wages, from donations, and from the proceeds of an out-of-court settlement of £2,000 made to Photography Workshop following Industrial Tribunal proceedings for 'unfair dismissal' against Half Moon Gallery Limited.

We would like to extend our thanks to all those who have worked in various stages of production, especially to our fellow editors David Evans and Sylvia Gohl, and to John Myers, our production person.

Terry Dennett/Jo Spence  
September 1979

'educational photographer,' which emphasise processes of active cultural production rather than the 'fetishized products of my labour, cut off from its own history, elevated to object status'.<sup>5</sup> Neither of these terms seemed to work as well as the 'magical word artist'.<sup>6</sup>

While they used the opportunities provided by the establishment artworld to gain visibility for their work, they were more interested in projects that undermined the separation of artistic and cultural work from the rest of life. Terry not only collected magazines and information material by radical artist groups such as *The League of Socialist Artists* but was also a member of *The Provisional Committee for Progressive Realist Art and Culture*. In a socialist tradition, they promoted 'a realist art and culture expressing the life conditions, aspirations and struggles of the working class and all working people for a better life', which had been brought to collapse and extinction under a monopoly-capitalist society. Thus, they believed that 'all forms of artistic expression and awareness, together with a heightened cultural sensibility in general, amongst all sections of the working class and working people of our land' ought to be strengthened. Alongside this, they asserted that art and culture is not a sole purview of 'the educated and enlightened', citing the example of the Ashington miners, a group of mine workers who started painting in the 1930s without any formal artistic training.<sup>7</sup>

They referred to their artistic work as standing in line with the 'language and methodology of dialectical and historical materialism,' which should lead to an understanding of photographic work within the language of 'an Eisenstein, a Brecht or Benjamin'.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, they were strongly influenced by John Heartfield and the tradition of his political photomontages. Heartfield was an employee of the German anti-fascist newspaper *AIZ* (*Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung*) [*Workers'-Illustrated-Newspaper*], run by Willi Münzenberg, and published weekly between 1921-33 in Berlin and between 1933-38 from his exile in Prague. His works should not be mistaken for the products of an individualist artist. As an artist, activist and a journalistic agitator, Heartfield used and invented photographic methods in order that his images could be wielded as weapons in the political struggle against fascism, in order to act quickly in the face of changing political circumstances. This immediate

5 Ibid. p.161.

6 Ibid. p.216.

7 Document of the Provisional Committee at the Bishopsgate Institute: DENNETT/30

8 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, pp.41-42.







political engagement through the distribution of his works in the AIZ is reminiscent in Jo and Terry efforts; they too did not limit themselves to an autonomous field of art, but used the publication and distribution of their work to intervene strategically in a reality that they understood to be constructed socially.<sup>9</sup> As Jo wrote,

One of the most important aspects of Heartfield's work is his dialectical method of representation. By this I mean not only his technique of reassembling photos and texts in order to communicate new political understandings, but also the way in which his work was embedded in certain specific modes of information dissemination very different from those typical in the Fine Arts.<sup>10</sup>

Terry and Jo refer very specifically to methods of political agitation and propaganda, predominantly in relation to working class photography in the Soviet Union and Weimar Germany. They engaged with this through their comprehensive study of another German magazine, *Der Arbeiterfotograf* (*Worker Photographer*, 1926–1932), which Terry collected. *Der Arbeiterfotograf* aimed to represent political content – and more specifically class division – within capitalism. Here, the specific function of representing class differences and working class struggles served not only as a strategy for convincing the masses by speaking to their experiences, but also as an educational medium. Instead of working solely through aestheticisation, the photograph functioned as a tool intended to make passive perception impossible.

In the practice of agitation, Vladimir Lenin advocated the representation of a certain pressing idea: agitation should demonstrate or represent the most impressive example of a complex situation, which should then unfold itself within further information and thus educate the recipient. This kind of photography also arose due to widespread illiteracy in Russia during the late-19th and early-20th century. As the pedagogical aspect of Lenin's conception was not often acknowledged when using representation as a political strategy, other working class magazines in Germany simply illustrated the conditions of working class life, but failed to provide information about structural problems. In this way, they simply competed with the illustrations of bourgeois magazines but failed to educate workers.<sup>11</sup> While agit-prop photography emerged primarily as a political tool, it soon

piqued the interests of radical artists. One such group arose around the *LEF* journal (*Left Front of the Arts*) in Soviet Russia and another around John Heartfield in Germany.

The Russian and Soviet protagonists often go even further in their aims, wanting not only to educate people to become critical of capitalism and fascism, but also to change humanity in the spirit of the new socialist technologies, to become bodies of a 'new world'. Meanwhile, the early worker photography movement directly challenged the bourgeois class through the taking and reproduction of photographs. In the 1920s (and to this day) many capitalists did not want the insides of their factories to be seen by the public, nor the conditions of work to be widely known. The propaganda of the AIZ brought these conditions to light, leveraging class struggle on the hiddenness of collective suffering within private enterprises. Photographs of the inside of a factory, depicting production, could be set in contrast to new mass media advertisements, that limited their depiction to the outside, or semblance, of the commodity for the sake of consumption. This presented an immediate challenge to a capitalist class whose profits rely on the hiddenness of labour – and the entirety of the production process – within the commodity.

• Fig. 14 Child experimenting with photographic chemicals. Source: MayDay Rooms Archive.



9 For more information on Heartfield and the AIZ see: John Heartfield, *Photomontages of the Nazi Period* (1977) or Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, *The Worker Photography Movement: (1926 –1939). Essays and Documents* (2011).

10 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.52.

11 Joachim Büttge, *Der Arbeiter-Fotograf*, introduction.



Terry and Jo both refer to their work as social realism, or socialist realism (and later, especially in Jo's case also to psychic realism). Realism, here, is understood as the method of representing a political problem by bringing its underlying dynamics to light, as opposed to realism considered as an aesthetic style of precise depiction. Meanwhile, the term 'socialist realism',<sup>12</sup> invokes a distinct period of artistic production under the Stalinist regime. This included art produced explicitly in the interest of the regime, as well as socialist filmmakers, whose self-led work has begun to evolve before that time (for example, Dziga Vertov, one of Terry and Jo's most significant role models).<sup>13</sup>

Beyond their relationship to these older traditions, their engagement in different activities has to be understood under the rubric of a Marxist concept of praxis.<sup>14</sup> The processes producing visible outcomes of their work must be taken into consideration just as much as the visual products themselves. With this in mind, Jo and Terry addressed their critique of capitalism towards various symptoms of exploitation and social division, including issues of gender and race.

### Collaboration – The Crisis Project

The *Crisis Project* provides a good illustration of a collective project that Terry and Jo worked on together. It also offers an impression of what Terry's photographic practice looks like. The *Crisis Project* brings together two different themes: Terry's focus on the urban space as an indicator of economic crisis; and Jo's on physical and mental health – and especially her experiences as a cancer patient, which work through medicine as an exemplary field of social, political and economic inequality.<sup>15</sup> Their ways of working together on different aspects, in order to visualise crisis as a consequence of capitalism's antisocial nature, provides a productive mode for collaboration; individual concerns could be linked together towards an expansion of evidence. These respective concerns grew into two separate *Crisis Archives*. This method allowed them to accumulate content through connecting individuals in a solidary manner, in which responsibilities could be shared and individual work could be built into a broader context.

The way they put their 'archives' on display<sup>16</sup> derives from a re-reading of Dziga Vertov's principle of 'factography': a way of montaging together different views of everyday

12 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.203.

13 Further information: Notes on the ideological development in socialist photograph at The Bishopsgate Institute, DENNETT/1, DENNETT/6. Devin Fore, 'Introduction', *October* No. 118 (Fall 2006), pp.3–10. Benjamin Buchloh 'From Faktura to Factography', *October* No. 30 (Fall 1984), pp. 82–119. Octavian Esanu (ed.), 'Realism Today?' *ARTMargins* 7, no. 1 (February 2018): 58–82.

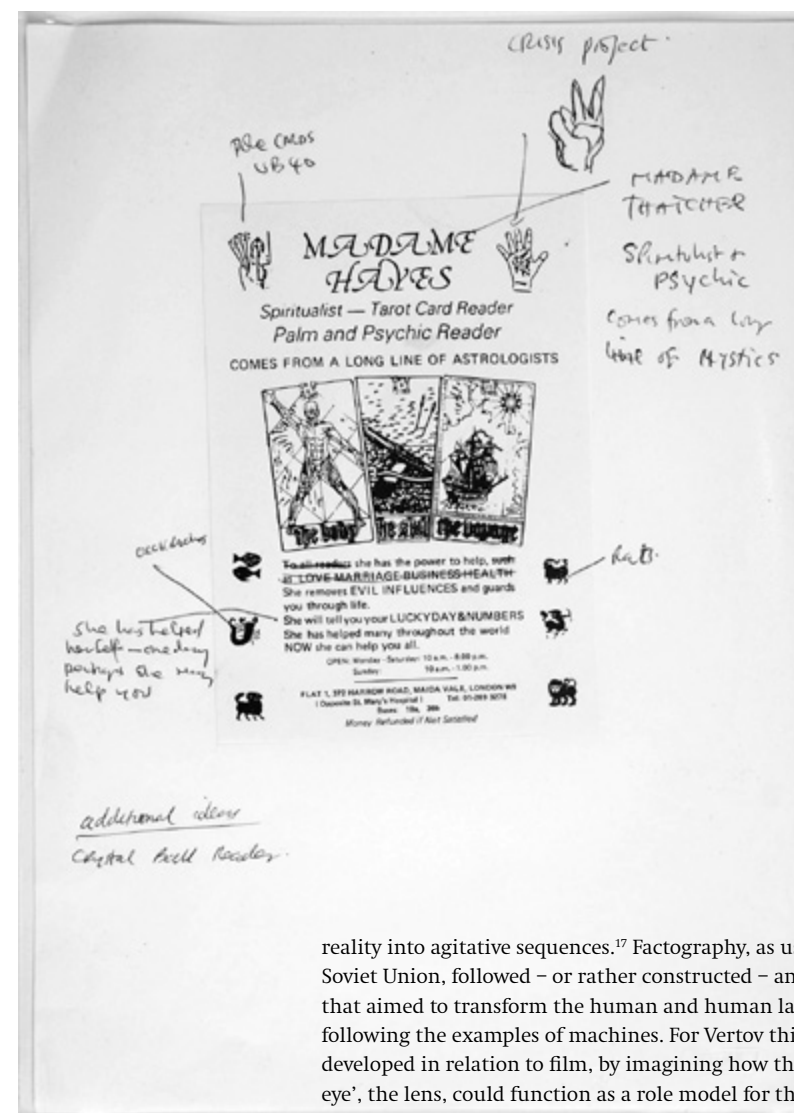
14 Marx, *Thesen über Feuerbach*, p.33.

15 Bright, Lundström, (eds.), *Real Stories: Revisions in Documentary and Narrative Photography*, p.50.

16 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.219.

17 Bright, Lundström (eds.), *Real Stories: Revisions in Documentary and Narrative Photography*, p.50.

• Fig 1. Source: Mayday Rooms Archive



reality into agitative sequences.<sup>17</sup> Factography, as used in the Soviet Union, followed – or rather constructed – an ideology that aimed to transform the human and human labour by following the examples of machines. For Vertov this was developed in relation to film, by imagining how the 'kino eye', the lens, could function as a role model for the human eye. But the aspects of his work that were of special interest for Terry and Jo were his montage and archival practice, in which facts from the everyday were collected together and produced into and through the work. The concept of factography must be differentiated from documentary in





HANDSWORTH - BIRMINGHAM

"I HOPE TO CARRY THE TORCH AS LONG AS I AM ABLE" MARGARET THATCHER.



BRIXTON

HACKNEY

• Fig2. Source: The Bishopsgate Institute, Terry Dennett Archive.

terms of its realist representation: its construction of facts touches reality; as opposed to merely offering a visual representation of real life.

The term 'documentary' was coined in 1926 by filmmaker John Grierson to designate the depiction of reality at its most objective, passive and impartial. Factography, in contrast, does not claim to reflect reality veridically, but to actively transform it. Factography is praxis, the outcome of a process of production. As a method, truth is an effort not to reflect human experience but to organise it. [...] In sum, the difference between factography and documentary lies in recording facts as opposed to producing and inscribing facts.<sup>18</sup> Vertov states:

Alongside the unified film-factory of grimaces (the union of every type of theatrical film work, from Sabinsky to Eisenstein) we must form a

#### FILM-FACTORY OF FACTS

the union of all types of kino-eye work, from current flash-news-reels to scientific films, from thematic *Kinopravdas* to stirring revolutionary film marathon runs.

Once again.

Not FEKS, not Eisenstein's 'factory of attractions,' not the factory of doves and kisses (directors of this sort have not yet died out), and not the factory of death, either (*The Minaret of Death*, *Death Bay*, *Tripoli Tragedy*, etc.) Simply: the FACTORY OF FACTS.

Filming facts. Sorting facts. Disseminating facts.

Agitating with facts. Propaganda with facts.

Fists made of facts.

Lighting flashes of facts.

Mountains of facts.<sup>19</sup>

Interpreting Terry and Jo's work as factography suggests treating their visual productions not as individual and separate static objects, but instead as different constellations or frozen moments of a larger, ongoing practice. In Terry's archive, in particular, this view becomes necessary because while there are few finished works, there are many different experiments, rearrangements, drafts and reproduced material. Much of the content appears in different

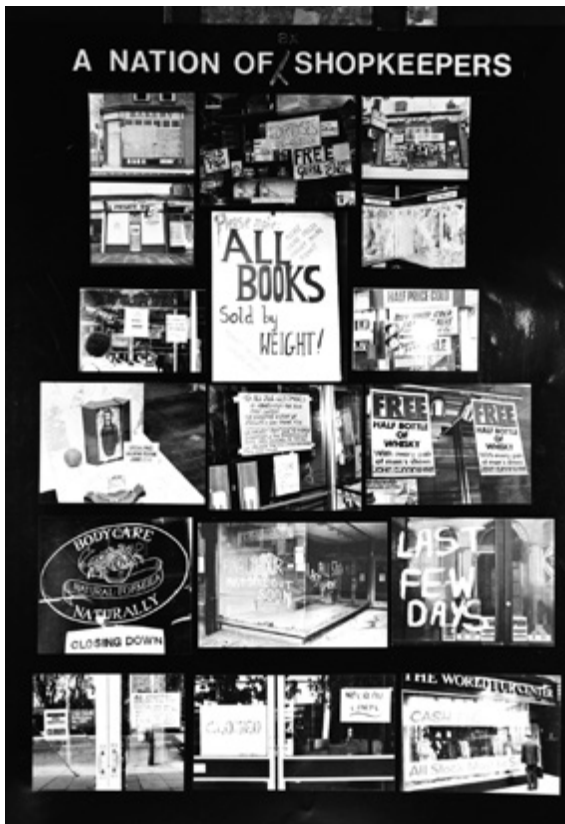
<sup>18</sup> Emmelhainz, Jean-Luc Godard's *Political Filmmaking*, pp.98-100.

<sup>19</sup> Michelson (Ed.), O'Brien (Trans.), *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, p.59.



contexts and combinations. As such, their visual practice has to be understood more as manifested through the traces, productions, and constructions of ongoing processes, than through completed works.

In the process of putting the collages together, they often used images that derived from *Photo Theatre*. This was a method of staging photographic representation of social conditions. Influenced by the work of the dramatists Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal, Jo and Terry had already used this method in a preliminary collaborative project called *Re-modelling Photo History*. The images were then supplemented with text, aimed at challenging the viewer's assumptions: a method familiar from the work of John Heartfield or Victor Burgin.<sup>20</sup> Both the collages and the final displays consisted



• Fig. 3-5.  
Terry Dennett, collage panels, *The Crisis Project*.  
Source: MayDay Rooms Archive.

of juxtapositions of related material from their archives, such as newspaper cuttings; historical illustrations, cartoons and postcards; slogans; and plain photographs. The assemblages were then laminated as serial panels to ensure qualities such as robustness, reusability and transportability.

Terry's ongoing work, *Scenes of the Crimes*, was his contribution to the *Crisis Project*.<sup>21</sup> This project recollects and depicts scenes in the urban sphere, emphasising the antisocial consequences of liberal capitalist politics and economics. His own photographs (street shots as well as staged shots) and his collected material (historical documents, advertisements, newspaper articles etc.) form the basis for his collages. His crime scenes represent, for example, luxury goods, expensive restaurant menus, and sale offers, juxtaposed with scenes of

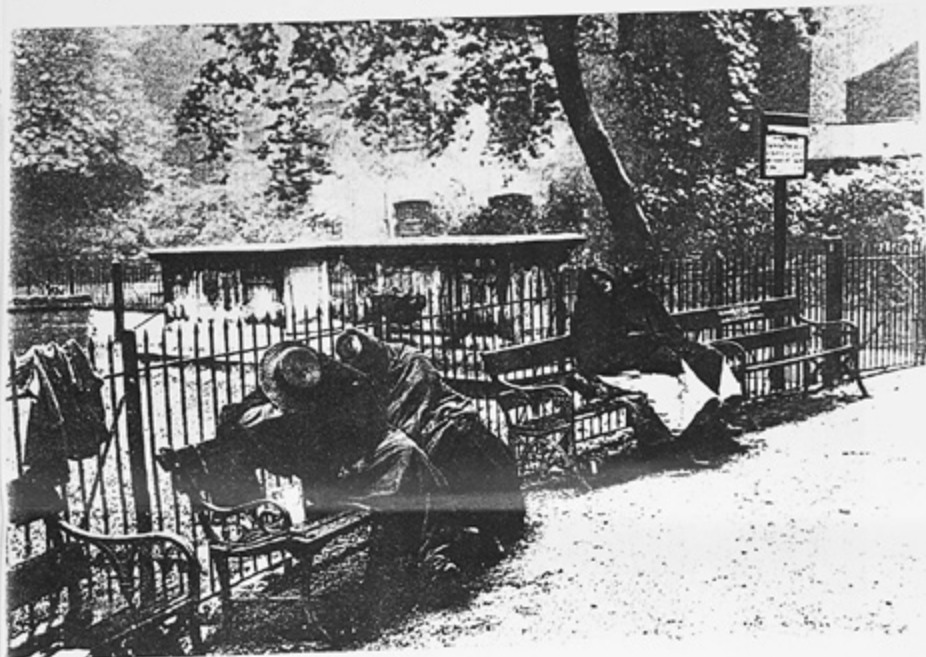


20 Bright, Lundström (eds.), *Real Stories: Revisions in Documentary and Narrative Photography*, pp.49–50.

21 Walter Benjamin uses the same description when talking about the photographs of Eugène Atget in *A Short History of Photography*.



"PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS" 1900's 1990's.



SPITALFIELDS GARDENS

PHOTOGRAPHS Charles Parks 1904  
Parkes was the proprietor of the Radical Fleet Street news agency Parks Press.  
Some of his Photographs were used by Jack London to illustrate his book "People of the Abyss"



homelessness, shut down shops, and abandoned buildings. (figures 3-5).

Within this work, the exclusion and marginalisation of those exploited and oppressed by economic processes is treated as a symptom of structural crisis. In this way, records of individual living conditions become valid historical witnesses. Often, Terry put his own work into dialogue with works of the past. Some of the materials exhibited under the *Crisis Project* were juxtapositions of his own photographs with those of Charles Parks, who had documented urban crisis and social exclusion nearly a century earlier in his



Monument to Human Ingenuity  
but no awards given to the Proletarian Architects.  
out money Press creative  
one lucky to be given



• Fig. 6-7, (left)  
Terry Dennett,  
photocopy, collage/  
draft. Source: MayDay  
Rooms Archive.

• Fig. 8-9, (above)  
Terry Dennett,  
photographs. *Scenes of  
the Crimes/Eating Rough  
Sleeping Rough* series.  
Source: MayDay  
Rooms Archive.



• Fig. 10–11,  
Terry Dennett, photo-  
graph and photocopy  
(collage), *The Crisis Project*.  
Source: The Bishopsgate  
Institute, Terry Dennett  
Archive.

photographs for Jack London's *The People of The Abyss*. (figures 6–9).<sup>22</sup>

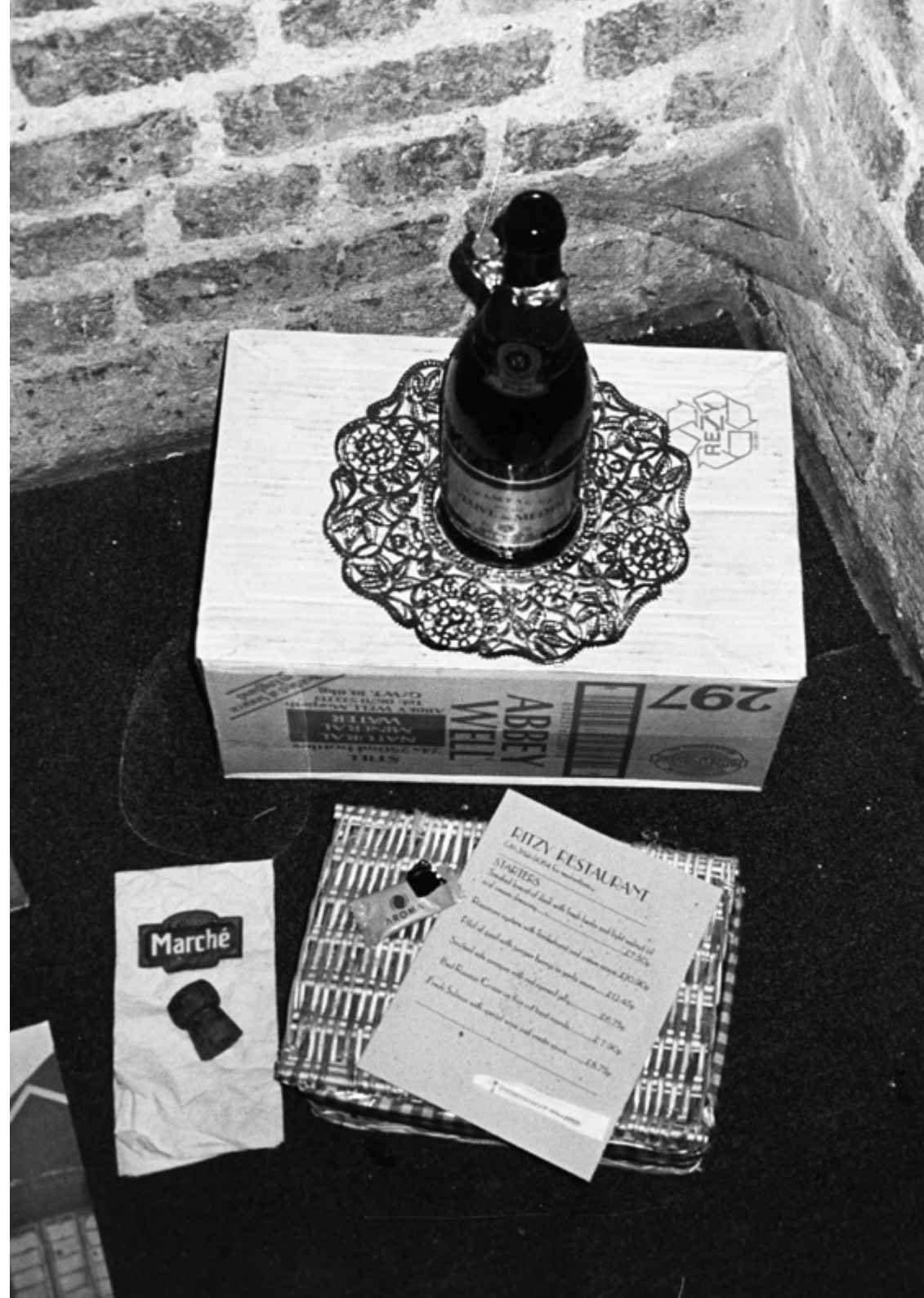
In planning and undertaking *The Crisis Project* we have proceeded as if we had been given a 'historical commis-  
sion' for a future government to produce visual material  
for a criminal trial against those who have presided over  
the despoliation and pollution of today's society. Techni-  
cally of course this is fantasy but in fact the archives  
we are building up using this 'historical imagination'  
approach will, if they survive, be truly transported  
forward to the future and the project will then almost  
certainly become a reality. 'Scenes of the Crime' uses two  
genres: legal record photography (documentation of the  
scenes of the crime) and staged photography.<sup>23</sup>

Figure 10 marks a staged setting Terry composed. It shows a  
menu from Ritzy Restaurant and a bottle of Champagne in  
a setting that represents the everyday conditions of rough  
sleepers. Figure 11 shows another example of Terry using



22 "Terry Dennett and Jimmy  
Merris: ECONOMICS 101" accessed  
March 2020, [https://spacestudios.org.  
uk/exhibition-programme/terry-dennett-and-jimmy-merris-economics-101](https://spacestudios.org.uk/exhibition-programme/terry-dennett-and-jimmy-merris-economics-101)

23 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of  
Transgression*, p.219.





the method of confrontation through juxtaposition. Jo and Terry's collaboration created processes through which material and knowledge could be collected and expanded; objects were seen in new ways, outside of the disciplinary contexts in which they had been produced. These processes not only formed new types of knowledge, but also challenged the traditional concept of authorship and the canon. Not every step of their processes was enacted jointly: they worked on their own archives, but collected and worked through the material together; they organised workshops together while focussing on different topics. The division and combination of duties in their collaborative processes is best understood as pushing against a liberal, individualist working morale, while also allowing the collaborators to take their respective living conditions and interests into account. After Jo passed away, Terry continued to develop his work on the *Crisis Project/Scenes of the Crimes*. In particular, his work continued to engage with homelessness. He entered into a collaboration with the biologist Shaheed Macgregor. Together they worked on a project called *Eating Rough, Sleeping Rough*. This provided a broad context to the subject matter through research and photographic depiction, as well as providing facts around questions of nutrition at a bio-chemical level, and manuals for DIY medical care.<sup>24</sup>

### Education and Self-Organisation

While Terry aimed to document evidence of social injustices, and to confront his audience with their presentation, his intention was not just to shock. Two cornerstones of Terry's practice were education and self-organisation. His work with children attempted to teach them from a young age to free themselves from ideological stereotypes and dependencies.<sup>25</sup> In fact, it was through their work at *The Children's Rights Workshop* in 1973 that Jo and Terry first met,<sup>26</sup> as they both started to engage in such workshops alongside their day-jobs as photographers. They especially helped children to question social roles and gender stereotypes. Jo concentrated on methods that would reveal types of identity as social constructs. By critically analysing magazines with them, and letting them imagine and practice their own ways of representation, she taught children how it was possible to reconstruct themselves. Meanwhile, Terry was concerned with the demystification of capitalist products, and his workshops involved teaching children about the

technologies behind photography. By dismantling the logics and technologies of photographic equipment, he taught the children how to build cameras themselves. He wrote comprehensive guides on how to produce photographic chemicals in order to stay independent from capitalist suppliers such as Kodak and their 'mystification' of technique and product.<sup>27</sup> (figures 12–13)

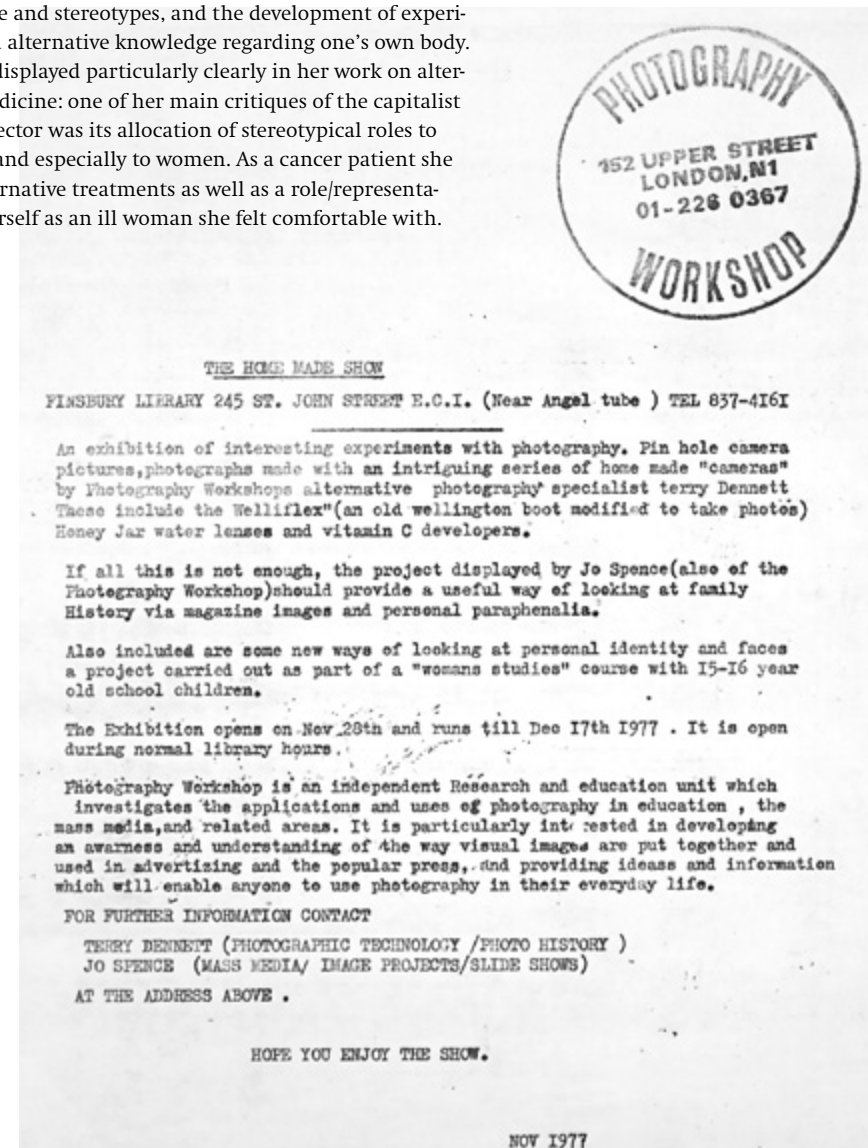
A similar logic appears in Jo's research and work in which empowerment occurs through the demystification of given knowledge and stereotypes, and the development of experiential and alternative knowledge regarding one's own body. This was displayed particularly clearly in her work on alternative medicine: one of her main critiques of the capitalist medical sector was its allocation of stereotypical roles to patients, and especially to women. As a cancer patient she chose alternative treatments as well as a role/representation of herself as an ill woman she felt comfortable with.

24 Terry's *Scenes of the Crimes* were shown at Space Studios London in 2011 in the exhibition *Economics:101*. This exhibition also displayed material from the project *Eating Rough, Sleeping Rough*, originally on display in 1994 at The Crypt Gallery, St. Martin-in-the-fields, London. The *Crisis Project* – including works from both Jo's and Terry's crisis archives – was shown in the group exhibition *Real Stories: Revisions in Documentary and Narrative Photography* in Odense, Denmark in 1992. This exhibition later toured Europe. In 2019, parts of Terry's *Scenes of the Crimes* were also shown at Georg Kargl Gallery Vienna as part of a group show project.

25 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.68.

26 Tina Takemoto, 'Remembering Jo Spence A Conversation with Terry Dennett' *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism*, Vol.36 No.5, (March/April 2009), Pp. 13-18.

27 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.91.





# The Home Made Show

Photographs made with old and home made cameras,  
presented by  
Photography Workshop (Islington).



WELLIFLEX PICTURE, TRAFALGAR SQ LONDON

ISLINGTON LIBRARY  
245 ST JOHN STREET EC1  
TEL.837-4161

NOV 28 to DEC 17  
1977

THE  
WELLIFLEX

• Fig. 12-13, (previous  
& opposite) Photography  
Workshop, Invitation  
Posters. Source: MayDay  
Rooms Archive.

28 See also 'Summary of Photography Workshop Aims', in: Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture: A Political, Personal, and Photographic Autobiography*, p.65. As mentioned previously, Terry expanded his research on homelessness in collaboration with Shaheed Macgregor in *Eating Rough Sleeping Rough*. Besides Terry's photos and collages around homelessness and collected material regarding the topic, a display of the work at the Crypt Gallery in 1994 contained lists of bacteria and salmonella development in different foods in relation to storage and age, and manuals of how to use herbs in the case of food poisoning (material located at MayDay Rooms and Bishopsgate Institute: DENNET/2, DENNET/10). This marks another example of how the very urge for emancipation through self-sufficient knowledge runs through the body of work. While figures 17 and 18 show single aspects of the project - depictions of bacteria as well as agit-prop style elaborations of facts - figures 19 and 20 show how actual panels made of material from the *Sleeping Rough/Crisis* archive look.

Critical responses to such stereotypes, through transformed self-representation, also ran through her work remodelling stereotypes in photographic history (in a collaboration with Terry called *Remodelling Photo History*) and her extensive work on the family album.<sup>28</sup>

The publishing activities of Photography Workshop must be interpreted in general both as gestures of structural education and of the emancipatory (re-)organisation of knowledge production and distribution. Their broadsheet, *The Worker Photographer*, which took inspiration from the left German newspaper *Der Arbeiter Fotograf*, aimed to educate readers in radical photographic practices. The first issue introduced the workers' struggles at Ford Dagenham through the workers' agit-prop photographs. Alongside reproducing part of a slideshow created as part of a campaign against continual layoffs, the broadsheet also contains a guide for producing similar slideshows. It gives information about necessary equipment, and tries to motivate readers to follow the workers' example.

## The Labour Album/Social Archive

Terry's research on working class history included work on 'labour albums', which developed into social archives. These albums, created by clubs, organisations, and fraternities, were modelled after family albums or diaries. As club albums, they became collections of political ephemera, notes, newspaper cuttings, leaflets, documentation of group activities, and photos of important socialist personalities. The albums also became the representative sources, used to pass on knowledge within activist groups, and to share stories of successes and failures with other groups. While little knowledge has survived about the development of these albums, there is evidence of the Clarion Camera Club's social albums. These had a dual function: both as educational means and as agitational and propaganda materials to be used in struggles against bad working and living conditions. Socialist groups created displays of this material, with photographs presented in vitrines in public places, which aimed at educating people on a political level. The development of lantern slideshows, cheaply printed pamphlets and zines, and picture postcards developed through this practice of collecting and presenting knowledge and experiences. In the 1890s the Clarion Group produced the *Merrie England Show*: a lantern show consisting of two hundred slides, comic



songs and piano accompaniment, which toured Britain. The show focused on 'Slum Conditions' or 'Political Fraud'; and aimed at unmasking the 'evils of capitalism' while revealing the 'advantages of socialism'. Crwys Richards, a member of The Clarion Camera Club, also initiated the *Sweated Trades Exhibition* in 1904, using agit-prop and working class photography in ways that would later be adopted in the Soviet Union and Weimar Germany.<sup>29</sup> Private libraries and collections evolved in order to provide other activists with access to socialist literature and collected political material.<sup>30</sup> These albums and archives did not function as containers for dead matter, but rather as sources for active communication and exchange, allowing viewers to grow from each encounter. The labour albums and archives did not exist just as spaces for storing and displaying physical objects, but produced new social spaces within the relations of solidarity and collectivity.

Terry's own collection should be approached as just such a space; not only with regard to the materials he collected, the sources he referenced and the aims he pursued, but also in the way he managed and Jo's archive, and his own, after her death. For the two of them, it was very important to make their work publicly approachable, especially to other activists and young researchers. The archives have to be considered not only as the foundations for numerous texts, photo collages, exhibitions, workshops, and collaborative projects, but also as a result of the social processes that were engendered in their production. Terry's work was not only a development of earlier politically engaged practices, in collecting and actualising the methods – he also aimed to create a basis for future activists to build on his own work. As a social historian, Terry was trying to develop a counter story to the canonical history in relation to historical materialism.<sup>31</sup> His methods of collecting material and producing knowledge were often calls for collective exchange; at points he actively appeals to future generations, or suggests how to apply his methods to other fields.<sup>32</sup>

Photographs are documents we can make ourselves, documents we can have some control over with regard to distribution. Also important in this respect are the ephemeral materials of everyday life, the redundancy notices and tax demands etc. Such material constitutes a vivid historical counter-archive, for it often contains



• Fig. 27.  
Terry Dennett, *The Worker's Film and Photo League*, laminated collage panel (group of 28), Source: Reina Sofia Gallery.

29 Dennett, 'Popular Photography and Labour Albums', p.75.

30 Ibid. p.73,74. In Britain, Ruth and Eddie Frow's private collection, which is still open to the public as the Working Class Movement Library in Manchester, provides an example of such a collection.

31 Spence, *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression*, p.76 or 221.

32 Dennett, 'Popular Photography and Labour Albums', p.83.

33 'Terry Dennett and Jimmy Merris: ECONOMICS 101' accessed March 2020, <https://spacestudios.org.uk/exhibition-programme/terry-dennett-and-jimmy-merris-economics-101/>.

34 Dennett, 'Popular Photography and Labour Albums', p.83.

35 Terry's cartoon collection can be found at the Bishopsgate Institute: Dennett/11, Dennett/12. A note in Dennett/11 states that Terry planned to publish a book on political cartoons.

photographic images made outside the sanction of officialdom and of events censored from the press, and, perhaps more importantly, shows things so ordinary and everyday, or so unique, that no one else has recorded them. Such material if it can be made to survive will give those who follow us the possibility of seeing other images and hearing other voices than those of governments and 'official' artists of our day.<sup>33</sup> In his postscript to the article 'Popular Photography and Labour Albums' Terry proposed a perspective for the contemporary or future use of labour albums and social archives:

[...] in summing up these developments within labour photography we can see that today many of these ideas may still be relevant to groups far removed from the labour movement – for example, in the politics of the 'green movement'. Given that popular photography and the family album are still so important in people's lives, in a time of rapid economic change we should still continue, as family and social archivists and historians (working in the tradition of the labour movement), to produce albums about our everyday lives and all kinds of political struggles – even if we are not sure what to do with them at the moment. In the age of Thatcherism, we are certainly in a dilemma as an increasingly restrictive regime limits the means whereby ordinary people can communicate through their cultural work to a wider audience, as in the early days, or for instance during the CND period. [...] In a society which is becoming increasingly individualistic and self-centred, we are in danger of forgetting the importance of these treasured little albums as social documents for the future, when there will again be a variety of means of mass distribution. To this end, a number of newly developed ideas are offered below:

The illustrated public letter [...] Photo theatre [...] <sup>34</sup>

## Research

As a social historian (a term with which he referred to himself), Terry gathered a lot of information that had not been previously brought together. This included a massive collection of political cartoons from the late 19th century onwards,<sup>35</sup> international working class history ephemera, material about British working class movements, and documents of the *British Workers' Film And Photo League* (WFPL).



Part of the research carried out by our Photography Workshop Ltd at that time was focused on the forgotten social and cultural history of art activism within the labour and trade union movement especially in the interwar period between the first and second world wars. Part of this research was used in these shows but the WFLP project came into being when Metropolis Films Ltd [were] researching left wing film of the 1930s [...] I obtained a photocopy of the league's minute book and address lists and subsequently tracked down and interviewed a number of surviving members. We also recovered a WFPL film thought to have been lost and a number of photographs and documents in the possession of League member John Maltby. The film *Liverpool: Gateway to Empire* is now in the collection of the British Film Institute London.<sup>36</sup>

In total he created four exhibitions in the course of his research. Each of these exhibitions consisted of series of laminated agit-prop collage panels. They were produced following the demands of practicality, so that the exhibitions could easily be transported and exhibited repeatedly.<sup>37</sup>

In 1986, the article *Proletarische Fotografie in Großbritannien 1848–1984. Zusammengestellt von Terry Dennett (London)* [English: *Proletarian photography in Great Britain 1848–1984. Collected by Terry Dennett (London)*] was published in the German magazine *Arbeiterfotografie*. This text presumably follows a similar structure to the exhibition, only less comprehensive.<sup>38</sup>

The history of photography as it has evolved within the labour movement is one of the elements which is almost entirely missing from all bourgeois texts on photography. This project seeks to make a start to correct this, by examining the literature and photographic sources from within the labour movement itself. From the very early period, very few primary sources are available and are often only discovered by accident (for example see colour picture of the Chartists' meeting). The photographs and documents presented here are a small part of the materials which are being gathered during research for a forthcoming book (*PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT, PAST AND PRESENT*) to be published by Lawrence and Wishart, London. The material has been brought together especially for this festival and

36 Terry Dennett, private correspondence with Reina Sofia, Madrid, 2010.

37 In 1976, an exhibition and research on the 1926 General Strike (figure 21 – photographs of the panels to be found at the Jo Spence Memorial Archive, Birkbeck University and also in the collection of Werker Collective) was shown at the Half Moon Photography Workshop Gallery, while Terry and Jo were among the directors of the gallery (See letter Terry Dennett Bishopgate Institute: DENNETT/24 Box 8 and correspondence Dennett with Reina Sofia (not public). Parts of those panels were shown again at Space Studios London 2011 and juxtaposed with material from other projects). The British Workers' Film and Photo League and The Thirties and Today are now held by the Reina Sofia Gallery in Madrid. The panels were used by various artist and activist groups in the 1970s, and were subsequently lent to German colleagues and toured within the Eastern Bloc countries. Unfortunately, another exhibition called *Photography and the Labour Movement: Past and Present* (German: *Proletarische Fotografie in Grossbritannien*, poster at the Jo Spence Memorial Archive Birkbeck College), shown in 1984 in the course of the documentary and short film week in Leipzig, GDR (Internationale Dokumentar und Kurzfilm Woche), was lost after the fall of the Berlin Wall. This exhibition gave an overview of different protagonists and important events in the working class movement. The plan for the exhibition as well as information material is kept at the Bishopgate Institute. The exhibition apparently consisted of 39 stations (fig. 22–23), each dedicated to a particular aspect in the history of the labour movement (examples: fig. 24–26). (Bishopgate Institute: Dennett/24/ Box 7).

38 Terry Dennett, 'Proletarische Fotografie in Großbritannien 1848–1984. Zusammengestellt von Terry Dennett (London)', *Arbeiterfotografie* No. 52, *Proletarische Fotografie in Großbritannien*, (Juli/August 1986), pp. 4–11.

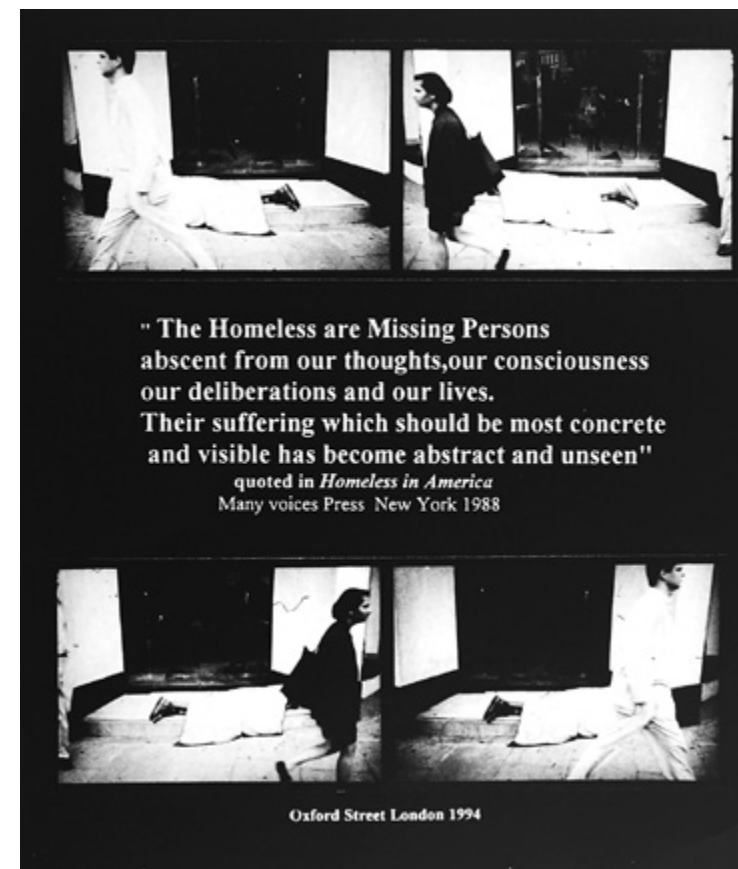
39 Excerpt from the introduction for the exhibition in Leipzig by Terry Dennett, The Bishopgate Institute: Dennett/24/ Box 7. The book mentioned was never published.



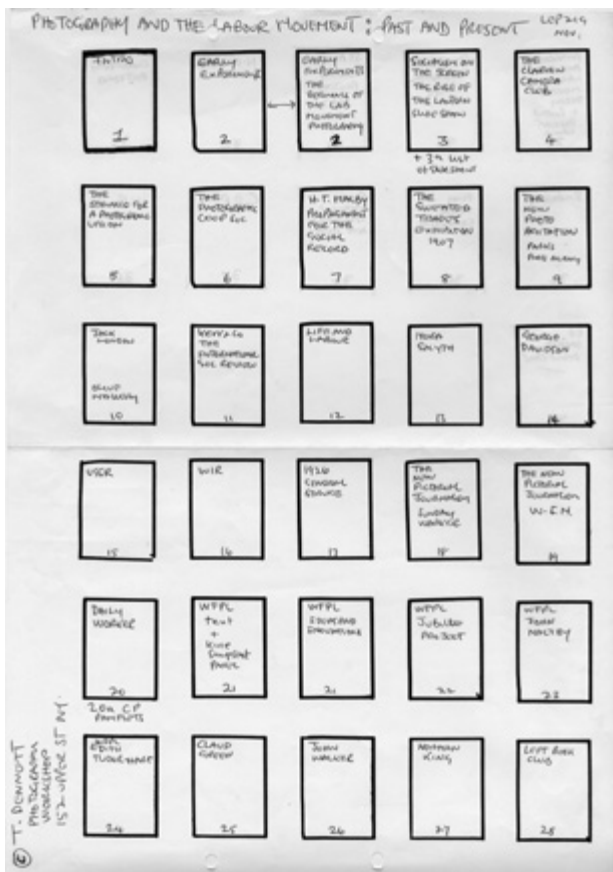
• Fig. 21, exhibition panel, reproduction held by Werker Collective

represents the first public showing of the work. As the research is still in progress we would be happy to receive any comments or information on the evolution and development of Socialist photography in Britain. Relative information from other countries will also be helpful.<sup>39</sup>

While the book mentioned here never came into existence, Terry's archive shows advanced plans and materials for another book: *The Labour Encyclopaedia: A Sourcebook for the Historian and Activist*. He was working on this together with Ruth and Edmund Frow, and planned to publish it with Pluto Press.<sup>40</sup> This *Encyclopaedia* also shows a similar structure to the exhibition in Leipzig, however it is extremely rich in further exploring diverse aspects and material.





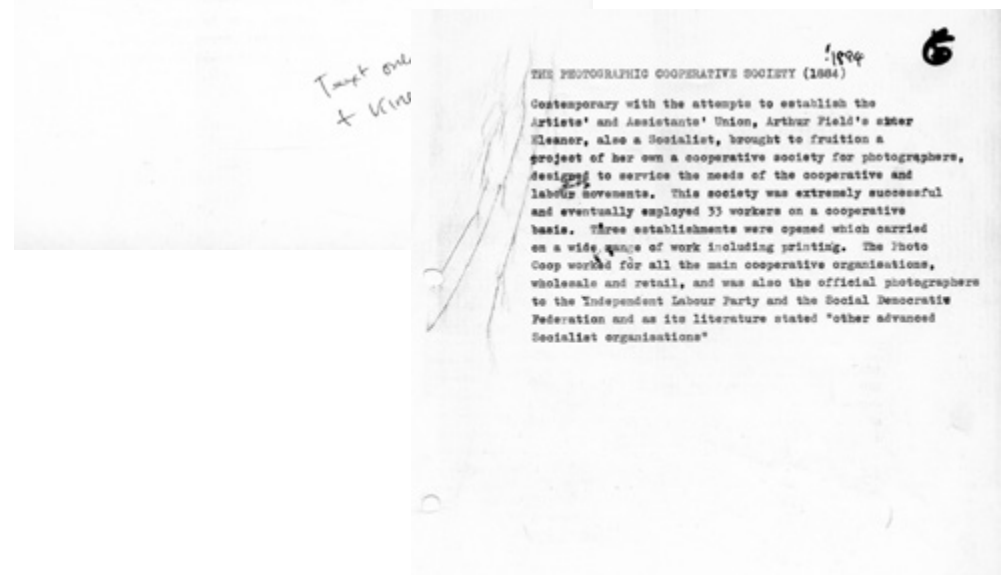
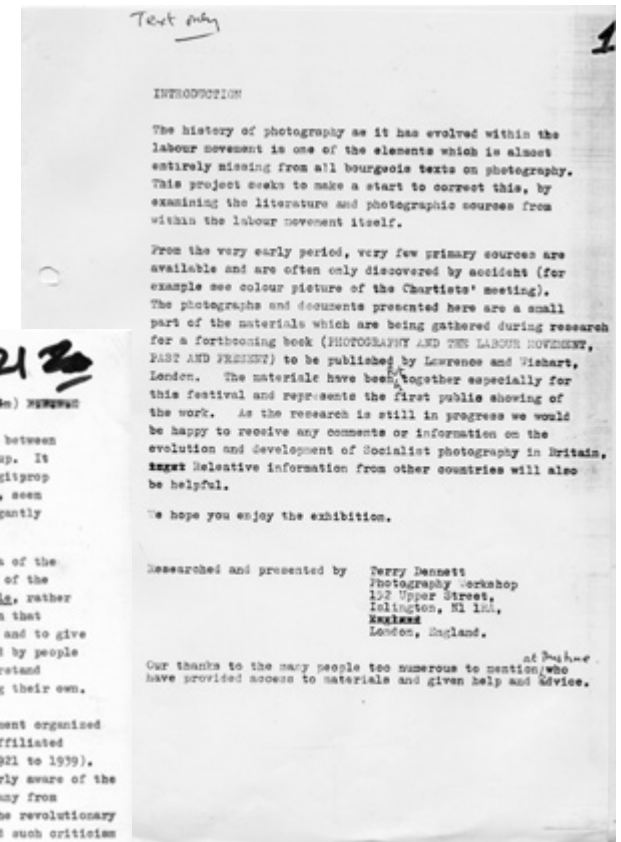
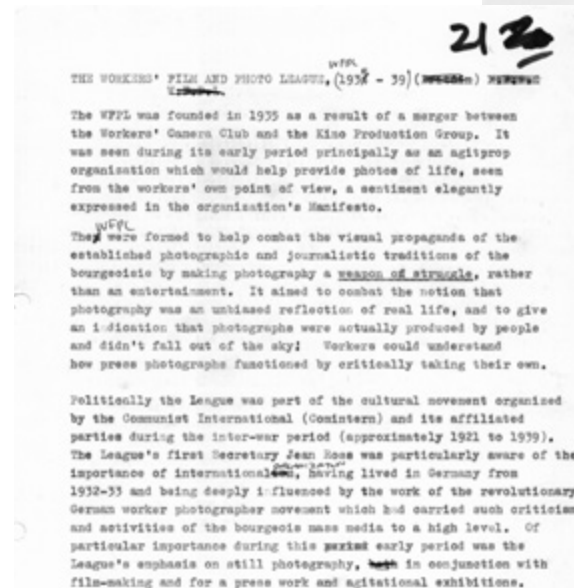


• Fig. 22-23,  
Terry Dennett,  
exhibition plan.  
Source: The Bishopsgate Institute, Terry Dennett Archive

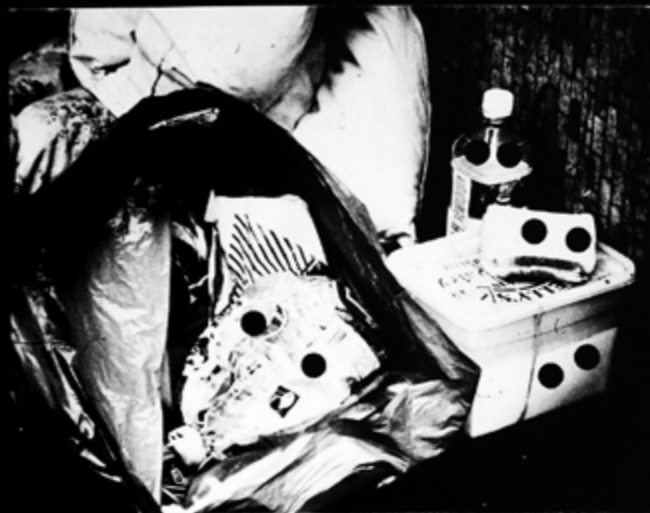
• Fig. 24,  
Terry Dennett,  
exhibition plan:  
introduction (station 1), The Bishopsgate Institute, Terry Dennett Archive.

• Fig. 25,  
Terry Dennett,  
exhibition plan,  
information material:  
WFPL (station 21), The Bishopsgate Institute, Terry Dennett Archive.

• Fig. 26,  
Terry Dennett,  
exhibition plan,  
information material:  
The Photographic Co-operative Society, 1894 (station 6), Source: The Bishopsgate Institute, Terry Dennett Archive.







## THE ROUGH FOOD ANALYSIS PROJECT

### INFECTIVE BACTERIAL FOOD POISONING

Diarrhoea vomiting and abdominal pain are the most common symptoms of food poisoning. While other clinical features such as fever may be seen with some regularity.

#### LOW INFECTIVE DOSES ( $10^6$ orgs/g )

##### Food left in sun

- 1) *Salmonella* spp.
- 2) *Campylobacter* spp.
- 3) *Escherichia coli* (EPEC, EIEC)

##### Water borne bacteria

- 4) *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*
- 5) other *Vibrio* spp.

##### Food in cold storage

- 6) *Yersinia enterocolitica*
- 7) *Yersinia pseudotuberculosis*

Terry's research on the British WFPL can be seen as one of his main achievements. It is mainly due to his work that the movement is known about today. His research resulted in the aforementioned exhibition as well as the essay 'The (Workers') Film and Photo League' published in *Photography/Politics: 1*.<sup>41</sup> In his essay 'The Worker Photography Movement in Britain, 1934-1939', Duncan Forbes notes that Terry's research 'deserves extended consideration as historical struggles fuelled the rising class consciousness of activists within the bitterly fractured present,' resulting even in an attempt to refund the movement itself.<sup>42</sup> However, the

40 Letter to the publisher, The Bishopsgate Institute: Dennett/24 Box 10; extensive material for the book: The Bishopsgate Institute: DENNETT/10, further material: DENNETT/18 and DENNETT/28 Box 1.

41 The Bishopsgate Institute: Dennett/24/ Box 3 contains collected original correspondences of the WFPL, extensive further material: Dennett/7 and Dennett/8

42 Forbes, 'The British Worker's Film and Photo', p.206.

43 Ibid., p.208.

44 Spence, *Cultural Sniping*, p.105.

45 Ibid., p.219.

46 Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture*, p.211.

original initiative was soon drained of its radical agenda in favour of a more popular cross-class, social-democratic policy. It therefore has to be considered less productive than Terry's interpretation and narration of it suggested.<sup>43</sup> Yet the enthusiasm, which spread in the 1970s, and led to artistic and political action, can partly be credited to Terry's efforts to bring the movement and the WFPL's methods into the present. While the reception of the British working class photography movement can to some extent be interpreted as a product of Terry's practice, his efforts ought not be considered only as research, but as an actualisation and staging of the potentials carried within this history.

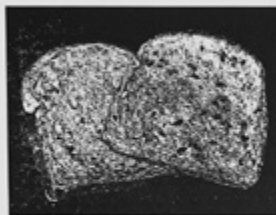
### Fantasy

Jo and Terry were always aware of the problems of documentary. Since documentary photographs are hardly able to show structural correlations or social self-documentation, they took up alternative methods of staging facts in order to influence the viewers' perceptions.<sup>44</sup> Images were produced to encourage people to identify with the problems on the ground that they represented. The aim was to stimulate reflection on common experiences and structural contradictions. As such, the photographic work could function as a social and political weapon, forged to produce spaces for change and action.

Exhibiting such private material in a public space allows our images and text to connect with other people's transitory memories, fantasies and lived experiences. In short, we try to offer our images as motivational (and contradictory) starting points, as working tools and methods, for others to produce similar documents of their own lives-in-context. In this respect our exhibitions are much more of a pedagogical exercise than consumerist fine art. Such interventions from below are politically essential at this time for it is our belief that global economic crisis cannot be separated from so-called personal crisis.<sup>45</sup>

They were inspired by the methods of the worker photography movement, especially with regards to their emancipatory methods: documenting sites of struggles, organising community teaching, and documenting antagonisms such as police interventions.<sup>46</sup> While acts of autonomy – through the production and recording of one's own visual representation – were important to them, they did not believe any

• Fig. 18,19,20 (previous, opposite & above )  
Terry Dennett, Collages,  
*Eating Rough Sleeping*  
*Rough project*. Source:  
MayDay Rooms Archive.

BUDGET SHOPPING  
"What can you buy for 50p ?  
  
a loaf of bread  
14 slices 'if your lucky  
so with a bit of self control  
it will last a week"



simple visual testimony of reality would have enough power to change people's behaviours and overcome ideology. The methods of Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal therefore became crucial for their educational works: these aimed at making people understand a world beyond ideology by turning the passive spectator into a protagonist, transforming feeling into thinking and acting.<sup>47</sup>

*Photo Theatre* became their totally 'non-realistic' method.<sup>48</sup> It was used in almost all of their photographic projects, including *Remodelling Photo History* (also called *The History Lesson*), *The Crisis Project*, and *Photo Therapy* (Jo's collaboration with Rosy Martin). Their strategy was to visualise and activate historically rejected or underrepresented constellations of social and political struggle through fictive theatrical staging. In this way, Terry and Jo produced visual objects, which, through the use of fantasy, transformed a political message into a narrative. Viewers were then able to be affected by entering into these unfolding situations. Yet the fantasies their works offered were not only addressed towards an outside; they also developed as experiential processes in the work of their production. This was especially the case for Jo, as she remodelled situations she had lived through as part of a life defined by gender, class, and other social roles and conventions. In confronting reality/normality, either by unveiling the constitutive conditions of economics and politics, or by dismantling established social principles, Jo's and Terry's fantasies demonstrated the possibility of an alternative narrative of reality. This alternative vision could, at the same time, become a part of a new, transformed reality. Thus, their use of fiction opens up a space in which it is possible to encounter and change the very sphere where subjectivity and society are produced as concepts – or even as myths – within an ideological system. Such an investment in fantasy could rewrite a world that otherwise uses narratives to reproduce itself as a repressive apparatus.<sup>49</sup>

In this way, Jo and Terry did not only address conditions or structures within society, but attacked the construction of visual representation as an ideological tool: 'We are not trying to show familiar objects in unfamiliar ways, but rather to denaturalise the genre of photography which already consists of fully coded visual signs'.<sup>50</sup> In order to not parrot the dominant modes of visual reproduction they

tried to 'call such practices into question, so that it begins to be easier to understand that the camera is not a window on the world, nor are meanings of pictures fixed, but that visual signs (in this case photographs) are in themselves sites of struggles'.<sup>51</sup>

The collective project *Remodelling Photo History* offers a good example of how Terry and Jo not only deconstructed social stereotypes, but reclaimed the ground on which they were created. As an act of empowerment, Jo's body appeared in ways that broke habits of representation. The images not only ask about the nature of stereotypical how, but also what these stereotypes leave out. While Terry and Jo built on culturally familiar motives and situations in *Remodelling Photo History*, Jo also developed projects individually (as well as with Rosy Martin), in which she elaborated on common social formats. In this other work, she concentrated on the fairy tale as social narrative,<sup>52</sup> as well as on the family album, which exists predominantly as a fantasy of social bias. Hence, she notices the stereotypical shape of the lives these albums include: happiness, births, a wedding etc. Here, the events are integrated in the narrative of the happy nuclear family, which the individual, however unhappily, must reproduce both in reality and in image. Jo then traced those aspects and experiences excluded or rendered unacceptable within the common representation of life (sadness, dissatisfaction, loneliness, confusion etc.) The traumas resulting from this systematic repression became the subject of her re-modelling.<sup>53</sup>

Fantasy was used furthermore as a method to make individual experiences shareable. As fantasies offered a means to visualise the political and economic conditions of life, and to approach how these relate to (often painful) experiences. Making content and contexts visible, which otherwise might feel private, insignificant, shameful, inappropriate, or off limits due to hierarchical power structures, means claiming a space for the development of emancipation and solidarity between individuals, who would otherwise be separated in their struggles by these very structures.

### Afterword

Terry and Jo's work was never just an oppositional reaction to social conditions, but rather an active confrontation. They attempted to understand how institutions, such as the

47 Spence, *Cultural Sniping*, p.86.

48 Ibid., p.78.

49 Michel Hardt (following Michel Foucault) on the reproduction of subjectivity: 'Affective Labor', pp.100. or Althusser on Ideology: *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)*, pp.108–112.

50 Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture*, p.118.

51 Ibid., p.118.

52 See Spence, *Cultural Sniping*, chapter 7. Also, Jo Spence Memorial Archive: (UP) –Uncategorised Photography: Box 8 and (WWC) –Work with Women's Collectives: Box 19.

53 See Spence, *Cultural Sniping*, chapter p.21.



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family or photography, produce political, ideological, social and economic systems. In doing so, they engaged in various fields of action while targeting different aspects of perception. This work produced fields of action, creating spaces that allowed for learning, interaction, and organisation. They attempted to demystify the institutional inventory of capital and the state, and to affect dynamics and structures by creating their own spaces (as far as this is possible). While their political work has to be understood within the complexity of its different processes, the great achievement of their method was to incorporate these multilayered aspects into visual works.

Nevertheless, it is wrong to limit their work to its visual appearance or the field of art. While the sphere of art can provide methods, space and possibilities for radical and creative voices, it also threatens to become just another institution, within which politics are limited to self-referential systems of ideology. While there are radical practitioners fighting from within the artworld, the way that political subjects are addressed often takes place solely within the autonomous sphere of art. Confrontation is therefore contained. The bitter aftertaste of what this 'bubble' really does – or could do – has been criticised by many artists, commentators, and activists. Often, the appearance of political questions in this sphere seems like merely a reproduction, or even an appropriation, of political forms rather than active engagement in politics. Urgent struggles are taken over in order to be exhausted and consumed in transient trends, which in the end serve only private financial and social capital.

The specific way in which capitalist structures transform and subsume even their critique into categories, which can be profitably put to use, while bolstering the systems, remains a problem. In his text for *Photography/Politics:1*, Allan Sekula asks 'How do we produce an art that elicits dialogue rather than uncritical, pseudo-political affirmation?'<sup>54</sup> Even though such questions have been productively addressed and dismantled by generations of artists, it remains no less relevant today than it was in the 1970s or 1980s. Here, it makes sense to look at Terry's and Jo's work as an example of a practice that does not produce content from inside of an autonomous or self-referential sphere or for the sake of capital. Instead, their work produced both content and

<sup>54</sup> Sekula, 'Dismantling Modernism, Reinventing Documentary', p.173.

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new forms through engaging in their social and material relations. In this way it was able to challenge the boundaries of limited disciplines and fields.

In a world as highly professionalised, sped-up, and capitalised within its different disciplines and fields as ours today, the praxis of Terry Dennett and Jo Spence provides inspiration for how structural limitations can be challenged. They emphasised the creation of spaces that subvert the reproduction of institutional categories, by pointing the weapon of their work at the very relations of production in which they were enmeshed. More than ever, we need to remember the great potential of collective support structures, forgotten knowledge, silenced experience of the exploited and struggling and the belief in a fairer life for everybody, not just a view – and to create space on this base, in order to gain strength and penetrate rigid dominant patterns.



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## OVERVIEW OF ARCHIVES

MayDay Rooms: Children workshops, Crisis Project, WFPL, notes on chemicals, handwritten notes and bibliographies, The Worker Photographer, negatives,

Birkbeck: 1926 General Strike Panels, various Photographs, collection regarding Poll Tax Law, handwritten notes and bibliographies

The Bishopsgate: Labour history and ephemera, league of socialist artists, Socialist publications, handwritten notes and bibliographies, socialist ephemera, WFPL, various negatives and slides, Crisis Project and Homelessness, Cartoons, photography history and labour street action images, Photography Workshop, The Worker Photographer, Half Moon Photography Workshop, Bernard Rothman, exhibition *Photography and the Labour Movement: Past and Present* Leipzig, draft *The Labour Encyclopedia: A Sourcebook for the Historian and Activist*

Reina Sofia: Exhibition panels: *The British Workers Film and Photo League* and *The Thirties and Today*

Wellcome Collection: Archive of Keith Kennedy: collaborative works, memories and facts about Terry and Jo Ryerson Image Centre Toronto: Mainly Jo Spence

Richard Staltoun Gallery: Not public

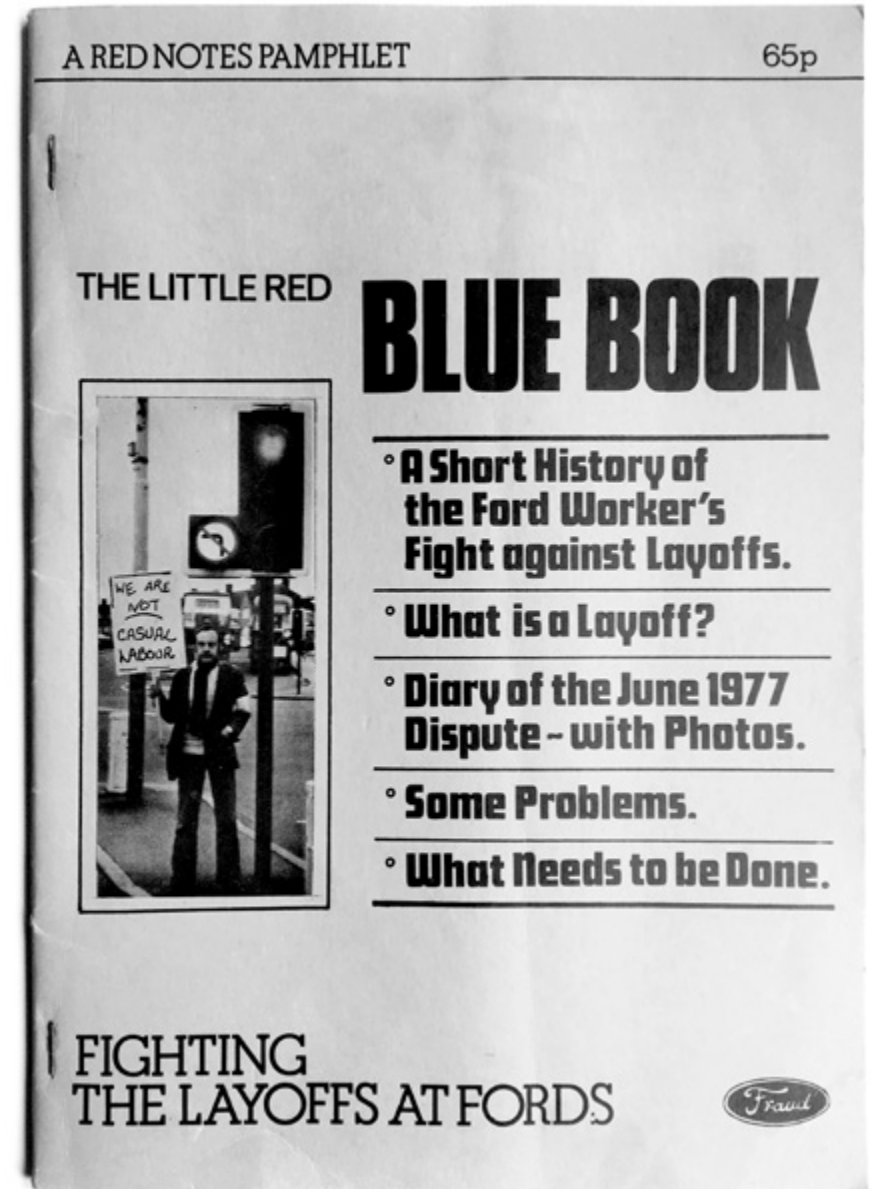
Werker Collective: Film and Photo League and Worker Photography research

# Working Together : archive supplement no. 3/4

# The Little Red Blue Book



As part of 'The Worker Photographer', Terry Dennett developed a set of guidelines for how workers could create agit-prop slide-shows, in order to display and disseminate the stories of their struggles. In doing so, he worked with Ed Emery, who had spent the previous decade agitating among workers at Ford's Dagenham plant. The following archival excerpts show the development of these ideas, including photographs from Emery's agitational pamphlet 'The Little Red Blue Book' (1977). Ed Emery's entire archive of workers struggles at Ford is now part of the MayDay Rooms archive, documenting workplace disputes from the 1960s to the 1990s. In 2019, he performed his Ford slide show at MayDay Rooms.







Sub Flower Book

--- OR HOW TO USE THE CAMERA AS A WEAPON OF STRUGGLE.

# HANDY HINTS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL STRIKER

In 1977 the workers of Ford's Assembly Plant at Dagenham decided that they were sick of Ford's never-ending round of layoffs, loss of earnings, lack of security etc.

They went on strike, and after 3 weeks of picketing the Dagenham Estate (and the Occupation of the Body Plant), they were about to bring many of Ford's operations to a standstill.

Imaginative tactics and a spirit of determination had shown their strength once again in the Assembly Plant - the plant that had been so badly defeated in 1962. But now the full-time IGWU, AUEW and GNVU officials stepped in, with a view to destroying the strike. After 3 weeks the strikers returned, without winning their major demand, but with limited guarantees against layoffs (by no means enough). But the strike had nevertheless won an important victory - the first seeds of a new phase of workers' organisation at Ford-Dagenham.

Throughout the strike, Ford workers and left-wing photographers were taking photographs of the latest developments. These photos have now been added together with historical material about the Ford Workers' struggle. It now forms a 40-minute colour SLIDE SHOW, with a spoken commentary.

The Slide Show is a weapon in the campaign for a dequalification of the motor industry - a very long-standing demand of car workers everywhere. The Slide Show is available for showing to Trade Union branches, Shop Stewards Committees, Socialist Clubs, political organisations etc. It is accompanied by a pamphlet about the car workers' fight for a secure living income. (The pamphlet is extensively illustrated with pictures from the Slide Show).

contact

contact Red Notes, Box 15, 2a St Paul's Road, London N.1.

For showings in the London area we can generally provide a guest speaker from Ford. Rates for showing the Slide Show are cheap and negotiable. Now Read on...

14 CH TEXT

note diff width

33 PIC

10/11 PR



Play Camera Forward

We are a group of socialists working in and around Fords-Dagenham. One of our activities has been to look into the question of WORKERS' PHOTOGRAPHY. For some reason (wonder why?) capitalists do not like workers photographing their own place of work!! Now, if we are Socialists, we believe in taking over those places of work... so why not start by asserting our right to take pictures of them?

The difficulties of this were well shown when Jack Sprung was sacked out of BLHC-CANLEY for taking in Cinema Action's film crew to film the real facts behind the dispute there in 1976 (see his published pamphlet).

Our activity is taking three forms:

1. Recording struggles.
2. Recording conditions in the plants.
3. Gathering history.

Let's start with HISTORY. We went to a few places and asked for pictures of Ford workers in struggle in past years. The Morning Star thought the old pictures had

been junked. The Evening Standard library said they could supply pictures of Mr. Ford, or of Ford cars, but Ford workers would be a hard one. The Keystone Agency treated us like we wanted nuclear secrets! And the comrades at the left-wing REPORT photo agency said they had almost nothing at Fords.

So... we've started collecting all the pictures of Ford struggles we can, from papers, magazines etc. And we've also started taking our own. Just to build up some sort of archive that will be useful in pamphlets etc.

Now, the STRUGGLES. In June-July 1977 there was the big layoff dispute at Dagenham. During the dispute we were able to break through the "psychological barrier" against photographing fellow workers (after all, Ford management had been using their own secret cameras in the Body Plant, and the Press photographers were all over the place). We took a whole lot of colour slides of the dispute - including a memorable meeting when the Union official was chased off the platform! These colour slides have been turned into black and white pix, and have been used in leaflets etc. Also a slide show has been made out of them, showing some of the lessons of the struggle for the Guaranteed Week.

Finally, the CONDITIONS. This is much harder. Photos of car factories are not easy to get - especially Fords. In the USA United Auto contracts of 1976, Ford was the employer who refused to sign the clause allowing shop stewards to photograph dangerous working conditions, under the health and safety provisions. As we all know...they've got a lot to hide!

18 pica  
10/11 PR. (2)

7.8 cm width



The Camera Surveys the Territory (Sub Head BOLD)

(3)  
18 pica

7.8 cm

Any factory is served by very many service routes. These include the postal service, water, telex and telephone, computer links, gas and electricity, road access, and the railways and waterways. These services are often vulnerable (like when the postmen blocked George Ward's mail in the Grunwick strike).



In the Ford layoff dispute (June 1977) the pickets made a mistake. During the 1972 Miners' Strike, the miners had Flying Pickets on boats going down the river. However, the Ford picket forgot to organise their Navy... So Ford was able to ship in supplies down the river. But there was more success on the rail front. One dark night a few hardy souls crept out and banged a fork-lift truck across an important section of Ford's rail link out of the Press Shop. The forklift, which ever-so-slightly dislodged the rails, was also accompanied by other assorted items of old garbage.

As it happened, Ford eventually cleared the lines... but it was of no use to them. The pickets had talked to the British Rail depot workers, and had assurances from them that they would block any wagons that came out of Fords by that line. This was a powerful weapon.



And Documents our Progress (Sub head BOLD)

7.8  
en

Communication of the struggle is an absolute necessity. You can never tell when seats are going to try and bust through the picket lines, when the police might come down making trouble etc. etc. All pickets should avail themselves of the best possible means of communication. For example, Ford Motor Company's phone system provides an excellent means of link-up.

Para

Another means of communication is the Flying Picket, equipped with motorbikes, cars, bicycles etc (skateboards and Pogo sticks may also be useful), who can shoot round instantly to any potential trouble points and keep everyone informed about what's going on. Instant mobility is essential, to make a picket line really effective.

Get CAPTIONS below - Bold + 7cm



BLOCKADING THE GATES



SOLIDARITY

Gusko-Chaudhry workers, Ford's last picket line in occupation for 7 weeks.



COMMUNICATIONS



Model to co-ordinate activities a flying picket service was essential.

A night's work with paint, brushes, and a bit of old canvas, makes good posters which inform all workers what is going on. Good information helps a democratic strike.

"Would you believe it! The middle of June! When we were out picketing it was raining, and when it wasn't raining it was bleedin' cold!"

Para  
Med 18p/20

Any dispute, even in Flaming June, can get a bit chilly - so Be Prepared! The first thing the pickets did (having examined the possibility of camping in the security guards' hut) was to set up a shelter by the main gates and picket points. This is the answer! Spare no effort! Better a little hard work than a dose of the flu. Scour the factory for wood, polythene, ropes, railings etc. Make yourself a home-from-home. Get a radio (for general entertainment and for news of latest developments), get a couple of beds (for the night shift pickets), get a gas stove and a kettle for tea-making, get a few good books to read, and above all, provide yourself with HEAT. In this case, a couple of oil drums with homes in; plus a goodly supply of coke from the Blast Furnaces kept everyone roasting-warm through the chilly nights.



CAPTION Set in Bold to 7cm.

7.8cm

In case you didn't know it, it's almost impossible to take photographs inside Fords. The worker who took the photo here, showing the Body Plant assembly lines at a standstill during the picketing, was arrested by security guards inside the plant and accused of being an "industrial spy".





Problem: A: every striker knows, when you're in dispute, you've got to bring your problem to the public's attention. But how do you do it? The Establishment is dead-set against you, and the press and tv are either telling lies, or just ignoring you. But, when all's said and done, they'll do anything for a good story.

Solution: Some of the pickets were standing watch at Sandy Lane. It's an important point, strategically, because it's Ford's back door... but it's a backyard dump, and they were getting BORED just sitting around. So they decided to have some fun. They laid out a row of mock graves. Some of them were for Ford Management. Others were for the Union officials who tried to sell out the strike. And one, humble, unadorned, grave dedicated to the Unknown Ford Worker. Also, in a tribute to Ford's wonderful industrial relations procedure, they erected a gallows with "Ford Disciplinary Procedure - Stage 6" written under it. (There are only five stages, officially).

Well, the press (hungry for a story) went down and photographed this Strikers' Booby Hill, and the next day it was splashed all over the national newspapers. A little bit of imagination paid off! And the next day workers at Ford-Longley (who were also picketing against layoffs) built some graves outside their own plant.

(Next time, by the way, the gallows will be for real. And it appears that Ford management are already being measured up for their own, personal, made-to-measure graves!)

Negotiations are currently under way to add a 6th Stage to the ~~xxxxxx~~ 5 Stage ~~xxxxx~~ Disciplinary Procedure which exists at Ford...



Para Their Media and Ours (sub head BOLD)

Para It's worth having a "Press Officer", always on the ball, to put the strikers case. Our Convenor was the Press Officer in this case. He gave an incredible number of interviews; but usually they print more of the Company's side. You can't control it. Also, although the reporters are always very KIND (!) when they come down to talk to you, they're usually two-faced bastards, and they'll print a savage story about you, if they get the chance. And they're also stupid! They wouldn't know a layoff from the back end of a bus!

Para "The press also completely distorted our dispute. They said that it was because of a man who had damaged his wrist, and the strike was costing Ford's millions. But in fact that dispute was only a x little part of the whole issue, and also when they interview people, they get people like foremen, scabs etc - not real fighting workers." (A Ford picket)

Para Ford management aren't worried about taking photos themselves. During the Body Plant occupation we saw them taking photos from an upstairs window. And in the PTA, a member of management was trying to take pictures of the Sit-In across the lines had an "unfortunate accident" with his little camera - eg dropping onto the floor and being unusable afterwards. That's the way we ought to deal with spies and informers!

Bold (Sub head) (A Fine Word)

Para There's no doubt that a CAMERA is an essential part of a militant's equipment. Not only can we record struggles for posterity (for future militants, grandchildren etc!), also we can take photographic evidence, eg hazardous condition. A camera can be useful on a picket line, in the event of trouble from police or scabs. It will also provide materials for leaflets, publications etc. And it provides good snapshots for passing round the plant! AND TAKE IT FROM US - YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN EXPERT TO DO IT! We're the biggest bunch of amateurs going!

(Set Bold) by FORD Photo Group

**Daily Mirror**  
Healey in a crisis bid to save pound  
**RIOTERS SMASH UP FORD PLANT**



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Working Together

: *archive supplement no. 4/4*

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# The South Island Photo-Show

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## South Island Photo-Show

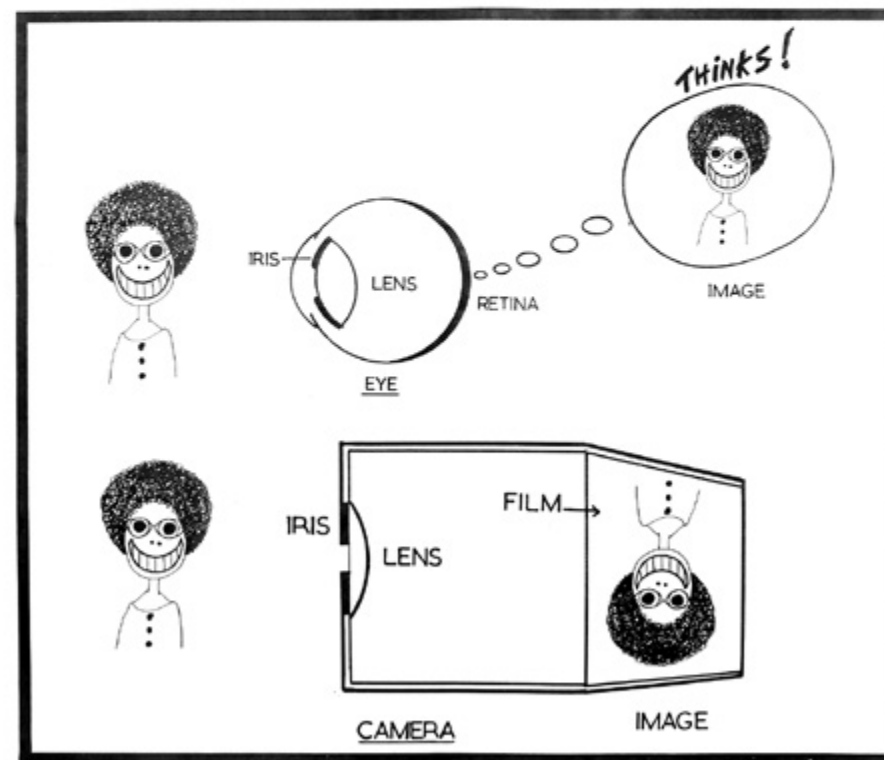
Terry Dennett and Jo Spence met while Jo was working at the Children's Rights Workshop. Childhood was in the political limelight, after the 1970 Stepney School strike, the banning of The Little Red School Book, and the infamous 'Schoolkids Issue' of Oz Magazine. They both continued to run workshops teaching children photography skills over the following years. Often cameras were not available, so for his workshops in Stockwell, Terry designed ways for children to make their own cameras out of things they had at home: boxes, jam jars, wellington boots, old prams; his 'Photo-Chemical Handbook' teaches children how to develop their own images with soluble vitamin c tablets. This collection includes photographs, photograms, photo-paintings, hand-coloured photographs, contact sheets, and collages made by children who took part in Terry's workshop. Alongside these are the technical manuals that Terry created, and posters for the exhibition of their work at the Cockpit Arts Centre.

# The South Island Photo-Show

A joint exhibition of photographic work by the pupils of the South Island Childrens Workshop and their teacher Terence Dennett.

Durning Library  
167 Kennington Lane SE11  
Telephone 274 7722 ext 324  
Kennington tube

29 April to 16 May



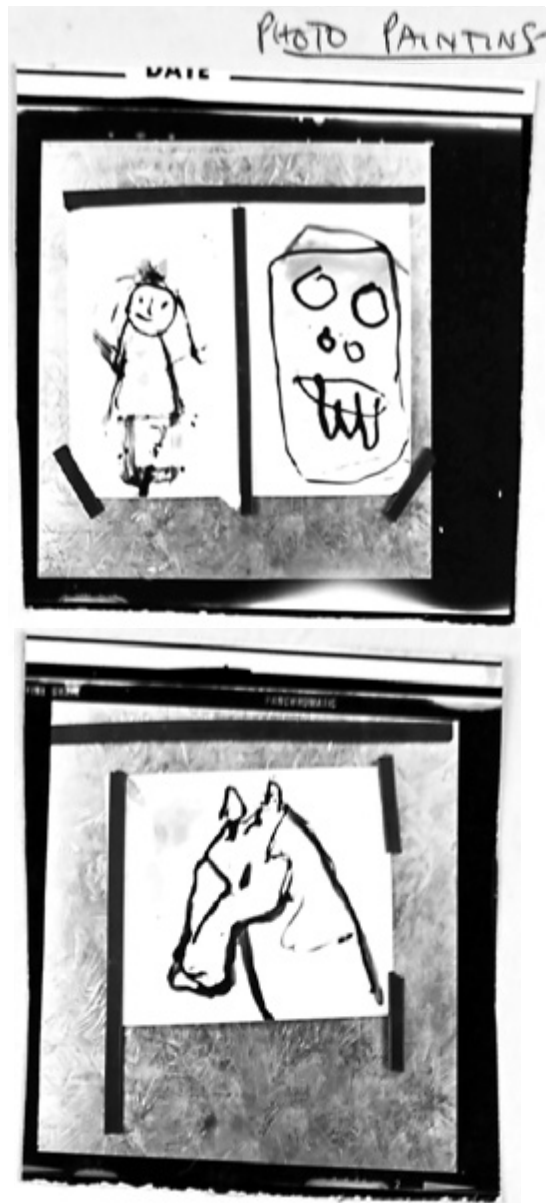
Presented by Lambeth Amenity Services in conjunction with the South Island Childrens Workshop 75.

Other locations:









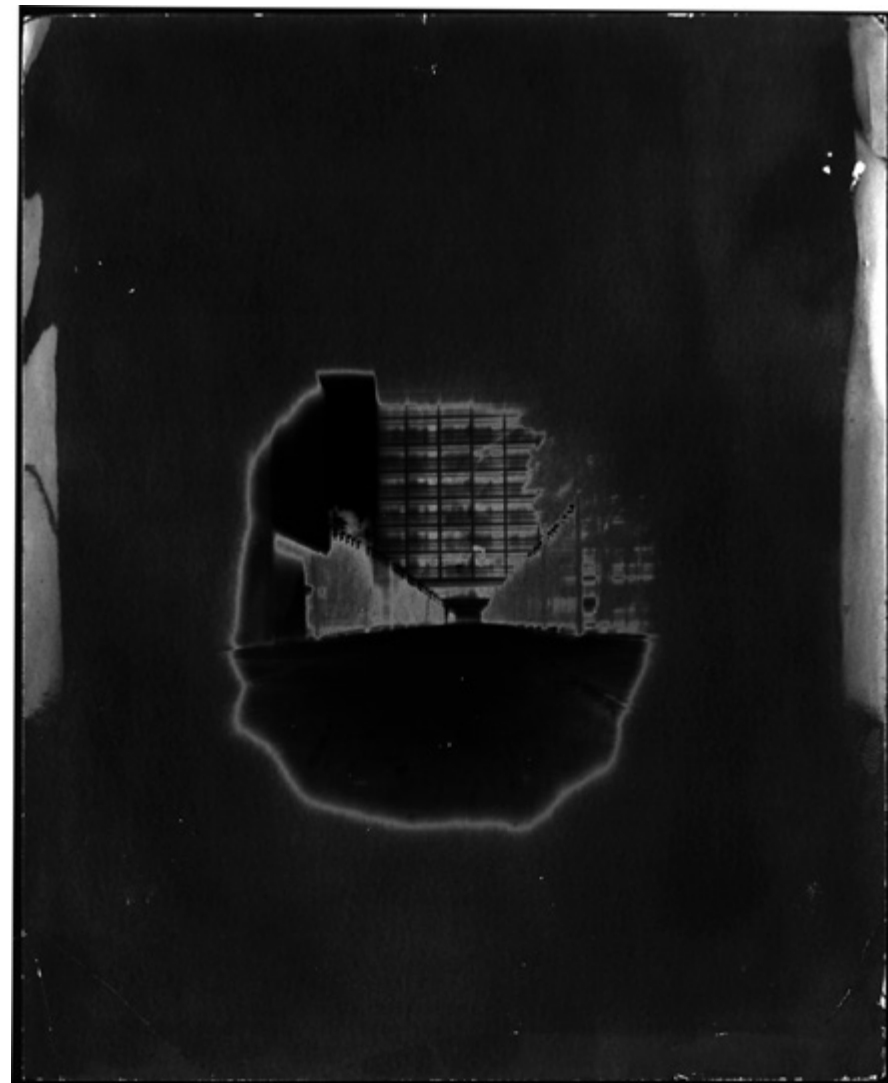














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Camera Forward!

: *text no. 3/4*

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# Where is the Gaiety?

FREYA FIELD-DONOVAN

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Wilf Thust: *Where is The Gaiety?*

This collection contains materials towards Wilf Thust's 1973 film *Where is the Gaiety?*. The film examines life in and around an adventure playground in Notting Hill. The collection gathers together books of photographs and scripts that became the basis of the film, original film reels, and other photographs taken in the playgrounds as part of the project. The film examines how the adventure playground is viewed by the children it served, and the communities who lived around it. The film poses, in particular, political and cultural questions of racism that had dominated life in Notting Hill around this time. At the same time that this film was made, Wilf Thust became a founding member of Four Corners: an organisation based in Bethnal Green that brought photography and film-making into a local community, teaching people new ways of representing themselves.

With thanks to Wilf Thust.

All analysis is the author's own rather than the intentions of the artist.





## WHERE IS THE GAIETY ?

1973.74 ○ AN/60/32

I.f.s.

BLACK YOUTH IN THE ADVENTURE

PLAYGROUND NOTTING HILL GATE

LONDON SUMMER 1973.

*'In every child who is born, under no matter what circumstances, and of no matter what parents, the potentiality of the human race is born again: and in him, too, once more, and of each of us, our terrific responsibility towards human life; towards the utmost idea of goodness, of the horror of error, and of God.'*

—James Agee <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), p.289.

Not all enclosures are restrictive. Some hold space for protection, for measured lessons, for the supervised experimentation that allows someone to set boundaries in themselves, and between themselves and others, for learning, to have too much, and then to learn to temper, both pleasure and pain. Institutions can offer this; so can the home, friendships, various iterations of holding spaces and patterns within which relationships between oneself and the world are formed. Some of these are considered natural, like the childhood acquisition of movement and language, or social and sexual bonds. Others are seen as unnatural, like the various manmade institutions designed to administer the legal, political and economic functions that reproduce society at large. The natural and the unnatural form one of the foundational binaries used to navigate the value and category of experience.



## DONALD KINCH HELPED :

Raised in Barbados, he came to London 1964. At present a student teacher and Youth and Community worker, he was one of the playleaders at Notting Hill .

1970-1971-1972

## WILFRIED THUST

MADE THE FILM : as a film student in London after teaching in Germany for four years . Since autumn 1972 he has visited the playground many times .

Childhood, in its idealised form, is related to innocence. Innocence at its most simplified is metaphorically coded as natural, related as it is to a lack of experience, unqualified or unacculturated judgement, to the sweetness and virtue of simplicity. An un-innocent child is one who has seen too much, or knows too much about the adult world, about violence, cruelty or complicity. These un-innocent childhoods are related to those administrative functionings. Having no access to resources; money; formal education; legal and political institutions makes those supposedly natural bonds and units harder to hold together.

This essay will consider a work made about an experiment in anti-authoritarian education by Wilf Thust. The film and the photo albums that make up the work are experiments in education themselves. They teach us that pedagogy is a reproductive apparatus by giving us the distance we need to see these workings. Through the formal means chosen by Thust, naturalised behaviours, attitudes, and social capacities are unpacked and denaturalised, and shown to be acquired through repetition and habit. The work teaches us that race and class unevenly distribute access to the value of innocence and to the intuitions which hold up this virtuous fantasy.





We learn that we need to be able to have distance from our habits and attitudes to be able to recognise their historical dimension. We must give up our own fictions of innocence to stay open to learning.<sup>2</sup> We must learn to denaturalise and re-naturalise different habits of perception to create pedagogical environments that allow all people to feel themselves as both spontaneous and political beings.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Thank you to Alexandra Symons- Sutcliffe for her research into this topic, which lead to my interest in the subject.

<sup>3</sup> In his introduction to *Against Innocence*, Revd Dr. Giles Fraser explains the banishment of innocence as not 'a council of despair; [but] rather, a fearlessly honest description of what it takes to love our neighbour.' Revd Dr. Giles Fraser, in Andrew Shanks, *Against Innocence: Gillian Rose's Receptions and Gift of Faith* (London, SCM Press: 2008), xi.



The German born filmmaker and educator Wilf Thust spent three weeks working as a play leader in an adventure playground in Notting Hill Gate in the summer of 1973. He completed a film as a record of that time in 1974 called *Where is the Gaiety?* The film is made up of a series of black and white photographs Thust had taken over those three weeks, animated into a motion picture in a department of the London Film School. These animated stills are interspersed with intertitles and overlaid by anonymised speech. That summer is also documented by a series of photo albums made after the film's completion, which can be found in the MayDay Rooms Archive.





Thust, along with Jo Davis, Mary Pat Leece and Ron Peck, was one of the founding members of the film collective Four Corners. The four met whilst enrolled at the London Film School, and began to experiment with collective filmmaking. The first two films completed by Four Corners were *Railman* (1975), and *On Allotments* (1976). Both films were made with and about people's everyday struggles and social worlds, working to complicate the opposition between formal experimentation and social realism.<sup>4</sup>

4 After this, they set up a workshop in a disused double-bedroomed house along Bethnal Green Road in the borough of Tower Hamlets. Four Corners still exists in the same site today but functions very differently. In 1978 Four Corners began to research the then declining East End cinema culture. The projects resulted in a reel, titled *THE EAST END CINEMA TAPE* (1979). After this they set about creating a 40 seat cinema and film workshop with the aim of opening Four Corners to the local public. Two important works ensued, Ron Peck's *Nighthawks* (1978) which focused on the negotiation between the public and private life of a queer geography teacher in London and Jo Davis and Mary Pat Leece's *Bred and Born* (1983), a film made with and about four generations of a family living at the Isle of Dogs.

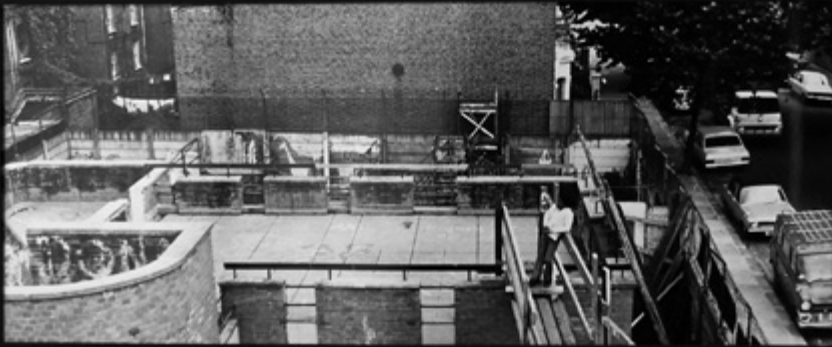


Thust's work at Four Corners focused particularly on young people. He later ran *The Young Peoples Cinema Workshop* for teenagers in the East End.<sup>5</sup> Originally from Germany, Thust had taught art in a school in Bremen. There, he began experimenting with his teaching, incorporating puppetry into the school curriculum, and allowing the children to make their own short films.<sup>6</sup>

5 From 1976-78 Thust worked in Germany with an alternative research teaching project set up by the new University in Bielefeld. On returning to the UK in 1979 he created a Young People's Cinema Workshop for teenagers in the East End with Paul Hallam and two other new members of Four Corners until the refurbishment of Four Corners as a Cinema and Film Workshop. Later in 1982 to 1984, Thust ran more workshops with young people and youth workers. Out of this experience and alongside it he made a series of films titled *Is That It?*

6 Material from the *The Young Peoples Cinema Workshop* can also be found at MayDay Rooms.





This position allowed him to take what was known as a 'secondment', a year long sabbatical to enhance his filmmaking experience and to improve his English in London by enrolling at the London Film School.

The Notting Hill project began during Thust's first year in London, after initially visiting the playground in 1972 with a colleague from Bremen called Annegret Nettelroth. Nettelroth had become interested in adventure playgrounds as experiments in anti-authoritarian education, and read with much excitement about examples in the UK. Many adventure playgrounds like the one in Notting Hill Gate were set up to provide a space for less regulated, more creative forms of play for local children. These parks were often located in working class, immigrant neighbourhoods. Those who championed them thought

White female voice:

Neill formulates for Summerhill:

"The whole idea is to be yourself. Children should be free. We shouldn't interfere, say and preach. Let the children solve their own problems."

Black male voice:

Black community says:

"Our black children are being socially 'killed' daily by British democracy, tolerance and fair play."

Most of the parents in this area say:

"We want our children helped towards a better future."

White female voice:

Is the playground providing the children a better future?

Is there gaiety in the air?

they could provide a nurturing alternative to the disciplinary and punitive education system. The emphasis on self-led play and the gentle guiding role of the play leader as opposed to the traditional teacher chimed with many of the principle of reform pedagogy, whose influence gained traction in West Germany after 1945, and which had directed Thust and Nettelroth's pedagogical training.





Reform pedagogy has long roots in German language educational theory. Its origins can be found in Rousseau's novel *Emile* (1762), which catalogues a child's removal from the city to the countryside where Rousseau believed an individual's propensity for freedom could be better cultivated than in the metropolis. *Emile* influenced the Swiss-German educational reformer Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi's *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* [How Gertrude teaches her children.] 1801.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Pestalozzi, unlike his great mentor Rousseau, was given the chance to test his pedagogical concepts. The French-imposed Helvetic Republic in Switzerland invited him to organise higher education, but instead he collected scores of war orphans and cared for them almost single-handedly, attempting to create a family atmosphere and to 'restore' their moral qualities.

For 30 years Pestalozzi lived in isolation on his Neuhof estate, writing profusely on educational, political, and economic topics, indicating ways of improving the lot of the poor. His main philosophical treatise, *Meine Nachforschungen über den Gang der Natur in der Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts* [My Inquiries into the Course of Nature in the Development of the Human Race], 1797, reflects his firm belief, instructed by Rousseau, in the resources of human nature against the doctrine of original sin, and his conviction that people are responsible for their own intellectual and moral states.

Rousseau's and Pestalozzi's primary desire for education was that it should develop the individual's faculties to think for themselves, a foundational principal of the later flourishing of Montessori's and Steiner's educational principles. Many reformist pedagogical ideas have





penetrated deep into the German state school system, characterised by early language learning, cross-age and interdisciplinary teaching, and self-directed activity. The persistent problems of the benefits of such educational ideals can be traced through Thust's project.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In 1976 Thust took up an appointment to a new University in Bielefeld as an educational researcher in the art department. A new building had been added to the University specifically for the purpose of researching alternative teaching in theory and practice in primary and secondary education. The unit was based on the pedagogical work of Hartmut von Hentig, a key proponent of West German reform pedagogy post 1945. The now discredited member of the scientific advisory board of Bielefeld University is little known in Anglophone culture, but was widely influential in progressive schooling in Germany.



We learn from the film that the children are encouraged by the play leaders to 'be themselves' and to 'solve their own problems.' Much like Rousseau's and Pestalozzi's flight from the metropolis, the playground is shielded from the 'dreary, worn-out' urban neighbourhood whose children it serves. The play structures themselves are ramshackle and handmade, relating formally to handicraft and the human scale. The 'gaiety' that the textbook describes is forged against the logic and scale of the city that encloses the park. This is especially evident in the first photo album, where wide angle shots of modernist city planning around Notting Hill, with its grid-like aesthetic patterns and standardized, functionalist tropes, are contrasted with photographs from inside the playground where wooden structures appear as rakish, organically inspired forms. Images of small children pouring paint into little home-made pots, learning to





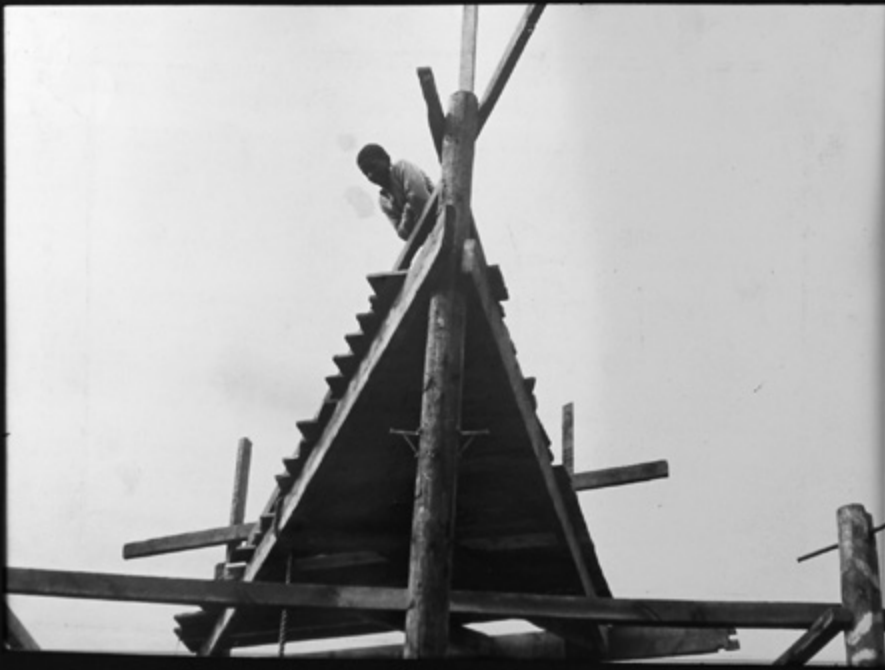
hammer, manipulate and to play with their surroundings give a sense of a tactile form of learning that encourages a curiosity toward the external world driven by imagination, immediacy, and resourcefulness.<sup>9</sup> But the higgledy-piggledy, somatic activity of the children is only available to the

9 'Jean Jacques Rousseau sees Eros as a driving force that creates the social person. The birth of the sexual drives at adolescence, he argues, can lead a person to a life of vanity or one of compassion. In this case, the issue is not repression but a channeling of Eros through education. In Rousseau's educational plan, Eros provides the psychological force for directing self-love to understanding that an injury to another can also be an injury to oneself. This creates compassion, which leads to helping others. Without this education, Rousseau believes, Eros turns self-love into vanity, which results in people spending their lives devoted to their personal appearance and accumulation of wealth.' Joel Spring, *Wheels in the Head: Educational Philosophies of Authority, Freedom, and Culture From Socrates to Human Rights* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 155.

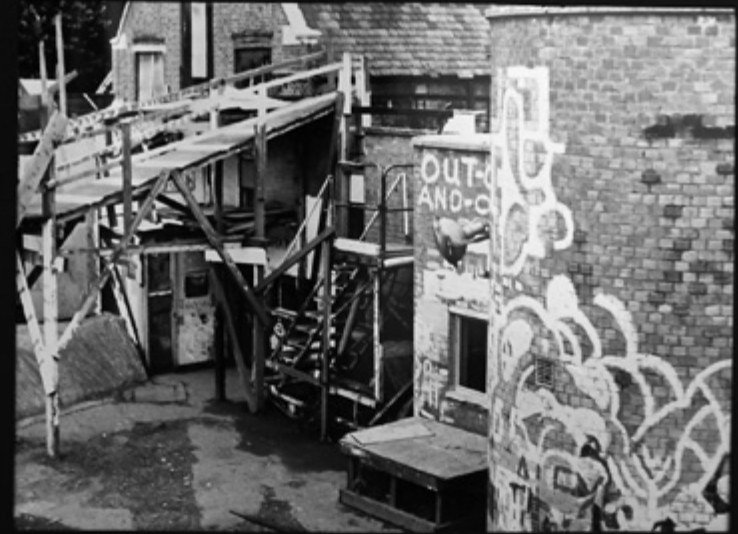


viewer through the mechanically reproduced, standardised form that the camera lens makes available. The pattern of play depicted is not that which unfolded chronologically in any one given day; nor does it not follow faithfully the predilections of one or more of the children as they move between objects and activities, but rather is an edited sequence that abstracts activity from a lived experience of time. In this way, access to some idea of authentic or natural play is impossible. The children are encouraged to be themselves, but those selves are inseparable from the infinite reproducibility of the filmstrip. The boundary between the natural and the unnatural becomes troubled; its location and affect less clear, the self-directed play more mechanical. The restrictions within, as well as outside of the playground, become apparent. The generalisations of race and class come to the foreground.





*Where is the Gaiety?* is constructed from still images – like all films – but in this case that re-animation from stillness is accentuated. The pro-filmic signs of movement: the pan; the close up; the cut from one portion of space to another, are laboured, their devices laid bare. Rather than the air of immediacy or actuality that the motion picture has been attached to, Thust's film brings us back to the essential nature of moving image: its stillness. Cinema consists of a linear sequence of still photographic images, each differing slightly so as to create the illusion of motion. Movement out of stillness is the paradoxical fact of the medium. The illusion of motion is only successful if the individual photographic image becomes invisible. The illusion here is suspended. Instead, we see the organisation of space and time by means of the camera. In this way, each image is significant. The slow, manual speed of the animation,



or the hand turning the page of the album, extends the time of viewing single images. The effect for the viewer is of a disciplined simplification, a paring down and a sharpening that thickens each image. Against the grain of contemporary trends in structural film that focused on film's production process as a vehicle of procedural abstraction, Thust's work holds fast to photography's history of political abstraction, to an aesthetic pedagogy of class relations, where photography's form is deployed to assemble those relations into workable social form, rendering those boundaries knowable and testable. This self-reflective procedure infolds the artist himself, as artist, and as playleader.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Thank you to Jacob Bard-Rosenberg for illuminating this contrast





A quote from an English publication on adventure playgrounds from 1972 appears near the start of both the film and the photo album. It reads:

Fencing provides an acceptable barrier that will keep people out of the playground when it is supposed to be closed and provides children with activities and a world of their own that gives them a sense of comfortable enclosure. There is gaiety in the air somehow in this adventure playground, and you feel it as soon as you enter through the gate from the street of this dreary and worn out neighbourhood.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Wilf Thust, *Where is the Gaiety?* (1973).

After this we are shown the concrete wall that encloses the park, and a chainlink fence; the entrance; the facades of shabby terraced houses and the narrow snaking gardens that surround them; the stoops that lead from the street to these front doors and the Goldfinger high rise that looms above. The film introduces the adults involved by name and with a description of where they are from, their relationships to the playground, and their educational backgrounds. There is a mixture of black and white play leaders and children. Thust includes himself in the profile. Next we are introduced to a young black boy called Sylvester. He explains what he does in the playground, and why he is there. Sylvester's voice runs over a series of portraits of himself, and later, of other children and play leaders. The photographs focus on their hands and faces. The figures appear in groups or alone.





Quotes attributed to 'black male voice' and 'white female voice' are repeated throughout the film and the photo albums, creating a recursive trope that guides us through a set of statements that roll out between the images of children and adults at play and at work.

*White female voice: 'The whole idea is to be yourself. Children should be free. We shouldn't interfere, say and preach. Let the children solve their own problems.'*

*Black male voice: 'The black community says: "Our children are being socially 'killed' daily by British democracy, tolerance and fair play.'"*

Middle class idealism meets working class realities. White institutionally sanctioned experimentation meets racism,



systemic underfunding and unemployment for the Caribbean community.

Thust attempts to draw out the contentious contradictions at play in the park by segmenting a set of three simple phrases throughout the slide-show of photographs. Each phrase appears once, followed by a set of images, and then repeats, this time with a question mark at the end:

*'The Black Community'*

*'The Black Community?'*

*'Be Yourself'*

*'Be Yourself?'*

*'Solve Your Own Problems'*

*'Solve Your Own Problems?'*





The problems of the city are not dissolved by the charm of the playground in Thust's work. The film and photo albums constantly remind the viewer of an outside, both physically and psychically. Sylvester's monologue over images of him in the playground speaks of the outside, of being expelled from school, of the subsequent violent fall out with his father, how he has nowhere else to go... The images of Sylvester seem timeless. His poses resemble classical postures, the black and white film enters the images already into a conversation with a generalised history, not located temporally by the shifting technical capacities of colour's capture on film. When Sylvester speaks he speaks not just of himself, but of the shared experience of those denied a 'natural' or 'innocent' childhood by the visible and invisible apparatus of British imperialism.



Thust's work is about measurements and boundaries, about the lines of demarcation between the inside and the outside. Just as the doorway or the corner of the street resonate through visual history as those sites of community rituals of self-representation, so does the portrait act as an evocation of an inaccessible inner existence, an unseen reality under the surface. Rather than representing individual stories, or claiming to know or understand the children depicted, the portraits in the work speak of general patterns of social inequality and general patterns of learning through the techniques of montage.

The works begs questions: Who defines 'The Black Community'? What self can you be in unrelentingly hostile conditions? When does solving your own problems stop and start being emancipatory?





Rousseau's baseline assumption in *Emile*, about the tension-filled and paradoxical relation between the individual and society, is instructive here. The educational plan detailed in *Emile* calls for the removal of a young Emile from Paris (the symbol of societal corruption) to the French countryside (where unnatural relations of domination are much less evident). According to Rousseau, only if one can obtain critical distance from the effects of power endogenous to society during childhood and adolescence can the experience of 'freedom' be actualised later on, *within* society, as form of political being. Rousseau's countryside, then, is never far from the city, from politics, or from power. His depictions of retreat are laden with irony, formal disruptions, the rediscovery of some kind of cultural interference at precisely the moment that any purity of intuitive nature is posed.



The film shows us that in the adventure playground no such dialectical relation is held up, the ameliorative qualities of retreat from the 'dreary worn out neighbourhood' and self-directed play stop there, they are unable to answer the questions posed around the violence of British democracy and fair play, remaining sealed off to the wider world behind the fence. The political organisation that was taking place in Notting Hill at the time sits behind the work: the fights for housing, for an end to racial violence and policing, for a transformative educational system, for jobs and prospects and political power for the black community. The community's own political and cultural organisation had a long tradition in the area: Notting Hill Carnival had been founded only some years earlier in 1966; Notting Hill was also home to the Mangrove restaurant, around which the high profile case of the Mangrove Nine was still being fought in 1973.





The playground, under-resourced and isolated, could never have woven that thread between somatic pleasure and political being, between a rich inner world and the necessary power of institutional life. But in between the form of the photographs and the contents they depict lies the intellectual possibility of a truly dialectical pedagogy, one only achievable through transformations in the economic world by the construction of a social ethic built on historical knowledge.<sup>11</sup> Here, childhood's metaphorical terrain, rather than innocence, would be the possibility of change, a rebirth guided by the generous self-knowing love that is only achieved through a committed council with the past and its pains.

<sup>11</sup> Ivan Illich, whom Thust was interested in, astutely describes the impoverishment of education against the backdrop of the general impoverishment of life under capitalism as such: '[m]any students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to *confuse process and substance*. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more treatment there is, the better are the results; or, escalation leads to success. The pupil is thereby 'schoolled' to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. *His imagination is 'schoolled' to accept service in place of value*. Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. Health, learning, dignity, independence, and creative endeavour are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on allocating more resources to the management of hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question.' Ivan Illich *Deschooling Society*, (1970).





The images, and their form, give us a framework for thinking about education. The slow unpacking of the contradictions of this educational experiment offers a chance to build on its failures and successes. Looking at the photographs we see the little hands learning to grip, understanding through experience what pressure to exert on what material, what to handle with care and what to handle with force. These hands grab on to other hands, build little forts to hide in and jump off, adult's hands soothe or chastise, set boundaries and encourage. The photographs portray mixed emotions – fights as well as communion – but these difficulties are not attributed to one person or another but to all by way of photography's standardising procedures. The formal means chosen by Thust gives the viewer access to the specific generality of human complexity, compromise, and possibility that must be worked with and over truthfully to learn to



live better. Emotional and motor skills are both acquired by repetition, work, determined production, done again and again. No educational project should aim to achieve a state of innocence, but rather a state of knowledge. Within the work the potential to learn and teach differently is reborn.



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Camera Forward!  
: text no.4/4

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# Squat City

The Afterlives of the International Times:  
A Brief History of the 'Non-New Left' in Britain  
from 1968–1977<sup>1</sup>

JACK BOOTH

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• Anonymous, *Squat City*, in *International Times*, No. 9, 1 May 1977.



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In the British situation, the old Left has been scattered, and a minority sucked up into the new corporate state. A new Left has to be created out of the existing fragmentary and divided opposition – from industrial militants already fighting the wages freeze and attempts to outlaw unofficial organisation (many of them still members of the Communist Party): left socialists, some of them still grimly and despairingly hanging on in local Labour Parties for want of anything else; tenant activists battling against savage rent increases; students fighting American imperialism in Vietnam; a multitude of left groups, some industrial, some purely political, by-products of the degeneration of the old labour movement; and a host of others who would act if only they could see that it was part of a continuing, organised and credible struggle, rather than an individual gesture.<sup>2</sup>

We have given up on communism – only to fall more deeply in love with the idea of ‘the community.’<sup>3</sup>

This article is a brief history concerning a strand of communitarian thought that came out of the ‘underground’ publication the *International Times* in the late 1960s. It will address a brand of communitarianism that realised itself in the form of community video, which burgeoned in a heavily squatted area of West Kentish Town in the first half of the 1970s. I will look at how ideas of community formulated in the *International Times* met, and rubbed up against, the practicalities of forming and partaking in communities in this area of London. In order to frame the idea of community theorised within *International Times*, I will use the writings of community video practitioners and the videos these practitioners made, considering these against the broader movements of leftism within Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In particular, the British New Left will be considered as a counterpoint to the types of leftism espoused by community video practitioners, allowing me to examine how the call to form a New Left was realised.

The call to form a New Left came from the British journal *International Socialism* in 1968, yet this project had been underway for around a decade prior, beginning in 1956 in the grouping known as the British New Left. That year inaugurated what one observer has called the ‘double conjuncture’ in reference to two key events at the time:

1 I take the term ‘non-New Left’ from Madeleine Davis’ essay, ‘The Marxism of the British New Left’, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, (2006), No.11, pp.335-358, p.337.

2 Editorial. ‘The Vacuum on the Left.’ *International Socialism*, No.33 (Summer, 1968): pp.1-2, p.1.

3 Gillian Rose. ‘Athens and Jerusalem: A Tale of Three Cities.’ *Social & Legal Studies*, No.3 (1994): pp.333-348, p.333.

Khrushchev’s secret speech denouncing Stalin, and the Suez Crisis that caused Labour to denounce Egypt’s nationalisation of the Suez Canal. It prompted a New Left to form in order to find a path between Stalinism and the Labour Party. E.P. Thompson was a forerunner of this new position, and in 1957 in an article in *The New Reasoner* titled ‘Socialist Humanism: An Epistle to the Philistines’ he called for a socialist humanism to replace the mechanical conception of Marxist doctrines adopted by Stalinism. In another article written that year and published in the *Universities and Left Review*, titled ‘Socialism and the Intellectuals’, Thompson discouraged joining either Labour or the Communist Party of Great Britain, as those who did join ‘seemed to get swallowed up in seas of expediency.’ This first period of the British New Left has been characterised as aiming ‘at facilitating the growth of a general socialist consciousness out of the multiplicity of anti-capitalist struggles.’<sup>4</sup> Many of these struggles linked up to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) that grew throughout the late 1950s.

This first grouping of the British New Left slowly ebbed coinciding with the ‘decline of CND by 1961.’<sup>5</sup> A second phase of the British New Left emerged and was partially represented in the *New Left Review*. This publication had formed in 1960, combining journals *The New Reasoner* and the *Universities and Left Review*; by 1962, under the editorial guidance of Perry Anderson, it had taken a step back from activist concerns and became a ‘primarily theoretical exposition and construction, aimed at the creation of a Marxist culture.’<sup>6</sup> It was during this time that the publication began to be ‘more geared to the emerging preoccupations of Continental theory.’<sup>7</sup> The publication still had at its core the rejection of official Communism and also social democracy, while drawing succour from Marxism in the hope of mapping the sites of working class consciousness.

By the time of 1968, ‘the old left’ that the *International Socialism* editorial above references was in fact the old New Left, and had undergone at least two transitions. ‘The new left’ of 1968 that *International Socialism* called to be formed was in a similar moment to 1956. If 1956 was formed out of Suez and the Secret Speech, then 1968 was formed out of a reaction against Wilson’s Labour government and the ‘complete disenchantment’ it had engendered with those on the left, and simultaneously the affirmation of ‘the interna-

4 Paul Blackledge. ‘The New Left’s Renewal of Marxism.’ *International Socialism*, No.112 (2006).

5 Editorial. ‘A Brief History of New Left Review 1960–2010.’ *New Left Review*, (2020), <<https://newleftreview.org/pages/history>>.

6 Davis. ‘The Marxism of the British New Left.’ p.337.

7 Editorial. ‘A Brief History of New Left Review 1960–2010.’



• Opposite:  
The front page of the first *International Times* after it had halted publication due to being convicted of 'conspiring to corrupt public morality'. This issue was published through *Maya* due to *International Times*' conviction and lack of funds. In bottom right hand corner, there is a statement from POWC squatters.

tional conjuncture. The examples of the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions were at the time, inspirational.' <sup>8</sup> Thompson's aim in the 1950s of engendering a 'socialist consciousness' that was essentially British became, in 1968, an aim of generating international socialist consciousness where the response to student and worker activism and militancy was to link these up with anti-capitalist struggles around the world.

The publication *The Black Dwarf* demonstrates an emergence of this New Left in 1968. The paper's conception of a new Left can be found in various editorials; a good illustration of their standpoint comes from the editor Fred Halliday's open letter 'A Reply in Defence of The Dwarf.' Here Halliday defines the position of the recently created publication as advocating for the 'overthrow of bourgeois society' through the 'revolutionary organisation of workers' via, but not solely through, students who could play an 'auxiliary role in the revolutionary process.' Marxism still held sway over their conception of extraparlimentary politics; what was new about this brand of the British New Left was a strong commitment to political action – both workers' strikes and student demonstrations – combined with a belief in students as being an important additional vanguard to achieve revolutionary socialism.<sup>9</sup> The paper, typifying the stance of sections of the British New Left, maintained a commitment to Marxist theory and embraced an activism that was organised as well as spontaneous and decentralised.

Another publication that could be seen to fit in with the *International Socialism's* call for a New Left was the *International Times*. *International Times* had been running since 1966 and was self-styled as the UK's first 'underground' publication. In its inception it fused the anti-capitalist politics of CND, music of 1960s London popular culture, a broad range of artists and writers from John Latham to Alexander Trocchi, and the existentialist psychiatry practised by R. D. Laing. As well as *International Times'* eclecticism of content, it was well known for its classified advertisements and social events. By 1968 the *International Times* propounded a politics that was anti-imperialist, supported student struggle, minoritarian causes and revolution in a broad sense. While these elements can be identified as being within *International Socialism's* call to form a New Left and overlap with topics and ideas in *The Black Dwarf*, the *International Times* diverged from the British New Left through its direct advocacy of

8 Tariq Ali. *Street Fighting Years: An Autobiography of the Sixties*, London: Verso, (2018) p.185.

9 Fred Halliday. 'A Reply in Defence of The Dwarf.' *The Black Dwarf*, No.8 (1968) p.2.

# The International Times

it vol 3 no 1 (maya 5) Supplement: Drugs - an anthology June 1975 15p



## MAYA Free Nation News



# it's back

### EDITORIAL

#### IT's Back

In 10 years of the battle for an alternative society many standards lie except the courage - Gandhi's Garden, UFO, Friends, Explosions, Middle Earth, Azra Lab, White Panther Party, Ceres, Apple, Mike's, Lord Rhythmer's Violet, when Time Out rang the other day to ask why we were bringing out IT Stone said, we found this banner lying on the battlefield. Nobody else was carrying it so we picked it up and are waving it about. The last IT appeared in August 1974. Maya appeared in September 1974 and has, since then been the only national underground paper. After much consultation it was decided that IT the first and undoubtedly the greatest British alternative paper should not be allowed to die. Maya has gladly given IT pride of place on our masthead.

In future issues the Maya content of the paper will decrease. It is our intention that IT shall be a sheet paper, we are not interested in an intellectual work for Harpers.

#### Thank You

In the world of underground newspapers the price on the masthead bears no relationship to the money in the kitty. This paper only survives on the donations it receives. Maya's readers have in the past been exceedingly generous. We had two donations - one of £150 and one of £200, together with numerous small donations and others not so small. Some money came back from our salesmen: our worthy troop in the field, in which we can never get enough.

To bring out this issue, we were given £300 by a longstanding supporter of the alternative society. It is action like this from our readers and supporters that will assure the continuation of the paper. Our policy is to pay the debts on one issue before bringing out another one. We do not pay our staff or contributors. Although if it ever becomes possible it is a situation we would like to change. Our continuing survival requires your continuing interest. Do it now. This issue is dedicated with love to Mrs E. Richards, Roundshaw, Hilda. May the long time sun shine.

### World News

**Amsterdam** is built on waterways, everywhere lots of small houses, often shorn up with timbered show subdivisions, warehouses, old factories, mills, old iron bridges over dirty canals. Amsterdam is a small area full of crisscrossed (inhabited) houses occupied by Dutch radicals since 1971.

The City Fathers have decreed the area be demolished to make way for an underground railway.

These first steps in perpetuating the myth of urban renewal together with the consequential disappearance of spacious low-rent accommodation in the old or buildings.

**WAGEN NIGH - RIJST GAY - HOPE CITY** Police with army assistance attacked 11 barricaded houses while squatters inside poured barrels of crude oil from windows. In the street demonstrators with rocks, dustbin lids, plastic helmets weapons of wood fought with police and troops who retaliated with water cannon and tear gas. Though they only managed to retake 3 houses, quickly moved in bulldozers to make them uninhabitable.

**APRIL, Bth.** After two relatively calm weeks old automobiles filled with hoodlums and used were employed to barricade streets, these were finally cleared by bulldozers while armored cars were used to batter down barricaded doors: rocks, bricks and cobblestones were hurled by demonstrators and cars overturned. Police tried to contain the situation with batons, whips, water and tear gas.

There was 1 arrest and 19 injured.

Later in the evening 225 people roamed the city tramping companies and businesses as looting the city's speculators were involved.

Buckley is the home of politicians and media barons like one famous socialist Axel Springer who built his head office in West Berlin nearer the dividing wall than anyone else to symbolize capitalist defiance of communism.

1975 STUSS 2000 - NO LIES! Only to have it torn apart by the books of the Red Army Faction found by Andreas Bader and Ulrike Meinhoff who now after 2 years of imprisonment, brutality, fortune and sensory deprivation begin trial in a specially constructed "gauntlet proof" court house in Stuttgart on 29 days of parading their theories of change into practice, the state refuses to treat the defendants as political prisoners but rather as criminals. These lawyers have been forbidden to defend them for minor misdemeanors in legal practice.

Feeling runs high in a country that in the 20's had a communist party of elect and proportions which was destroyed by the rise of fascism, but like a red stain spreading Bader-Meinhoff promotes the roots of Contemporary European neo-fascism.

Buckley mit der RAF?

### Home News

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drugs, sexual politics, gender fluidity, cybernetics, new age philosophy, libertarian ecology and occultism.<sup>10</sup>

The publication grouped this array of thought under the concept of the 'underground.' This was a way for it to simplify its message and speak directly to what they saw as an emergent social class in the society. In an editorial in January 1968 the unmoored grouping of the 'underground' was laid out: 'We are without class, without social roles, technically speaking, without sex and totally without any notion of reality.'<sup>11</sup> The editorial's disavowal of class meant that it addressed new leftist readers that were not embedded in the traditional understanding of leftist politics, which was based on working class struggle. Instead, the ideal *International Times* reader sought out wilful disenfranchisement as a shortcut to overcoming these categories, and moreover found a process in which to do so in the radical anti-psychiatry practiced by R.D. Laing. This process, as one adherent to Laing's phrased, looked at valorising 'the dissolution of the self,' which 'ceases to be a pathological determination' and instead 'becomes the mightiest power, rich in positive and salutary promises.'<sup>12</sup> The 'salutary promises' of self-exploration or of dissolving the self were intended to be the negation of the categories of gender, labour, and class. This negation is inherently ahistorical as it asks the readers to not consider their personal or general (local, national, international) history, which has produced their particular subjectivity, and instead offers an immediate present which aims to make society again 'from scratch.'<sup>13</sup>

*The Black Dwarf* expressed similar distain for social categories. In their pre-issue they wanted to take off the labels or categories that their readers had attached to them. However, they did not assume that these labels were already dissolved, as *International Times* had; rather the assumption was that they would be worked through instead of being discarded *a priori*. The lens to which they would be worked through was Marxist and had the aim of supporting two outcomes: first they supported, national, that is British, working class struggle: those 'who go on strike have always got a case, and we are going to put that case;' secondly, they backed working class international struggle, which included the 'The National Liberation Front of Vietnam [as] an obvious example. But there are others all over Asia, Africa and Latin America.'<sup>14</sup>

10 Here the *International Times* shows crossovers with and influence from U.S. that *The Black Dwarf* and the British New Left in general did not explicitly have. This is represented in the *International Times*' membership to the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS). UPS originated from a group of publications in the U.S. coming out of California and New York. Their aim was to create an international grouping of 'underground' publications, allowing those in the syndicate to republish articles that appeared in other publications that were part of UPS. For *International Times* this meant that they republished a lot of 'underground' articles from the U.S.

11 Editorial, *International Times*, No.24 (1968) p.2.

12 Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense* (London: Athlone Press, 1990) p.283.

13 Editorial, *International Times*, No.24 (1968)

14 Editorial, *The Black Dwarf*, Pre-issue (1968 Mayday): 1.

While the two publications differed in what type of outcomes they supported, ideological crossovers came in their extraparlimentary position, with the difference that *International Times*' rejection of parliamentary politics was absolute, whereas *The Black Dwarf*, and the British New Left historically, were more agnostic about the matter. Both publications' extraparlamentarism, in 1968, carried over into a communitarian and internationalist outlook. *The Black Dwarf* covered Marxist struggles around the world and saw the need to join up with these. The *International Times*' position was more diffuse: it invoked the idea of community which combined with the desire to – as a 1968 editorial put it – represent 'all human life.'<sup>15</sup> It also adopted an international militant leftism as a paradigm for struggle. This latter position led one of the editors and founders of the *International Times*, John Hopkins, to critique one of the founders of *The Black Dwarf*, Tariq Ali, for having a poor knowledge of this history of militancy. Ali had led two demonstrations in London in March and April 1968 that resulted in violence. For this, Hopkins accused him of leading a 'children's crusade' as demonstrators were not equipped with training in 'military tactics or self defence.' He advised Ali to 'read what literature exists on street fighting and urban guerrilla warfare. Read Guevara, Fanon, Debray.'<sup>16</sup> Ali responded to Hopkins' criticism, and others, for his role in these demonstrations in an open letter in *The Black Dwarf*, in which he accused his leftist detractors of 'sectarianism' at a time that required the left to be unified.<sup>17</sup>

By 1970 *The Black Dwarf* had succumbed to the sectarianism that Ali derided. Ali wanted the publication to 'politically organise its readers,' whereas others at the publication, like Fred Halliday and Clive Goodman, did not want to compromise its 'independence from every left group.'<sup>18</sup> The editorial board split in 1970: *The Black Dwarf* carried on publishing for a short while after; and Ali and Robin Blackburn went on to form *Red Mole*. The sectarianism that split *The Black Dwarf* centred around two different approaches to the best course of action after 1968. While not reneging on Marxism, both groups settled on an extraparlamentarism refusing both social democracy and official Communism, albeit with different outlooks. The remainder of *The Black Dwarf* editorial board espoused a type of anti-factionalist leftism based on class struggle, while the *Red Mole*, like *International Socialism*, was increasingly Trotskyist. By 1970

15 Editorial, *International Times*, Issue 32 (1968): 1.

16 John Hopkins. 'Open Letter to Tariq Ali.' *International Times*, No.29 (1968) p.11. Ironically Ali had met Régis Debray in 1967 when Ali, Perry Anderson and Robin Blackburn had been sent to Bolivia by Bertrand Russel's *Peace Foundation* to document Debray's trial, in lieu of Debray being captured for his involvement with Che Guevara while the latter was attempting to overthrow the Bolivian Regime.

17 Tariq Ali. 'Letters.' *The Black Dwarf*, No.3 (1968) p.3.

18 Ali. *Street Fighting Years*, p.226.



*International Times* ideological underpinnings were less discernible. Instead of a direct engagement with proletarian struggle, it developed two almost antithetical poles of ideological thought; on the one had it took individual discovery or self-abstraction or 'self-dissolution' as one pole of its thinking and as the other extraparlamentarism, which in 1968 centred around anti-imperialist and student struggle. The two poles were brought together in 1970 through the idea of action: this was not action in uniting and galvanising workers' struggles; it was a direct action that sought to effect and create a community that was intended to be 'without class,' thus demonstrating a radical break from traditional forms of leftism espoused by the British New Left.<sup>19</sup>

In 1970, a short-running series of articles in the *International Times* titled 'Fourth World' stated that the alternative to political affiliation was to 'assert our power in community' and form a 'New World which is a honeycomb of SMALL human communities.' The article rhetorically asks readers 'How do you join' this type community; the answer was, 'You don't. You act. You act here and now on your own doorstep to build bridges, to communicate with your neighbours.'<sup>20</sup> 'Our power' presumably referred to a now-established 'underground', who were encouraged to embrace community, which was to be made on the 'doorstep.' The qualities of the doorstep being both private and public belies the article's belief in community as something that dissolves these two aspects, rather than accepting their rigid separation in parliamentary politics, while pointing towards communication as a means of uniting people in a community. This was a starting point for John Hopkins who looked at creating community through communication, specifically emergent communication technologies namely video.

In a column in the *International Times* in 1970 titled 'Real Time Television', Hopkins promoted the *New Arts Lab*, which was one of the first video workshops in the UK. The aim of these workshops was to demystify the medium of television and to allow people to represent themselves, thereby fulfilling the 'crucial prerequisite of community' of the 'decentralisation of power and function.'<sup>21</sup> Hopkins saw video as a method to get round a 'hierarchically structured society' and video, for him, would function as 'decentralised television.'<sup>22</sup> Video, as well as 'providing genuine decentralised informa-

• *International Times* review of the New Left in Britain.

19 It should be noted that the *International Times* espousal of a classless position was hollow as the publication represented a bohemian class that had gained this status through a refusal to work rather than a lack of job opportunities. This was certainly true in the 1960s as the level of unemployment in the UK rarely strayed over 4 percent; only after the OPEC Oil Crisis in 1973 did unemployment rise over 4 percent.

20 Anonymous. 'The Fourth World.' *International Times*, No.71 (1970) p.7.

21 Richard King. *Party of Eros: Radical Social Thought and the Realm of Freedom* (Carolina: The University of North Carolina, 1972) pp.91-92.

22 TVX. 'Real Time Television.' *International Times*, No.78 (1970) p.7.





tion networks,' had uses relating to psychiatry:<sup>23</sup> Hopkins saw one of video's core principles as providing 'intense feedback' for the individual. Such 'feedback' was one of the intentions that the *International Times* had been founded on, in the form of feedbacking readers interest, through the publication of readers' letters, articles and poems. Video, for Hopkins, superseded print as it was the medium par excellence for individual feedback in that it could instantly playback to the individual the representation of themselves in real time. In this way removing the individual from the 'unsatisfactory' past and future and facilitating a perpetual present. Therefore, Hopkins considered video a 'transcending machine,' insofar as it both facilitated decentralisation through its ability to dissolve the hegemonic power of television, to represent minority communities, and allowed for a dissolution of self through allowing the individual to have an 'intense feedback' and therefore to be continually present. These principles would have been worked through in the workshops that Hopkins facilitated and in the communities he represented in the videos he made.

For the rest of the essay, I want to look at the videos Hopkins made with his collaborator Sue Hall. These are, for me, afterlives of *International Times* and speak to a section of a 'non-new left', as distinct from the British New Left. Hopkins and Hall's idea of community was based on a similar dualism of the *International Times*: at one end an extraparliamentarism based around anti-capitalist struggle and direct action; and at the other, a desire to dissolve the self and find a basis for the individual away from historical categories of class, gender and sexuality. These two aspects were linked increasingly in *International Times* through a loose idea of community that was both a set ethics and a moral compunction. Hopkins and latterly Hall devised the idea of community video to concretise a conception of community through the form of video. Their idea of community found material form in the West Kentish Town squatting community in the first half of the 1970s. The centre of this community was Prince of Wales Crescent. The Crescent had been marked for slum clearance and was to make way for a 'development of horizontal blocks' and a 20 storey tower.<sup>24</sup> In the years between local residents moving out in 1969 and the Crescent's eventual demolition in 1977 it became the centre of activities for squatters in West Kentish Town. The *International Times* had covered Prince of Wales Crescent

23 John Hopkins. 'Italy the Politics of Information.' *Time Out*, (1970) and 'Time Travel & Mind Swap with your friendly transcending machine.' *International Times*, No.75 (1970) pp.20-21. In the latter article Hopkins compared the process of video as similar to the sessions he was having with 'Ronnie Laing'. He is referring to R.D. Laing.

24 The bottom three floors of the tower were originally designed as a community centre, and the remaining 17 storeys were for council tenants. The development also wanted to be 'traffic free' and was to be accessed only with 'footpaths... between the low-rise blocks and open gardens and courtyards. Traffic will use underground roads, and there will be one underground garage for each family.' Sylvia Jones, 'What Will Life Be Like on the Future Estates?' *Express & News*, (May 5, 1967).

from its inception to its demolition. Early on and in June 1972 it ran an article on the Crescent calling it the 'nub of North London's liberative freak community,' declaring the community's intention to live in the area despite police harassment. A caricature in the *International Times* from May 1977 titled *Squat City* can be found in the squatting archive at Mayday Rooms. The picture holds within it the afterlives of social movements spawned by *International Times* and a squatting history of West Kentish Town: it shows a large house, as a cross section, with people living in cramped bedrooms. Each room depicts a type of squatter: a single mother feeding her child; a group holding a meeting; in the basement there is a depiction of a Baphomet and a man muses over the benefits of squatting as a camera lens comes out of his wall. The locality is specified in the subheading 'Twixt Belsize Park and Chalk Farm.'

The caricature in 1977 references the uptake in the squatting movement that had grown considerably since the late 1960s and the end of the squatting community on Prince of Wales Crescent. *Squat City* plays the role of eulogy for the Crescent and a lament for those that it supported. In the years between 1972 and 1977 the Crescent and the surrounding 'liberative freak community' of West Kentish Town formed a variety of businesses and community groups: there was a mental health care service; residents' associations; and the housing project SCH.<sup>25</sup> These were formed alongside media and arts groups. John Hopkins was prolific in terms of creating these types of groups. Notable ones include TVX, the *Institute for Research in Art and Technology*, and the *Centre for Advanced TV Studies*.<sup>26</sup> The *Centre for Advanced TV Studies* was set up with Sue Hall, a prominent organiser at the time who formed *Fantasy Factory* which ran one of the first independent video editing suites in the UK and also created *Graft-On*.<sup>27</sup> These groups found voice in various ways in *International Times*, however, it was through Hopkins, and the groups he created and was associated with, that clear overlaps with the editorial standpoint of *International Times* can be seen to have become actualised, particularly in the form of community video.

Hopkins and Hall produced a variety of videos during their time in the squatting community in West Kentish Town. The synthesis of extraparliamentarism in the form of community and the dissolution of self or selfabstraction coalesced

25 Some notable examples include *Community Food*, a still existing food cooperative, *The Mental Patients' Union*, which provided mental health support, *Eurosec*, an artists' administration service and the *Prince of Wales Crescent Residents' Association*.

26 These groups were based at 13a POWC, an old dairy, which was shared with *London Film Makers' Cooperative*.

27 The name was a play on Grafton Road that came off the Prince of Wales Road.







in community video and found practical applications on Prince of Wales Crescent, where Hopkins and Hall shot video of, amongst other things, evictions of squatters and police brutality. *Squat Now Whilst Stocks Last* shows the eviction of 'Dr John' and those who he squatted with on the Prince of Wales Road adjacent to Prince of Wales Crescent.<sup>28</sup> Dr John Pollard was a self proclaimed community leader of squatters in West Kentish Town.<sup>29</sup> Living with him at the time of the eviction were 'founders of the Mental Patients Union and members of Dux Deluxe pop group.' Those in the house had barricaded the doors and tore down internal parts of the staircase; as people in the house were slowly removed, four of the squatters remained on the roof, as is shown in the video, drenching Police from above with a hosepipe. Hopkins' video was shown on the BBC and as he put it the video allowed 'the squatters [...] to brief themselves in absolute detail by playing the tape again and again and again...' <sup>30</sup> The video was also intended to be used for evidence in court, however, it was not admitted. A video that was admitted as evidence in court was shot by Sue Hall titled *Ben's Arrest*. This was filmed on Prince of Wales Crescent and shows Police 'violently arresting a young black man before apparently beating him up in the back of the Transit van.' The video set legal precedent in the UK as it was 'accepted as evidence at a court of sessions in South London and the tape was played to the jury.'<sup>31</sup> These two videos formed part of Sue Hall's entry, titled *The Politics of Squatting – Excerpts*, into *The Video Show* in 1975.

These videos became a form of activism for these practitioners as *Squat Now Whilst Stocks Last* allowed all those who were arrested to avoid being charged by Police.<sup>32</sup> *Ben's Arrest* intervened directly in the law as it set legal precedent and proved the innocence of someone wrongly accused. This type of activism directly challenged the scope of legal power through the vitality of community video, while Hall and Hopkins used it to also formulate an ideal community. This is aptly shown in Hall and Hopkins video *Forming a Residents' Association* (1974).<sup>33</sup> The video is about the formation of *Prince of Wales Crescent Residents' Association*. It aimed to give a template to others by showing how the association was formed and what its aims were. From the video we learn that the residents' association aimed to be a member-led body, formed for the purpose of renegotiating the planned demolition of the Crescent with the council. The medium of video merges with struggles around housing, functioning as a

28 Jackie Hatfield. 'Interview with Sue Hall & John Hopkins.' *REWIND: Artists' Video in the '70s & '80s*, (2004).

29 David White. 'The New Settlers.' *New Society*, (December 14, 1972). In this article 'Dr John' also outlines a survey he conducted of the squatters in the area: out of 99 people the median age is 24; a third have a degree; 22 percent are artists; 63 percent are self-employed; and 16 percent had full time employment.

30 Anonymous. 'The Day the Squatting Had to Stop.' *Express & News* (March 8, 1974).

31 Jackie Hatfield. 'Interview with Sue Hall & John Hopkins.'

32 Ibid.

33 The video can be found at <http://www.the-lcva.co.uk/videos/5e25c36e2d813b7ef0014a5b>

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# THESE ARE

**LONDON:**—The most prosperous business in Britain today is money lending. The lowest interest rate at which money can be commercially borrowed is 10%. Most people with overdrafts are paying around 12½%, and they are lucky if they can get an overdraft in the first place.

**DID YOU NEED CASH?** £1,000 loan at only £14.50 per month says one moneylender ad. Quick decision, speedy service. Speedily, you bet. Only £16.50! That's 19½%! The money lending company we are recruiting. A medium business standard contains advertisements for up to 100,000, and the rate is higher than 15%. Incomparably, the ads are addressed to 'house owners'—i.e. full backed and we take your house. Not that the banks are getting better, but they are getting worse. The reason that it is so hard to get an overdraft is that the banks have all put their money into American credit cards. Why lend the money at 12½% when you can put it into credit cards and make a fortune? The banks pay 10% the interest on the cash.

**Hoppy.** Acorns are being at least 10% on interest, which is caused by naughty people using overdrafts with no intention at all of paying, or using cards obtained in some black manner, like off the mail order of large black blocks of flats with an unlocked outer door.

**HELFAST:**—There doesn't seem to be much Ireland in the English papers these days. The wave of sectarian killings over Christmas elicited the usual blather about 'motivated murders' together with the usual lack of any real explanation of what has been going on. In the fortnight before January 26th, 14 people were murdered in an anti-Catholic pogrom. Then the UDA announced that it would take measures to 'eliminate' sectarian killings, reassuring that "more could be gained by talking with the British Government." The Official IRA shot two young Catholics in the last week for murdering Protestants. And so the sectarian murders have almost disappeared for the time being—certainly a relief, for instance, for the Catholics of East Belfast.

On the evening of January 26th, after four Catholic workers had been gunned down in Belfast on the way to work, Whitaker summoned the leaders of the UDA to a secret meeting at the Ritz Hotel. He told them that the leadership of Catholicism must stop. Did it monthly assassinate him? Not so. The murders were waiting for the British government, because for the first time the British media was being forced to focus on the fact that there was a deliberate pogrom on the way to work. Calhoun and the few who they do hold in Belfast. If British public opinion was to rise to the level it might begin to ask why, perhaps, the British Army, or the British Government, or the British private army. And the world would never be the same. It would divert troops from their




## VIDEO: HOPPY SEZ...

**BY Mary Finnigan & Hoppy**

**LONDON:**—UFO's re-appear from time to time, it's still it, BFI's still sabbid and us at CATS (Centre for Advanced Television Studies) have been running around with video equipment for the last three years. Given how just published our report on these activities. Its called Video in Community Development, costs £4.25 and is worth it if you are into keeping ahead of the changes. Here's a quote:

'Half-inch video tape is a new medium. It is one of the few of its full potential. But through our involvement with video tape for the last year two things have become rapidly apparent. The first is that the medium is no longer the sole domain of "experts". The technology is such that anyone with minimum training can have

Development, costs £4.25 and is worth it if you are into keeping ahead of the changes. Here's a quote:

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doing pilot programmes for the BBC'—in graphic TV programming designed for non-viewing.

There's no way to describe it as yet because TV critics suffer from the absence of a language appropriate to the medium. There isn't even a commonly known structural language for TV. That's why attention should be paid to TV artists, who are years ahead of their time. I know because I am one. So watch your language because its due for a change. A fact is in this could take the form of an experiment:

- 1) Get stoned
- 2) Put a record on the hi-fi
- 3) Switch on TV, with volume off, and adjust horizontal hold so that a pleasant rhythmic pattern repeats itself on the screen.
- 4) Think.

But what's really happening? Its not the lightweight Porapak video equipment mentioned in our report that is the phenomenon in itself, but the ritual literacy that it produces—a whole new breed of people with changed thought patterns and the Porapak is the latest way to produce it. Nobody knows what happens when the number of people with high visual literacy suddenly starts increasing exponentially as a culture. That's what's happening right now. This equipment is vital to it. You know how to use it.

There is some important research to be done, particularly on the semiotic techniques. But who's the phenomenologist? Really it should be the manufacturing side of the TV industry: the hardware makers. They stand to gain anyway by knowing what's going to happen and designing the next generation of hardware accordingly. The ones I have in mind are Sony, Shindengen, Fuji & Hewlett, Philips, Ampex and EMI—which brings us back to the beginning again.

Incidentally some people who have highly developed radio literacy latched with money and other contributions towards the publication of "Video in Community Development." They include John and Vito Lennan, Mark Jagger and Pete Townsend among a lot of other friends. Thanks.

**PS.** Don't forget to come to the Nottingham benefit on Feb 11th at the Roundhouse.

**PPS.** If you detect an element of snobishness in all this you're right—some of the material was assembled for the straight press.



Sue Hall,  
Director,  
Graft-On!  
98, Prince of Wales Road,  
London,  
N.W.5.

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Film tape  
23.8.74  
allowed  
in court



By our own Reporter

A videotape recording of squatters being evicted from a London house will be admissible as defence evidence in a case of alleged assault—provided that Scotland Yard forensic scientists are satisfied that the tape is authentic.

The Lambeth magistrate Mr K. J. H. Nichols, said yesterday that it was a novel situation but videotape could be allowed as evidence on the same terms as sound recordings.

Mr Peter Darcy and Dr John Pollard, who are accused of assaulting a police constable during their eviction from a house in Prince of Wales Crescent, Chislehurst, North London, by bailiffs and police earlier this year, believe the film is crucial defence evidence.

The case, which was in its fourth day yesterday, originally involved 15 people but seven have had their charges dismissed. Yesterday six men were bound over to keep the peace and the charges against them were dismissed.

Mr Benedict Birnberg, counsel for Mr Darcy and Dr Pollard, who is conducting his own defence, applied yesterday for its screening of the film. Mr Birnberg said he thought that it would be the first time a videotape had been used as defence evidence.

But the application was adjourned until November 5 while Scotland Yard makes a duplicate and tests it thoroughly for defects and tampering. Mr Trevor Pagnon, prosecuting, did not oppose the use of videotape as defence evidence but claimed the right to have it tested by specialists. He had been advised that Scotland Yard's forensic division would take 10 weeks to give a considered view.

Mr Birnberg argued that there was no difference in principle between the recording of a human voice and a videotape.

Mr Nichols yesterday accepted this precedent as applying equally to the videotape. The film was made by two members of Graft-On, a community development agency based in Prince of Wales Crescent.

But Mr Nichols said, the film must be strictly established as the first evidence possible, and although he was not suggesting that the tape had been tampered with he presumed that interference was possible.

## A medium for the people



Communications breakdown: At least one councillor in the London Borough of Camden has found a new way of meeting his constituents. Councillor Neil McIntosh was afraid to meet squatters in a block near Prince of Wales Road for fear of being verbally maltreated. (They had asked him, as deputy-chairman of the Council's housing committee, how long before the Council evicted them; he didn't have a clear answer). So a local 'community development agency', Graft-On, run by a couple of videomakers, recorded the squatters discussing their plight and are now preparing to screen the tape for the television channels.

### People's Tube

A powerful check against misuse of police power is the presence of a television camera. One of the most memorable pieces of television footage this year was that by an amateur crew at the scene of a squatters' eviction. The swearing and confusion of the hand-held camera mirrored the chaos and anxiety at the scene. When a cop threatened the cameraman, he seemed to be threatening the viewer as well.

Community groups, as well as schools, art organisations and even athletic teams have been tempted by the potential of relatively inexpensive one-half inch television equipment. (Professional machinery runs one-inch and two-inch tape). The great difficulty has been editing.

Now, with a £1370 grant from the British Film Institute, Sue Hall of Graft-On's community agency and John Hopkins of the Centre for Advanced Television Studies has established a half-inch editing facility. It is called Fantasy Factory, and is at 98 Prince of Wales Road, NW5. The rates are £6 per hour with operator and only £1.00 per hour for 'bona fide non-profit-making community groups'.

Information available from Fantasy Factory, c/o The Institute for Research in Art and Technology, 15 Prince of Wales Crescent, NW1 8BA, telephone 534 4524, ext. 718.

TIME OUT 15

Time Out

The Guardian

The Video Show 1-25 May 1975 Serpentine Gallery London

• Opposite:  
Sue Hall's Press  
Release for her contribution to *The Video Show 1975*. Showing a picture from *Ben's Arrest* (1974) and a news article about *Squat Now Whilst Stocks Last*—Excerpt (1974). *CATS* and *Graft-On* were one of several community organisations that showed alongside artist video practitioners at *The Video Show* exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery on May 1975. The exhibition was one of the first institutional showings of video in the UK and brought together community activists and individual artists.

mode of self-representation and galvanising communitarian output, while also providing an administrative record of the meeting that aimed directly to solve problems immanent to their situation.

This type of activism form Hopkins and Hall's political aspirations of community video, in that it can directly challenge and cajole legal and governmental authority while also having the power to affect a type of self-determination for the community being represented. This self-determination came from the fact that it was someone either inside, outside, or with a status of both, who made the community video and was sympathetic to the community being represented. The status of the person who made the video required, as a prerequisite, an empathetic understanding of the community being videoed and when this was coupled with the fact that community video was intended as an activist concern it raises empathy up to becoming a political model intended to jar and disrupt the cold and distant impersonality of state power.

In an issue titled 'Communications' in the *International Times* there is a double page spread that detailed the galvanising effects of community video on community as it 'allows the complete control of the means of communication by the people in a community,' and says that it has the 'potential of catalysing community dialogue, and can become an important tool in community development.'<sup>34</sup> The article references the 'Challenge for Change' projects initiated by the Canadian government in the early 1970s in the 'poorer areas of Montreal, Drumheller and other communities' as an example of where community video has been used, but it does not describe the effects it had on the communities there. More fundamentally there is not a specific definition of community. Strangely the closest the article gets to a definition of community is through its comparison of 'video users' to 'tantrikas [adherents to Tantra]' both of whom channel 'the free energy of the greater body'; this 'greater body' in Tantra was the union of the individual to the cosmos and in community video this was the union of 'the needs and means of the individual and the needs and means of community.' For the article community video effects an ideal union of individual with community, and therefore the definition of community exists in the realisation of individual needs within a community.

34 Pages 4-5 from the Communication Issue in *International Times*, No.42, 1 November, 1975.



Hopkins and Hall expounded on the power of community video in 1976, when they wrote an article titled 'The Meta-software of Video'.<sup>35</sup> The pair describe the formal capacities of video similarly to how Hopkins had in 1970 in his column 'Real Time Television', seeing it as a medium dedicated towards: 'decentralisation, flexibility, immediacy of playback, speed of light transmission, global transmission pathways, [and] input to two of the senses [hearing and sight].' Their desire for total communication is elaborated through cybernetic theory and broadens out their idea of feedback through equating it to 'response'. They therefore allow it to be measured at all levels of communication, rather than specifically as an individual feedbacking their interest: 'there is no reason why response cannot be viewed as a communication in reply to a prior communication.' Communication thus becomes the reaction to information rather than the traditional idea of communication as an exchange and/or the imparting of information. The idea was that communication was no longer the measure of certain things, and instead was now the measure of all things, as exchange/authority (imparting), became reduced to response, meaning that all communication had become valid at the cost of knowing how or what communication was useful or operative. Furthermore, the effect of treating all communication as a response renders information unhierarchical and thereby without the stipulations of traditional power. In the vacuum of stabilised and regulated forms of power individual means can coalesce with community needs.

For Hopkins and Hall this ideal of communication, measured purely as individual response, which engendered community agency, was beginning to find material force in the mid-1970s. The materiality of these ideas found form in the West Kentish Town squatting community, where the three videos referenced were filmed, and through a wider culture of community work at the time, in which the pair identified video as part of a burgeoning of 'community services' that were emerging at this time. Hall and Hopkins see community video as being able to harmonise individual and community needs, with the effect of creating both a socially engaged process and a business model which the pair termed the 'third sector.' These services were 'neither wholly commercial nor wholly state supported, but which [were] in the form of independently run public services.' The idea of the 'third sector' was a term akin to

35 35 Sue Hall and John Hopkins. 'The Metasoftware of Video.' *Studio International: Journal of Modern Art the Video Art*, (May/June 1976) pp.260-264, 263.

36 A community organiser on the Crescent, E. D. Berman founder of Inter-Action, went on to set up an NGO Advisory Service.

37 David Harvey. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p.78.

another community group active in the West Kentish Town squatting community: Inter-Action's coinage of the term 'social enterprise.' Both took the idea of merging private and public spheres to make community projects that were defined as independent, or privately run, 'public services.' In the 1970s the idea of independently run public service would have appeared novel and even ground breaking, in its alternative to state intervention it effectively recasts the idea of civil society in opposition to state power, as opposed to the Gramscian idea of the two being in unity with one another. The idea of an independent public service has become sedimented in 21st century in the form of grass-roots organisations (GRO) and non-governmental organisations (NGO).<sup>36</sup> As David Harvey states, these have 'proliferated remarkably under neoliberalism, giving rise to the belief that opposition mobilised outside the state apparatus and within some separate entity called 'civil society' is the powerhouse of oppositional politics and social transformation.'<sup>37</sup> Community video was one of the harbingers, of such change, providing an announcement for the transformation of oppositional politics conducted exclusively from the outside; a change that has been unopposed and welcomed under the logics of neoliberalism.

By March 1976 Prince of Wales Crescent had come to an end, the *Ham and Highgate Express* ran the title: 'Squatters Go Quietly - To GLC Flats.' After negotiating within the GLC for some on the Crescent to be rehoused, the majority on Prince of Wales Crescent dismantled their barricades and peacefully left the Crescent. The history of Prince of Wales Crescent and wider West Kentish Town squatting community is held with the caricature of *Squat City*: it depicts a brief history of a section of the non-New Left, a strand of which became focused on using community video to allow the full freedom of individuality to be harnessed in community action. Community video originated as the site of anti-capitalist struggle for Hopkins replacing the political struggles of the late 1960s, demonstration, revolt, student insurrection. Fighting authority through direct action was instead rethought as a claim to decentralise dominant modes of media representation for groups that, if not exclusively part of the underground, were considered as poorly represented.

In this way community video was an afterlife of the *International Times*, which united the poles of self-exploration



You are the product  
of TV.

1

## VIDE

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00077778

The potential of video as a vehicle for change can best be illustrated by reference to the Canadian Government-sponsored **Challenge for Change** programme - the first-ever application of video to community organisation.

Building the boats,  
for strong, big systems for ourselves,  
the city,  
the world.

**CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE**

[illegible]

"Citizen access to media" became "civic people throughout Canada could videotape themselves, and their own and their community activities set up."

If people could benefit by their local and national activities, why not the same? However, the next step was to find ways to provide community - to provide citizens access of distribution. Cable television. In 1971, Canada was the first "cabled" net in the world, with over 200 cable companies. 4 million people receiving their own satellite technology had about 100,000 miles could be played directly into the cable. transferred and edited on 1" video for a response to public. The Canadian Cable Television Commission, stipulated a community that each local operator would have a cable production facility. The Commission operates channel for distribution. Chalk has been helping people take full advantage and developing and perfecting necessary.

With a time-lag of about 24 years, the use of this country has developed about similar to Canada, about 1995.

video, and the use of the system for monitoring and maintenance of the plant. The system is designed to be used by the operator via a video display and a keyboard. The system is designed to be used by the operator via a video display and a keyboard. The system is designed to be used by the operator via a video display and a keyboard.

A black and white photograph of a man with a mustache, wearing a large, ornate, circular headpiece. Above his head is a small, dark, rectangular object labeled "MIRROR MACHINE". The man is looking directly at the camera. The headpiece has a textured, possibly woven or beaded, appearance. The background is dark and indistinct.

Examine the figure. Identify the cell and the process.

Challenges: Chomsky/Schwartz-Novelle was set up in 1967 under the auspices of the National Film Board of Canada, in terms approved by the Canadian Cabinet. It was an attempt to make a film about the Canadian government's attempt to gain understanding of the problems accompanying social change. Its declared objectives were to improve communication, create greater understanding and promote social change.

From making film about people and their problems, an attempt essentially to do different from the conventional media. It focused on the Pope's enclosed project, his media film with people and

[illegible][illegible]

In January 72, Manitoba licensed television to provide local television to the subscribers in the Winnipeg area. Licenses were granted to British Columbia-based, Cablevision, Sherfield (3,000 Viewport 110,000); the only agreement not to be a franchise was with the local company. Programmes were to be local in nature and intended to reflect the tastes and interests of the local community. The local sponsorship for any extra charges to be allowed.

Licensed operators found it heavy to pay, and in February this year British, through closed doors. The terms of the

Tantra is a philosophy of ecstasy based on cosmic alchemy.

In tantra the union of the male (Shiva) and the female (Shakti) is the alchemical equation of the source of energy in the body. The male are food, sex, movement, sensation and color.

Energy flows within the body through the chakras within the greater body through the human network behavior, speech and movement.

Free energy flow of the spirit, the greater body of the soul, the greater body of the universe.

Video is a new communication tool. It is information system, having input (camera), memory (videotape), record (player) and

...an a vision  
...and the female  
...iverse.  
...s of the body  
...amplation.  
...ous system,  
...d communica-  
...a.  
...necessary for  
...he system.  
...t a complete  
...and microph-  
...d [playback]

[illegible][illegible]

705 were the first group to bring video consciousness to the UK. There are now new and groups working with video in this country in a variety of applications, including those from local authority, educational, medical and other fields. Software being produced goes everything from free festivals and recreation to psychotherapy.

In June this year, the Arts Council held a video show at the Sequence Gallery in Hyde Park. There were more than 100 British videomakers. In many ways the only time the Lagos have been so close.

[illegible]

to this property that makes video the mirror to contemplation, experience of experience. Raster and flutter provide variety and which may be seen as the joy of seeing experience of joy.

Video users are the tantriks of our culture, channeling the free energy of it.

To materialise this energy is to amplify it. It may be seen as the free energy and means of the individual and the good of the community.

*ಭಯದಿಂದಲೇ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ  
ಸಂಜ್ಞಾ ಭಾಷೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ  
ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ಸಂಜ್ಞಾ ಭಾಷೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ  
ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ಸಂಜ್ಞಾ ಭಾಷೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ  
ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ಸಂಜ್ಞಾ ಭಾಷೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ*

Women have found and we  
self that has entered the  
maker of the universe  
the maker of all. His is  
called by the world  
spiritual-ecology

...ing, a deer  
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...nce and the  
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...greater body,  
...li towards  
...n the needs  
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...for he is  
...a world  
...it.  
...overhead, 12

**MACRO MICRO**

**VIDEO FEEDBACK WORLD  
INTERACTIVE MFT-2**

HARE KRISHNA

"Here's a global videotape course which is a real gem... it will help you understand the world better than any other source yet produced. A must have for all serious students of international affairs and religion."

The New York Times 10/18/79

A collage illustration titled "COMMUNITY OF MINORITIES". The central figure is a person in a white shirt and dark shorts, carrying a large stack of books. To their left is a car with a person standing behind it. To the right, there are circular inset images showing people in various social settings, including a family and a person sitting. The background is filled with various symbols and images, including a flag and a person in a suit. The title "COMMUNITY OF MINORITIES" is written in a large, stylized font across the center.

**OPERATION TOTAL EXPOSURE**  
LARRY B. GORODIN

...and with television. "It's  
the switch is the best part," he  
said. But Gorodkin invented television.  
[In writing, Gorodkin developed his own  
cinematic pictures.]  
Working for Westinghouse and perfect-  
ing—at a cost of \$20 million—with  
his based on his system, but television.

Dr. Gorodkin, who is 86 and retired,  
world's most exploited inventions  
all on salary," he says.

In men technologically, I mean  
as far as human purpose, it would help  
that way. There is too much violence,  
by it. It's contaminating our society."

**EVERY**

[Gorodkin to give to]

[Gorodkin to give to]

Top left: A large, dark, textured object, possibly a piece of machinery or a large animal, with a person's head visible in the foreground.

Top right: A group of people, some wearing hats, standing in front of a building with a sign that says "HOTEL".

Bottom left: A person wearing a dark jacket with "DAY" and "LIFE:" printed on the back, standing in front of a large, dark, textured object.

Bottom right: A person wearing a dark jacket with "DAY" and "LIFE:" printed on the back, standing in front of a large, dark, textured object. A sign in the background reads "HOTEL".



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with extraparlamentarism in the form of community. Despite some of Hopkins and Hall's community video practice joining up with the extraparlamentarism of the New Left, it was their desire to liberate the individual from institutional form which set them apart. Those on the British New Left perceived 'a crisis' in the established institutions of the left and turned towards extraparlamentary politics and a critique of culture through a Marxist lens to engage with class politics anew, yet their drift away from these institutions was not absolute.<sup>38</sup> This preference for cultural critique had become symptomatic of their drift away from traditional institutions and led, according to Davis, to their indistinguishability from forms of non-New Left by the late 1970s.<sup>39</sup> Yet their distrust of institutional form never amounted to a wholesale rejection. Whereas, community video practitioners, steeped in the radical anti-authoritarianism of the *International Times* and the non-classed lumpen squatting milieu of West Kentish Town, saw the power inherent in institutional form as abhorrent and looked to solve problems for themselves. Community was a potentiality and a halfway point, neither capitalism nor class struggle. What emerged for community video practitioners in the vacuum of institutional form was an entrepreneurial power found in community action.<sup>40</sup> Hopkins and Hall (as well as similar groups on the crescent such as Inter-Action) began by the mid 1970s to embody community action as enterprise, affirming the socially progressive traits of socialism and social democracy within the nascent environment of rabid deregulation and privatisation. The effect was to disarm themselves and their adherents of a critique of class and economic oppression, replacing it instead with a toolkit for professionalising concerns around social inequality and a reduction of politics to the solution of immediate and surface problems; this was an idea of community reduced to the individual which began as a bridge from anti-capitalist activism and realised itself as a 'third sector' enterprise.

Previous pages:  
Page 4–5 from  
Communication  
Issue in *International  
Times*, No. 4–2,  
1 November 1975.

38 Fredric Jameson. 'Periodising the 60s', *Social Text*, no.9/10, (1984) pp.178–209, p.181.

39 Davis. 'The Marxism of the British New Left', p.338.

40 As Stuart Hall points out community is a 'convenient halfway stop to class' in Stuart Hall. 'The Neo-Liberal Revolution', *Cultural Studies*, No.25 Vol.6, (2011) pp.705–728, p.710.

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Lotte L.S. is a poet living in Great Yarmouth, at the easterly edges of England. She published an untitled pamphlet – a long poem and short text – about loss and protest in Iceland in January 2020; and *Twelve Days of 21st Century Rain*, a single-poem pamphlet in September 2020. She organises 'no relevance' a series of multilingual readings with local and visiting poets, and accompanying pamphlets, in Great Yarmouth.



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## COLOPHON

The MayDay Rooms Pamphlet Series brings together reproductions of documents from radical histories offering a space for extended engagement and critical reflections on their contemporary relevance. Each pamphlet will contain newly created content – including essays, poems, and illustrations – set alongside reproductions of materials to which they are responding.

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