The London School of Economics and Political Science

Democratising Print? The Field and Practices of

Radical and Community Printshops in Britain 1968-98

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A thesis submitted to the Department of Media and Communications of the London School

of Economics for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London, September 2016

Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

Alternative media studies is a rapidly expanding field, particularly since the emergence and uptake of digital technologies and their potential to facilitate the articulation of alternative and contestatory voices. As previous scholarship has shown, aspirations to this end, deploying various communication technologies are not new. However the histories of these earlier activities can be elusive. This thesis examines one such case, typically absent from litanies of pre-digital attempts in democratising media/cultural production; Britain's late 20th century radical and community printshops, particularly but not exclusively those in London. Field theory approaches (Bourdieu 1994, Crossley 2006, Fligstein & McAdam 2012) are used to map and analyse the trajectory of this heterogeneous field of printshops; from its emergence in the 1970s to its dissipation by the 1990s. The thesis identifies the combinations of material, cultural and political conditions, internal and external to their fields of operation (fields of movement and civil society activity), that variously enabled and challenged their growth and survival. The field approach is linked with Shove et al.'s (2012) synthesised practice theory to analyse how the printshops democratised internal organisation and production, and the challenges in doing so.

The methods undertaken to conduct the study are a combination of archival research, the instigation of a 'radical printshops' open wiki and 55 in-depth interviews with printshop members. The research demonstrates how the printshops activities did not exist in isolation but as part of, and dependent upon, wider webs of culture, politics and influence. It shows how their participatory practices were contingent on wider field recognition of their value, and how 'habitus' can play a role in their uptake. The research also found that the heterogeneity of printshop memberships kept them open to diverse movement struggles and internal self-criticism, but how this could also be a source of internal instability and conflicts about aims. Lastly, the thesis reveals how the influence of the alternative left field on municipal socialist policy of the 1980s both enabled and undermined the activity of the printshops. Generally the thesis contributes to alternative media studies by bringing the printshops to attention and connecting them into a larger history of democratic experiments in the amplification of contestatory ideas and marginalised voices.

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Chapter 1: Introduction – Print: How you can do it yourself[1]

> Only the successful (in the sense of those whose aspirations anticipated
> subsequent evolution) are remembered. The blind alleys, the lost causes and
> the losers themselves are forgotten.
>
> <div align="right">E.P THOMPSON</div>

In 1979, I took a printing apprenticeship test. I was leaving school the next year and had
vaguely realised I needed to make moves towards getting a skill I could earn my living by. Or
at least something I could *say* to the adults that were starting to ask. The word careers was
associated with three things; the deadly sessions at school, 'Army Careers', and the song by
The Clash. I passed the test and duly applied to local printers. Those that agreed to see me,
on finding I was female, something my signature did not give away, said 'sorry love, it
wouldn't work'. I didn't mind too much, I didn't really want to work in that sort of printers
anyway. It was a whole *other* world of print that had given me something to cling on to. This
was the print media that was piled up on stalls, or thrust into your hands on the Rock and
Against Racism and Anti-Nazi League marches and events, that was pasted onto boarded
up shops and lampposts, it was the pamphlets and flyers that the Trotskyists brought along
to the youth club, it was the print media that was stuffed into the alternative bookshop that
had started to become a haunt. Marxism. Anarchism. Women's Liberation. Gay. Third World.
Revolution. Ecology. Occult. Spiritual. Overflowing tatty magazine and newspaper racks,
rolls of posters, leaflets in the window. Someone had to print it. I had no idea who though.

I left school, left home, signed on the dole for a few months, got put onto a Youth
Opportunities Scheme, started going to 'meetings', and began volunteering at a wholefood
co-op – a few doors down from the alternative bookshop. Opposite the wholefood co-op was
a 'Resource Centre' that the co-op also ran. It housed the women's centre, the office of the
local anti-nuclear campaign group, a meeting room, a café – and a printroom. This consisted
of a knackered duplicator that groups could use and a screen-printing set up in the making.
Alan who ran the room encouraged me, what did I want to print, well a bulletin of all of the
alternative and radical activity in the city to start with. I was getting closer.

In early 1982 I saw an advert in *Spare Rib* for 'woman needed' to join women's poster
workshop in London. I had seen some of their posters, they were serious. So Long as
Women are not Free the People are not Free. Capitalism also Depends on Domestic
Labour. YBA Wife. My pulse was racing. I applied immediately, there was no way I would get
it but I just wanted to *go* there. I was 18, with two stints on YOPS and I could sort of operate

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1 Title of series of printing manuals produced by Jonathan Zeitlyn between 1974 and 1992.

a duplicator. To my disbelief they offered me the job. It didn't matter that I couldn't print, that I hadn't been to art school, was less than two years out of school. They would teach me. I moved, signed on again, (there were no wages to speak of), got a cheap room in a communal women's house and finally learnt how to print. I had entered the world I been groping around to find.

The workshop was up a set of rickety steps in a nineteenth century industrial yard in south London. We paid a nominal rent to the council. Opposite was a women's litho print collective with whom we shared the darkroom and roll-ups in the yard, and when we could afford it, dinner in the local 'greasy spoon'. A short bus ride away was a community printshop that we schlepped over to when a piece of kit was out of action or loaned cans of chemicals from. There was a lot to do at the workshop and we all did everything. There were new issues that needed new posters designing for, there were old ones to reprint and distribute, orders to be sent off to bookshops, organisations and individuals, service jobs to print, conferences to lug posters to. Urgent things to print for flyposting. It was exciting. It was also freezing in winter, boiling in summer and when we were printing it stank. The health and safety was one WW2 gas mask. And then we started applying for grants. The GLC women's committee had been formed. Groups we knew were applying and getting money.

The workshop had been going for eight years when I joined, on voluntary labour. Those that been there since the early days saw a chance to try and put the workshop on a more stable footing. A plan was being vaguely drawn up. Those of us that were newer and younger weren't so sure. It would be quite good to be paid though. However this new spectre of wages brought conflict. If the grant could pay proper wages, shouldn't these jobs be reserved for women who couldn't afford to 'work for free', who were typically excluded from cultural production. These were the debates that were surging through the women's movement. Not what, but who. Many of us got caught up in them. We entered into an intense and miserable period, which resulted in a split in the collective. Women with dedication, passion and skill were forced out to make way for new ones. After a few months of 'grant wages', I left and went to work in a 'mixed' service printing co-op. No grants, no accountability to the women's movement. Still intense collective meetings but a lot of interesting printing and a flow of different groups and individuals that wanted to use us. We shared the building with a radical typesetting co-op, a wholefood delivery co-op, and a campaign group and housing co-op office. It was leased from the council, on a very cheap rent. We rotated jobs on a fortnightly basis. Darkroom. Screenprinting. Litho. Artwork. Admin. We printed for plethora of left, campaigning and arts groups; screen printed posters, vinyl stickers, offset litho leaflets, pamphlets and badges.

I spent the next ten years working in various printshops, until the early 1990s. After years of 'job rotation' I had ended up with a particular skill in pre-press and that what was I did. The last place I worked at was a large collective, with specialised job roles. We printed a lot of worthy things, argued about what to print occasionally, about who to employ, about why we were losing money. We went to pub and had more arguments. It was mostly good. I spent most of my days in a darkroom or hunched over a light table – that was ok too. The printing, what we actually printed was becoming less interesting however. There would be the odd exciting moment – doing *War Report* for the 'first' Gulf war, for example. Printshops we knew of were closing down. We were dying breed it seemed. The Apple Mac had also arrived. We got one. My job was going to be next. And I didn't want it. It was time to try and do something else. Maybe go to college even.

In 2007 I received an invitation from this same printing co-op.[2] It was for their 30th birthday party. I had remained loosely in contact. I had evening shifts as a casual when I was at college and friends that continued to work there long after I left. I always rang them for a quote if I needed any printing, or recommended them to people. By this time I was working at the London College of Printing (renamed London College of Communication), where almost twenty-five years earlier I had done my City and Guilds in printing. For the printshop's 30th birthday present I decide to make a poster celebrating their history. The politics. The rows. The people. The customers. I had access to the means of production at work. And it got me thinking. About all the other printshops too, those that I had worked in, those that I knew of. A whole phenomenon seemed to have sunk without a trace. At the party those of us who had long left, and from other printshops, marvelled at how this one had survived, how had they done it, and *still* be a flat-pay, proper collective workers co-op. The subject inevitably turned to all those other printshops, we called up names, tried to remember dates and revived old gossip. One person said, half-jokingly, 'somebody should do a history before we all die'; there was a murmur of concurrence. 'Yeah but who would do it?' I asked. 'You could!' The event itself and this exchange laid the seeds for my research proposal. Ideas for an oral history project, an exhibition, a book of images and anecdotes were all considered before eventually deciding the research should take this form. The study presented here does not and cannot do this history justice, but I hope it is a start.

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2 Calverts, 9-10 The Oval, London, E2 9DT. http://www.calverts.coop/

Chapter 2: Conceptual framework: Fields and practices

The 'printshops' were not an isolated social phenomenon — if such a thing could exist— and my contention is that in order to make sense of how and why they did what they did and their individual and collective trajectories— that is, the *history* of them, or more precisely *a* history of them — they need to be understood in relation to the particular historical and cultural constellations in which they were born, sustained, struggled and faded. These constellations produced, and were produced by, movements and milieus, made up of groups and individuals staking particular claims, contesting varying forms of power, producing 'culture', developing new ways of 'doing things' and mobilising technologies and tools to do so. Already there are a number of scalar 'levels' and formations to contend with here; a wider realm of related activity (there may be more than one), movements, groups, networks, milieus and individuals. Furthermore, all of this is operating within wider social, political and material contexts that 'all of this', is in turn, actively responding to or having to negotiate with some way. Therefore a containment strategy, that is, a conceptual framework, is required that enables moving in and out between these levels without getting lost and with sufficient analytical purchase to make sense of the relationships between and within them. The central strategy has been to deploy a triumvirate of sufficiently related concepts — field, practice and habitus — to enable these movements. These concept names, particularly together, most likely suggest a 'Bourdieusian' approach. This is not the case. As will become clear in order to adequately address the questions and material that is being worked with, there is a significant amount of promiscuity with regard to each concept. In some cases I draw on modifications of Bourdieu's particular development of the concept ('habitus' for example), in others I use variants with a different genealogy ('practice' for example). In each case however the concepts orientate and provide a frame of reference rather than a rigid blueprint for analysis. Detached from Bourdieu's elaborations of them (by varying degrees), the question might be do these concepts still work together; I think so.

The chapter proceeds by initially positioning the activity of the printshops against the ever-present, albeit elusive concept of 'power'. They make no sense at all without reference to this. Particularly relevant most obviously is the notion of symbolic power and how that might be conceived. This in turn takes us further into the terrain of the printshops and the relationship between contestations of symbolic —and other forms of power— through media related activity, and the issue of 'alternative media'. Defining alternative media, noting competing definitions and raising problems with the concept itself, is an established tradition of prefacing alternative media scholarship. While this procedure was branded "tiresome" some time ago (Meade 2002: 728), it still serves to position the work in the field of study. Alternative media is then related to social space, and a discussion of the most salient way to conceptualise this; from alternative public realms, to counter publics and finally alighting on

'fields', of various kinds. This leads into the tricky concept of field itself and the understanding of it that is drawn on in the thesis. Having established a viable concept to analyse and articulate the social space of the printshops, the discussion then moves into the printshops, and a particular set of related practices taken up by them; what I am calling participatory-democratic practices. This requires some unpacking of what is meant by participatory-democracy first, and then the concept of practice, what 'variety', why this one and how it is being used. The last section moves from the level of the organisation, to that of its membership; in practice theory terms the 'carriers' of practice. Here I attempt to justify the mobilisation of the habitus concept in relation to that of 'practice' and 'field' for the analysis undertaken. The aim has been as with thesis to establish the territory, position the printshops, selectively zoom into key aspects of what they did and how (practices), but to do so with a back and forward movement of context, field, organisation/printshop/practices and membership. The chapter conclusion provides a diagram (Fig. 2) to show how the concepts fit together, and states the research questions (Table 1) so they can be seen in light of the conceptual framework.

2.1. Power and oppositional activity

Media is not the central topic of this thesis. However the production of media — by others, sometimes by themselves — was key to the printshops' purpose. The instigatory motive was to extend the communicative capacities of politically, economically and socially 'marginal' groups and movements disputing various forms and practices of 'dominant power'. This can also be cast as enabling as well as facilitating the contestation of 'symbolic power' (Thompson 1995). Consequently even this cursory description of the printshops rationale and endeavour indicates that the issue of power is central and needs to be unpacked.

At the most basic level power can be understood as the capacity to act in pursuit of one's interests and to influence outcomes in one's favour (Thompson 1995). This is power as a relational positive capacity, the power to. However following Giddens (1985) and Bourdieu (1984, 1992) this capacity is socially enabled and constrained by pre-existing contexts, systems of meaning and legitimation and the (uneven) accumulation of various kinds of resources. While power may be seen as a contingent and productive force, this should not obscure the fact that the accumulation of resources and historical processes of legitimation pursued by particular social groups, institutions, and 'power networks' (Mann 1986) creates significant concentrations of power that not only enable situations of power over (domination) but also shape the wider social field(s) of interaction and action. Beyond this, analytical distinctions need to be made between different forms of power, albeit with the acknowledgment that in practice they overlap.

Thompson (1995), drawing on Max Weber, Michael Mann and to an extent Pierre Bourdieu, usefully delineates four sources of social power that relate to particular kinds of activity and the accumulation of certain kinds of resources. These are identified as economic power, political power, coercive power and symbolic power.   Economic power derives from the accumulation by individuals and organisations of material and financial resources, institutionalised in industry and commerce. Political power derives from the usually centralised coordination and regulation of individuals within a demarcated territory, and is typically institutionally located. The state is the most explicit expression of modern political power and is a key example of what Thompson defines as a 'paradigmatic institution'; an institution that "provides a privileged basis for the exercise of certain forms of power" (p.14 ibid). Coercive power is the use or threat of physical violence to dominate opponents, typically institutionalised in the military, police and prison system. As Thompson (1995: 15) notes, in some categorisations of power, coercive power is folded into political power, as not only are the two frequently linked, the potential for recourse to coercive power is partly what lends political power its ultimate authority. However not only are coercion and violence qualitatively distinct from 'coordination and regulation' as such, there are arguably many instances of coercive power that are not linked to political power, especially if we are conceiving of power as operating at various scales and dimensions of social life.

The fourth source of power, symbolic power, derives from accumulations of resources that enable the effective production, dissemination and use of symbolic or representational forms. Thompson summarises symbolic power as "the capacity to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others and indeed to create events, by means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms" (1995: 17). The resources that enable symbolic power are a complex of technical resources; skills and competencies in the production and 'transmission' of symbolic content; literacies in the use and understanding of symbolic content; recognition and respect as a producer of symbolic content. While symbolic culture is a fundamental part of everyday life encompassing the realm of spoken, written, visual and sonic communication and thus representing and reproducing various kinds of discourses or 'systems of meaning', particular institutions have historically exercised significant symbolic power, notably religious, educational and media institutions. Symbolic power is often especially linked to other types of power, for example political or economic power, indicating how 'ideal types' of power frequently overlap or reinforce each other. The 'effects' of symbolic power may be more complex to discern than other forms of power because symbolic forms operate at the level of the imagination and human consciousness, and as such how they are actually interpreted by individuals is not a straightforward matter, as significant bodies of cultural and media research have shown (Hall 1997). Furthermore non-institutionalised symbolic culture that challenges concentrations and practices of other types of power may also become 'a force to reckon with'. The paradigmatic example is the

counter culture of the 1960s, arguably an eruption of symbolic power, whereby a proliferation of 'alternative' values were expressed in a panoply of symbolic forms circulated via radio, TV, concerts, festivals, clothing and the underground press and so on (Lull 2000).

Nick Couldry has argued however (with specific reference to 'media power'), that Thompson's conception of symbolic power is a 'weak' one that does not allow for the possibility that "some concentrations of symbolic power are so great that they dominate the whole social landscape [and that] as a result, they seem so natural that they are misrecognised, and their underlying arbitrariness becomes difficult to see" (Couldry 2003: 4). For Couldry this possibility suggests the application of Pierre Bourdieu's 'strong' concept of symbolic power as a way to address the problems of power and inequality that drove earlier media and cultural studies research, and which it has certain parallels with. For Bourdieu symbolic culture plays a vital social role in defining and constructing social reality and symbolic power is no less than "the power to produce and impose the legitimate vision of the world" (Bourdieu 1989: 20). It is through symbolic power that 'social structures' are legitimised and naturalised as the 'common sense' — and successively reproduced.

Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power can be related to his use of the term 'doxa', a concept from Aristotle, meaning the 'common opinion' as contrasted with 'knowledge'. Bourdieu however takes the notion further, to mean that which has become so taken for granted, it "literally goes without saying" (Crossley 2005: 68). Doxic assumptions exist beyond 'opinion' and choice as self-evident and 'indisputable' facts. For Bourdieu what has sedimented as doxa is often the result of "dogged confrontations between dominant and dominated groups" (Bourdieu 1998: 57), and therefore contains a — typically erased — history of struggle. Bourdieu's notion of symbolic power and his use of doxa are comparable to Antonio Gramsci's (1971) idea of hegemony, which similarly tries to account for why or how 'the dominated' internalise and accept the order of things, rather than rise up against it. Hegemonic power includes "not only the conscious system of ideas and beliefs… but the whole lived social process as practically organised by specific dominant meanings and values" (Williams 1989: 56). For Gramsci the concept of hegemony provided a more appropriate description of the operation of power in liberal ('bourgeois') democracies, than that which reduced power to 'dominance' and coercion, it was not a totalitarian concept (Williams 1977; Hall 1987,1997, Gitlin 1980). For Gramsci and neo-Gramscians, the 'consent' to, or naturalisation of, economic and social inequality is similarly achieved through the operations of symbolic power (culture) that need to work to form a 'common sense', partly through 'defining situations'. However Bourdieu's notion of symbolic power is less to do with the absorption of explicit beliefs and discourses as such, but the more insidious "taken for granted assumptions, classifications and perceptions" that perpetuate inequality

(Swartz 2013: 40, however see Williams 1977[3]). In turn these (may) provide the 'pre-condition' for the acceptance of certain explicit ideological 'messages'. Furthermore Bourdieu argues that inequality and its acceptance occurs not at the level of 'consciousness' but through the body, in dispositions (habitus) and practices (Bourdieu 1984). There are obvious parallels here with Foucault's conception of power relations as a dispersed force operating through bodies and their actions, and "rooted deep within the social nexus" (Foucault 2000: 343). The concept of habitus will be returned to later in this chapter and in the thesis. Bourdieu's (and Foucault's) theorisations of power are more concerned with the reproduction of power relations than 'resistance', although the possibility is considered viable, for Foucault at least. While the position here is that Bourdieu (and Foucault to some extent) provide more convincing notions of the diffusion and incorporation of power relations through the body politic than that offered by neo-Gramscian hegemony, the concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony are useful to begin to position the activity of the printshops, especially within a wider field of contestatory activity.

Partly deriving from the initiatives of British cultural and media studies of the 1970s and 80s,[4] 'resistance' on the symbolic terrain has been frequently framed as counter-hegemonic struggle, although Gramsci did not use the term himself (Hammer & Kellner 2009, Lash 2007). Because hegemonic power is mostly legitimised and naturalised through 'consent' and persuasion, rather than force, it is always having to try and secure this in the face of competing social, cultural and ideological forces, and as such is "an ongoing process of resistance, incorporation and negotiation" (Proctor 2004: 88). Therefore counter-hegemonic activity is always a possibility, but one also at risk of incorporation. Cornel West for example described the incorporation of key aspects of the above mentioned, ostensibly counter-hegemonic 1960s counter-culture into the liberal capitalist American mainstream as an example of 'neo-hegemony' (West 1982). The concept of counter-hegemony has been widely used to describe social movements of various kinds, as well as alternative and oppositional media. As Downing et al. (2001: 15) noted in their important study of radical media, "notions of counter-hegemony and counter-hegemonic have become fairly common…as a way of categorising attempts to challenge dominant ideological frameworks and to supplant them with a radical alternative vision. Many radical alternative media clearly belong within this frame" (see also Carroll 1992, Atton 2002, Bailey et al. 2008). The trend has continued in the fifteen years since that study was published, although during that time the concepts have also been criticised for their contemporary relevance.

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3 William's (1977) description of hegemony in Marxism and Literature captures this. However as Milner (2002) notes, William's use of Gramsci's concept was rather different from the way it was taken up by other British cultural studies academics.

4 For example, *Resistance through Rituals* (Hall & Jefferson 1976); *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (Hebdige 1979); *Television Culture* (Fiske 1987)

Very briefly, the general argument has been, a) that the notion of counter hegemonic struggle ultimately assumes an ultimate quest for hegemony, which is not relevant to many contemporary social movements, ('change the world without taking power') and b) that Gramscian inspired hegemony theory is too concerned with 'representation' and discourse at the expense of affect and the 'real' (see Day 2005, Lash 2007, Beasley-Murray 2010). The critique is frequently pointed at the development of hegemony theory by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001) and tends to be indicative of Deleuzian (Deleuze & Guattari 1999) inspired descriptions of social movements, as articulated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000, 2005). While mention of these critiques indicates that there is possibly, to quote one their authors, no longer a 'hegemony of hegemony' (Day 2005: 8) in contemporary theorisations of contestatory politics, and without making any particular claims for the value of hegemony theory for contemporary movements, in this context the general notion of a 'counter-hegemonic culture' aptly describes the wider social realm that the printshops operated in, the media that they printed, and the implicitly critical forms of their practices.

2.2. Alternative media: fitting the printshops in

I understand the thesis subject matter, radical and community printshops, to be part of the wider diverse and complex history and research of alternative media. Some definition of what is meant by the concept of alternative media is therefore required, as well as how the printshops 'fit in'. Since the development of the sub-field of alternative media scholarship there have been discussions as to what constitutes a certain type of media making as 'alternative', with an array of other terms to describe various types of 'non-mainstream' media. These include radical alternative media (Downing 1984), social movement media, citizens media (Rodriguez 2001), activist media (Waltz 2005), tactical media (Lovink 2002), autonomous media (Langlois & Dubois 2005), critical media (Fuchs 2010), community media (Jankowski 2002, Rennie 2006, Howley 2006), rhizomatic media (Bailey, et al. 2008). Some of these terms of course pre-date the emergence of alternative media as a defined area of study. Proponents of each term use them to best capture what they see as the distinctive aspects of the particular media they describe. Naming is important; it creates a boundary (we are talking about this and not that), it is also political and performative (Bourdieu 1990, Melucci 1996). Naming carries values or aspirations for that which is named, both for scholars and practitioners (Couldry 2015).

There are inevitably problems with the term 'alternative media'. Downing for example, dismissed it for its vagueness; "everything at some point is an alternative to something else" (2001: ix). This is true of course, but possibly an ahistorical point given 'alternative' has been associated with a range of marginal, oppositional and progressive practices since the 1960s, at least in Anglo and European contexts, a point evident in Downing's his own earlier usage

of the term (Downing 1988). It is also true that 'alternative' has been subjected to incorporation and commodification by the so-called mainstream, 'alternative music' for example (an example of West's (1982) 'neohegemony'). This is partly the nature of language, all terms are unstable, and as political discourse theorists in particular argue the struggle for the capture of terms is part of what constitutes politics (Laclau 1990). The problem of the concept of 'community' is an example par excellence (Williams 1976, Delanty 2003, Downing 2010). For others the problem with 'alternative media' is not so much its vagueness but that it is too bounded and sets up an untenable binary or opposition with mainstream media (Hamilton 2008); a hegemony-type argument. This position, particularly as argued by Hamilton pre-empts the issue of 'incorporation' by proposing that both alternative and 'mainstream' media be understood as 'influenced and influencing' variations within an ambiguous and unstable social field.

Actual definitions of the ostensibly generic sounding 'alternative media' vary from those that are more encompassing to those that delineate a list of necessary or usual characteristics. Couldry and Curran (2003:7) for example define alternative media, briefly, as "media production that challenges, at least implicitly, actual concentrations of media [symbolic] power." Couldry and Curran's definition acknowledges the value/s of alternative media without making any claims for that media as "either radical or empowering". This encompassing definition is arguably a response to the setting out of specific 'alternative media' criteria that invariably exclude particular forms, practices and alignments. These typical, albeit 'ideal', criteria associate alternative media with particular kinds of content, aspirations and organisational practices. These can be summarised as; politically progressive and/or oppositional content; democratic organisational practices; independence from commercial and state influence; involving amateurs rather than 'professionals'; considering audiences as participants (potential if not actual) rather than consumers; adapting/mobilising available technologies (Atton 2002, Hackett & Carroll 2006, Bailey et al. 2008). Each of these criteria of course raise questions, which practitioners have navigated and scholars have analysed. For example the issue of 'independence' from state and market forces; empirical evidence frequently reveals a multiplicity of negotiated relationships (Couldry & Curran 2003). The printshops are a case in point. Generally speaking these criteria point in the same direction, towards a democratisation of media in terms of what is produced (different perspectives), who produces it (different bodies) and how it is produced (different practices). Instrumental to the democratisation of media production is technology. The story of alternative media is arguably also a story of the opportunistic mobilisation of particular communication technologies that have offered relative 'accessibility', in terms of cost, ease of use and availability. These features might be called their 'participatory affordances', a phrase regularly used since the advent of so called 'web 2' and social media, but arguably applicable to other technologies. Before the possibilities offered up by domestic

access to digital technologies and networks, radio, video camcorders, cable TV, basic printing presses and photocopiers were all heralded for their participatory potential (Brecht 2000 [1932], Gillespie 1975; Nigg & Wade 1980; Jankowski et al. 1992; Zeitlyn 1975, McLuhan & McLuhan 1988, Duncome 1997).

The 'rhizomatic' model of alternative media offered by Bailey et al. (2008) seeks to address what they feel are some of the limitations of other models, one of which is the tendency to media 'centric-ness'. Instead their rhizome model highlights alternative media as "at the crossroads of organisations and movements linked with civil society" (ibid, p.27). This is an especially pertinent point for the printshops. The rhizome metaphor is from Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) critique of 'arboreal' thought; the tree as a model for knowledge. Arboreal thought is hierarchical, centralised and linear (with roots, a trunk, and branches that subdivide in importance), whereas the rhizome is anarchic, made of points without a centre, but "always in the middle, between things… the tree is filiation… the rhizome is alliance" (Deleuze & Guattari 1988: 26). Further, "any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other" (ibid. p. 7). The rhizome suggests heterogeneity and multiplicity, process and flows rather than structure and fixity. Bailey et al. (2008: 27) relate the figure of the rhizome to alternative media's potential to connect diverse struggles, which again resonates with the printshops as sites of heterogeneity in terms of type, memberships and users/audiences. The authors also propose that "elusiveness and contingency", characteristics of the rhizome, tend to be "defining elements" of alternative media. These properties indicate the fluidity, creativity and usually sought-after independence of alternative media from state and market influence, but also its vulnerability; similarly salient considerations for this study.

In summation, I assume here Couldry and Curran's (2003) more inclusive definition of alternative media as the flexible yet sturdy ground onto which the printshops can be positioned, that is, as enabling various kinds of contestations to concentrations of symbolic power — neatly illustrated in the poster produced by one of the feminist printshops 'the power of the press belongs to those who operate it' (See Red Women's Workshop 1978). However the specific features claimed by other scholars were also characteristic. The detail of how, the extent to which, and the challenges to this mix of the printshops 'alternative' aspirations and practices comprise the greater narrative of the thesis. The concept of alternative media as both broad and flexible and able to claim specific features also allows for the empirical variation amongst printshops. Bailey et al.'s (2008) rhizomatic model is also highly suggestive for thinking about the printshops as a node connected into and contingent on a wider realm of movement and civil society activity, as well as the threats to their survival.
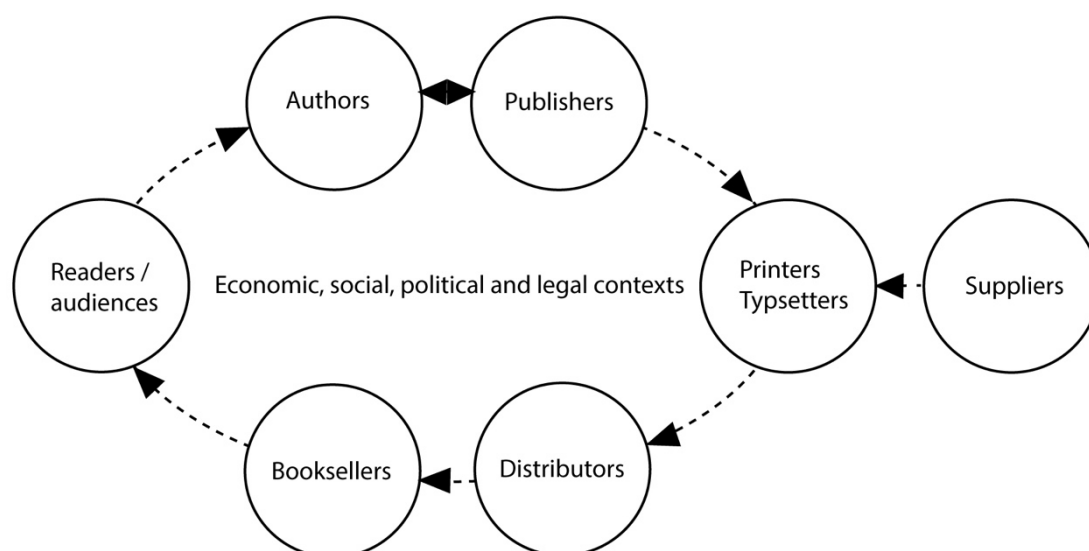
Fig. 1. Modified version of Darnton's (1982) communication circuit.[5]

At this stage it is now useful to illustrate how the printshops fitted into what might be called an alternative media 'communication circuit'. In the radicalprintshop.org wiki that I set-up, a longterm participant of the printshops called Sarah provided a good outline of this circuit: "The presses were part of a chain: activists in organisations wrote and designed the books, pamphlets, posters, newspapers and leaflets which they needed to further the cause. Typesetters and printers produced them. Activists, distribution coops and independent bookshops distributed them" (radicalprintshops.org 2010). Sarah's 'chain' has resonance with Robert Darnton's (1982) communication circuit,[6] devised to depict the connected agents or roles involved in the life cycle of book production (fig. 1). Authors connect to publishers who connect to printers (who have a separate connection to suppliers) who then connect to distributers who connect to booksellers who connect to audiences who then connect back to authors. All of which occurs within specific social, cultural, economic and legal contexts (Darnton 1982: 67).

This model certainly has some value, and many of the roles in the 'circuit' can be qualified or supplemented with adjectives such as community, radical, alternative, co-operative – even recycled paper co-operatives (suppliers) became part of the 'circuit'. To booksellers, as sites of distribution, could be added meetings, events and the streets, which however begins to blur the separate role of 'distributors'. Publishers would also have a large overlap with authors, often being one and the same, and those authors would mainly be groups. In some

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5 I was introduced to Darnton's 'circuit' by way of Atton's (2002) *Alternative Media*

6 I acknowledge that nets, networks (and rhizomes) have for good reasons since superseded metaphors of circuits and chains.

printshops these 'authors' came and 'printed their own'. The printshop members might also be 'authors'. This points to where the model works less well in its uniform applicability to alternative media. As Atton has pointed out, Darnton's model "emphasises dominant and discrete roles" which in alternative media production are "often confused and conflated, at times to an extreme degree" (2002: 27). In fact the rhizome metaphor is more apt. With regard to the printshops, the degrees of role conflation varied between them and over time as well existing in some kind of combination. A printshop for example may have printed mostly for 'external' users including discrete publishing entities but also have members writing and printing their own newspaper that they distributed in pubs and on protests themselves — as well as delivering to radical booksellers. Therefore while Darnton's nodules of connected activity help provide a sense of the printshops as a nodal point in a wider alternative media process and habitat, these nodules also need to be seen as potentially mobile and overlapping. However the assemblage of this activity, the writing of leaflets and pamphlets, designing of posters and placards, the discourses that fuelled the need to communicate, the printshops, distribution co-ops, community publishers and radical bookshops, the events and meetings, the bodies that undertook these activities, all took place as part of a wider social realm of 'alternative' cultural and oppositional activity. A sense of this 'realm' is crucial to making historical and social sense of the printshops, and needs to be conceptualised.

2.3. Conceptualising the space of oppositional activity

In his analysis of the 1980s West German anti-nuclear press, drawing on Negt and Kluge's (1972) proposition of a 'proletarian public sphere', John Downing invoked the concept of an 'alternative public realm'. Downing described how the West German anti-nuclear movement had emerged in synergy with the 'alternative scene' ('die alternative Szene'). This culture, with its 'alternative' spaces of cultural production and consumption, sites of sociality, alternative lifestyle provision and living arrangements, also spawned a wide variety of alternative media, contributing to a discernable alternative public realm or sphere (Downing 1988, 2001). The concept of 'the [political] public sphere', as a mediating realm between the state and 'civil society'[7] where citizens could freely exchange ideas and debate about matters of common concern, in person and through media, and as such formulate a critical public voice (Dahlgren 2000) frequently derives from that put forward by Jürgen Habermas in his book, titled in English, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1962 [English trans. 1989]). Habermas's model, based on the ostensible 'rise and fall' of European bourgeois public spheres that emerged in the late 18th and 19th century and which

7 'Civil society' is understood to indicate, in the contemporary context, the highly differentiated assortment of voluntary, religious and social movement entities and activities operating in relative independence from state and corporate influence (Mansell et al. 2007, Bailey et al. 2010). It is a concept that has historically held and still does hold various meanings however.

'degenerated' in the 20th century, from a space of rational, deliberative debate about politics to one dominated by corporate-led 'mass culture' has been subject to a vast amount of productive criticism, arguably indicative that both an important concept and historical narrative was at stake (Kellner 2003). Negt and Kluge's proposition, for example, was an early response. The gist of the critique of Habermas's exemplar is succinctly summarised by McLaughlin; Habermas had produced "an inadequate normative model derived from an incomplete historical description", resulting in the depiction of an "idealised, internally coherent and homogenous" that was neither accurate nor desirable (McLaughlin 1993: 617, see also Calhoun 1992, Robbins 1993, Eley 1990, Kellner 2003). Despite, or rather through, the criticisms, and sufficiently modified to address Habermas's original oversights, the concept of the public sphere as a democratic space of public communication and exchange, to be realised (Fenton 2008), has had immense purchase for scholars concerned with the extension of democracy and the apparent and potential role of media in its realisation (Livingstone & Lunt 1994, Curran 1997, Dahlgren 2000, Cammaerts & Carpentier 2007).

It has also enabled the development of those notions indicated above, alternative or 'counter public spheres'. Alternative media and social movement scholars have regularly mobilised the concept of counter-public spheres, defined by Nancy Fraser as "parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations" (1992: 81). Fraser's illustrative example was the feminist 'counter-public', "with its variegated array of journals, bookstores, publishing companies, film and video distribution networks, lecture series, research centers, academic programs, conferences, conventions, festivals, and local meeting places" (ibid p.123). Echoing Downing, scholars of alternative media (for example Atton 2002 and Harcup 2013) have stressed the inseparability of alternative media production and the 'cultivation' of particular counter-public spheres. These counter-public spheres, in addition to the development, creation and circulation of counter-hegemonic (or 'anti-hegemonic') discourses, (may) also involve contestation of dominant values and practices through experimentation with prefigurative alternatives in the production and organisation of mediatic forms (Downing 1988, 2001). In his work on Infoshops especially, Atton (2003) has linked the notion of counter-public spheres to that of 'free spaces', autonomous spaces of interaction that nurture and develop movement culture, reflexivity and practices (see also Melucci 1996, Polletta 1999, Johnston 2009). Following this, the printshops then might be usefully positioned as part of the embedded resources, or 'institutions' for the enabling and (re)production of various counter-public spheres, and to some extent constitute a type of 'free space'. Counter-publics in the plural is important, given that most printshops were not aligned to a particular movement counter-public, but 'served' several, as in fact did those that were so aligned, such as the feminist and anarchist printshops.

The concept of counter-publics is therefore useful and relevant to the fact of the printshops. However a public sphere approach suggests an evaluative focus on the production of discourses and debates in those counter-public spheres, the extent and nature of their inclusivity, democracy, equality and participation (Carpentier 2011), or their political efficacy and influence on the official public sphere regarding their concerns (Fraser 1992). The reason for invoking the concept of the public sphere in critical analysis is usually, and understandably, normative in intent (Postill 2008). Not only is that not the focus here, at least not in relation to conceiving the wider social space in which the printshop existed, it would be virtually impossible to ascertain any of the above factors through a discussion of the printshops as such. The other problem in using the notion of counter-public spheres as the sole means to describe the social space in which the printshops co-existed —normative questions about the functioning of that space aside— is that the concept does not bring any evident analytical tools to consider how that space is internally organised (Calhoun 1992). Geoff Eley (1990) for example raised this issue some time ago, proposing that the Gramscian concept of hegemony could be usefully deployed to theorise the struggles within and for a public sphere. The issue of conceiving a social space that comprises multiple 'parallel' counter-public spheres also complicates matters. While Fenton and Downey (2003) have drawn attention to the political problem of 'unarticulated' multiple counter-publics, Calhoun (1992) has raised analytical problems.

Simply recognising a plurality of public spheres, organised around different locales, concerns or identities, Calhoun (1992 & 2010) argues, is not enough. In order to analyse these 'clusters', we need to ask questions about internal organisation, relationships and contestations, boundaries and the reasons for separation. Relationships between multiple public spheres, Peter Hohendahl (2002: 19) suggests "may be that of complete separation, of partial overlap, of competition, of mutual dependence or of domination and dependence. Each… the result of specific historical situations and particular social constellations." In some respects Hohendahl's description points to the analytical solution proposed by Calhoun. This is that different political public spheres ("differentiated publics"), can be better understood as constituting particular *fields* of social organisation which may in turn be part of a wider "field of contestation" constituting competing and complimentary struggles for public voice, recognition and political influence (Calhoun 2010: 20). A 'field' here, adapting from Bourdieu (1992, 1993), as Calhoun does, refers to a relatively autonomous, internally differentiated and relational space of social action. A field is organised around particular but contestable values and 'stakes' and is constituted by a range of 'players' or agents (individuals, groups, organisations), interacting directly and indirectly to produce an identifiable social field.

Agents both bring and develop particular dispositions and resources, which in turn shape practices and locate 'positions' in that field. The overall dynamics and structure of the field are unintended and may be indiscernible to participants. Bourdieu (1992) uses the metaphor of 'the game' to describe fields; 'players' in the field develop a 'feel' for the particular game of that field, although inevitably play it with differing levels of expertise and resources, however they play because there is a belief or 'illusio' in the 'game.' A game also suggests agency and invention, skill and tactics. It also is dynamic in that players are, or learn to, respond to the moves and positions of others in the field. A field may develop specifically in order to influence another field; a social movement for example that seeks to influence the medical field (Crossley 2006). Calhoun suggests that instead of seeing various counter-publics as simply parallel and existing, a field approach allows us to consider not only "the extent to which they are mutually constituting" but also to understand particular counter-publics "as products of social struggles, institutional formations and culture" (2010: 25).

Calhoun's proposal resonates with that of Nick Crossley (2002a & 2006) who, similarly drawing on Bourdieu, has argued that social movements — which are at least partly what Calhoun is referring to — can also be understood as 'fields of contention'. Following Calhoun's lead, and that of other scholars who have taken a 'field' approach to the study of social movements, organisations and types of cultural production, I draw on the notion of field in the thesis to conceptualise the wider social space of the radical and community printshops. This social space is conceived as the field of 'alternative left contention'. This is not the same as a social movement, but an arena that included various social movements (also comprising their own field structures), campaigning groups, radical left and anarchist groupings, various forms of cultural activism and resources, social and political networks and milieus, with typically shifting lines of division, contestations and alliance, interconnections and interdependences. Some printshops were also part of specific movement fields, such as the women's movement and community activism, which while sharing many general beliefs and practices with that of the wider alternative left field, necessarily had their own specific claims to distinctive value, dynamics and internal contestations.

2. 4. A field approach

A 'field' is a meso level social order that provides an analytical bridge between the micro level of individuals and specific organisations and the macro level of social structures and fields of power (Fligstein & McAdam 2012). The concept of field has been used in domains of scholarships germane to this study. As indicated above this includes social movement studies (Armstrong 2002; Crossley 2006, Husu 2012), but also organisational theory (DiMaggio & Powell 1991, Emirbayer & Johnson 2008), and cultural and media related scholarship (Hesmondhalgh 1996; Benson & Nevue 2005; Postill 2015) including alternative

media studies (Atton & Hamilton 2008, Jeppeson 2012). As Bolin (2012) acknowledges in relation to media related studies, a field approach can serve to addresses "the relation between production and consumption… avoiding the reductionism of only focussing on one part of the production-consumption circuit" (see also Couldry 2012 on this point). So here while the focus of study is 'printshops', a field approach necessarily takes into account the 'users' of the printshops and 'consumers' (actual and potential) of that which they printed and the relations between these and the activity of the printshops. The 'radicalised' or alternative media version Darnton's (1982) circuit of communication, suggested earlier, can as such, easily be recast in field terms, including as it does related and interconnected organisations and individuals all of whom are 'invested' in a particular type of cultural production. This brings us to the issue of fields of cultural production in particular. While as indicated above I am conceiving the printshops to be part of the activity in a wider field of contention (and in some cases part of specific movement fields), I also propose they were simultaneously agents in a specific domain of cultural production.

Bourdieu's (1993, 1996) specific theory of fields of cultural production have provided some useful tools for scholars in a variety of cultural and media production analyses, from the music industry, media systems and journalism to varieties of alternative media and cultural scenes. In Bourdieu's schema, a 'field of cultural production' is effectively constituted by the relationship between two sub-fields, that of commercial production for a generalised audience and that of small-scale or 'restricted' production. These subfields are marked not only by their scales of production and audience but also the extent of their 'autonomy'. The sub-field of larger scale, commercial production is closer to, or more dependent upon, Bourdieu's 'field of power', which includes economic, political and legal forces, and as such more subject to 'outside rule', that is, it is *less* 'autonomous'. The sub-field of small-scale or restricted production being further away from the 'field of power' is relatively *more* autonomous, being unconcerned with large audiences and economic capital but more so with the 'true' values of the endeavour in question.

Bourdieu further divides the field of small-scale production, into two zones. While both of these zones involve low volumes of economic capital, the pole of difference is between high and low levels of 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu 1996: 124). Symbolic capital here is the accumulation of field specific prestige or honour (Thompson 1991). I will refer to this as 'prestige capital'; the word symbolic here is confusing given we are referring to the production of symbolic culture, and that it is surely symbolic culture produced in Bourdieu's —problematically undifferentiated — sub field of 'commercial production' tends to exercise the most symbolic *power*. 'Prestige capital' in the restricted field of production is effectively 'recognition' by those with the relevant cultural capital to be worthy of making judgements. At the top end of this pole is what Bourdieu refers to as the 'consecrated avant garde' for whom

field prestige capital is the prize (achieved through validation by critics, selected institutions, awards and so on). At the other end, are "an aspirant bohemian avant garde [that] claims to shun even symbolic [prestige] capital" (Hesmondhalgh 2006: 215). For Bourdieu autonomy is crucial because it is only through this that resistance to the 'symbolic violence' perpetuated through symbolic forms close to the 'fields of power' can be developed. The concept of 'capitals' is central to Bourdieu's field approach, however the various capitals are always field specific rather than generally possessed, which also means that new fields are accompanied by the generation of new kinds of capital (Gorski 2013). However the concept of capitals is not taken up to any significant degree in the approach taken here.

Figuring a wider arena of cultural production as a field, with greater or lesser degrees of autonomy in relation to state and/or market influence, consciously differing scales of production and audience, as well as divergent and contested values about the purpose of the endeavour on the one hand possibly offers a way of overcoming the static binary implied by notions of 'alternative' and 'mainstream' cultural production, at the very least. Diachronic field studies can also help to reveal the always relative and historically contingent nature of contesting notions vis a vis the nature (values, practices, purposes) of cultural production. (The changing value afforded to certain kinds of, 'participation in media' providing a salient example, perhaps). On the other hand, as Atton and Hamilton (2008) have observed in their evaluation of Bourdieu's 'field of cultural production' vis a vis alternative media, the theory was developed in relation to professionalised worlds of cultural production, charting the trajectories of individual creators. As such it appears to leaves little space for "democratised notions of production", where production may not only be collective but also involve amateurs (Atton & Hamilton 2008: 124-5); in other words very different kinds of motivations for participation might be at play here.[8] This awkward fit arguably stems from the sociological aim of Bourdieu's project, which is the 'unmasking' of misrecognised power (Swartz 1997). To some extent Atton and Hamilton's observation connects with Alan Warde's (2004) concerns about the limits of Bourdieu's field theory in capturing un-professionalised domains of social life, domains that are not characterised by strategic and competitive striving for field 'dominance' or authority. Warde's solution is to develop Bourdieu's notion of practice, a concept that is also taken up in the thesis and that will be discussed later in this chapter. However looking beyond Bourdieu for other elaborations of field theory provides a valuable steer in conceiving variation between types of fields. As Martin (2003) and Postill (2008 & 2015) remind, although Bourdieu is typically seen as the sole heir of field theory, there are other traditions, as well as plenty of convincing scholarship that either develops Bourdieu's ideas or draws on them in a highly selective way.

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8 In Bourdieu's schema amateur production seems to float outside the field of cultural production entirely, loitering at the bottom of his 'field of power'.

Phillip Gorski, for example, usefully proposes that fields can be characterised by their 'shape' according to Bourdieu's 'poles' of hierarchy and orthodoxy. Correlations between high degrees of hierarchy and orthodoxy, Gorski suggests, such as the Roman Catholic church are 'pyramid' shaped fields; fields with strong degrees of hierarchy and low degrees of orthodoxy, for example the New York art world, are 'tower' shaped, while fields with low degrees of both hierarchy and orthodoxy such as many social movements fields, are 'big box' shaped, with "strong horizontal ties based on permeable organisations and overlapping networks" (Gorski 2013: 333). Low degrees of hierarchy, do not of course equate to low degrees of internal contestation! Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, who have developed their own 'theory of fields', acknowledge differences in this regard. They suggest that fields should be seen "as a continuum with those exhibiting high levels of consensus, coalition and co-operation at one end and those based on stark hierarchy and stark differences in power at the other" (Fligstein & McAdam 2012: 90).

Competing or different notions about the priorities, value and purpose of a particular field endeavour need not be rigidly cast as an incessant quest for authority, but considered relative to the field in question (Atton & Hamilton 2008), with Bourdieu's general concepts used to orient rather than dictate investigation and analysis, which is the approach taken here. To conclude the above; cultural production that is in the 'service' of advancing movements for political and social change (counter-publics) can, I am proposing in this case, to be taking place in an *overlap* of fields; a particular or more general field of contentious activity and a sub-field of a wider field of cultural production. This sub-field is conceived here as a sub-field of radical cultural production, made-up of individuals, groups, institutions, resources, internal debates, accepted and contested practices, standards, aesthetics and so on. The particular focus of activity, as I am suggesting in the case of the radical and community printshops, may evolve to take on field properties in its own right, while being simultaneously 'nested' within these two other fields.

Fligstein and McAdam have contended that most field analyses focus only on their internal operations, "depicting them as largely self-contained autonomous orders" (2012: 18), to the detriment of understanding the full range of factors that impinge upon and shape fields. Arguably this observation is partly a corrective to Bourdieu's theory that the autonomy of a field, subfield or agents therein is entirely related to its, or their, 'distance' from the 'field of power' (see also Eyal 2010). In Fligstein and McAdam's 'theory of fields' particular emphasis is placed on the interrelationships between fields. Although 'field change' is still understood to be part of the ongoing process of dynamics internal to the field, it is also, they argue, often related to the influence of other fields, be that the wider field in which a field may be nested, 'proximate' fields or other fields entirely. These 'relationships' may be of dependence or

interdependence, taken for granted or barely noticed. They may be subjectively experienced or only 'objectively' observed.

In addition to this, Crossley (2006) draws attention to the potential challenges for participants of one field in having to negotiate or take their struggles into other fields, where the 'rules' of the game may be quite different. The relationships with other fields, the broader field environment, is considered here to be crucial for explaining not only the particular characteristics of the printshops' field, but also for identifying and understanding the various challenges and transformations that took place within it. Relevant here is also the changing relationships with other fields brought about by the shifts internal to the fields in question, for example changes in the field of local government created new resource opportunities and dependencies amongst the printshops. What the above amounts to is that despite the ostensible autonomy of the economically, politically and socially marginal printshops and by possible implication, the autonomy of a field of radical and community printshops, the necessary conceptual understanding of fields is that their internal activity and historical trajectories are partly and sometimes significantly shaped by varying types and degrees of inter-relationship with other fields as well as changes within those other fields. This understanding can be seen to resonate with Bailey et al.'s (2008) rhizomatic model of alternative media, which similarly emphasises heterogeneous relationality. Furthermore the rhizome as a constantly mutating figure also highlights fields as always 'in process' (see Savage 2011 for a discussion of how 'the rhizome' can radicalise the concept of field).

Finally, I need to briefly address the issue of field assemblage. For Bourdieu a field is an explicitly theoretical construction, "a space of objective positions defined by their rank in the distribution of competing powers or species of capital" (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 113). Field construction for Bourdieu is about revealing the invisible structures and relations of force that account for hierarchisation. Bourdieu also rejects the relevance of social interaction and networks, that is, visible connections, for field analysis (Bourdieu 1992: 114). Fligstein and McAdam's model on the other hand, as David Swartz (2014) has commentated, mainly presents fields as social spaces that are defined as much by their participants through shared understandings and consciousness of their own and each other 'positions'. The approach here is that while I have drawn on the 'subjective' understandings and stories of interviewees, the overall shape and patterning of the field that I have presented, is arrived at through my own analysis of the aggregated research. With regard to the relevance of social interaction and networks for fields and their analysis, both Postill (2008) and Bottero and Crossley (2011) have in different ways disputed Bourdieu's stance, instead seeing these factors as vital elements in understanding the processes by fields emerge, how the recursive relations between field and individual (but shared) dispositions occurs, how agents navigate, 'secure' (temporary) positions and even transform fields. The

understanding here is also that social interactions, connections and visible networks play an important role in explaining these factors. Furthermore actual connections and social relations were an integral part of a printshops operation.

2.5. Practices of democracy

Fields may be more or less internally contentious, doxic, stable, horizontal, autonomous, and so forth but what defines all of them is that they are arenas of particular and related *practices*. Or as Postill (2013: 14) put it; fields are "internally diverse configurations of people, practices and technologies." A defining characteristic of the alternative left field that I have been referring to (and many other alternative left fields that emerged elsewhere in the same period) was its experiments in participatory-democratic practices in the carrying out of its myriad undertakings, including media related activities such as that of the printshops. As stated earlier, democratic practices are a frequent criterion of alternative media production, part of their claim to alternativeness and 'counter-hegemony'. A history of alternative media is not simply a history of objects and names, of then and there; it is also a history of practices, some of which are orientated towards 'practicing' alternative models of democracy. While a field approach enables the conceptualisation of the wider social space and analysis of the dynamic and relations between field participants, attention to practices serves to deepen the analysis of the field's distinctive value. The assertion here then is that alternative media may be productively studied by investigating and analysing the history of its practices; particularly those that are part of its claim to 'alternativeness'. To this end, a central part of the thesis analyses 'the life' of the participatory-democratic practices that were taken up in the printshops. Before explaining how these 'practices' will be conceptually and analytically approached, some clarity is needed with regard to the notion of 'participatory-democracy'.

While some of the tenets of 'participatory-democracy' are typically traced back to Rousseau, along with strains of what the Cohn-Bendit brothers (1968) once called, 'obsolete communism', the term generally derives from the New Left activism of the 1960s and political theory that developed from the end of that decade onwards. According to David Held (1987), the concept was sufficiently developed by a number of different thinkers, including Carole Pateman (1970, 1985), CB Macpherson (1977) and Nicos Poulantzas (1980) to constitute a new theory of democracy. Common to most of its conceptions is the vision of "maximum participation by citizens in their self-governance, especially in sectors of society beyond those that are understood to be political" (Hilmer 2010: 43). In other words the contention of participatory democratic theory is that democratic politics also needs to take place beyond the confines of government by way of citizen participation in decision-making about matters of direct concern such as in the neighbourhood, school, workplace

and so forth. Social movements also play a crucial role here, as it was in response to what was 'happening on the ground' that theories of participatory democracy were developed. Social movements have also frequently continued to be significant sites of experiment in participatory democracy (Polletta 2002, della Porta 2013). Proponents of participatory democracy also believed the extension of democratic involvement to be both necessary realisation of individual and collective capacity towards a wider democratisation of democracy and psychologically and politically developmental for participants (Pateman 1970). Participatory democratic theory not only identifies locations or 'sectors' for participation it also identifies 'modes', that is the means by which democracy occurs, for example via cooperative ownership, collective decision-making and so on (Hilmer 2010: 46).

Alongside and following the development of participatory democratic political theory, a significant amount of writing about participatory democracy 'in practice' subsequently focussed on workers co-operatives or the democratic workplace, to the extent that they were regularly seen as synonymous (Hilmer 2010). Indeed as political visions of participatory democracy or arguably any sort of progressive political change on a wider scale diminished in the 1980s and 1990s with the increasing hegemony of neoliberalism, some authors in this period held up co-ops as continuing to carry the flame of earlier aspirations (Lindenfeld & Rothschild-Whitt 1982, Bachrach & Botwinick 1992. Mendel-Reyes 1995). Whereas varieties of democratic political theory have set out normative criteria for democratic participation, cooperative organisational theory usefully provides such criteria at the level of the democratic *organisation*. I draw particularly on that established by Frank Lindenfeld, Joyce Rothschild and J. Allen Whitt (1982 and 1986) in their substantial research on the participatory-democratic workplace.

The New Left derived concept of participatory-democracy faded from interest in political theory in the 1980s, although there were significant contributions such as that by Benjamin Barber (1984) and Carole Gould (1988). Newer normative theories of participation in democracy subsequently came to dominate, especially that of 'deliberative democracy' derived from Habermasian ideas as well as 'agnostic pluralism' as developed by Chantal Mouffe; the former focussing on procedure (or mode), the latter on the incommensurability of difference. Neither however relate to the power to make decisions, nor concern themselves with the extension of democracy into ostensibly non-political realms (Röcke 2014). Inspired by a variety of theories and/or social action and policy discourse, the concept of 'participation', explicitly or implicitly charged with a democratic value, has since been revived across a spectrum of domains (Bishop 2006). Furthermore there has been some resurgence of scholarly interest of worker co-operatives, some of it in the wake of the Argentinian 'recovered factory movement' that unfolded after their financial crisis at the start of this century (May 2010, Atzeni 2012, Vieta 2014). In contemporary media scholarship,

'participation' has acquired the status of a 'key term'. As is well known, this has been due to the possibilities held for the potential of popular digital media tools and platforms in facilitating the 'democratisation of the public sphere' or in amplifying and co-generating new counter-public spheres or at the very least in exponentially extending the means of 'public' self-expression. According to Jodi Dean (2005), 'participation' has become a 'fantasy' based on a fetishisation of technology in what she terms the era of 'communicative capitalism'. As indicated above, in alternative media studies, which is generally seen as only becoming established as a distinct sub-field at the start of this century, participation has been a central motif; for scholarship that focuses on 'community media' it is a defining one (Howley 2006).

Therefore as Nico Carpentier (2011) writes, in his hefty volume *Media and Participation*, what is actually meant by 'participation' in media related production, regardless of the specific technology deployed, needs to be unpacked somewhat. Similarly to other contemporary alternative media scholars, Carpentier refers back to the theories of participatory democracy developed by the 1960s New Left, although in his case articulated with cautions derived from theories of agonistic democracy. Taking inspiration from Sherry Arnheim's (1969) 'ladder of participation' (devised to reveal 'pseudo' participatory claims about citizen 'engagement'), Carpentier distinguishes between three types of input into media production typically collapsed under the one celebratory rubric of 'participation'. These are 'access' to media making technologies, 'interaction' by which he means collaborative involvement in generating media content, and 'participation' itself which he argues needs to be reserved for that which includes the political dimension on which theories of participation are based; equal decision-making power and control. Carpentier proposes that these be seen a scale from 'minimalist to maximalist' in terms of their democratic register. The distinction between access to technologies and organisational decision-making power are the relevant distinctions for this study. However the attempt to enact participatory-democratic beliefs in the printshops actually comprised three distinct *practices*; providing 'access' to the means of media production, collective self management and the internal 'de-division' of labour. In Carpentier's terms only collective self-management equates to a practice of actual democratic-participation. The internal de-division of labour, more illustratively described as the practice of job rotation was seen however to underpin self-management. As for 'access' —effectively the promotion of DIY printing— it is not anachronistic to say that it resonates with some contemporary aspirations, and certainly those long held by some community media proponents, which is that participation at this level might encourage participants and their audiences *towards* a situation of (some) citizen power. The point is also that it was access to the means of self-representation for voices and political ideas that were systematically excluded from, or misrepresented in, 'mainstream' media and political discourse. Each practice therefore I contend is orientated towards participatory-democracy, even if it does not *constitute* it in its own right. Having established what is meant by

participatory democracy, the approach to conceptualising these specific practices, *qua* practices, can now be outlined.

2.6. Conceptualising practices

A practice is taken here to be an embodied activity that is performed and repeated, which requires developing know-how or competence, is understood by its practitioners as a practice, or 'a thing they do', and which constitutes part of a wider field of related practices. 'Practice theory' has a genealogy that includes the philosophical ideas of Heidegger and Wittgenstein, the social theory of Giddens (1985) and Bourdieu (1977, 1990), as well as the the the writings of de Certeau (1984), Ortner (1984) and Lave (1988). Underpinning most notions of practice is the view that the social world is constituted through the day to day activities of 'agents', that all practices are social, (they are not the same as personal 'habits'), and therefore to understand the social world we need to turn our attention to practices. In media related study the interest in 'practice' represents a distinct shift away from one its predominant modes of analysis; the scrutiny of media texts and 'content'. A practice approach "decentres the media text" (Couldry 2010: 37). Couldry argues that a good reason for focussing on practices, what people do in relation to media, or how media figures in a wider web of practices, is that it "sidestep[s] the insoluble problems" of proving the actual effect of media content on audiences (ibid). There is a much bigger discussion here; one that there is neither space nor sufficient justification to elaborate upon in this context. For this study, although *what* the printshops printed ('the texts') in general terms is relevant, as it tell us who is using them (and therefore hopefully something about their connections to movements and groups), for the most part in depth analysis of these texts in themselves would tell us little about the actual printshops, what was distinctive about them, or those connections. The exception to some degree is the output of the poster workshops, but again the value of their posters as 'texts', for this study, is again what they might tell us about their relationships to movements. A focus on practices on the other hand takes us into the printshops and the 'how' of their distinctive activity.

The work of the social philosopher Ted Schatzki (1996, 2001) and the bringing together of various practice approaches by cultural sociologist Andrea Reckwitz (2002) are frequently considered to have helped establish a wider turn to 'practice' in social theory at least (Warde 2004, Couldry 2004, Postill 2010, Shove et al. 2012, although see Hobart 2010). Reckwitz's (2002: 250) definition of a practice is useful and elaborates that provided above; "A practice… is a routinised type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge". This definition is clarified by explaining that the

interconnected elements of a particular practice comprise a 'block' that cannot be reduced to any one of these elements. Following Schatzki (1996) practices also need to be understood as both 'entities' and as a series of 'performances.' 'Printing' for example, is an 'entity', (the recognised practice of printing) but only if there are performances of printing (printing being practiced). Performance here is in the sense of enactment. In the pleasingly alliterative words of Warde (2004: 17), "A performance presupposes a practice and a practice presupposes performances." While this might seem self-evident, it leads to an important point.

While practices as entities are an acknowledged social activity—even if this is only within a particular social field—, and have become so through their repetition across time and space, the performances of a practice will always to some extent be different by the fact of occurring in different places, at different times by different practitioners. In other words practices are inherently culturally, historically and situationally particular, and thus both contingent and ever subject to the possibility of variation and change (Hobart 2010, Nicolini 2012). Therefore the concept of practice assumes not just reproduction but also, in principle, difference and change; matters of central interest here. However despite this as Warde observed some time ago, many of the cited references for practice theory "presume an unlikely degree of shared understandings and common conventions, a degree of consensus which implies processes of uniform transmission of understandings, procedures and engagements" (Warde 2005: 136). More recently Elizabeth Shove and her colleagues have noted that few practice theories are actually amenable to studying the *trajectory* of practices. To this end, and drawing on a number of strands of practice theory, they offer their own variant (Shove, Pantzar & Watson 2012), which has been adopted to guide the analysis of democratic practices in the thesis.

Shove et al.'s (2012) practice approach amalgamates the multiple connected elements that are generally considered to comprise a practice, such as those provided by Reckwitz above, into just three; 'material', 'competence' and 'meaning'. The element of 'material' includes objects, tools, hardware, infrastructures, and the body itself. 'Competence' pulls together background knowledge, skills, know-how and understanding, while ideas, aspirations and symbolic meanings are combined into the single element of 'meaning'. As in practice theories generally these elements must be integrated or 'linked' to constitute a practice. However the elements are also understood to exist already as un-integrated 'proto-elements', prior to the practice emerging. Their point is that practices do not come out of nowhere. For example, 'elements' that comprise practices of political organising or domestic arrangements may be carried over into new activities that develop into new practices. When linked to form a practice, elements are mutually shaped by, and shaping of, each other. Changes in elements can variously enable, help stabilise or disrupt the practice in question.

Practices fade when the elements are no longer linked. Whether as a broader cultural phenomena, or within a singular situation, the trajectory of a practice may then be partly analysed by 'following the elements'. As such, each of the three 'democratic' practices of the printshops are analysed by being broken down into the simplified elements of meaning, material and competence.

Practice theory understands practices to exist in 'bundles', so practice approaches in organisational studies, for example, view organisations as "bundles of practices" (Nicolini 2012: 5). As well as being co-located and co-existing, practices within a given bundle have varying degrees of co-relation to each other. Together they form recognisable, but also variable, patterns of practices. Organisations engaged in the same type of activity, or making up an organisational field can be said to comprise similar bundles of practices. The democratic practices referred to here are conceptualised as a particular bundle of practices, on the one hand within a larger bundle of practices that make up a certain type of printshop, and on the other as practices shared with other organisations across the alternative left field. Particular kinds of shared practices across a field may also be seen to give rise to the 'normative order' of a field, and in that sense play a sort of structuring role. The role of social ties, milieus, and what Shove el al. call 'translation' is of vital importance in this regard. That normative order in turn is likely to shape new practices that may emerge, through 'cross referencing' (Schatzki 2001) or diffusion (Schneiberg 2013). Swidler (2001) has suggested that some types of practices may serve to 'anchor', order or determine other practices. Here is it proposed that the practice of democratic self-management served such an anchoring role for the wider range of practices of alternative left activity, as well as at the level of the printshop organisation. Still following Shove et al. (2012) bundles of practices are seen as distinct from 'complexes' of practices. A complex of practices refer to arrangements of practices that involve co-dependency in "sequence and synchronisation" for example or are in some other way 'sticky' (Shove et al. 2012: 17). Complexes of practices may have the potential to become a practice entity in their own right, to become so integrated that they are part of one practice. Defining the parameters of a practice is the researchers task (Hobart 2010). Technological developments for example may be based on transforming a complex of practices (or indeed a bundle of practices) into a practice entity. One of the implications of co-dependency rather than just co-location of practices is the nature of how the performance of a practice in the complex can impact performances of other practices in the complex. The distinction between bundles and complexes is especially useful for one of the 'democratic practices' under investigation, the de-division of labour or 'job rotation', which involved sequentially co-dependent practices.

Lastly, it is time to consider those who were acting in the field, those who were carrying out its practices. Practice based approaches tend to take the unit of analysis to be the practice,

rather than the practitioners. However clearly a practice cannot exist without practitioners, or as Shove et al. (2012) would put it, without 'practice recruits'. For a practice to maintain itself, it needs an ongoing flow of new recruits. For a practice to emerge it needs practitioners-in-waiting. Notwithstanding that some performances of practices are the result of coercion, or if not of explicit force, performed with reluctance or resistance, for people to become enrolled in a practice, doing so must presumably in some way 'make sense' to them. Here Hobart's purposely open definition of practices is helpful; "[Practices are] those recognised, complex forms of social activity and articulation through which agents set out to maintain or change themselves, others and the world around them under varying conditions" (Hobart 2010: 64). There is enough scope in Hobart's definition to include any kind practice uptake. What I want to get at initially is how the innovators and practitioners of the 'democratic practices' in the printshops were in some way already disposed towards these, at the time novel, emergent or in fact 'proto' practices. Recourse to the elements that make up a practice is helpful, material, competence and meaning and the reminder that for a practice to emerge at all, these elements must be actively linked, but that they will have existed in an unlinked state already. While it is perfectly possible to simply say that the alternative left field generated competences and meanings that were linked with a range of materials (technologies, tools, systems) to create 'new' practices and applications, my argument is that additional recourse to the concept of *habitus* enables a more precise analysis into the emergence, uptake and trajectory of the practices investigated here. This might seem an odd move given that a) I have not followed Bourdieu's notion of practice here at all, yet his concept of practice is intimately linked to that of habitus and b) the concept of habitus tends to be associated with the reproduction of social inequality, rather than the intentional practices of agents to challenge established 'structures'. However, as with the concept of field, I also draw on variants that suit the material and my purpose. It needs be acknowledged nonetheless, that more so than field, it is Bourdieu's powerful theorisation of habitus that tends to be the consistent reference for such 'variants'.[9]

2. 7. Habitus and radical habitus

Bourdieu's concept of habitus concerns the embodied and tacit ways of acting and perceiving in the world in accordance with what feels comfortable and possible to do, where and with whom. Habitus is 'disposition' and know-how shaped by a complex of biography, social experience, culture and history, it is not obedience or rule following. Bourdieu's notion of practice is intimately related to habitus, in that it is concerned with the preconditions that generate practice and those preconditions are the formation of habitus. Habitus is

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9 The concept of habitus does not 'belong' to Bourdieu, it has much older roots and has been developed in different directions by others but in social theory and in many other fields his unique development of it dominates (see Crossley 2005).

"constituted in practice and is always orientated towards practical functions" (Bourdieu 1990: 52). It is not a theory of 'practices as entities', but rather the 'practical sense' that emerges from the accrual of social experience, translating as "transposable dispositions" rather than conscious intentions (Calhoun 2013: 31). Bourdieu's conception of habitus is typically seen to play a conservative role (King 2000, Reay 2004, Goldthorpe 2007, Lahire 2010). It is through this that enduring social structures of inequality are internalised and reproduced. While habitus, for Bourdieu, is also the capacity to generate creative responses to situations, and as such implies agency, as Calhoun puts it, "even the responses that succeed in breaking with some dimensions of old structures or in adapting to new circumstances remain marked by learning that situates individuals in structures and shapes their trajectories through them" (2013: 42). Habitus is not reducible to social structure but understood by Bourdieu as the pivot between structure and agency. We 'make' ourselves according to the complicated residue of our experiences, which despite the singularity of their sum are always also part of a collective history, of shared experience and circumstances. As such, it is possible to refer to group specific aspects of habitus, a social distribution of habitus; Bourdieu of course has particularly focussed on the class specificity of habitus. The point is that to understand how people behave, we need to understand how they individually and collectively perceive and evaluate their environment, and the concept of habitus is an attempt towards this. Bourdieu's concept of field presupposes habitus, as the source of motivation for engagement and the ability to understand what is going on and as that which in turn continues to be shaped by ongoing 'play' or involvement; "To enter a field, to play the game, one must possess the habitus that predisposes one to enter that field, play that game, and not another" (Bourdieu 1993: 8). While many field theory inspired studies jettison any concept of habitus, as indeed do many practice approaches, for the purposes of this thesis it is useful on a number of counts, as partially indicated in the previous section.

As established above a central part of the thesis analyses the various democratic 'practices' of the printshops. Yet to willingly engage in a practice, to be an advocate for a practice — a practice as entity — presumably it 'make senses' somehow to practitioners, in other words they must in some way be predisposed towards it. However these were not practices that people had grown up with, or socially established as part of the order of things, they were precisely and deliberately an attempt to break with that order. The printshops were, as we have seen, a product of the emergence of a new social and cultural space, created in and as part of a particular period of "collective effervescence" (Durkheim) that generated new fields and "insurgent realities" (Lofland 1996). Therefore given that habitus is formed by "location in and trajectory through social space", we can argue that the formation of new social space, of new fields, is likely to be accompanied by changes in, and new types of, habitus (Gorski 2013: 348). Bourdieu himself suggested that in periods of social upheaval or 'crisis', normal features of habitus might be suspended and an opening provided for new ways of being in

the world. Commenting on this, Crossley (2002a) has argued that we might better consider a permanent background of crisis and contentious activity that provides such openings. New fields also assume new practices that in turn have a recursive relationship with new, or developments of, habitus. This all suggests a somewhat stronger conception of agency and innovation in action than Bourdieu's model, which I believe to be necessary. In order to better conceptualise this I stay with Crossley (2002a & 2003), who adapting from Bourdieu has usefully developed a concept of 'resistance habitus' or 'radical habitus' to describe the type of habitus that develops through engagement in protest and social movement fields. This concept has been taken up by various social and political movement scholars, for example Ibrahim (2011) who has argued for greater distinction between types of radical habitus and Haluza-DeLay (2008) who proposes an 'ecological habitus'. Kenny et al. (2015) have also significantly applied on the concept in their work on 'active citizenship' and the 'third sector', particularly in relation to 'participation'.

In the thesis I mobilise Crossley's notion to suggest the emergence of a radical-participatory habitus, as not only the predisposition for the particular 'democratic' practices of the printshops but also as a politically informed *intention* towards the development of new kinds of habitus. (Changing behavior and attitudes has of course been the aspiration of many social movements). I connect this back to the value given to participatory-democratic practices by earlier 'new left' activists and scholars, referred to earlier in the chapter notably Carole Pateman (1970) who argued for their necessary educative role in figuring 'a new society'. Taking up Crossley's concept does not mean however that I am eschewing Bourdieu's more all-encompassing notion of habitus; it remains important to help explain some the difficulties and challenges of the enactment of 'democratic' practices in the printshops. It also draws attention to the inequalities that pervade the social world, and here Sherry Ortner's definition of practice as 'serious games' is useful; they are serious because inequality and power are always present. Practice in her schema is thus "people-in-(power)-relationships-in-projects" (Ortner 1996: 13). The concept of habitus is also taken to be significant for explaining *changes* in individual printshops and more generally in their fields of operation. Earlier in the chapter, I related field transformations to changes in, and relationships with, other fields, however field changes are also brought about by the arrival of new participants to the field. As Benson (1999: 468) points out "both qualitative and quantitative aspects of demographic change in a field are crucial. A rapid influx of new agents into a field can serve as both a force for transformation and conservation." New entrants may bring with them different kinds of collective habitus, and as such different understandings and competencies that may in turn present implicit and explicit challenges to the assumptions and practices that have been established in a particular field. Therefore the concept of habitus also plays a role in helping to explain field transformation, and that of its practices.

Conclusion and research questions

In this chapter I have first outlined the intention to firmly position the printshops within their particular historical, social and material contexts, arguing that analysis of their activity and trajectories, cannot be bracketed off from this. The wider frame for this, I then proposed, was that of 'power', in all its forms but given the 'content' of the printshops, symbolic power and the contestation of it, was I claimed, of particular significance. Bourdieu's 'strong' conception of symbolic power was then linked to Gramsci's notion of hegemony, and hegemony in this context begets counter-hegemony. With reference to Carroll, Downing and Atton the connection was then made between counter-hegemonic strategies and radical alternative media, with the claim that the activity of the printshops could be categorised in this way. This, perhaps inevitably, segued into a discussion of the term alternative media, by way of positioning both the printshops and the research but also in order to establish some initial criteria that sufficiently captured their endeavour with more detail than 'counter-hegemonic'.

The chapter then began the task of how best to conceive of the wider social realm of the printshops. This discussion began within the alternative media section by proposing a radicalisation of Robert Darnton's 1982 'communication circuit', in a move that drew on an earlier tussling with 'Darnton's diagram' by Chris Atton. This aimed to show how the 'printshops' fitted in to networks of related organisations and 'audiences'. However as Atton found, the discrete functions delineated by Darnton are frequently collapsed in alternative media, although perhaps less so with this research than with Atton's own. Nevertheless the radicalised model initially established the printshops as a 'node' within a historically specific, wider alternative print media configuration. In order to better conceptualise the realm of oppositional activity and discourse I then turned to public sphere models, by way of Downing, Negt and Kluge, Habermas and Fraser. I suggested that printshops might be usefully positioned as part of embedded resources for the production of counter-publics and their symbolic struggles. However, this raised the spectre of a public sphere approach, which suggests an evaluative focus on the production of discourse in the particular (counter) public sphere/s. Not only is that not the focus here but it also starts moving the analysis away from the printshops. With Eley (1990) and Calhoun (2010), I argued that beyond this the concept came with no tools that would enable an analysis of how that counter-public was organised, what the internal dynamics and relationships were like, what might the internal contestations be, as well as offer ways to consider the nature of relationship *between* different counter spheres. Drawing on Calhoun's solution, I argue that the concept of 'field' is better placed to do this work, starting with the concept of an 'alternative left field of contention' to initially demarcate the various kinds of activism, groupings, movements, networks and cultural and social resources that made up the printshops sphere of operation.

The next section clarified and qualified how the notion of field is understood in the thesis, and indicated where I move away from the more hierarchical and conflict orientated Bourdieusian model suggested by Calhoun, and draw on field theory elaborations by other scholars, such as Fligstein and McAdam (2012), Gorski (2013) and Crossley (2001). As part of this discussion I consider Bourdieu's model for a field of cultural production, in light of critical commentary by Atton and Hamilton (2008) with regard to its relevance for alternative media and 'non-professional' production. This leads to the proposal that not only should the printshop be positioned within an alternative left field of contention, but also within a partially overlapping sub-field of radical cultural production. As with the alternative left field this is not purely an abstraction but has a relation to a historically existing realm of debate, production, media, sites, groups and individuals, that did not operate 'autonomously' from the alterative left field but certainly had its own contours, structure, contestations and dynamics. Mindful of how can fields can proliferate (Swartz 2014), I nevertheless go onto claim that the printshops gradually developed into a field in their own right, while maintaining positions within the above. I raised the issue, noted particularly by Fligstein and McAdam, of the vitally important, yet often overlooked matter in field studies, of considering the relationships with *other* fields in order to understand not only the particular features of a field but also how fields can be disrupted through the activity in other fields, be they in existing relations of dependence or felt to be remote. The example offered was that of changes in the local government field, which had a considerable impact on resourcing, and subsequently issues of independence for many printshops.

The concept of field was then connected to that of 'practice', reasserting the point once made by Bourdieu, that all fields are fields of practices (Warde 2004). I argued that a history of alternative media is also a 'history of practices', especially practices that in some way attempt to 'democratise' relations of organisation and production through experiments in 'participation'. After clarifying the legacy of the concept of participatory-democracy, that is, a concept of democracy that extends into the contexts of everyday life, in this case especially the 'workplace', I explain how I draw on 'practice theory' to analyse the democratic practices of the printshops. The variant devised by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012), I contend is the most useful for my purpose because it is expressly designed to analyse how practices emerge, change *and* fade out, unlike most varieties of practice theory that tend to be more concerned with reproduction.

Lastly I move to the issue of 'disposition' towards participatory-democratic practices, proposing that the concept of habitus is useful to account not only for their uptake and spread but also some of the challenges in their enactment. While Nick Crossley's notion of 'radical habitus' is drawn on in the first regard, as a particular disposition that developed through involvement in the wider alternative left field, Bourdieu's 'original' concept which

captures the longer term social learning and individual and collective orientations is drawn on to discuss the latter. The relationships between the main concepts used in the thesis are shown in the diagram below (Fig. 2.)

Field of contention:
Crossley (2002a, 2006)
Calhoun (2010)
Fligstein & McAdam (2012)

Relations between fields:
Fligstein & McAdam (2012)
Crossley (2006)

Fields of practices:
Warde (2004)
Postill (2013)

FIELDS
(alternative left contention)
(radical & community printing)
(radical cultural production)

Field of cultural production:
Bourdieu (1996)
Atton & Hamiliton (2008)

Participatory-democratic practices:
Pateman (1970)
Rothschild & Whitt (1986)

Field/habitus relation:
Bourdieu (1993)

PRACTICES
(democratic)

Field of contention/ radical habitus relation:
Crossley (2002a, 2003)

Elements of practices & trajactories of practices:
Shove et al. (2012)

HABITUS
(radical)
(radical-participatory)

Habitus & practice as recursive:
Bourdieu (1993)
Crossley (2003)

Fig. 2. Key elements of conceptual framework and linkages.

In conclusion, the conceptual framework of the thesis seeks to structure a historical analysis of a previous alternative-media related phenomena, 'radical and community printshops' in the UK, by way of a 'field approach'. Conceptualising the printshops as part of specific, dynamic and changing arenas of action, attitude and resources, with degrees of connection and interrelationships with 'other fields' allows for a greater understanding of not only their 'conditions of possibility' but also their historical trajectory. A significant aspect of their 'distinctive value' and what marked them apart from the kinds of 'radical printshops' that had previously existed was their 'democratic practices'; practices carried over from the 'fields' from which they emerged. Similar kinds of practices continue, or perhaps have returned to be, a frequent feature of alternative and social movement media related activity. Then as now, attempting 'to make a new world in the shell of the old' was both exciting and challenging. The belief here is that by analysing the 'life' of these practices within historically specific fields, we can learn more about innovative attempts orientated towards new social relations and what enables, strains and sometimes dislodges them. As such the research questions that drive and structure the thesis, following from the concepts discussed, are orientated towards these aims; shown below in Table 1, to conclude this chapter. The

various methodological factors that have to be addressed in the undertaking of such research and analysis. This next chapter will discuss these in detail, outlining the approach that has been taken in the study.

Table 1. Research questions

Main Research question:	
What political, cultural and material conditions gave rise to the emergence of a field of collectivised radical and community printing in 1970s Britain and what combination of external field activity and internal processes contributed to the dissolution of this field?	
Sub-research question 1: What were the relationships between the printshops and their movement field constituencies? How did they respond to changes in these fields? To what extent, and how, did they similarly change?	Chapter 4 (The Contours of a Field)
Sub-research question 2: How did the concepts of participation and democracy shape the organisational and production practices of the printshops and what were the challenges? What role did habitus play in the uptake of these practices?	Chapter 5 (Democracy in Action)
Sub-research question 3: What combination of internal and external field resourcing enabled the printshops? What were the different positions and strategies regarding resourcing? What were the material opportunities and challenges for the printshops created by developments in other fields? How were these negotiated?	Chapter 6 (Material Resources)

Chapter 3: Methodology

The previous chapter has outlined how the thesis draws on the concepts of field and practice in order to analyse the history and activity of the radical and community printshops. The claim was that a 'field approach' enables a greater historical understanding of their emergence, trajectories and practices, because it does not treat them as isolated phenomena but as existing in relationship to other groups within relevant changing social, political, cultural and material contexts. I also claimed that their democratic practices were part of the 'character' of the field/s which the printshops co-comprised and that to try and understand the life of these practices in the printshops, practice theory can be usefully mobilized. However a recognisable field of radical and community printshops, populated by a diverse range of organisations and 'users', effectively disappeared two decades ago. This chapter explains the methodological choices and limitations that have ensued from this fact and in relation to the research aims. The structure of the chapter proceeds as follows: Initially I outline the overall research approach and the three core methods of data gathering. I then establish the parameters of the field, and the criteria for which type of printshops are included in the study. This section is followed by a general typology of printshops devised as a basis for the differentiation of their activities (and therefore practices and resource opportunities). After this I go on to outline the processes and sources used to 'find printshops', as well as the search for relevant document and archival sources. The next section focuses on the experimental instigation of a radical printshops 'wiki', created with the aspiration to both try and balance the gap between the academic research and the subjects of study, *and* to attract sources of information. After this, a substantial section is devoted the role of interviews with ex-participants, and then the process of managing and analysing the material. Lastly I explain and reflect upon the ethical considerations of the research process.

3.1. Research approach

The research approach relates to the conceptual framework and research questions, however this has been a recursive and reflexive process, as progressive familiarisation of the object of study has caused various revisions to the research questions and of the concepts employed. The issue that significantly frames the research approach undertaken is the matter of sources; finding them is a key concern for any historically based project. For 'peripheral' phenomena such as the printshops, also occurring in a 'pre-digital' period, the issue is potentially a problematic one. The printshops had developed alongside the growth of 'history from below', oral history, community history and 'community archives' and the importance of these challenges to conventional history were assumed. Nevertheless, my suspicion at the start of the study was that they probably did not much consider their own historical record and that there was likely to be a rather limited amount of publicly available

surviving documents and published material. Furthermore the extent to which others had 'reported' on them at the time was also likely to be limited. The problem of elusive remains is one common to both historians of grassroots activity and of marginalized lives (Black and MacRaild, 2000). 'Fringe' social movement groups and 'alternative' organisations often fall into this category and as Bosi and Reiter point out, due to their often 'informal and fragmented nature produce and leave behind only in a limited way the same kind of evidence as classical organisations' (2014: 129). Few do what they do with 'heritage' in mind, and may even deliberately leave minimal evidence for reasons of safety (Flinn 2008). There would certainly have been items printed in some of the printshops for which 'file copies' would not have been kept, nor any printer's imprint applied. The alternative left culture in the printshops emerged from was also one in which an 'anti-bureaucratic' ethos often prevailed (Landry et al. 1985), with little importance attached to keeping records. While independent community and radical archives can sometimes provide vital sources of marginal or otherwise overlooked activity, such resources often exist in precarity due to lack of economic resources, space and the fluctuations of interested volunteers (Bosi and Reiter, 2014). For example the volunteer run Feminist Library in London, recently donated their substantial pamphlet collection to the Bishopsgate Institute Archives as they felt they could no longer house it securely. This potential general situation suggested that a broad and flexible approach to sources sought and consulted would be necessary for the research. It also suggested that the role of ex-printshop participants in providing information and sharing their experiences was going to be key. The time period of the printshops was recent enough that a reasonable proportion of those involved were likely to still be alive, at least. Furthermore it was possible that some ex-participants would have kept related materials. I also had a somewhat privileged starting point, which is useful to outline before explaining the research approach further.

As mentioned in the introduction to the thesis, my knowledge of the printshops' existence was based upon my own involvement between the start of the 1980s to about the mid 1990s. I worked in three different London printshops during that time, had 'casual' involvement in two others, and knew and knew of people in other presses. I had retained tangential contact with the last printshop I worked at; one of the few that has continued to exist. I also had some contact with another surviving printshop. This background provided me with a few names of ex-participants, and those of a good number of printshops, as well as some limited means, through personal contacts and social networks, to try and locate people. It also gave search terms for online tracking down of individuals and available materials relating to the printshops, as well as locating possible documents in archives. My own prior involvement also meant I had a *sense* of the field of radical and community printing during my own period of involvement, knew a little about the material contexts during that time, the 'state' of movements, some of the tensions and challenges and so forth. All of this

was a research advantage, and gave some starting points for both primary and secondary research. My position also had methodological implications, which will be discussed below.

While I had this reasonable starting point, the basis of it also raised the spectre of the gap in my own 'general' knowledge. When I became involved in the field of radical and community printing, it was some years into its existence and 'radical printshops', community presses, print co-ops, women's printshops, anarchist printers, were a taken for granted feature of the alternative left and feminist world I habituated. I was not part of the early instigatory period, the particular cultural and political 'context' in which they had emerged was 'before my time', not just in the printshops but in terms of my age and movement involvement. As such I chose to begin with secondary research into the cultural and political 'contexts' of the printshops' emergence and early years. The concept of 'context' itself is rather vague or assumed to be self-evident. Roy Dilley (1999: 3) points to the generally useful definition given by Scharfstein [1989] as "that which environs the object of study and helps by its relevance to explain it", noting that this leaves out how we deem what is relevant (and what comprises an explanation). What is relevant may not be known; it may be a matter that emerges through the study of the object that 'needs contextualising' and as in this study a recursive process as well, inevitably, one of judgment and interpretation. Further, it should be explicit that the allocation of relevance is inevitably based on the researchers theoretical interests and focus. Here the focus was the development and contours of the alternative left field in the UK, not only as part of a historical approach that would help in understanding the subject and make valid interpretations but also to help further down the line with possible interviews — as well as to shift, or 'de-centre' my own frame of reference. This was a complex task and no doubt one of over-reading, involving histories of the 'first' new left, the early anti-nuclear movement, the libertarian left and anarchist groupings and fractures, urban community activism, tenants and squatters movements, the 'counterculture', the student movement, the revolutionary left and so on. However especially valuable as entry points were, *The Unsung Sixties: Memoirs of Social Innovation* (Curtis & Sanderson 2004); *British Social Movements since 1945* (Lent 2001); *Against the Bomb* (Taylor 1988); *The Politics of Community Action* (O' Malley 1977) and *The Left in Britain 1956-68* (Widgery 1976) amongst various other sources. Autobiographies also contributed to an understanding of the some of the key themes and points of difference within the complicated world of the 'non-parliamentary' left, for example Shelia Rowbotham's (2001) *Promise of Dream*, Tariq Ali's (2005) *Street Fighting Years*, Lynne Segal's (2007) *Making Trouble*, Michèle Roberts' (2007) *Paper Houses*, Sue O' Sullivan's (1996) *I Used to be Nice*, Ian Bone's (2006) *Bash the Rich,* and Stuart Christie's (2004) *My Granny Made me an Anarchist.*

In order to be able to continue to position the activity and trajectories of the printshops within their specific historical contexts, and in relation to their changing cultural, political and

material environments, focussed 'contextual' reading went on to comprise a significant part of the research process throughout. By necessity this covered a range of specific areas in addition to the above. It included materials relating to the emergence of the new realm of radical cultural production and its debates; the development of community arts, media and publishing; changes in the broader field of contention, as well as in more specific fields such as the women's movement and community activism; the new worker co-operative movement and its relationship to the left; the background to varieties of funding and resource opportunities such as urban policy, urban restructuring and municipal socialism; developments in and distributions of printing and reprographic technologies. Through this I also discovered earlier writing that made reference to certain types of printshop. For example contemporaneous literature of community arts and media occasionally included interviews with printshops. The more academic field of worker co-operative studies that developed in the 1970s and early 1980s sometimes included printshops in case studies. I drew on contemporaneous materials, archival and policy documents, movement and academic sources, as well as more recent studies. In some case interviewees lent me materials or recommended them, or often a subject raised in an interview or correspondence lead to further reading.

The overall research approach that developed was threefold; recourse to archival and document sources where possible, in depth interviews with a wide range of printshops participants and substantial reading of both contemporaneous and secondary sources relating to historical and material contexts. It also became clear fairly early on in the research that a case study approach was not the direction I wanted to pursue. To some extent this was a practical issue. A case study approach would require sufficient range of interviews and source material from pre-determined printshops, something I could not guarantee in advance, given that there was going to be some work involved in tracing people, and in persuading them to engage. I also suspected that the quality of interviews would be rather varied, not least because of the time period that had passed. In turn these factors made it difficult to predict in advance which printshops would be the most viable 'cases'. The overriding interest at the start of the project had been to provide a collective history of the printshops, and the diversity within that. These were some of the factors that had also begun to suggest a field approach.

3.2. Parameters of the field and the research

A field approach requires determining the boundaries of the field in question, and as other scholars have pointed out, this is not always a self-evident or easy task. It is invariably a reflexive process, informed by the ongoing empirical research (Eyal 2010, Fligstein & McAdam 2012, Gorski 2013). The parameters of the field relate to inclusions and exclusions

of the research as well as the time frame covered. The time frame at one end needed to encompass field emergence; this date was eventually set at 1968, as the year in which two distinctly 'new' kinds of printshop were set up (Notting Hill Press and Poster Workshop). They were new in that they were run on a self-managed basis, not owned by an individual nor associated with a particular 'organised left' political grouping; some of the defining features of the radical and community printshop field that subsequently emerged. There may of course have been earlier printshops that this was also the case for and which the research has failed to uncover. In this sense the date is propositional, but not arbitrary. The date at the other end, I have set at around 1998. This is slightly convenient as a thirty-year period but seems to tally sufficiently with the empirical evidence, and is generous enough to allow for the voices of the few that survived the 1990s. However the field itself had ceased to reproduce itself some years before this.

With regard to the geographic scope of the research, this was initially set to be London alone. This was partly pragmatic, as it was the location of my own experience and as such preliminary knowledge and connections. In terms of interviews, I also felt it might be more practical assuming at least a fair proportion of ex-participants had remained in the city and therefore these would possibly be easier to arrange, in terms of logistics anyway. Furthermore the sense of a 'field' or realm with a range of points of difference, position takings, interconnections, certain kinds of competition and such forth was likely to be more discernable in one city with a significant number of printshops. However as the research progressed, the extent of connections between printshops across the country became more evident especially in the period of field emergence and through the networks of community activists and alternative radical and community newspaper groups. Furthermore, and of practical significance, communication opportunities arose with ex-participants of printshops beyond London. While retaining a 'London-centric' focus, in terms of the printshops discussed and interviews conducted, I subsequently enlarged the geographic scope of the study to include a number of printshops in other parts of the UK (for example, Sheffield, Manchester, Rochdale, Newcastle, Cardiff and Aberdeen).

The central criteria I established for printshop inclusion in the study were,
a) democratic/collective self-management;
b) printing as the main activity of the organisation;
c) non-aligned to any specific left political party or faction
d) recognisably an expression of the 'alternative left', at least initially

To a large extent criteria a) assumes criteria d) and generally criteria c). Criteria a) ruled out organisations that were management committee run even if they practised relative democratic control in their day to day operations. This excluded a number of funded

community printshops and print resource centres. Criteria *b)* similarly excluded certain community printshops; in this case those that that were part of larger multi-activity community arts or media projects. These also tended to be management committee run, although not exclusively so. The reason for exclusion on the grounds of being part of a multi-activity project, even if self-managed, was that printshops within these tended to be run by one or two people and as such there was no opportunity for the exploration of collective self-management of the printshop, nor related practices such as the collective de-division of labour. Lack of independence from a larger project also meant that their survival issues were less comparable to those of 'stand-alone' printshops. What they did share however with some types of 'stand-alone' printshops were the access or DIY printing philosophies that were part of a wider 'community printing' discourse and practice. While I decided not to pursue interviewees from this type of printshop, I have drawn on some existing accounts of the access/DIY printing practice within this type of organisation. Furthermore the growth of these types of community print facilities was an effect of the same range of cultural experiment and resource opportunities as those that are more fully referred to in this study. Criteria c) and d) raised some issues about the inclusion of self-managed anarchist printshops. Some anarchists of this period would likely see themselves as quite distinct from the new alternative left, coming out of a much longer political tradition, from which the alternative left had adopted some ideas about self-management. However in terms of these ideas in *practice* there does not appear to be a lineage of collectively run anarchist printshops in the UK before the growth of the alternative left and the spread of ideas and practice of self-management, collective living and so forth. The anarchist printshops that set up in this time seemed to have been 'new' in that regard and I would argue part of the diversity of the alternative left in terms of their practices and lifestyles. In field terms they could be said to have existed in an overlap of an older anarchist movement and a newer alternative left (Melzer 1996). The presence of anarchist members in many of the other radical printshops also made for connections between these presses in a way that does not appear to have been at all apparent with the printshops of the revolutionary left (such as the press run by the Socialist Workers Party).

3.3. A typology of printshops

As the foregoing indicates, there co-existed various *types* of printshops that fit my criteria of inclusion. Different types of printshops came out of different imperatives, privileged different relations of production, positioned themselves differently in relation to their constituencies and adopted different strategies for survival. Therefore devising adequate categorisations to represent these differences was important for conducting analysis throughout the thesis. However defining these 'types' in a way that would remain useful across the period of study was not entirely self-evident. Participants typified printshops in different ways and at different

periods, and printshops also changed 'type' during their existence. The process of constructing a viable typology involved identifying the range of previous categorisations and then creating my own, mainly based on a synthesis of the former, whilst ensuring distinctions that were pertinent for this study and that could be usefully maintained with regards to different areas of analysis. The main documentary sources that I drew on to establish earlier categorisations were Jonathan's *Print: How You Can Do It Yourself* (editions 1974, 1975, 1980, 1986), *Alternative London* (Saunders 1974,1978, 1982), *Printing Co-operatives in London* (Elston et al. 1983), *Changing the Word* (Marshall 1983), *Printing is Easy? Community Printshops 1970-1986* (Kenna et al. 1986) and papers from two 'lay' conferences *Alternative Printers* (1979) and *How Can Radical Publishing Survive the Eighties?* (1980). These documents were contemporaneous with the printshops main period of existence and were produced by participants and associates. Furthermore, they reflected the variation and type of distinctions referred to by interviewees and correspondents, as well as the changing nature of categorisations.

The various distinctions made across these sources were community printshops, self-help presses, community resource centres, radical service presses, 'commercial' presses and printing co-operatives. The most unstable category appeared to be that of the 'community printshop' which sometimes only referred to printshops that had a DIY or 'self-help' (as it was often called) printing policy (Zeitlyn 1974-1980), other times only printshops that were screen-printing workshops funded as 'community arts' organisations (Kenna et al. 1986), other times printshops that were at the low-cost marginal end of a spectrum of radical service printers (Elston et al.1983). However, the generally overriding feature was that of a printshop that had been set up as a corollary of urban community activism.

My own final typology distinguished between community printshops, movement service printers and poster workshops (see Table 2). Community printshops are taken to have started with the above mentioned orientation towards local activism, and may or may not have also operated a 'self-help' printing policy. The category of movement service printer is synonymous with that of radical service press and is fairly self-explanatory. These were also often referred to as printing co-ops (although that could apply to any type of radical printshop). What was not differentiated by 'type' in the various documentary sources were those poster workshops that did not fit with any of the notions of 'community printshop'. These were not a large grouping but they were significant and well known and as such covered in the study. What distinguished them is that they generated the 'content' of their printing (i.e. designed their own posters), rather than it being brought to them as was mostly the case with the different kinds of community presses, and movement service presses. This suggests a rather different kind of position in the field of radical and community printing, internal practices (of co-creation), as well as distinct kinds relationships with their

constituencies, therefore I felt the 'poster workshop' warranted differentiation as a 'type', albeit one with a small population. There is some case to be made that distinction by source of content generation could also apply to the community printshops that were partly set up to produce a radical local newspaper (there were several of these), however these printshops were always, it appears, set up to simultaneously service other groups never solely to produce the paper. Furthermore a separate editorial group usually emerged that included people not involved in the printshop (Minority Press Group 1980, Harcup 2013). Table 2 below shows the criteria I have assigned to each type of printshop and provides the basis for differentiation throughout the thesis.

Table 2. A general typology of printshops

	Community printshop	Movement service printshop	Poster workshop
Key discourses may include	Access, participation, empowerment, self-help, self-determination, community	Service, democratic workers control, equality, solidarity	Counter media, propaganda, representation, solidarity
Print process/es	Screen-printing Small offset-litho	Offset-litho (large and/or small) Some screen-printing	Screen-printing
Operational Aims	To provide a printing service for local community based activists and cultural groups **and/or** To provide access to print media resources and skills for such groups	To provide a printing service for activist, campaigning, community and radical cultural groups. May be a preference for particular politics or SMs (e.g. anarchism, feminism)	To create, reproduce (and distribute) visual propaganda for specific political, social movement aims and causes
		To make enough profit on services to sustain an independent self-managed democratic workplace and politically/socially meaningful livelihood	
Social Aim	To support local community based, radical political and cultural activity.	To support a wide range of left, social movement, cultural and voluntary sector activity (although see above regarding preferences)	To support and visually 'represent' specific political, social movement aims and causes
	To challenge hegemonic media representations and elitist cultural content, forms and practices	To practice (and possibly promote) democratic and egalitarian self-management of work place	To challenge hegemonic media representations and elitist cultural content, forms and practices
	To empower members of socially and politically marginalised groups through a) access to media production and/or self-representation **and/or** b) access to print services		
Source of content	Mostly from external users but may also be derived from members involvements	Mostly from external users but may also be derived from members involvements	Mostly from members, also in collaboration with activist groups
Geographic scope	Primarily works with local groups, (aims to be embedded in local/radical community activity)	Primarily works with groups based within town/city of location, (groups may be locally, nationally or internationally orientated)	Primarily groups based within town/city of location. Addresses issues that may be nationally or internationally orientated. May disseminate internationally

3.4. Finding printshops, documentary and secondary sources

An early task in the research was compiling a list of printshops in order to gauge the extent and scope of activity. Needless to say this task was started before the development of the 'printshops typology', and as already stated I had a reasonable starting point. Some of the documentary sources listed above greatly assisted the process. In particular, editions of Zeitlyn's *Print: How You Can Do It Yourself*, proselytizing manuals for community printing published between 1974-1986,[10] all contained listings in the back, and occasional 'adverts' for some of the printshops. Zeitlyn, who unfortunately died long before this study began, was a figure on the community printing scene, connected to a well-known London based multi-arts community project, InterAction, who published some of the manuals. He was involved in other publications to support 'printing it yourself' (Treweek & Zeitlyn 1983, Zeitlyn 1988) as well as a series of short documentaries on Channel 4 on the subject in the mid 1980s. Possibly surprisingly to a contemporary reader, the above-mentioned editions of Nicholas Saunders handbook *Alternative London* (1974-82), were also useful for gathering printshop names, as each contained listings of 'alternative' printshops with brief descriptions. The multiple editions of both these publications also helped with nominal start and end dates of organisations, plus a sense of growth and emerging 'types'. Other publications that yielded information included the above-mentioned *Printing is Easy*, a catalogue of a national 1986 exhibition of community printshop posters and the various publications produced by the Minority Press Group/Comedia in the early 1980s. Especially useful amongst these were *Here is the Other News: Challenges to the Local Commercial Press* (Minority Press Group 1980), *and Rolling Our Own: Women as Printers, Publishers and Distributors* (Cadman et al. 1981). Both of these contained interviews with and information about printshops relevant to this study, including some of those whose members I would interview myself. Robert Dickinson's rather later (1997) *Imprinting the Sticks*, about the alternative press 'beyond London', although focussed on publications, included uniquely valuable material about some of the associated printshops, particularly Moss Side Press and Rochdale Alternative Press, which I have drawn on the thesis. I also scoured collections of several contemporaneous magazines for mention of printshops, especially the classified sections for job adverts, general adverts and appeals; including *IT, Undercurrents, The Leveller, Peace News, Spare Rib and Outwrite*. These were accessed either in the British Library, Women's Library or in the case of *IT* and *Undercurrents*, online. Printshop job adverts were useful for finding out about what skills (if any) were being asked for as well as wages; appeals in relation to crises; general adverts in terms of the printshops 'offer'.

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10 There was also a 1992 edition however this did not contain any listings – indicative of the demise of such resources.

Material from three 'lay' conferences, including registration forms, also provided names and addresses of printshops, along with other useful information. These were, *Womenprint 1977*; *Alternative Printers 1979*; *How Can Radical Publishing Survive the Eighties 1980*. An ex-printshop participant provided the last two sets of documents, the first was found in a collection in the Women's Library. The *Alternative Printers* conference records consisted only of registration forms, however these gave worthwhile information about starting dates, types of work taken on and refused, orientations and numbers of workers. Papers and reports from the other two conferences provided information about debates and issues within the field at that time, as well as different positions, all of which has been drawn on in the thesis.

Names of printshops were also put into the online database of the Mutuals Register, the record of registered cooperatives, friendly and mutual societies. These tended to be the constitutional forms used by the printshops, if they had one. The Mutuals Register enables searching for deregistered organisations. It is however quite a crude mechanism for ascertaining actual dates of existence, as registration may take place some time, often years, after starting and deregistration happens as result of annual records not being submitted for period, a period which also be might be several years. While it would have been possible to request to see documents related to specific printshops, which would include a list of named directors and summary accounts, the costs involved and time to arrange for what the effort would yield was felt not to be worth it. In a similar vein I also searched the online *London Gazette*, the daily government publication where certain statutory notices have to be published including company insolvencies. It covers the UK, and all back issues since its inception are online. This was useful in giving somewhat more exact dates of closure and a number of printshops appeared here.

Despite suspicions about the lack of material in public archives of any type, I searched the National Archives database, and those of specialist collections for any material that might have been deposited by defunct printshops. There was some limited success, notably three feminist printshops had put material of varying amounts into public archives; Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op (in Sheffield City Library), Onlywomen Press and See Red Women's Workshop (both in The Women's Library). This is interesting in its own right, possibly suggesting a greater sense of felt significance regarding their endeavour than that of the 'mixed' presses, or at least by the depositing members. Aberdeen People's Press had also donated a collection of material they had printed to Aberdeen University Library, including copies of the newspaper of the same name that was co-instigated with the press, but no internal records. I did not make the trip to Aberdeen, but did consult the other collections of materials. What I was particularly interested in finding were minutes books, correspondence, publicity materials, customer/user lists and financial records. The Sheffield

Women's Printing Co-op (SWPC) collection was especially fruitful containing all of the above about a printshop I had known little of. It also provided full names of participants, which lead to later interviews. The Onlywomen Press collection was huge and remained un-catalogued by the Women's Library. Consequently it took some negotiation to gain limited access. One of the most useful documents I found in this collection was the report of the *Womenprint Conference 1977*. The See Red collection was quite small, but useful in containing some founding statements, minutes books and press cuttings. I also searched and viewed 'radical' poster collections in the V&A, Women's Library, and the online catalogue of the collection held at the International Institute of Social History, which contains many from British collectives. This was to identify groups and the political themes of posters by the groups over time.

Further on into the research, a number of interviewees gave me access to various internal records (including minutes books and accounts) publicity materials, grants applications as well as annual reports. In all, I consulted internal documents of various kinds from 11 printshops including minutes books from five of those. I also later consulted the grant application files of the GLC Community Arts sub-committee and Women's Committee, held in the London Metropolitan Archives. This was to track what printshops had received funding from this source. Application forms also provided user lists, aims and statements from the printshops. Additionally it revealed the funding process as committee records and internal GLC memos were included in the files. Information about which printshops received funding, how much and over what period was also obtained by recourse to the back catalogue of Arts Council annual reports. Online Hansard record of parliamentary debates also proved informative, as funding for certain printshops also appeared in these, as well of course as the debates in which this was referred to. All of the above has fed in to different parts of the thesis.

Finally, a note about some of these sources. Archival and document sources all have their own issues of 'reliability', and had to be viewed for what they were; documents produced for a particular purpose, rather than neutral and self-evident records of 'reality', however the reasons for their production, and how they are produced, are part of the historical narrative and context (Howell & Prevenier 2001). Grant applications and annual reports are written for funders, and publicity materials for gaining customers. Minutes of collective meetings, which can feel like 'gold' to the researcher, are not always necessarily reliable accounts of what happened at the meeting and from experience a minutes book does not necessarily record the major issues that are happening within a press!

Table 3. Overview of public collections and publically available materials consulted

Public collections	Materials viewed	Date visited
Women's Library, London (London Metropolitan University)	See Red Women's Workshop Collection (1974-1984) Feminist Poster Collection	Jan 2009
	Onlywomen Press Collection (1974-1998)	March 2011
	WIRES (Women's Information and Referral Service newsletter) back issues (1975-84)	April 2011
Women's Library @ LSE, London	Spare Rib magazine Collection (1972-93)	July 2015
	Outwrite Women's Newspaper Collection (1982-1988)	July 2015
Hall-Carpenter Archives at LSE, London	Ephemera items: Lesbian and Gays Support the Printworkers (1986-7)	April 2013
Sheffield City Library Archives	Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op Collection (1979-2001)	Jan 2011
Open University Archives, Milton Keynes	'Debate on Community Print' Film (1976)	Jan 2011
	Co-operative Studies Collection	Jan 2011
BFI Archives, London	'Print it Yourself 'Channel 4 Documentary Series (1985)	Feb 2011
Victoria & Albert Museum, (Prints & Drawings Collection), London	British activist poster collections: Poster-Film Collective, Martin Walker, Red Dragon, GMW Collection (1960s-1990s)	Sept 2012
London Metropolitan Archives	GLC Community Arts and Women's Committee grant records (1981-1986)	April 2015
Online collections and records consulted	**Material/information sought**	
International Institute of Social History https://socialhistory.org/	Posters produced by British collectives	
Poster Workshop (1968-71) http://posterworkshop.co.uk/	Collection of posters produced by this group	
Hansard: Parliament records http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/ http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/	Government and local authority funding for printshops	
Arts Council England Archive of Annual Reviews http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/annual-reports/annual-reviews-archive	Annual Reports (1973-1990) Funding for printshops	
Mutuals Public Register https://mutuals.fsa.gov.uk/	Registrations of printshops	
London Gazette https://www.thegazette.co.uk/	Insolvencies of printshops	
Undercurrents magazine archive (1972-84) https://undercurrents1972.wordpress.com/	References to printshops	
IT (International Times) archive (1966-1980) http://www.internationaltimes.it/archive/	References to printshops	

3.5. The wiki: radicalprintshops.org

In 2009, very early into the research I instigated a publicly viewable, open access wiki called radialprintshops.org (Appendix D). This was done with technical support of a friend. Very briefly, a wiki is a web-based content management system that allows non-expert users to collaborate on content asynchronously. The aims of setting up the wiki were two-fold. On the one hand it was an attempt to balance the nature of the academic research process and final form with that which seemed more aligned to the previous collectivist politics and practices of my subjects. On the other hand, I hoped it would engender the interest of ex-participants and provide new empirical material to draw on.

With regard to the first aim, this related to concerns about the value of my academic research for those that had been involved in or associated with the printshops, as well as for lay audiences more generally that might also be interested in their story. This is not an original apprehension, concerns about academic research and its subsequent 'value' for its

subjects has become an ongoing theme in social movement studies in particular, with much discussion about ethics, reciprocity, positionality, identity and so on (Croteau et al. 2005; Khasnabish & Haiven 2012; Milan 2014). Whilst scholars of radical movements and organisations might hope that their assiduously researched and analytical studies will in some way assist the future of progressive movements and organisations, their efforts tend to remain inaccessible in academic journals and textbooks. It is not simply the final form and dissemination of the research that may be at issue but the manner in which the research is conducted, and thus the kind of knowledge produced (Chesters 2012). Many of those engaged in such research are politically sympathetic to the movements and groups they study, and as in my own case have often been or are involved in them, which can make these issues especially resonant. The ways in which these issues can be addressed partly depends on the type of research and the researcher's relationship to the subjects of study. While there is not space to expand here there have been various propositions and approaches advocated, such as Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Militant Research, which in various ways are about politically engaged research that is 'with' rather than 'about' its subjects (see Kindon et al. 2010; Shukaitis et al. 2007; Garelli & Tazzioli 2013). In terms of approaches to contemporary history, a valid option is developing oral history accounts as part of the research, the recordings and transcripts of which can be made publically available. These options were not appropriate to the kind of research I was doing, nor the time constraints I was working within, as a part time, otherwise employed, unfunded PhD. Setting up the wiki was my experimental attempt to both address this issue and some of the practical issues of the research.

In the first instance the site (the wiki) would serve to publicly share the material I was finding. The anticipated 'audience', as indicated above, were printshop members and a wider activist and radical lay audience. The site would hold documents, images and maybe participant accounts, operating as an organically developing open archive, a sort of micro 'knowledge commons'. It would also start to give the history of the printshops a visible and affirmative online presence that printshop members unknown to me might encounter. I hoped that it would stimulate interest from ex-participants, individually and collectively in the general value of producing such a history. By setting the site up as a *wiki* it also held the possibility for them to contribute in their own time and terms, a sort of micro 'crowdsourcing' (Howe 2006) to begin to generate a loosely collaborative history.[11] This in turn might provide me with new sources of information, and perhaps lead to interest by printshop participants and/or site audiences in contributing to the academic research of this study.

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11 Howe coined the term crowdsourcing in a 2006 Wired article and defines it as 'the act of taking a job traditionally performed by a designated agent (usually an employee) and outsourcing it to an undefined generally large group of people in the form of an open call' (Howe, 2006, n.p.). The term crowdsourcing has been taken up by Mia Ridge (2014) in particular to describe initiatives towards digital participation in institutional cultural heritage projects.

A wiki was not just practical for the task but its affordances for content collaboration seemed ideologically resonant with the historical background of the printshops. Maintaining this resonance I also used an open source, free and very basic wiki software (DokuWiki). The congruence of wikis with horizontal organisational structures and collective knowledge building has of course historical precedence in their use by *Indymedia Documentation Project*, as well as *ESF* (European Social Forum) groups in the early 2000s (Ebersbach & Glaser, 2004; Milberry, 2012). More recently wikis are being used for a growing number of participatory digital history projects from *FoundSF* (http://foundsf.org), which gathers the history of alternative San Francisco to the *LGBT History Project* (http://lgbthistoryuk.org). As Andrew Flinn (2007) has suggested, the upsurge more generally of online 'community archives' and digital history projects are driven by the same impetus as the radical, community and oral history initiatives that were developed in the 1970s and 80s. The recent growth is not least because of the affordances of online technologies in creating virtual space for deposits and dispersed collaboration and access, overcoming some of the problems inherent to their location bound counterparts.

The radicalprintshops.org wiki site went live in February 2009. Following instructions on how to register as a user, the home page showed the index of the different pages so far created ('namespaces' in wiki-language). These were for the printshops I already knew of; names, locations and approximate duration. I uploaded pictures and documents from my 'personal archive' along with images of materials that bore the imprint of specific printshops. I created lists of links to radical archives and libraries, along with articles relating to the history of alternative print media. I added more of everything as I found it. I worked on the assumption that the more content the site had, the more it would encourage others to contribute. Sometimes the only information I had was the name of a printshop and very approximate dates, however setting up pages in advance also made it simpler for others to add content.

Once the site had sufficient information to look like a viable concern I began publicizing it. I left messages and links on politically resonant sites, where printshops members might lurk or have friends that did, such as marxists.org and libcom.org, and continued to do so as new radical history sites sprung up. I emailed the slowly growing number of printshop workers I was obtaining contacts for. The link to the wiki served to introduce the idea of a history of the printshops, and showed the beginnings of a visible and accessible outcome, which I hoped might be a hook to encourage participation. If people were interested in the wiki they might also be interested further down the line in being interviewed by me, and I used this email to introduce the academic research project. The response towards both the wiki and the formal research was generally encouraging.

Over a four-year period about 35 people registered as radicalprintshop.org users, most within the first two years of its inception. Although not a large number, it was more than I had expected. Throughout this time I periodically emailed my contact list of printshop members with updates about the wiki and to encourage contributions. Twenty-three of the 35 registered actually *contributed* content, ten of them by directly uploading and the remaining 13 by sending contributions through the wiki's contact form or by email, for me to upload. The explanation given by some for the latter was that they either were not confident to upload themselves or that they had tried and failed. By the end of 2013, eight of the 40 printshop pages on the wiki had been set up by registered users and 25 different printshop pages contributed to. There were four 'super contributors', although I remained the key contributor by far. Content added ranged from perfunctory to detailed printshop biographies, personal photographs and memories, printing equipment lists and images of work printed. Some pages bulged; some were scant. There was a marked profile of those that contributed: they had either worked in several printshops, or been a founder member of a press. This was unsurprising, greater length of involvement and/or intense 'start up' commitment would have made their time in the printshops a significant period in their lives and as such probably a greater motivation or interest in their 'historicisation'. Those that registered were overwhelmingly male, but two of the four 'super contributors' were female. Of the people that uploaded, I was in contact with only two of them when the wiki launched. Overall I had previously known less than a quarter of those that contributed and over half of those that contributed found the site independently. Of significance in terms of 'mapping the field' of printshops, was the connection made through the wiki with ex-members of Poster Workshop (1968-71) and previously unknown to me. Some of them had recently met again and created their own website about the workshops history and were excited to discover the wiki. Although attempts at a formal interview never came to fruition, I corresponded with two members and met several times with one, gaining useful insights and leads.

Table 4. Wiki contributions

Wiki printshop page contributions by external users:	
Aberdeen People's Press	Paupers Press
Blackrose Press	Poster Workshop
Calverts Press	Range Left
Chat's Palace Printshop	Rochdale Alternative Press
CopyArt	Rye Express
Crest Press	Spider Web Offset
Fingerprints	Stepney Community Print Workshop
Fly Press	Suburban Press
Footprint	Trojan Press
Greenwich Mural Workshop Printshop	War on Want printshop
Islington Community Press	Women in Print
Lithosphere	Union Place
Little A	

The wiki was almost universally appreciated by the ex-members I made contact with ('great stuff', 'brilliant', 'it's nice to be acknowledged!', 'so much of this history is invisible'). As such it was productive in gathering support and interest for this study and helped to both introduce it and legitimize it. There were also plenty of problems, including major issues with spam and maintenance, to the wiki becoming an unacknowledged source for other academics and professionals.[12] However through the wiki my knowledge of the scope of different printshops significantly expanded and it quickly began to function as a useful organisational tool for the research, revealing gaps and relationships. Interest from printshop members in different parts of the UK enlarged the original scope of the wiki and the thesis research beyond its original London focus. It developed a number of fruitful new contacts that were more than willing to be interviewed and to share old documents, offline, with me. For most in fact this was preferable to contributing to the wiki. Thereforewhile the 'wiki experiment' proved to be rather limited for 'direct' information gathering, the value of the above more than compensated. As such it may be seen as having played an intermediary role within the data gathering process, as well as initially helping to address the ambivalence I had regarding the distance between the thesis process and form and my subject/s.

3.6. Interviews

As indicated earlier, interviews were the main method used in data gathering for this study. They are an extensively utilised method within the social sciences and frequently comprise the core method of data collection in qualitative research. They are also the basis of narrative inquiry and oral history. In the social sciences types of interview range from the anonymous survey questionnaires used in quantitative research to the ongoing conversations that might comprise part of an ethnographic study, and the in-depth semi interviews used in many case study approaches, as well as in this study. The value of the qualitative interview, according to Gaskell (2009: 39), is that it "provides the basic data for the understanding of the relations between social actors and their situation." For this research, interviews were seen to be valuable not simply for lack of other sources but vitally for their potential to enable a much more in-depth grasp of the various motivations and experiences of those involved in the printshop during the period of their existence. The particular issues related to interviewing about the past will be addressed shorty, first the criticisms of, and problems with, interviews as a reliable source gathering method more generally need to be mentioned.

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12 These combined factors led to eventual archiving of the site, at least for the time being. As these issues do not pertain to the role of the wiki in this study, I have refrained from explaining them here, although I have elsewhere, along with a discussion of some of the other issues in attempting to initiate a 'collaborative history', in a non-collaborative manner (see Baines 2016).

Some of the criticisms of qualitative interviewing are the same as those against qualitative research more broadly. Partly these criticisms stems from the debate about what can constitute scientific study, and to what extent positivist principles developed in the natural sciences are appropriate for the study of the social world, such as the belief that knowledge is generated through 'observable facts' and the assertion of science as value-free (Bryman 2004). From this position qualitative interviews are unscientific and unreliable because they are subjective or impressionistic testimonies and cannot lead to generalizable knowledge. As Gaskell notes, some of the potential problems with interviews as a source of information "arise[s] from the fact the interviewer relies on the informants account of action that occurred elsewhere in time and space" (Gaskell 2009: 44). Interviewees may also tell the researcher what they want to hear, give misleading accounts or omit details of key significance to the researcher (ibid). The interview is also an accounting of oneself, frequently to a stranger, and raises numerous issues of self-presentation and intersubjectivity. While document sources already exist in the world, and observation is of something happening in the world, the content and context of a qualitative interview is generated on the initiative of the researcher, who is therefore not 'separate' from it. From an interpretivist and qualitative research perspective, the interview, rather than being seen as a neutral conduit for the interviewee's experience, is acknowledged as a particular site of knowledge construction, situationally and contextually co-produced by interviewer and interviewee and underpinned by particular power dynamics (Kvale 1996: 126, Holstein & Gubrium 2006: 141). The interview is not a reciprocal social situation, as it is the interviewer's agenda that determines the process. This imbalance may also be exacerbated by social differences between the interviewer and interviewee (Bourdieu 1996). Kvale (2007: 140) has outlined several "internal criticisms" of interview research, which include the individualist focus that "neglects social embeddedness", decontextualisation from social and historical context, a focus on thought and speech rather than action and a tendency to believe everything an interviewee says. In others words the form of the qualitative interview has instabilities particular to itself, which do however vary in relevance according to the type of research undertaken and its aims. Qualitative interviewers can also devise various strategies to try and mitigate some of these problems; those undertaken in this study will be outlined in due course. Meanwhile these considerations have to be extended to the problem of interviews in relation to the relatively distant past, where the issue of 'memory', at the very least, may be even more complicated.

As narrative theorists and oral historians point out, people attempt to create coherent if not fixed narratives out of their memories (Portelli 1991, Andrews et al. 2008). The past rapidly or eventually gets tidied up in versions of its recollection. Periods of involvements in 'social experiments' for example may be fitted into a personal life narrative as halcyon days, a weird embarrassing period, or simply one of insignificance. The relationship that people have with

activities in their past may also be informed by their current social attitudes and political views (Thompson 2000, Butler & Gorst 1997). These are also factors that are likely to inform whether someone is willing to be interviewed at all. It is only relatively recently that the cultural experiments of the 1970s have become culturally validated, at least by a new generation of activists, researchers and artists. It is fair to say that these earlier attempts to live and work differently had been consigned to the 'history-dustbin' marked 'uncool' for more than two decades previously (Sholette 2011; see also Hesmondhalgh 2000). Even in 2007, Colin MacCabe and Stuart Hall speculated about why the vast amount of collective experiments from the mid 1960s to the early 1980s, which MacCabe suggested constituted "a massive social movement", had gone unwritten by those involved agreeing that it was perhaps "too painful" (MacCabe 2007: 27).

People's capacity for recollection also widely varies, increasingly so as time passes, raising more potential difficulties for the researcher hoping not just to revive a particular period in a subject's life, but to ask specific questions about it. However, although memory, as inherently reductive, may gloss over and reconfigure difficulties, the passage of time can also aid the research. Firstly as Yow (1994: 18) suggests, participants may be much more candid about the distant past than both the present and near past. Secondly, they may have integrated their understandings into their historical contexts, and provide interesting reflections on the specific phenomena and their involvement, vis-a-vis those contexts, even if these are different to the researcher's interpretations and conclusions.

For this study the one to one, in-depth semi-structured form of qualitative interview was adopted. A total of 55 semi-structured interviews were conducted, 44 of these were face-to-face, five conducted via Skype, and six by email. The aim was for face-to-face interviews where possible, but issues of insurmountable geographic distance (in three cases) or convenience for the interviewee (in two cases) sometimes prevented this. The preference for face-to-face interviews was that I felt it would better enable trust and rapport to develop, and that it would solicit "more thoughtful" and expansive answers (Shuy 2003: 181). Skype was considered an acceptable alternative if meeting in person was not possible, because interviewers could at least 'see' their interviewer and some of the visual cues of communication are retained, it is also free and conversations are simple to record. It is by no means 'the same' as sharing physical space with someone, and the matter of 'eye contact' is rather odd, as it has to be simulated. Email was used where neither option were viable for the interviewee. A thematic topic guide, or interview schedule, as it is also known, based on the emerging research questions, was devised to generally structure the interviews while allowing a degree of open endedness and flexibility to allow other themes to emerge. The guide was to help ensure some consistency across interviews, to enable cross-referencing between interviewees and between the transcripts, but also to help return focus to the

interview when necessary (Flick 1998). It was modified according to type of printshop, and whether the interviewee had been either a founder member and/or present at the press's closure. Eighteen interviews were followed up with further questions for clarification or elaboration either by phone or email. In addition to the 55 people who participated in semi-structured interviews, there were 12 other ex-printshop members who provided significant information, either through non-interview meetings, phone or email. These were people that it had not been possible to arrange an interview with for a variety of reasons, but who were willing to share information informally, in person or by phone or email. I kept written records of these various communications and they fed into the wider material collected. Otherwise all interviews were recorded using a digital audio recording device (Zoom Handy Recorder H2). I transcribed all interviews verbatim from these recordings. Table 5 below gives examples of some of the kinds of questions that were asked in relation to the research focus. It needs to be taken into consideration that while some research questions drew heavily on interview responses, others also drew on the wider range of sources discussed earlier in the chapter.

Table 5. Operationalising the research questions in the interviews

Research questions	Core topic guide themes	Examples of related interview questions
Main research question: What were the political, cultural and material conditions that gave rise to the emergence of a field of collectivised radical and community printing in 1970s Britain and what combination of external field activity and internal processes contributed to the dissolution of the field?	(Main RQ also maps across all other themes below) Field context/s of emergence Background and motivations of participants Changing fields Changing memberships Major challenges, ongoing struggles	What had you been doing before the printshop? What sort scenes were you involved in? What led to setting it up and how did you do it? What else was going on around? What were the big changes that you felt affected the press? Did the kind of people who worked there change? Why did people leave? What kinds of crises were there? What was their impact?
Sub research question 1: What were the relationships between the printshops and their movement field constituencies? How did they change and why?	Position within and relationships to alternative left field/s of contention Changing user base	What did you understand the role of the printshop to be? What kinds of groups did you work with? Did that change, if so how, and why do you think? Did you prefer particular kinds of work/groups? What were the relationships like?
Sub research question 2: How did the concepts of participation and democracy shape the organisational and production practices of the printshops and what were the challenges? What role did habitus play?	Democratic practices Stresses on practices	How was the work organised? What was your experience of collective working? Can you describe it? What were sources of conflict?
Sub research question 3: What combination of internal and external field resourcing enabled the printshops? What were the different positions and strategies regarding resourcing? What were the opportunities and challenges created by developments in other fields? How were these negotiated?	Material basis: Intra and external field support, opportunities Resource challenges	What were the economics of the press? Did they change, if so how? What was it like being funded? How did it work? How did the press deal with technological developments?

Recruitment and range of interviewees

The aim was to interview a range of printshop participants who had been involved during different time periods of a particular press as well as participants across a range of presses.

Of particular interest were those involved at the beginning, therefore founder members and members of early printshops, those who had a long history in the printshops and had been involved in more than one press, and those who were there when a press closed. The reason for desiring more than one interviewee per printshop was not only to be able to find out about changes during the life a press, but also varieties of experience as well to assist in the cross checking of 'factual' information. I began the process of recruitment by compiling a list of potential interviewees from existing contacts, some of which had been made or renewed via the radicalprintshops.org wiki. I had also managed to obtain contact information for a few individuals via online searching. Distinctive names, ongoing 'career' orientations towards social change, or creative activity, helped. In most cases I emailed potential interviewees, introducing myself and my own printshop background, the wiki and the research project, with the request for an interview. It could however take several weeks for someone to answer, and then only by prompting with follow up emails. A number of people did not reply at all, some others said they might be interested but faded out, a few said they would happy to answer questions by email. In early 2009 through a friend from one particular press (Blackrose), I had also attended a reunion of the 'London Print Co-operative Movement' as it was billed in the invite. This was organised by some ex-members of one of the larger London service printshops, a press that I had no previous connection with. I met a number of potential interviewees here and I used the mailing list that emerged from this event to subsequently contact people, as well as to encourage wiki contributions. I had particularly hoped to interview the founder members of the press that had organised the event, two of which (at least) also had substantial experience in other printshops. Unfortunately despite eventual agreement by two members, both later 'went quiet'. Part of the problem appeared to be that the potential interviewees wanted the founders to meet together to establish the 'accurate' history of the press, something they were finding difficult to organize. When I replied that my interest was as much in their own experiences of involvement, they appeared to lose interest. The mailing list in combination with the wiki did however yield a valuable interviewee from another service press. I also used two established mailing lists, the Women's History Network (WHN) and the Feminist History Network, to try and attract interviewees, in this case from the women's printshops. Again this yielded promise of interviewees, but none that actually transpired.

Once I started the interviews, a 'snowball' process began to occur, where I asked interviewees if they were in touch with anyone else that might agree to be interviewed and over 20 interviewees were found in this way. The 'snowball sample' is typically useful when as Lorenzo Mosca puts it "focusing on hard to reach populations…[and] where the interviewees know each other (2014: 409). In some cases because the interviewees had enjoyed discussing this period in their life, they actively recommended taking part to ex-colleagues they had remained in touch with. In this sense the snowball process was not just

useful for acquiring otherwise hard to obtain names and contact details but also in creating a degree of trust and validation.

Most of the interviews took place between 2011-2012, although some new contacts and interview opportunities emerged after this period, which I felt were important to pursue. My aims for the range of interviewees were reached to a reasonable extent in that the 55 interviewees represented 30 different printshops. There were 10 printshops for which I only obtained one interviewee. In three of these cases the information was very minimal, as it preceded more substantial or memorable involvement by the interviewee in other presses, which dominated the interview. In the seven other cases the interviewee had been a founder member of the press, usually with several subsequent years of intensive involvement. Nineteen interviewees had worked at more than one printshop, half of these at three or more. The number of interviewees also included founder members of 18 printshops, and 'closure' members of thirteen. The overall gender binary balance of interviewees was in favour of women, with 34 female interviewees to 21 men. However this figure needs to be viewed in the light of the fact that seven of the above mentioned 30 printshops were women's presses. The gender balance of interviewees for the 'mixed' presses was biased towards male interviewees, with 14 women to 21 men. What was unusual about many of the mixed printshops compared to their conventional equivalents (including those of the revolutionary left) was that a significant proportion of women worked in many of them, therefore I had expected to recruit more female interviewees. However I had not started out with targets of this kind. The issue of choice with regard to interviewees was difficult as it was based on the ability to locate individuals and then their willingness to be interviewed. There were some cases, as to be expected where key members of a printshop had died, or were currently suffering from ill health. In other situations, although existing interviewees had made contact with other ex-members for me and encouraged them to participate, they felt they simply could not remember enough, or did not want to 'go on record.' These circumstances pertained to trying to obtain more female interviewees from particular mixed printshops. Other demographic factors such as the class and 'race' balance of interviewees were fairly representative of the printshops – although with a proviso that will returned to shortly – with a little over a third from working class backgrounds (21 people) and just six people of 'non-white' heritage interviewed. The printshops were predominantly white, with the exception of one or two of the women's printshops (such as Lenthall Road Workshop) and one of the mixed printshops (Fly Press) for periods in the 1980s. Apart from one person, all those I interviewed or had contact with otherwise had been part of alternative left or feminist milieus. While this was reflective of those instigating and joining the printshops for several years, by the early 1980s the larger movement service printers were increasingly taking on workers who came from the general trade, mostly as machine printers. These members, typically working class men, did not emerge as interviewees through secondary or

snowball process of finding interviewees, and I did not find a way to track any of them down. The 'straight printers' as they were sometimes known, however certainly have a presence in the thesis although except for one case it is not through their own voices.

Usually the advice regarding when to stop pursuing qualitative interviews is when a sufficient point of 'saturation' has been achieved. This is when "the researcher realizes that no new surprises or insights are forthcoming" (Gaskell 2009: 43). For this study, the partial aim of which was to plot 'a history' covering multiple organisations, rather than for example, hone in on a narrow selection of case studies, this was not entirely straightforward. While variation of individual experience, and of printshop character, practices and trajectory was important, I was also interested in patterns across printshops. It was when I satisfied that both sufficient variation and discernable similarity had been adequately captured, within the inevitable limitations imposed by the schedule of the research project, that I decided to stop seeking interviews. However as stated earlier in this section, there were a number of interviews that took place after this period, usually due to a rather geriatric 'snowball effect' or sometimes where a significant gap had emerged and the opportunity to address it arose.

Procedures, consent form, transcriptions
Interviews took place in the location chosen by the interviewee. Often this was their own home, but sometimes their workplace or a public places such as cafes, parks or pubs. About a quarter of interviewees chose to be interviewed in my home. The most conducive environment overall was probably that of interviewees' own home, as they were relaxed and it was usually quiet. While the choice for public places was understandable, background noise made transcription especially arduous and in one case it was so bad, I had to request a re-interview, which took place in a domestic location. Prior to an interview date, I emailed the interviewee with information about the general themes I would be asking them about. Some requested to see a list of specific questions in advance, to help them prepare. I also detailed the basic content of the Consent Form I had designed, shown in Appendix A. This included their right not to answer a question, not to be recorded and their right to set the level of anonymity that they wanted in the thesis and related writings. I usually began interviews with a brief explanation of the kinds of themes I wanted to cover and by going over the consent form. I explained that recording would only be heard by the researcher/transcriber and if the later was not myself, that a confidentiality agreement would be signed. No one objected to being recorded.

The typical length of interviews was between 90 and 120 minutes, with a minority exceeding this. The general arc of the interview script, as shown in Appendix B, started with a few factual questions about 'what printshops' and 'when' before moving on to the individual life story that had led to involvement in the printshop/s. This was followed by questions relating

to various aspects of the printshops they were involved in and eventually returning to the more personal narrative of leaving the printshop. We returned to the consent form after the interview, as this was a better time for people to decide how they felt about anonymity. The majority of interviewees were happy to be named in the thesis, those that were not have been anonymised. I also gave interviewees the option of being sent the transcript of the interview. Many requested this and it provided an opportunity for them to correct or clarify certain things they had said, amend my spelling of names in particular, as well as to redact remarks they felt were indiscreet or damaging to others, or indeed themselves. There were two instances whereby interviewees said they did not want the transcript but would like to see how I used what they said in order to 'check it', if possible. I felt this was not feasible in the context of this thesis and those interviewees accepted this.

The quality of the interviews inevitably varied. Partly this was due to my skills as an interviewer, which I would like to think improved with experience. I made a habit of listening to the recording of an interview soon after it had taken place, which also helped me identify weaknesses in my interview approach, as did repeated listening while transcribing. Sometimes I was nervous, and found it hard to build a rapport. Other times it proved difficult reining in extensive elaborations of, for example mechanical details of equipment, or just matters unconnected to the printshops and their contexts. Occasionally interviewees wanted to paint a rather sanitized view 'for posterity' of the printshop they were involved in. The issue of 'lack' of memory was extreme in a couple of cases where the interviewees could recall very little about the printshop, although had fascinating stories to tell otherwise.

In a number of cases (a little under a quarter) I was interviewing people that I had once worked with, although I had only remained in contact with a minority of them. After some initial awkwardness, this history usually made for a fairly open interview. However my own memories had to be 'neutralized' somewhat, although if one of these interviewees missed out something I had recalled as significant, I tried to frame a question around "what are your memories of…I seem to remember something about…". I would like to think I entered into the research with an open mind about the subject, as well as perhaps more crucially in these interview situations, about events that had happened at printshops I had been involved in. I did not have any fixed analysis of what had happened or why, certainties I had once felt had long faded; it was a long time ago for me too. However as Johnson (2002: 108) has argued, while there are benefits to familiarity with the research context, there is still also the problem of assumption and taken for granted knowledge, which can lead to the failure to recognize moments of theoretical significance (see also Adler & Adler 1987: 23). While there is the opportunity during the analysis to overcome this, in an interview situation vigilance in the moment is needed. Yet part of the conditions that enable candid and reflective response may partly be that degree of 'taken for granted knowledge'. This remained something I

needed to be alert to throughout the interviews, especially when it was the interviewee that was assuming the 'taken for granted knowledge' on my behalf. In response I sometimes enacted a sort of naivety and said to the interviewee that I needed to do this; not to say so would have been patronizing. Or sometimes it was a case of just reconfirming that it was their understanding and memory I was interested in.

What was generally helpful as the interviews progressed was being able to cross-refer points made by other interviewees, as in "X said that… how different was that to your experience". Furthermore I attempted to find out as much as I could about the printshop/s an interviewee had been involved in before the interview took place and in some cases took along relevant documents or secondary sources that I had found, to act as an aide memoire in the interview. A number of interviewees had also dug out items saved from the press to show me, which again provided useful memory triggers and discussion points. As explained earlier I had especially attempted to become familiar with the contours of the 1970s alternative left more generally, and this helped my ability to 'keep up' in several interviews. This combined with my own previous involvement, despite the issues raised above, I think probably aided sensitivity toward nuance and the multiple meanings and references within participants responses (Johnson 2002: 108). To a certain extent, or at least in some cases, this worked towards the interview relationship aim that Bourdieu (1996: 19) describes as "active and methodological listening." This is attempted by giving undivided attention to the interviewee, and gaining as great an understanding as possible about the context of their experience. Overall and taken together, the interviews yielded a rich array of experience and information that could directly feed into the thesis, especially when combined with and cross-referenced with other sources.

As indicated above I transcribed all the recorded interviews. Doing this myself was partly due to financial considerations but also a way of re-immersing myself in the interview material, despite the considerable amount of labour involved. I did explore using a transcription service with a small sample of interviews, however along with cost issues, there was a problem with some of the technical, cultural and political terminology being inaccurately transcribed and I ended up re-transcribing those particular interviews. An overview of the interviews is shown in Table 6 on the next page.

Table 6. Overview of interviews

Interviews with printshop members	
Total number of interviewees: 55 (44 face to face, 5 Skype, 5 email) Follow up interviews: 18	Number of printshops represented by interviewees: 30 Founding members: 18 (printshops) 'Closing' members: 12 (printshops)
Breakdown of interviewees by printshop type: – Poster workshops: 7 – Community printshops: 21 – Service printshops: 29 *(Figures include people that worked at different types of printshop, hence the total over 55)*	Names of printshops represented by interviewees: Aberdeen People's Press, Aldgate Press, Blackrose, Calverts, Crest Press, Fly Press, GMW Printshop, Islington Community Press, Lasso, Lenthall Road Workshop, Leeds Community Press, Lithosphere, Little A, Moss Side Women's Press, Notting Hill Press, Onlywomen Press Printers, Open Road, Open Workshop, Paupers Press, Poster Film Collective, Ramoth Prints, Rye Express, See Red, Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op, Stepney Community Printshop, Trojan, Tyneside Free Press Workshop, Whitechapel Press, Women in Print, Union Place

3.7. Coding, handling the material and analysis

The number of interviews generated a considerable amount of textual data. I also had a body of notes made from document sources and internal records of the printshops, such as minutes books, as well as from the few secondary sources that contained information about particular printshops. I felt the most appropriate way to manage this large body of different kinds of text for analysis was to use qualitative analysis software in order to code it thematically. I used NVivo 8, which allows the user to generate their own codes and to further specify within those codes using a 'tree structure'. Drawing on Flick's (1998: 188) advice to initially approach coding in an open manner before setting up codes based on theoretical themes, prior to using the software I had read and reread through each interview transcript noting themes that had emerged that were distinct from those that had framed the interview questions. Each transcript and document was saved with a title that would enable identification of printshop and source. All of the transcripts and email responses were imported into NVivo as 'internals', and quotes and notes from the other material as 'externals'. I initially created coding categories based on the themes raised in the interviews, adding new subcategories, as I proceeded to reread the sources during the coding process.

While the interview questions were structured around particular themes of the topic guide, arising from the research questions and conceptual framework, the same theme might be returned to or elaborated by an interviewee in response to ostensibly quite different questions, therefore coding was not matter of solely transferring the response to particular thematic question into the relevant coding category, but dealing with transcript as whole with regard to each theme. I did not set up 'cases' in NVivo for specific printshops, nor coding

categories for individual printshops, as the research approach is not based on case studies as such. However because each document imported into NVivo was named for printshop identification I could track the representations of individual printshops within each set of coded material. Initial coding categories included the main themes of 'participation', 'resources', 'networks/relationships', 'printshop aims', 'participants', 'context of emergence', 'changing context'. Most of these then became tree nodes with subcategories as shown in Table 4 below. Coding slightly begat coding, with subcategories proliferating, which then for manageability were sometimes merged back into other coding categories. I exported the resulting 'nodes' containing the coded text as Word documents and checked over them, making notes regarding repetitions and confirmations, differences and discrepancies. Later interviews and 'quotes and notes' from documentary sources that I subsequently discovered were then 'manually' added by theme into the relevant Word document, rather than by returning to NVivo.

Table 7. Data coding categories and sub-categories

Coding categories	Coding sub-categories	Relation to specific research question (RQ) and relevant chapter (All feed into Main RQ)
Printshop aims	(none)	Sub RQ 1 (Chp.4)
Participants	Background Motivations (for joining) Leaving (reasons) Diversity of members Changing memberships	Sub RQ 1 (Chp.4) Sub RQ 2 (Chp.5)
Contexts	Context of emergence Context when joining Changing contexts Context of demise	Sub RQ 1 (Chp.4)
Networks/relationships	Users Customer relations Changing users Connections with other presses	
Participation	Collective working Prior collective working Participatory ambitions Self-help Internal conflicts	Sub RQ 2 (Chp.5)
Resources	Finance sources Premises Wages Attitudes to money	Sub RQ 3 (Chp.6)
Technology	Skills Acquiring tech Low tech Changing tech	

The coding enabled comparison of the characteristics, practices, ambitions and narratives of printshops, as well as a range of experiences within and across them. The coding also aided, to a degree, with the verification of particular printshop information, by enabling the accounts of a particular aspect to be viewed together and cross-referenced. Interview accounts were cross-checked with information from the various archival, document and secondary sources I had acquired, some of which had also been fed into NVivo as indicated above. Where there seemed to be significant discrepancies regarding what happened or

how or when something was done, rather than divergence of interviewees' experiences and thoughts on the matter, and it felt important to establish some certainty, I made a note to seek further clarification, and produced a list of contradictory or unclear 'facts' relating to particular printshops and sought where possible to resolve these, sometimes by re-contacting the interviewees. Where it was not possible to gain clarification, I ensured that it was evident in the writing of the thesis that this particular matter was 'according to the recollection of…' While the 'chopping up' of interview transcripts by coding was extremely valuable for the above reasons, I also found that I frequently returned to the full transcripts in order to get a more holistic understanding of what was being said, by seeing particular points made within the contextual narrative of the interviewee.

3.8. Research ethics

The role of ethics is central to any social science enquiry, and most explicitly so those that involve research participants, or makes reference to any identifiable human beings, living or deceased. This study has been carried out in accordance with the LSE Research Ethics Policy, taking further guidance from LSE taught seminars relating to ethical research conduct and qualitative research literature. The overriding consideration of research ethics in relates to the avoidance of harm to those persons and groups that have contributed to or been referred to in the study, at each stage of the research process, as well as in its public dissemination. The other ethical dimension relates to the beneficial consequences of the study; for those contributing to it, for the social groups they may be part of, or more broadly for "the human condition" (Kvale 2007: 26). A number of the steps undertaken to ensure ethical responsibility in the conduct of this study have already been described in this chapter in relation to the stages of the research process, however I will gather them here together for coherence.

With regard to interviewees, in my initial request for them to be interviewed by me, which was usually by email, I explained the nature of study to the extent that it was formed for myself at this time, and the academic context in which I was undertaking it. I also explained that I would be asking them about their own experiences. I gave the underlying rationale for the project in terms of addressing a collective history that had not received any historical attention, but that I felt was worthy of it. If the individual I was contacting was someone I had not known, as in the majority of cases, I also gave a little of my own background, so that I could be 'placed'. I invited questions about any aspect of the project. Consent forms for interviewees were designed, that again explained the academic context of the research, gave the university name and department, along with a contact email for the department's administration and the names of my supervisors. It also stated the interview would be recorded, unless the interviewee wished it not be. Additionally it stated that the interviewee

had the right not to answer any question and to end the interview whenever they wished. I went through these forms at the beginning of the interviews. On the form I provided three different levels of anonymity that interviewees could chose. The options were: i) willingness to be identified in the thesis and related writing, ii) not being identified by name but agreement to being quoted if anonymised by name, iii) not being identified by name or having their words directly associated with a particular printshop. Interviewees usually decided upon which option they felt most comfortable with after the interview, and sometimes contacted me to change this at a later date. It would have been difficult if the majority of interviewees had chosen the third option as it would have prevented connecting direct statements and insights from interviewees to specific printshops. However because the *possibility* exists for identification by ex-colleagues with the second level of anonymity, I wanted to offer participants a more secure option. The consent form also stated that the recordings would only be heard by myself, that they would only be used for the purposes of this research and that they would remain in my possession.

All interviewees had the option of being sent the transcript of the interview, and therefore the chance to reflect on whether there was anything they had said that they wanted omitted. This felt especially important because the interview context as one of encouraging of candid talk and reflection could result in things being said that felt comfortable in the moment, but less so in retrospect and especially with regard of being cited in the future. In some cases during the interviews, interviewees made statements such as 'this is off the record'. In the transcripts these sections were also highlighted as 'off limits' and not coded. In some cases I deleted the problematic material from the transcript. Most interviewees did not make any comments on their transcripts, and I suspect that in some cases they did not read them.

The issue of intimate relationships within a press arose in a number of interviewees, although it was not a line of questioning I initiated or pursued. While there is certainly room for a study that considers the role that sex, the having or wanting of, plays in the dynamics of collectives; that is not this study. Throughout I have felt that this subject, affecting though it could be within a collective, raised too many ethical considerations to contend with, and as such I have made minimal reference to these relationships. I feel that a study that included these issues would require a more participatory approach in handling and interpreting the material. The thesis does not claim to give the 'whole' picture, nor cover all the issues that might characterize printshop collective life, it cannot. Similarly certain kinds of rifts or conflicts within a press I felt were not appropriate for academic exposure. That is not to suggest conflicts as such were considered inappropriate for exploration, they are a vital aid for understanding some of the issues at stake, however those that have been referred to, do not in my judgement present any risk of 'harm' or embarrassment to those involved.

The other body of material that needed to be considered with regard to ethical issues was the internal printshop records that I had access to, particularly minutes books and correspondence. While some of these were in public archives, and therefore presumably considered fit for public research by the depositing persons, used without due respect there was still the possibility of undermining named individuals and indeed the representation of the press. With respect to those materials that were generously shared with me by interviewees, including minutes books, special caution was taken not to cite anything that referred to particular individuals, or that related to conflicts. In one case I also agreed with the press in question only to makes notes from the minutes books up until a certain date.

While the issue of 'harm' is usually considered in relation to individual participants, this study also required reflection about the issue of harm in terms of 'reputation' not just of individuals but of the printshops they were, or are, associated with. Two of the printshops referred to in the study are also still very much going concerns. To a large extent, because this is not a case study approach, printshops are not treated as discrete entities that can then be held up individually for 'judgement', be that in relation to their democratic practices or financial struggles. Clearly the purpose of this type of study is not to do that in any case, however I cannot predict how readers of it, especially possible printshop-participant readers, might subsequently feel about how their press has been 'represented' across the study. While those that gave their time, shared their experiences and sometimes shoebox archives were supportive of the study, the selection of material, the themes chosen and interpretations made are my responsibility alone. I have taken care not to misrepresent the activities of a press, but I could also only work with the material that was available to me, including my own intellectual limitations, trying to ensure ethically grounded choices and precautions along the way.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to make explicit the methods used in the research process and the justification for them. I outlined some of the challenges of researching a marginal historical or 'past' phenomena, and the issues of finding sufficient material to draw on, as well as locating participants. The strategies to address this were explained, from the recourse to public archives and collections, the use of documents provided by participants, the experiment with the radicalprintshops.org wiki, and the ongoing focussed contextual reading. A typology of printshops 'types' that made up the field, and which provides differentiation between them in the core chapters of the thesis was introduced and explained.

The methodological approach, as can be seen in this chapter is qualitative, and the use of in-depth interviews and subsequently recourse to participant's own narratives and reflections

indicates a generally interpretivist perspective (Bryman 2004). My contention has been that to try and understand the emergent shape and texture of the printshop field, its distinctive democratic practices and subsequent trajectory, the experiences and understandings of its participants are central. This provided the justification for undertaking semi-structured interviews with a range of participants. The main criticisms of qualitative interviews were outlined along with approaches to mitigate problems that were applicable to qualitative study. Here I also raised the possible further problem of interviews regarded the relatively distant past; that the vicissitudes of individual memory may be greater than with regard to more recent experiences. However citing Yow (1994) I proposed that temporal distance might bring also greater clarity and reflexivity regarding previous involvements and experiences. Nevertheless where appropriate, for example with regard to significant events or changes, I explained that I have attempted to corroborate claims, through cross-referencing and comparing versions between individuals and/or triangulation if possible with other sources. In various places throughout the chapter I raised the issue of my own relationship to the object of study and some of the implications this has brought to carrying out the research. In the final section I discussed the ethical considerations of research process and the actions taken to try and ensure respect for, and appropriate protection of, the participants.

In retrospect, the research task that I had set myself, or that took shape, was methodologically quite challenging. The inclusion of different types of printshops, and the decisions to try and 'cover' what Fligstein and MacAdam (2012) refer to as the three phases of a field; 'emergence', 'stability' and 'rupture/resettlement' (in their terminology), made for an unwieldy project at times. However to some extent the shape of the research was determined by the resources I had access to and it was through the research process and the piecemeal discovery of sources that I began to see the connections between different types of printshops and to begin to understand this varied phenomena as parts of the same field. Yet there were perhaps points where I could have made some methodological decisions to narrow the focus. It was suggested to me early on that I pursue a case study approach for example, of three or four cases. However as indicated earlier in this chapter I was not confident, that I would be able to locate sufficient sources and interviewees to do this approach justice. There was also on the other hand a personal drive to try and piece together a more inclusive story for analysis. The first empirical chapter of the thesis, which follows on from this one, begins this task by drawing on the typology to map the field of radical and community printshops.

Chapter 4: The Contours of a Field

The radical printshops were a part of the alternative left 'field of contention' and its related movement fields. What they printed, the way they worked and the fact of their existence constituted part of the cultural expression of this multifarious field. As Crossley has written, movement fields are not just spaces of political activism, but of "cultural and material resources… sites and forms of activity which serve to keep the movement illusio alive" (2003: 59). Print culture and the different kinds of workshops that enabled and produced it, along with spaces and networks of distribution are examples of such cultural and material resources. What Crossley means by 'illusio' is taken from Bourdieu's use of the term to describe the 'belief in the game', necessary for participation in, and therefore the life of, any field of social activity. Crossley suggests that such cultural and material resources are a source of field sustainment, reflecting movement values and providing evidence of its internal achievements (see also Melucci 1996 and Atton 2003). However the printshops, as field 'resources', necessarily existed "at the crossroads" of other activities, groups and positions (Bailey et al. 2008: 27). This then suggests that the position(s) of the printshops within that field are always subject to wider field dynamics and processes in quite particular ways, and that in turn shape their relationships with those other (changing) actors and their values and expectations. The field approach taken here, as explained in Chapter 2, assumes that those relationships are a large part of what constitute 'the story' and that to understand the historical phenomena of these alternative radical printshops it needs to be seen as one contingent upon these relations and shifting wider field contexts.

To what extent the practices and survival of the printshops connected overall to the dynamics and trajectories of the alternative left and associated movements is one of the underlying questions of the thesis. In this chapter the focus is on the relationships between the printshops and these changing fields by establishing what they were printing, who with and who for, and in what ways that changed. In doing so, I address the first sub-research question, '*what were the relationships between the printshops and their movement field constituencies and how did they respond to changes in these fields.*' More generally the chapter establishes the emergence and contours of the printshop phenomena in relation to the relevant movement fields, and a wider field of radical cultural production, providing a contextualized introduction that lays the basis for the subsequent chapters. As such the chapter also contributes to addressing the main thesis question by attempting to identify and understand some of the political and cultural conditions that gave rise to these kinds of printshops, as well starting to distinguish some of the internal and external field processes that possibly contributed to their collective demise. Before going on to outline the structure of the chapter, although it has been explained in the previous chapter, some restatement of what is meant by a field is briefly summarized.

What makes a domain of related social activity 'a field' is seen here, drawing on Crossley (2002, 2006) and Fligstein and McAdam (2012), to rest on a number of factors. Firstly it assumes a site comprised of an array of distinct actors, (groups, individuals, institutions, networks) orientated towards shared goals, and taking up roles and positions relative to each other. Resources and types of field specific capital, such as internally derived status, networks or access to finance, are typically unevenly distributed amongst these actors. Actors have a shared sense of the fields 'distinctive value' (Crossley 2002), as well as of their own as 'players', relative to others in the field; of what it is that they are contributing and standing for. In the case of counter-hegemonic fields, such as most of those referred to here, this usually involves what aspects of hegemonic (or doxic) thought and practice is being contested and what alternative value is being put forward. What constitutes the field's distinctive value, and what it *should be*, can be a source of internal field contestation, or in parts of it, with different field actors taking up different and relative positions or stances (Crossley 2006). Knowing about the relative stances, roles and positions is to some degree part of being in a particular field, however not all of this may be apparent to those involved. (It can also prove a challenge for the researcher!). Fields also involve an internally shared set of understandings about what 'tactics' are considered 'legitimate' for the different roles that agents have and more generally across the field (Fligstein & McAdam 2012). These 'rules' are also part of what help define a field, but again they can become the cause of lines of division, position taking and challenge. Finally it needs to be born in mind, especially given the diachronic nature of this study, that fields are typically in flux and "constructed on a situational basis, as shifting collections of actors come to define new concerns and issues as salient" (Fligstein & McAdam 2012: 10).

The structure of the chapter draws on the 'printshops typology' presented in the previous chapter. The three general types of Poster Workshop, Community Printshop and Movement Service Printers define the three core sections and aid the positioning of these types within the field. The particular roles that each sort of printshop set for themselves implies different kinds of relationships with their constituencies and different stances or positions about what they were doing. These roles, taken from the typology, were 'ideally' as shown below, in Table 8. As also indicated in the previous chapter, there was a wider realm of oppositional printers that included non-democratically run presses, as well as ad hoc and one person set ups. Figure 3, at the end of this introductory section, illustrates this as well as the movement of activity that might occur across types.

Table 8. Printshop roles according to 'type'

	Poster workshop	Community printshop	Movement service printshop
Print process	Screen-printing	Screen-printing or/and Small offset-litho	Small & large offset-litho Occasionally screen-printing
Role	To create, reproduce (and distribute) visual propaganda for specific political and social movement aims and causes	To provide a printing service for local community activists and cultural groups **and/or** To provide access to print media skills for such groups	To provide a printing service for a range of activist, community and cultural groups. May be a preference for particular politics or SMs. To make enough return on services to sustain a self-managed workplace.

Each of the three chapter sections follows a similar pattern. Firstly, the contexts of the emergence of the printshop type are outlined. Once established, these also provide support across the subsequent sections. For example the first section on Poster Workshops, numerically the smallest grouping, sketches out the revival of radical poster making and wider context of radical creative production. This also provides part of the contextual and field basis for the following section on Community Printshops. Each section goes onto discuss what they were printing, who with and for, in order to establish their roles and relationships with their constituencies. This is followed with evidence of how this changed and what the challenges were for the particular roles they had set themselves and how they negotiated this. The contemporaneous development of the alternative left field are brought in where relevant. Having established the overall basis and structure of the chapter, we can now move onto the first section, poster workshops.

Fig. 3 Field of radical and community printshops
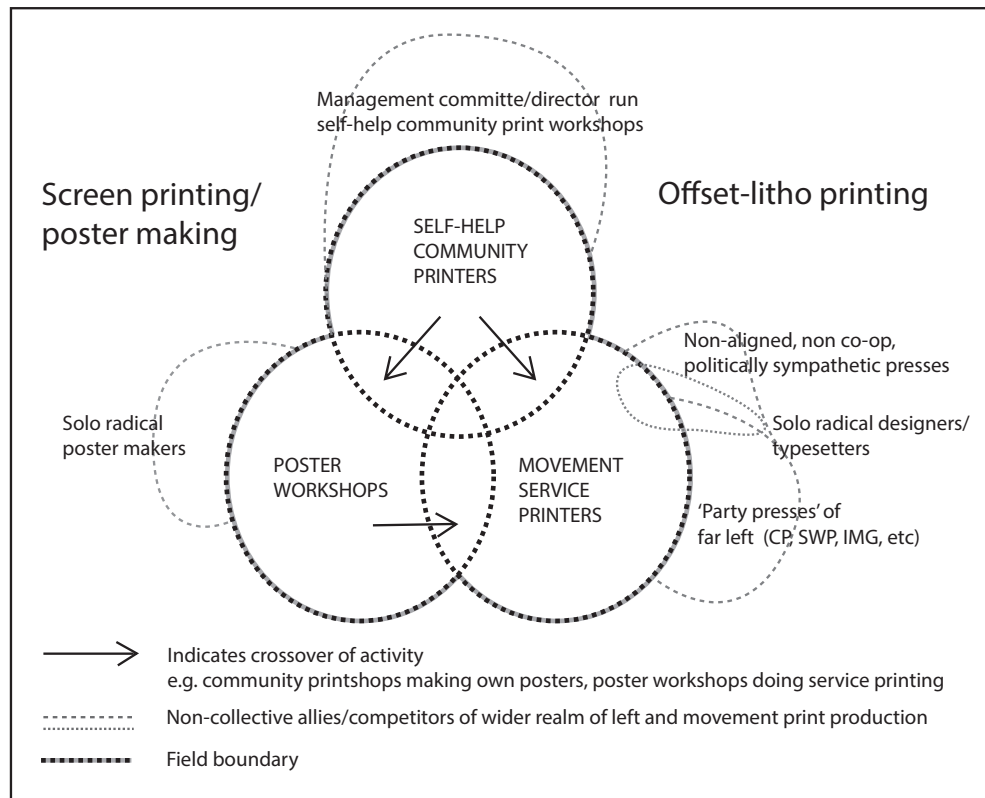
4.1. Poster Workshops

In the late 1960s and early seventies, the screen-printed poster, as an aesthetically potent and accessible means of political communication, was seized upon by activists and artists across the world[13]. Performing various functions, posters became a significant component of the visual culture of many new radical and social movements. Poster making was a distinct area of practice in Britain's field of radical and community print. For analytical purposes, my typology of printshops identified 'poster workshops' as primarily content *creators* in distinction to the community and co-operative printshops for whom content was mostly supplied by their users. However some of these printshops, particularly the community printshops discussed in the next part of the chapter, also created their own posters. In this section I introduce the political-cultural field in which radical poster production took place, pin down what roles the poster was seen to play, doing so in relation to particular poster workshops. Firstly I outline the international context and influence of this turn to poster making and something of the cultural context in which the poster workshops set up. After turning to the roles and relationships that the poster workshops had with the movements they sought to contribute to, I finally turn to the challenges of poster production in the context of a changing political and cultural field.

The main groups referred to are Poster Workshop (1968-71), Poster-Film Collective (1972-1990), See Red Women's Workshop (1974-1990), all London based. Mention is also made of Red Dragon Print Collective who began in 1972 and joined forces with Poster-Film Collective in 1974. Where relevant the poster-making activities of other types of printshop (community printshops and printing co-ops), are also referred to. Until the late 1970s Poster-Film Collective was simply Poster Collective, however I am using their later name, abbreviated as PFC throughout for clarity for the reader. The phrase 'poster workshop' only refers to *the* Poster Workshop when capitalized.

The contexts of radical poster making
Despite a long history of radical 'printmaking' it was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that members of the new protest and social movements began to really exploit its potential (Rossman 1993, Cushing 2011). Britain's first 'new left' social movement, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) had attracted sympathetic professional designers[14] who created a powerful and austere iconography for its placards and campaign posters. But there is little evidence of an eruption of art students and participants designing and printing their own unofficial posters. It was the rise of the poster as a new object of youth

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13 Although screen-printing was the key process, posters were sometimes made using other means such as lino-cut. If there was access to large offset-litho this process was also used.

14 These included F.H.K Henrion, Ken Garland and Robin Fior

consumption (Flood 2012), especially those emanating from the hippy counter-culture that inaugurated it as a popular 'alternative' cultural form and helped to pave the way for its autonomous adoption by the new left protest and social movements. In the US, cross currents between the counter-culture and the anti-Vietnam war movement in the mid 1960s kick-started a renaissance of political poster making and by the late 1960s, screen printing poster workshops had become a feature of campus protest throughout the country; a pattern that would repeat across the world (Cushing 2009). The prolific poster output of the Parisian 'Ateliers Populaires' ('peoples workshops'), set up in art schools during the protests of May-June 1968 further consolidated the poster's position in the media repertoire of contemporary youthful dissent, and show it was possible to set up a workshop and "just do it" (Taylor 2008, Intv. Halsall 4/10/11). Posters were disseminated through global reportage and via the movements of radical students and sympathizers. In the 1968 occupation of London's Hornsey School of Art, it was not just the numerous posters they produced themselves – for which demand generated many reprints – that covered the walls, but also 'souvenirs' from Paris (Page 2008). Later that year, inspired by the 'ateliers populaires', a non-campus based workshop set up in London, the eponymous Poster Workshop.

One of the broad leitmotifs of the 1960s 'explosion' of experimental creativity from its counter-cultural expression to new varieties of art practice had been the dissolution of the perceived divide between 'art' and 'life' or 'art' and 'society' (Moore-Gilbert 1994). The above mentioned occupation at Hornsey art school[15] raised questions about the nature and function of art education, the role of artists in a technological and increasingly media saturated society and the social role of art (Cranfield 2012).[16] These were matters of sufficient cultural interest for Penguin to publish a book by the occupiers the following year and for the Institute of Contemporary Art to stage an exhibition. Into the 1970s this questioning would develop into a more concentrated critique of the hegemonic forms, institutions and practices of both 'high culture' and mass media (Moore-Gilbert 1994, Dworkin 1997). Many of those drawn to those critiques believed, as two poster makers put it, that "political content alone does not make art political if it remains within the confined social territory of art; it must move into a broader sphere of 'influence', a new social base must be sought" (Dunn & Leeson in Taylor 1980 [1977]: 107). For a number of ex art students, radical and community poster production provided a solution to these various questions. Posters had an identifiable social and cultural purpose as propaganda tools for movements

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15 There were parallel protests at Guildford, Croydon, Brighton and Birmingham art schools amongst others.

16 As Cranfield (2012) notes the issues raised were a partly continuation of debates begun in the 1950s especially by those around the Independent Group (Richard Hamilton, Reyner Banham, Lawrence Alloway etc.)

and as contributions to a new counter-hegemonic symbolic culture.[17] The ideas of Walter Benjamin were also starting to be disseminated in art schools and radical cultural networks, particularly his notion of the author or artist as 'producer' (Benjamin 1970 [1934]), contributing to social struggles by being amongst them, co-creating new social relations of production (Zeitlyn 1975, PFC 1982, Walker 2002). The form of the poster allowed for democratic 'consumption'; collectively made, it was democratic in its production too, "preserv[ing] the possibility of both social and cultural radicalism" (Miles in Taylor 1980 [1977]: 60). Photography, film and theatre collectives and workshops grew up in parallel as forms seen as politically apposite to the 'democratic' communication of ideas and with radical precedents to draw on (Moriarty & Jeffers 2014). The general claim here is that the poster workshops, and indeed many of community screenprint shops that made posters, did not *just* grow out of political movements and their co-mingling with the counter-culture, there was also a concomitant discourse about the role and status of art, artists and culture taking place on the fringes of cultural institutions and beyond, that validated their activity.

By the early 1970s, along with the intersecting and growing community arts/media field, various forms of radical publishing activity and spaces of dissemination, these different elements came to co-constitute a diverse and substantial field of radical cultural production into which poster production fitted. This field while having its own internal structure and contestations – and increasingly its own subfields (such as alternative theatre) – necessarily overlapped with the field of left contention; the social space where subject matter, positions, participants and usually audiences were also formed. In that sense we can say that this field of radical cultural production, or certainty some parts of it, were *dependent* on the radical political and movement field (Fligstein & McAdam 2012). Having very briefly established these framing contexts, we can now turn directly to the poster workshops themselves.

Poster workshops: representing movements?
The London based Poster Workshop (1968-71), referred to above, seems to have the been the first collectively run poster making set-up, and can be cast as a 'pioneer' staking out some of the field territory that subsequently took shape (Gorski 2013). They described themselves as: "A tool for counter-information at the service of the class struggle: solidarity with industrial, student and tenant strikers and liberation fronts all over the world" (Poster Workshop 2009) and soon became a popular resource within, and for, the dynamic and rapidly shifting field of late sixties radicalism (Wilson 2009). They combined most of the

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17 Politically committed artists in this period did not abandon individual making and 'the gallery' by any means. Some were also critical of the "complete abandonment" of art institutions by left artists "in favour of a 'popular' art of posters, banners and murals" because it assumed that the political was "perpetual[ly] elsewhere" and did not grasp the political nature of the gallery/institutional context (Burgin 1980: 215). For black and female visual artists excluded from mainstream art channels of representation and support, this point was in some respects self-evident (see Chambers 2014, Parker & Pollock 1987).

defining activities of the later printshops, and as such do not fit neatly into the typology above. Namely, they anticipated the self-help community printshops of the 1970s by encouraging people to produce their own propaganda, designing and printing *with* rather than for people (although they did this too), and they made posters relating to the campaigns and interests of those involved in the workshop. They also took mobile printing set ups to events and protest planning gatherings, again a practice of later workshops. The posters created at PW provide a near index of contemporaneous activism: anti-Vietnam war demos; housing protests; striking workers; anti colonial struggles; Black Power; anti-racist activism; CND; student protesters and Irish civil rights campaigners. As far as they were concerned "the political health of the workshop" could be gauged by the extent to which it reflected, "what is happening politically" (Poster Workshop 1969: 3). The left allegiances that came to them were also diverse; International Socialists (later SWP), Situationists, the Communist Party and the Indian Marxist Leninist group provide only the explicit examples of their users that would have fiercely disagreed on the right road to revolution. This might seem insignificant but at the time the largest mobilizing movements, the anti-Vietnam war movement and the student movement were dominated by competing revolutionary left factions (Widgery 1976, Taylor 1988). The workshop's open stance was a deliberate attempt to bypass the growing sectarianism, which as they put it, "seemed to plague the Left"; their only requirement was that what was produced was "approximately socialist" and that "we find this too difficult to define" (Poster Workshop 1969: 3)[18]. Their non-alignment to a specific left faction or party would also be a feature not just of the poster workshops that were to follow but also of the printshops more widely. Poster Workshop closed in early 1971. For some the period of political optimism was over, for others more focused political directions beckoned, including that of the growing Women's Liberation Movement (Lord 2013, Wilson 2009). In the year that they folded however, another group began to form and would call themselves the Poster Collective, later the Poster Film Collective (PFC). The following year Red Dragon Print Collective started up and two years later in 1974, See Red Women's Workshop.

The 1971 closure of Poster Workshop and the germinating of PFC roughly marked various interrelated shifts in Britain's radical movement field. Failure, fading momentum and the factionalism between the revolutionary left groups that had grown along with the anti-Vietnam war and student movements had led both into decline (Rowbotham 2001, Lent 2001). The revolutionary left itself however grew in the 1970s, particularly the Trotskyist groups that had dominated the leadership of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. Their hopes for the revolution were in the industrial working class, fuelled by the rise of home grown

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18 This non-sectarian position reflected that of the newspaper, *The Black Dwarf,* which their statement was published in. *Black Dwarf* also started in 1968, however in 1970 they would split to set up *Red Mole*; a paper of the International Marxist Group (IMG), one of Trotskyist groups dominant in the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC).

labour militancy in the early 1970s, or in the continuing anti-colonial and anti-imperial struggles (Laybourn 2006). The non-aligned radical left, alienated by the sectarianism, increasing rigidity and limited agendas of the revolutionary left, grew in parallel to them, embracing a wider range of concerns that included international and labour issues but also local issues and those of the social movements that were gaining ground, particularly women's and gay liberation. The poster workshops that set up in the early 1970s roughly reflected these general orientations. For example Poster-Film Collective (PFC) was initially concerned with anti-imperialist/colonialist and industrial struggles; Red Dragon Print Collective with housing struggles, 'Ireland' and police injustice; See Red Women's Workshop with the women's liberation movement, from a generally socialist perspective. Alignment with the growing 'community politics' was most evident in the community printshops, the focus of the next section, but also featured in the output of Red Dragon, who in the mid 1970s combined interests with PFC. There was a cross over of issues between these groups of poster makers, but with varying focus and articulation. Despite being non-aligned, unlike Poster Workshop they did not represent *any* left or feminist position on an issue, in fact what position amongst these, that a poster would convey, was an issue of serious internal debate (Intv. Halsall 4/10/11, Intv Robinson 1/11/11)

These workshops largely saw their posters as orientated towards radical and social movement fields rather than propaganda to convince the 'general public', or at least came to. This question, of 'preaching to the converted', was and remains an ongoing point of discussion for radical media producers (Coyer at al. 2011). However it can miss the point about the need to sustain movements internally and the role of culture in doing so (Melucci 1996, Crossley 2002). Jonathan for example explained how he had seen the role of PFC as partly "to generate a poster culture and on different levels, so nationally, locally but for a milieu (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). See Red while asking the question, as did many in the early Women Liberation Movement (WLM), "how can we reach more women" (See Red 1976), also "positively recognised that for the moment at least their work is primarily for women already in the WLM" (*Womanprint* 1977). This does not necessarily undermine the role of posters as 'counter-media', or 'consciousness raising', but represents an evolution of the functions of the post-68 radical poster in its contribution to the culture of the radical and social movement field. The posters of the earlier Poster Workshop had 'the street' in mind, and were not made to be sold or even kept as cultural 'commodities' but rather to operate as immediately functional objects of propaganda (Poster Workshop 2009), echoing the Atelier Populaire's position that the only "rightful place" for their posters was "in the centres of conflict that is to say in the streets and the walls of factories" (Atelier Populaire 1968). This was part of Red Dragon, PFC and See Red's activity; all produced posters for placards on demonstrations and flyposting, as well as advertising political events. However posters were also understood as cultural artifacts that could carry politics into *various* contexts (PFC 1982:

135). Part of building a counter-hegemony, a new culture, was through the critical 'socialisation' of political knowledge (Gramsci 1971), with the alternative left expansion of politics into the 'lifeworld' this might take place in multiple domains. Unlike Poster Workshop these slightly later groups also sold posters, albeit very cheaply.

The all-important distribution of posters was often part of a mutually sustaining relationship with other movement resources and activities. It included setting up stalls at political meetings and events, delivering them to radical bookshops and occasional exhibitions in alternative and radical cultural spaces. The network of radical and alternative bookshops across Britain was especially vital for distribution. The number of such bookshops had mushroomed in the 1970s with the growth of the non-aligned left, and indeed the revolutionary left, as well as black cultural politics and the women's movement (*The Radical Bookseller* 1980). Both PFC and See Red also produced catalogues of their posters, which could be ordered from them, or seen in radical bookshops. Small ads advertising the catalogues, or new posters, and occasional articles in the radical press also publicised them to likely constituencies. Significant amounts of posters were also distributed via direct mail order to a host of individuals and groups; the latter typically comprising a wide range of campaigning groups and organisations, trade unions, universities, youth clubs, women's, advice and community centres, as well as organisations abroad. Connections were made with radical groups in various professions, particularly education, youth work and health, and posters made in conjunction with them for distribution in those spheres, as well as through engagement with a host of movement groups (Intv. Miles 20/9/11, See Red 2016).

Developing challenges for radical poster makers
The main period of new poster production for both PFC and See Red had mostly ended by about 1984. Up until that that time, between them, and similarly to the earlier Poster Workshop, most major issues of concern to either the radical left or the women's movement were mapped in the numerous posters they produced (see collections in V&A Archives and Institute for Social History). PFC was to develop one more 'set' of posters, on the theme of technology, completed in 1989 and discussed later in this section. See Red's last new 'poster' of their own was a poster calendar for 1984, highlighting women's role in international struggles against imperialism and colonialism; it was not popular and some feminist distributers refused to stock it (Intv. Hodder 8/4/11). They continued however for several more years, sustaining production and distribution of a diminishing range of existing posters and operating as service printers for a range of movement, arts and civil society groups. There are various factors that contributed to these situations and while some are obviously distinct to the specific histories of each group there are also possibly field related issues in common.

Between the early 1970s, when PFC, See Red and Red Dragon started up and 1984, the field of independent radical printing had grown significantly and now included many funded community screen-print workshops, as well as radical service printers. The community screen-print workshops, as we will see in the next section, facilitated activist and cultural groups in designing and printing their own posters. Some of these workshops also produced their 'own' political posters for sale on an ad-hoc basis and distributed them through mail order and radical bookshops. A few of the new radical service printers such as Fly Press (est. 1978) and Trojan (est. 1979) also made and distributed their own posters 'on the side' (Intv. Williams 21/9/11, Intv. Swash 22/9/11). Several of this type of printers had also acquired large offset presses, enabling groups to get their own posters printed for sale. In other words the growth of a diversified field of radical printshops had expedited an increase in radical poster production more generally. While all this this created 'competition' it also served to reconfirm the cultural position of radical posters.

The late 1970s and early 1980s had also seen the rise of more centralized protest and campaigning movements who produced professionally designed, graphically striking, offset litho posters for flyposting, placards and sale. David King for example designed most of the posters for Rock Against Racism, Anti-Nazi League[19] and Anti-Apartheid Movement of this period. Peter Kennard supplied CND, which had resurfaced as a major movement in the early 1980s, with many powerful poster designs. One of the most popular oppositional posters of the period was the anti-nuclear poster 'Gone with the Wind', a humourous appropriation of the Hollywood film poster.[20] These posters were all much 'slicker' than the output of the radical poster (or community screen-printing workshops), significantly challenging the visual distinction of their output. David King in fact, explicitly "wanted to introduce professional design rigour into what he felt was a mishmash of graphics on the left" (Flood 2012: 77).

The radical poster production of the workshops had been informed by a shared critique of capitalist mass media and commercial advertising. There was a resistance to 'slickness' as it was often called, and a general agreement that radical counter media should not be a "crude mirror image" of capitalist forms (Dunn & Leeson 1986: 57, See Red 1980). The "mishmash" that King refers to above was no doubt the graphically eclectic "field of works" (Bourdieu 1996) that radical poster workshops, including those mentioned here, drew on. Furthermore few in the poster workshops were trained in 'promotional culture' or graphic design. King was also not the only one to start critiquing the 'incoherent' aesthetics of the left. Su Braden

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19 These were mostly printed at the SWP printshop because SWP members initiated these organisations (see Widgery 1986)

20 It showed showing Reagan carrying Thatcher with the caption "She promised to follow him to the end of the earth. He promised to organise it." Britain's main seller of political posters claims this poster was "one of the best selling propaganda posters of all time" (andrewburgin.co.uk). It was produced by the SWP.

(1983), for example, raised a number of issues in her analysis of independent radical poster making. She argued, drawing on Enzensberger's (1970) earlier critique of the left's preference for archaic technology, that the use of screen-printing by the poster workshops constrained both the image and its appeal to audiences used to commercially printed offset-litho media (Braden 1983: 41-55). Not only this, but the deployment of imagery in radical and community posters trailed 'behind' that of commercial advertising in its analytical grasp of visual symbolism. To some extent a consideration of Thompson's (1995: 17) summary of the means that enable symbolic power is relevant here; a range of technical resources, competency in the creation and dissemination of symbolic content, literacy in the use and understanding of that content, along with recognition and respect as a producer of it. It can be argued that on most of these fronts the poster collectives were increasingly challenged.

Poster workshop interviewees echoed aspects of these charges. Jonathan of PFC for example, "we were very slow, limited by a very narrow syntax, very narrow technical… compare it with, 1979, you get those huge poster campaigns, Saatchi, my god they were good and severe, elegant and worked on semantics and ambiguity… the language which came from [left] politics was always lagging behind life" (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). Not dissimilarly, Anne from See Red felt that by the early 1980s, "people were becoming more visually sophisticated, able to read quite complex images, in terms of advertising posters and TV images, and in some ways the Left, the feminists, we were just lagging behind, using these older forms" (Intv. Robinson 1/11/11).

Writing about the challenges they faced in the mid 1980s, the See Red collective partially echoed these reflections. They were feeling pressure for a "more subtle… slicker product… [t]here was a time when political posters were displayed regardless… as long as the politics were right, this doesn't work anymore" (in Kenna et al. 1986: 33). There was also a plea for more "uplifting and positive" messages. The latter issue was not especially new; See Red had previously tried to address this after their posters had been described as 'depressing' by some in the women's movement (See Red 1980: 54). The more recent 'demands' on them can also be linked to a generational reaction against the politics and aesthetics of '1970s feminism' – and that of the radical field more generally (Intv Hodder 8/4/11). It is precisely what new entrants to 'restricted' cultural (or movement) fields do; "attack the consecrated forms of the alternative" (Hesmondhalgh 2006: 213, Bourdieu 1993). However, as Jonathan suggested, '1970s' radicals were also changing, "the whole sense of a social movement had started to go… [and] I think everyone wanted to forget the 70s, amnesia, so part of the amnesia is getting rid of all that which very quickly seemed archaic" (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). Arguably part of what was archaic was not the just politics but the visual culture that went with them.

PFC had in fact been moving away from the typical radical poster format, if not its means of technical production, through the development of poster sets. "We wanted to produce posters that had the possibility of staying up on a wall to be viewed over a longer period of time… go beyond the emphatic statement" (PFC 1982: 137). These narrative 'sets', on themes such as the history of racism and colonialism, were made in conjunction with radical teaching groups, for use as "non-didactic teaching tools" in school classrooms. Left sympathisers in the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) approved and helped distribute them to schools in London and across the country (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). They had also been extending their activities in other ways, with filmmaking, talks and slide shows.

See Red on the other hand had continued in the same vein, although the politics and dispersions of the women's movement had significantly changed by the early 1980s. Lesbians had become more dominant in many organisations, including See Red, and certain cornerstones of WLM critique, such as housework, or even reproductive heath issues, were of less interest (both had been amply represented in earlier See Red posters). Existing movement debates about how feminists should look and how women should be depicted intensified. A hint of the difficulties that this created for poster making are apparent in Anne's description of trying to design a new 'Lesbian' poster in the early 1980s; "it was torturous, what kinds of *images* of lesbians could you have? ... and all the bonkers politics about what you had to look like" (Intv. Robinson 1/11/11). Sexual violence and pornography had also become particular focuses of feminist activism in the early 1980s but the collective found the issues impossible to represent in a poster that anyone would want, not least because of the demand for more uplifting messages (Intv. Winter 19/8/11). Other kinds of challenges were simultaneously emerging as internal movement racism, classism and disableism came to the fore. The issue of representation and recognition *between* feminists became more charged and recriminatory. While this partly raised awareness and generated new groups and movements (for a while), it did not necessarily encourage an analysis and activism that confronted broader political and social structures (Mizra 1997). All of this made it much harder to determine what the current aims and concerns of the women's movement actually were and therefore what posters were 'needed'. Effectively by 1984, See Red were unable to identify the relevant issues to make posters about and in the increasingly fractious climate of the movement, also found themselves, "a bit frightened in case we did the wrong thing" deciding that, "it was easier to be a service [printers] to the women's movement rather than add to it" (Intv. Hodder 8/4/11). In 1969 Poster Workshop had stated that the 'political health' of the workshop could be evaluated by the extent to which it reflected what was happening politically. It might also be considered that the political health of a poster workshop can be partially gauged by that of the movements it seeks to represent.

PFC's final poster project was a series on the history of technology, completed in the late 1980s. It was a radical critique of the dominant narrative of technological progress. However they found that "no one was interested whatsoever" and they could not distribute them (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). The series was out of step with otherwise politically sympathetic audiences and distributers, or what was left of them. According to Christine, 'technology' was "seen as a side issue, it was also difficult to criticize 'progress' at this time… seen as reactionary to do so" (Intv. Halsall 4/10/11). What is also notable is that most, if not all, of the other posters produced by PFC and certainly, the elaborate 'sets' of posters, firmly connected into existing movement concerns, expressed through a range of groups, activities and discourses. This critique of technology, at that moment, did not, other than in a marginal way.[21]

PFC and See Red (and Red Dragon and PW) had been born in a dynamic period of radical movement development and activity. However maintaining their role in providing salient cultural resources for those movements and their actors was subject to various challenges over time; from that of aesthetics, an issue exacerbated by limitations of technology and possibly certain kinds of skills, to perhaps more profound issues relating to the health and directions of radical movements themselves. Changes in movement fields inevitably created challenges to the other types of printshops, although as we shall see in the next section on community printshops, these took a somewhat different form, and other kinds of responses were available to them.

4.2. Community Printshops

The 'community printshops' were initially set up to meet the needs of the new wave of urban community activism that spread across Britain's inner cities between the late 1960s and early 1970s (Intv. Foster 17/4/13; Intv. Holland 10/11/11; Phillips 2005). Corresponding to the ethos of both this community activism and the 'community arts movement', community printshops aspired to aid the 'empowerment' of socially and politically marginalised groups through access to the means of (print) media representation and self-expression (Zeitlyn 1975, Braden 1983). The following statement by Islington Community Press (est. 1972) provides an introductory indication of intent:

> We see the press as a weapon in a political struggle – we want it to be used by local groups who are pushing for more control over their lives and situations and who are fighting against the profit system and against bureaucracy. We would like it to be a bit of meeting place for people who come with other things to print (in Zeitlyn 1975: 50).

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21 This is a slightly tricky point because probably strains of the existing anarcho-punk movement, 'primitivist' anarchism and the yet-to-take-off radical environmentalism would have identified with aspects of the message but relative to previous themes, at this moment the audience would have been tiny.

As indicated by the typology presented in Chapter 3, community printshops took a variety of forms; including offset-litho printers (leaflets and newspapers) and screen-printers (posters and banners), those that stressed a high degree of user participation and those that did not, those that attempted to remain economically independent and those that tapped into 'funding' streams. By the late 1970s these variations had mostly aligned in a particular way; a community *screen-print* workshop tended towards full 'user participation' in the production process, enabled by 'community arts' or 'community development' funding, while an *offset-litho* community press signaled a lesser degree of user involvement and relative economic self-sufficiency. Also by the late 1970s community printshops started to co-exist with a wider provision for 'community printing' offered in community arts centres and state funded 'resource centres'. The dynamism of urban community activism had mostly faded by the early 1980s (Waddington 2008), yet many of the printshops set up in its wake continued well into the decade. Before focusing on the community printshops themselves, and following the same general pattern as the previous section, a brief introduction to the 'new' urban community activism, which initially provided the context, inspiration and purpose for their instigation is provided.   The various printshops referred to in the section are shown in the table below.

Table 9. Community printshops referenced

Main printshops referred to in section:		
Islington Community Press	1972 – 1987	North London
Lenthall Road Workshop	1975 – 1992	East London
Notting Hill Press	1968 – 1971	West London
Paddington Printshop	1974 – 1991	West London
Stepney Community Print Workshop	1976 – 1980	East London
Union Place Community Resource Centre	1974 – c1994	South London

Other printshops mentioned:
Aberdeen People's Press (1973-1982); Bradford Community Printshop (1975-c1990); Camm St Community Printshop* (1986-?, Crewe); Corby Community Arts ** (1979-); Crest Press (1971-1975, London); Docklands Community Poster Project* (1981-1991, London); Fingerprints (1973-1995, Cardiff); Greenwich Mural Workshop Printshop (1977-1995, London); Impact* (1974-1998, Liverpool); Leeds Community Press** (1974-c1984); Manchester Area Resource Centre* (1975-); Moss Side Press (1970-1976, Manchester); Nottingham Community Arts** (1979-); Peopleprint* (1984- Rochdale); Rochdale Alternative Press** (1973-,); Tyneside Free Press Workshop (1972 – 2013).

*Non-collective shops
** Became non-collective

Brief introduction to the field of urban community activism

The 'new' urban community activism emerged after a period of increasing government intervention at the local level, from urban planning to the delivery of the post-war welfare state and largely in response to their failures (Smith & Jones 1981). However, its concerns, activities and actors were diverse. By the early 1970s it comprised a dynamic field that included: tenants associations, squatting campaigns and urban redevelopment protests; Claimants Unions; local actions against racism; autonomous advice centres, women's centres and playspaces; community newspapers and community arts activities. What brought the various issues and activities together was their concern with the struggles of 'ordinary' life away from the workplace (the historical focus of the mainstream and revolutionary left) and with those subjects ignored by left and institutional politics (Cockburn 1977). As the above list indicates, community activism combined pressure on local government to redress its failures with the instigation of autonomous local 'alternatives'.

Much of urban community activism's confrontational and creative energy derived from the influx of activists radicalized in the peace, student and anti-Vietnam war protest movements and who now saw the urban neighbourhood as a new and exciting space of mobilisation. (Baldock 1977; Intv. Foster 17/4/13; Intv. Holland 10/11/11). Aspects of community activism built on the anti-authoritarian and entrepreneurial spirit of the 1960s counterculture and in London certainly, squatting played a significant role in the formation of new radical communities that sought to make common cause with their working class neighbours, especially around housing issues (eIntv. Moan 30/6/12; Intv. Rose 19/12/11; Intv. Todd 30/9/11). As one participant put it "Localism was the new radicalism" (Intv. Rose 19/12/11).

Another dimension of the growing community activist field was the input resulting from institutional political interests. A series of reports[22] during the 1960s regarding inner city poverty, underachievement, disaffection and 'loss of community', led to various directives that would promote 'self help' and 'participation' through the encouragement of community groups in areas of 'urban deprivation' (Craig 1989). A 'community' dimension was incorporated into parts of the welfare state, jobs for community workers grew and funds for projects with 'community development' aims were made available. The early initiatives were experimental and provided an opening for more radical interpretations to be pursued, and by the early 1970s many of the new community workers saw themselves as part of a social movement and, like radical youth and social workers, as working 'in and against the state' for radical social change (Ward 1976, LEWRG 1979). There is not space to detail more of

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22 These included *The Plowden Report* (1967) by the Central Advisory Committee for Education, *The Skeffington Report* (1968) by the Committee on Public Participation in Planning, *The Seebohm Report* (1968) by the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services and *The Gulbenkian Report* (1968).

the basis of this official interest and what it generated (see Loney 1980; Lees & Mayo 1984; Craig 1989) the point here is firstly to convey that it contributed to the discursive context of 1970s community activism and the struggle over the distinctive values and stakes of the field. A brief indication of this 'struggle' can be detected in these further words from Islington Community Press; "we are not a Council-sponsored 'project' aimed at do-gooding and participation – which means participating in a way which the Council controls us and keeps us down!" (in Zeitlyn 1975: 50). Secondly this interest provided political and resource opportunities for activists, the latter especially will be returned to in more detail in Chapter 6.

The development of the 'community printshop'

Two key factors contributed to the spread of community printshops. Firstly the growth of community activism itself had brought a need for local and cheap print production, "local battles need[ed] local communications" (Morley & Worpole 1982: 3). Secondly the co-emergence of the wider community arts field created a discourse that validated the co-production of arts and media with local 'communities'. There were other contributing factors, such as the 'resource opportunities' afforded by accessible technology, and funding prospects, however although touched on here these aspects will, as indicated above, be explored later in the thesis.

The first self-styled community printshop, Notting Hill Press (NHP) was set up in west London in 1968 after two ex-peace movement community activists canvassed neighbourhood community action groups about setting up a newspaper. It was not a newspaper that groups were desperate for; it was their own local printing press — although a newspaper (*People's News*) shortly followed (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). News of this press spread and community activists from Croydon to Cardiff, travelled there to get their newspapers printed, indicating both the scarcity of such resources and the wider networks of community activism that existed. NHP inspired and supported housing activists in Manchester, also coming down to print their paper, to set up Moss Side Press in 1970 (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). Moss Side Press in turn played a similar role, supporting the instigation of other northern community printshops in the early 1970s, such as Rochdale Alternative Press (Dickinson 1997: 81), Tyneside Free Press Workshop (eIntv. Cattell 9/1/13) and Aberdeen People's Press (Intv. Marshall 10/215).

The campaigning and corruption-exposing community newspaper was a key feature of 1970s urban community activism and its particular rise (and fall) charted by various authors (Minority Press Group 1980, Dickinson 1997, Harcup 2013). It also provided a motivating or closely related factor for the instigation of several community printshops in the early 1970s. For example both the above mentioned Rochdale Alternative Press and Aberdeen People's Press printshops were initially set up to print their own community newspapers; Leeds

Community Press came out of *Leeds Other Paper*; Fingerprints in Cardiff came out of a group that had previously run a local radical paper; Suburban Press in Croydon was set up by people producing a newspaper of the same name and Islington Community Press was co-developed with *Islington Gutter Press*. As Dickinson (1997: 82) and others have acknowledged there was a symbiotic relationship between the rise of the local 'alternative' radical press and the growth of the community printshops. The hope was usually that the printshop would help subsidise the newspaper as well as providing a needed print facility for other local political and cultural activity (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15, Intv. Holland 10/11/11). There was also the aspiration that 'direct access' to the production of their own media would increase the 'confidence' of groups (Zeitlyn 1975, O'Malley 1977).

All of the above mentioned organisations were small offset-litho community printshops. In the 1975 edition of Jonathan Zeitlyn's *Print: How You Can Do It Yourself*, (a manifesto/manual for setting up a community printshop), so are most of the 18 listed existing community printshops. Small offset was ideal for the leaflets, advice manuals, bulletins and newspapers of community activism. The growth of the poster producing screen-print community printshops happened a little later and by the time of Zeitlyn's 1980 edition, they comprised the majority. Community activists were certainly making posters in the early 1970s, they had become part of the symbolic repertoire of protest, but were mostly doing so in "garages, basements, even the corner of their own flats" (Wright & Phillips 1986: 11) and it was out of this ad-hoc activity that some of the most well known and long lasting community printshops were established such as Paddington Printshop and Wandsworth Arts Resource Project (WARP). However as mentioned earlier the increase in community screen-printing workshops was in large part related to the arrival of grants for 'community arts' projects (Kenna et al. 1986). The screen-printed poster, a hand printed visual artifact, was a kind of art. That it was being done by, *with* and for 'communities' in working class areas made it a 'people's art', a participatory art that encouraged the creativity and self expression of 'ordinary people', which is roughly what 'community arts' defined itself as (Braden 1983).

During the 1970s 'community arts' developed as a field of activity in its own right but one that, through the community printshops, overlapped with the field of radical printshops. The alignment of screen-printing with 'community arts' partially accounts for the rather different trajectories of the community screen-printing workshops. This relates both to their position within the field of radical printshops and their relationship to their constituencies. Owen Kelly describes the late 1960s origins of the 'community arts movement' as the interweaving of three distinct strands,

> First there was the passionate interest in creating new and liberatory forms of
> expression… Second there was the movement by groups of fine artists out of the
> galleries and into the streets. Thirdly there was the emergence of a new kind of

political activist who believed that creativity was an essential tool of any kind of radical struggle (Kelly 1984: 11).

The 'new kind' of activist Kelly specifically refers to, is the radical community activist. Community arts were another response to the radical questioning of the role of art and 'the artist' described in the previous section of the chapter. In Jenny Smith's explanation of the background to setting up Lenthall Road Workshop, we can get a sense of how 'creativity' combined with community action:

> [We] had been squatting... [and] redressing various issues to do with housing and other stuff in the local area… [Our] squatting community had a hugely playful and creative side to it and instigated a community café, theatre group, band, bicycle workshop… Lenthall Road Workshop was an opportunity to apply some of that energy in a more grounded fashion… people could come and create their own posters reflecting issues of relevance to them and in their communities. It was about handing people the means of production, in this case screen-printing (eIntv. Smith 24/4/12).

In 1972 a national Association of Community Artists (ACA) was formed in order to lobby for recognition and funding of projects and by 1974 the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB), also coming under increasing pressure to justify their focus on minority interest 'high culture', had set up a grant giving Community Arts Panel. One of their first successful applicants was Paddington Printshop, initially started on a kitchen table in 1972 to design and print posters for "an ever-increasing stream of community and political activists" (Phillips 2005: 129). Their success would provide a model for the spread of other community screen printshops across the country (Kenna et al. 1986). Screen-printing posters also became a regular feature of the growing number of funded 'multi-activity' (performance, murals, music, video) community arts projects (Zeitlyn 1980).

Engaging (with) their 'constituencies'
Having established the origins of the community printshop, we can now turn to the kinds of relationships they had with their constituencies, who those constituencies were, and the particular roles that the printshops attempted to, and did, create for themselves. It was not just their local orientation that distinguished the community printshops from the radical service printing co-ops; to a large extent it was also the nature of their local engagement beyond printing provision. Bath Printshop probably spoke for many in their statement that "[community] printshops… should be actively involved in the community they normally 'service'" (*Community Arts Principles & Practices* 1980). Needless to say, despite an overarching common purpose and a generally shared 'left libertarian' political ethos, the detail of the above varied according to their particular (and changing) networks, interests, and distinct local contexts. What I attempt here is to capture both some of this distinction

and some shared themes. The timeframe referred to in this subsection 1968-1980 which encompasses the key era of urban community activism (Waddington 2008). This was also a period of intense activity and growth in the wider social and protest movement field; developments which were also a factor in shaping the activities and constituencies of the printshops.

Many community printshops included the name of their area in their title, for example, Notting Hill, Moss Side, Hulme, Stepney, Saltley, North One, Deptford, Wandsworth and so on; a claim to being *for* and *of* the people of that specific area. As we have seen Notting Hill Press (NHP), the first of the community printshops, had been instigated at the request of an existing range of locally networked community action groups. Central to the formation of this network was the Notting Hill People's Association set up in 1966 as an autonomous and open forum for local discontent, information sharing and action, with sub-groups concerned with housing, playspace, claimants and the police. The press was also established in such a way that the different local groups owned its assets. Beryl from NHP described it as "very widely embedded, deliberately across a wide selection of groups… and it was seen as *their* press… part of the resources for a neighbourhood network" (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). Similarly, Moss Side Press (est. 1970) was set up in the context of existing locally networked community action groups and individuals around the Moss Side People's Association in Manchester, which had formed in 1968 specifically around the issue of housing redevelopment. Wandsworth Arts Resource Centre (WARP) grew directly out of the publicity needs of Battersea Redevelopment Action Group.

While working-class housing struggles were a core strand of early urban community activism, the growth of concentrated urban squatting generated large alternative networks and 'communities', who were by default and often actively in conflict with their 'landlords'; the local authority. It expanded not just the activity of community activism but also its *subject* from local working class tenants to the incoming and often (but not exclusively) middle-class squatters.[23] Groups, advice centres and networks were formed, and were "prolific in their publication of leaflets, newsletters, campaign material and such like" (Reeve 2009 n.p). Not only did some community printshops come directly out of squatting, but squatting 'communities' and networks also generated constituencies for the printshops. For example, Stepney Community Print Workshop (est. 1976) "came out of the squats, a lot of people were involved, a lot of different things going on, quite a buzzy political atmosphere… a group of us came together so we could print our stuff, our posters and so on. We did printing for ourselves and other people" (Intv. Todd 30/9/11). Islington Community Press (est. 1972),

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23 While urban squatting of the 1970s was often a white and predominately middle class phenomena, this is not the full picture. In Brixton in the early 1970s there were many black squatters, often local activists. In Tower Hamlets in the mid 1970s, there was a large Bengali squatting contingent who formed the Bengali Housing Action Group. These are but two examples undoubtedly there are others.

were involved in setting up squatting advice centre while Union Place became "intensely involved" in the nearby St Agnes Place squats and acted as the "publicity arm and press officers" of the street (Intv. Williams 21/9/11).[24] However squatters were rarely conceived to be the sole constituency of even those community printshops that were directly involved. Charlie Rose, involved in the above-mentioned Union Place between 1974-78, outlined its intentions as follows:

> The purpose was to provide access to printing resources and a place to meet where local campaigns could be planned… For instance on childcare or for people on unemployment benefit. We had Claimants Union there. For squatting and housing issues. Campaigns for low paid workers… It was twofold thing, in a way it was an intervention, maybe these campaigns weren't actually happening yet. If they weren't, we would instigate them or encourage them to happen… It was also for existing organisations to come in and use… for example anti-racist organisations (Intv. Rose 19/12/11).

To a large extent what Charlie describes echoes the role that the radical community workers set for themselves. Paul Williams, a founder member, and local ex-community worker, described the core of what they were trying to do was "encourage[e] people to voice their opinions and express themselves politically, artistically" (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). To this effect Union Place set up meetings on housing estates, met local mothers through running jumble sales and food co-ops and involvement on the adventure playground, helped instigate tenants associations and housing campaigns, introduced themselves to the local trades council and reported on local struggles in their newspaper *Knuckle* (Intv. Williams 21/9/11, Intv. Rose 19/12/11). They used their resource as the base to both support and generate a constituency with some success (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). In a not dissimilar way, Islington Community Press also used the printshop as base for a wider set of supporting and instigatory activities, which as we have already seen included a newspaper (*Islington Gutter Press*) and a squatters' advice centre, but also a nursery campaign and meeting space for groups. They too got involved with setting up a tenants association and related local housing battles (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). In both cases, to different degrees, the community printshop was about more than 'serving the community' through access to print media production (see Bailey et al. 2008), it was also initiating and encouraging that activism in the first place.

As indicated above, community printshops were also involved in encouraging the creative 'self expression' of local populations — and in ways that were not explicitly about meeting the communication needs of community activism. Aligned with the general community arts/media ethos, the underlying assumption was that social empowerment also came about through group and individual cultural self-representation (Kelly 1984, Morley & Worpole

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24 The Poster Film Collective, discussed earlier in the chapter, moved into the Tolmer's Square squats in north London in the mid 1970s, also becoming their 'publicity wing' (see Braden 1983).

1982). Through the people they met in their "day to day activity" Union Place began publishing "local stories… the everyday experiences of the ordinary person that never got exposed in the right way" (Intv. Williams 21/9/11), Lenthall Road Workshop worked with literacy groups from the nearby Centerprise community publishing project and set up the Hackney Girls Project, "a space for young women to be themselves, experience alternatives and make art" (eIntv. Moan 30/6/12). Projects with young people might begin through informal relationships with neighbourhood youth workers (Nigg & Wade 1980). For example community activist connections with a 'detached youth worker' brought young local skinheads to Notting Hill Press to produce their own paper (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). Getting to know local young people also helped establish the printshops as neighbourhood entities. More generally these kinds of activities extended both their local networks as well as connecting them into particular fields of community art/media and/or progressive 'youth work'. The examples here came from the informal initiatives of the printshops, not that of any outside agency (also see Berrigan 1976). Involvement in local 'cultural' initiatives outside of the printshops also built their 'community capital'. Paddington Printshop for example saw "an exponential growth of its social network" through instigating local festivals, a farm project, assisting local artists convert wasteland to a public park and negotiating contacts between funders and the "Notting Hill Carnivalists" (Phillips 2005: 131).

Lastly, although the general purpose of the community printshops was to support and encourage the broad catalogue of activities that comprised 'community activism', both agitational and "celebratory" (Wright & Phillips 1986: 11), they were also often used by local radical, protest and social movement groups whose interests were not locally orientated. This could range from anti-nuclear activists and anti-prison campaigners, to anarchists and international solidarity groups (eIntv. Moan 30/6/12; Intv. Holland 10/11/11; Intv. Williams 21/9/11). Explicitly resonant with the 1970s left libertarian politics of several printshops were the new gay liberation and women's movements (Farrar 1989) that also used them. For example, in the early 1970s Crest Press provided a welcome base for the Gay Liberation Front magazine (eIntv. Grimes 19/8/14), Union Place actively invited the 'radical gay community' of early 1970s Brixton to come "and make posters, diaries, badges, calendars and badges for our campaigns" (Townson 2012) and by the late 1970s Lenthall Road Workshop also became a place for lesbian feminists to socialise and make posters (eIntv. Tod 7/4/12). LRW had in fact become as much a women's movement workshop as a 'community' one. This wider uptake was no doubt reflective of the lack of accessible print resources for radical groups at the time, but on the printshops part it can also be seen as contributing to the building of a thriving local alternative 'left' community. If as Kevin Howley (2005: 2) states, part of what define community media projects are that they are "committed to enhancing community relations and promoting community solidarity", then the support of the broader local radical population by the printshops can arguably be seen in those terms.

Exclusions?

With these examples I have perhaps sketched a picture of locally engaged, inclusive printshops. Retrospectively ascertaining the actual extent of this, in other words an accurate sense of the local field in which they operated and their positions within it, and importantly, how they were perceived is difficult. Documentation is scant and annual reports mostly exist for funders. Participants' reflections can fill in the gaps or as William Gamson (1991: 47) cautions; social movement partakers can have a tendency to recall relationships as they would have liked them to be. Conflicting accounts may point to either, or genuinely different experiences. For example, as yet unmentioned is the degree of involvement the predominantly white-run printshops had with local black community activism; also flourishing in some of their neighbourhoods. From interviewees' accounts and documentary evidence, they certainly printed for local black groups as well as the anti-racist and fascist movements of the 1970s (Intv. Foster 17/4/13, LRW Tri-Annual Report 1975-78, Braden 1983, Segal 2007, eIntv. Grimes 19/8/12). Charlie's recollection of Union Place, during his time (located on the edge of Brixton a significant locus of black organising) was that:

> [W]e were very white. Black working-class people were generally not very involved in the stuff we were doing, occasionally when it was relevant, but in general not. Union Place was not involved in the antiracist movement in any significant way apart from Rock Against Racism and things like that. But they were not involved in militant black politics. It was almost as if and I don't want to imply anything – but it was almost as if a decision had been made that it's not our game (Intv. Rose 19/12/11).

For another member however strong connections with local radical black activism, particularly that around the *Race Today* collective were a memorable feature of being involved in the printshop (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). Members of Moss Side Women's Community Press also had different recollections on this. For example, "We were all white and there weren't many links with the black population of Moss Side" (Intv. Mair 13/4/11), however another member recalled that, "There was the black community of course, because we were in Moss Side. So there were strong links there and we used to print some stuff and they used to come in" (Intv. Cooper 23/713). The discrepancy here may well be due to the author of the second quote having a far longer engagement with the press than the first. Both examples may also be illustrative of the fact that different members of given printshop collective had their own particular political interests and local connections.

There were of course deliberate exclusions, being locally orientated did not mean being for 'everybody'; most refused work they politically disagreed with or perceived as sexist or racist. They were also unlikely to attract such users, although like other radical printshops they were subject to attacks from the far right; for example both Islington Community Press and Union Place for example were victims of 'fascist' arson attacks in the early 1980s (Intv. Millett 8/5/13, Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11).

After community activism

The dynamic period of urban community action was mostly over by 1980 (Waddington 2008). In the ten-year anniversary edition (1982) of *Islington Gutter Press,* the paper associated with Islington Community Press, this demise and some of its consequences were explained as follows,

> [By 1979] [t]he space for grassroots activity was disappearing as the confidence of campaigning groups faded with successive defeats, and the ever more vicious reality of a confident Tory government under Thatcher. Many former activists who did not lapse into cynical despair, retreated into the Labour party… to abandon former dreams of self-organisation and active campaigning politics…The paper's role as a visible and active co-ordinator of local struggle had inevitably declined with decline of those struggles themselves (Lynne, *Islington Gutter Press* 1982: 7).

The paper lasted about another year after this was written, the printshop another five. Most of the other radical local papers referred to earlier, along with many more, had also disappeared by the early 1980s, and were not replaced with new ones. Community Press also found that numerous little community newsletters that they had regularly printed also disappeared (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). A sustained account of the radical aspiration for community action, and the deflation of it, is clear in the community work literature. By the end of the 1970s it tells of an overriding sense that community action had "already failed because after ten years or so it has resulted in neither more politicized individuals in working class areas, nor in more control of the political process by those individuals, nor in any except the most marginal changes in local authority provision" (Twelvetrees 1979: 236, also see Vass 1979, Bolger 1981, Jacobs 1984). There were warnings and fears of 'incorporation'; it was not possible to be both 'in and against the state'. Thatcher's election victory did not bring about the demise of urban community activism, it merely confirmed its failure. They had been "fiddling while Rome burn[ed]" (Baine 1977: 20).

By 1980 there was also a noticeable demise of a "visible and active squatters movement" (Reeve 2009, but see Prujit 2003). Deals were struck with local authorities and ex-squatters created housing co-operatives and associations, thus drawing them into housing management and often away from neighbourhood activism (Intv. Todd 30/9/11, Intv. Rose 19/12/11). The local ad-hoc law, rights and health advice centres developed into more formalised entities, part of voluntary sector or local authority provision. Other autonomous local welfare initiatives such as women's refuges and nurseries gained recognition, statutory support and management committees.

What did these changes mean for the community printshops? Their constituencies as we have seen, comprised a broad base and in many, part of their activity with groups was also on the 'cultural' rather than explicitly political front, although understood as inherently

entwined (Nigg & Wade 1980, Braden 1983). Furthermore those activities that had become more 'formalised', and this is a relative concept, still had print needs (Intv. Millett 8/5/13). Neither were the late 1970s and early 1980s were an entirely dead time for local activism. The anti-racist and anti-fascist movement resurged with new groups and mass demonstrations; there were new patches of urban redevelopment resistance and industrial battles were back on the agenda with the miners strike and steel industry closures.

However, as we saw in the previous part of the chapter, the field of radical and community print provision was also growing. As will be discussed in the next section, the late 1970s and early 1980s saw a growth of radical 'general service' printing co-ops, which is effectively what most of the offset-litho community printshops transitioned into (Marshall 1983). To some extent this evolution into more self-preserving and 'formal' entities paralleled moves above, such as squatters into housing co-ops. There was also continuing expansion of print provision within community arts and resource centres (see Zeitlyn 1980 & 1986). The harbinger of the latter was as early as 1975, when the Voluntary Service Unit ran a pilot resource centre project in six 'areas of deprivation' to support the development of community action groups (Taylor 1980). One was the Manchester Area Resource Centre (MARC), explicitly set up to service groups active around redevelopment and housing issues— the types of group that Moss Side Press had, five years earlier, also initially been set up to support. Subsequently the local role of the unfunded and autonomous Moss Side Press began to significantly diminish (Duncan in Dickinson, 1997: 97). Not only this but photocopiers were becoming more widely available; groups had other ways of getting things done (Intv. Millet 8/5/13). The expansion of community arts centres was indicative of the growth of the community arts field, which by the late 1970s, as pointed out at the start of the section, was mostly where the funded (typically screen-printing) workshops were 'positioned'. As such their post-1970s existence is usefully framed in relation to this field.

Increased access to funding, from national and regional arts boards, local authorities and central government schemes was how the field of community arts had expanded. More detail of this will be discussed in Chapter 6. However broadly speaking the reason for this grant giving was that community arts (with its discourse of 'empowerment' and 'participation'), like well behaved community action, could be instrumentalised by these bodies, to help meet their own social democratic and welfare obligations towards their 'disadvantaged' constituents (Bilton 1997). The fears of incorporation that had been expressed by radical community workers were to be paralleled in the field of community arts by the early 1980s. For some, it was in danger of losing its 'radical partisanship' and on the way to willingly becoming "just one more worthy branch of whatever this government chooses to leave of the welfare state… the welfare arts" (Kelly 1984: 1). In 1982 the newly elected 'radical Labour' Greater London Council (GLC) produced a report called *Community*

Arts Revisited (GLC 1982). It identified various problems with the current perception and practice of community arts. It was seen as "middle-class management and policing intervention into working class culture", associated with poorly executed outputs, and crucially for the GLC, the groups they wanted to address – "feminists, gays and lesbians, members of the Black consciousness movement … had operated outside of it for some years because they mistrusted its cultural and campaigning intentions" (in GLC 1986: 16). The GLC built their own community arts policy and proceeded to fund a large amount of organisations that fitted their new bill (Bilton 1997), including several community printshops. They and the other new left municipal authorities also funded numerous local projects and groups, creating a circuit of funded groups using funded printshops.

Paddington Printshop's experience of the 'GLC years' was that, "Ironically increased recognition and support did not invigorate the organisation… a climate in which community organisations no longer needed to attract so much attention left the [printshop] moribund. It ticked over for the next five years" (Phillips 2005: 131). They did not 'need to attract so much attention' because they were now funded by the authorities that they had once agitated against. These remarks somewhat relate to doubts expressed at the time; that the socialist policies of the new left municipalities would as Bob Deacon put it (in rather 'old left' language), "sap socialism's greatest creative force – the self-activity of people in struggle" (cited in Jacobs 1984: 223). Corresponding with the general withering of radical aspirations for '1970s style' community activism, by the early 1980s Union Place's local interventionism and involvement beyond that of a local printing resource had mostly ceased. Early 1980s bulletins publicize the services of their users — other local funded groups such as mobile crèches, community transport and education projects for unemployed black youth. Their self-description, rather like Paddington's 'ticking over', was one of "jogging along" (Union Place Bulletin 1983: 1). For Lenthall Road Workshop (LRW) on the other hand the first half on the 1980s was a dynamic period, "Even though it was Thatcher's time, I thought we were thriving. I remember feeling very enabled somehow by the numbers of groups that had the same kind of desires and will to work in community arts… somehow the backlash of movements was very strong" (Intv. Murray 19/9/11). LRW's rather contrasting experience of the early-mid 1980s, was also shaped by their close involvement with feminist activity and perhaps especially with the newly flourishing Black Women's Movement for whom they became an important resource. Arguably, LRW were precisely the kind of organisation that the GLC had in mind when it wrote its cultural policy.

In 1986, the Greenwich Mural Workshop, which had also run a community printshop for several years, staged a survey exhibition and produced a catalogue of work and statements from several community printshops across the country, *Printing is Easy? Community Printshops 1970-1986* (Kenna et al. 1986). The show had been put together as a 'swansong'

for community printshops, preempting their disappearance in the face of the funding cuts that would result from the pending abolition of the GLC and the 'Metropolitan Counties'. Although several new community printshops had opened in the early 1980s, the older workshops dominated the organisers' selection. Their explanation was that the more recent workshops were mostly producing work that was "parochial" and that "an exhibition of jumble sale posters would not put bums on seats" (Kenna et al. 1986: 7). Many of the printshops (old and new) included in the exhibition describe working with the historically typical mix of local campaigning and cultural groups, mostly expressing partisan political motivation for what they do. Yet there is also evidence of what François Matarosso (2013: 216) has described as community arts path from 'radicalism to remedialism' (or Kelly's 'welfare arts'). This is particularly evident in relation to unemployment. Here the printshop is variously described in apolitical terms as either a place for unemployed people to "fill their time" (Camm St Community Printshop), give them "access to the arts" (Bradford Community Printshop) or train them for employment (Peopleprint).

That many community printshops did *not* 'succumb' to 'welfare arts', is partly because unlike the various other media of community arts, printing was still the most widely used process for groups to communicate their 'message' and as grant-aided organisations, community screen-print shops could do it cheaply. However the use of screen-printing for such purposes was starting to diminish (Kenna et al. 1986, Phillips 2005, Intv. Murray 18/9/11), again a point that will be picked up in Chapter 6.

As funding dried up, most of the self-managed funded community printshops had closed by the early 1990s (Zeitlyn 1992). The next part of the chapter turns to the last 'type' of printshop, the movement service printers, which those community printshops that fell outside of the funded community art rubric, as we have seen, tended to transition into.

4.3. Movement Service Printers: the printing co-ops

This last chapter section discusses the third category of 'radical printshop' collectives; the service printers or *printing co-ops,* as they were generally known. The printers referred to in are listed in Table 10 below (next page). Some have already been mentioned in the previous section, however they reappear in the discussion here, as they are those that effectively morphed into general movement service printers.

Table 10. Service printshops referenced

Aberdeen Peoples Press (APP)	1973-1982	Aberdeen
Aldgate Press	1980-	East London
Blackrose Press	1978-1992	Central London
Calverts Press	1977-	Central/East London
Fly Press	1978-1989	South London
Islington Community Press	1972-1987	North London
Lasso Typesetting & Design	1984-1990	North London
Lithosphere	1980-1992	North London
Moss Side Women's Press / Amazon Press	1976-1988	Manchester
Rochdale Alternative Press (RAP)	1972-	Rochdale
Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op	1980-c2004	Sheffield
Spider Web Offset	1978-c1995	North London
Trojan Press	1979-1990	East London
Tyneside Free Press Workshop	1973-2013	Newcastle
Women in Print (WiP)	1976-1986	South London

The initial motivation of this type of printshop was to provide an affordable and sympathetic general printing service for a wide range of radical and 'progressive' civil society activity. Phil of Blackrose Press further explained the original imperative,

> A lot of it was to do with that kind of free press movement at the time… being able to communicate left wing ideas was a really important thing to be able to do… you didn't have access to mass media… and it was about providing services for people, being an enabling resource… and partly there was the issue that commercial printers were very unsympathetic to those kinds of political ideas and often would not do it. There would be instances people going all the way through, to the point of getting it printed and the printers just refusing to do it (Intv. Green 2/8/11)

The radical service presses were mostly set up to also generate a livelihood for their workers from print sales (Intv. Williams 21/9/11, Intv. Palmer 3/4/12, Intv. Sorba 22/2/13, Intv. Green 2/8/11). This is quite distinct from the initial ambitions of both the poster workshops and the community printshops. As worker controlled 'businesses', they were simultaneously 'service providers' and 'for themselves'. This created a particular dimension to the printing co-ops' relationship(s) with the alternative field; this field was also its economic market. By extension this meant that the printing co-ops were not only in some cases in competition with each other for parts of that market but also potentially with other types of printers, outside or on the borders of the field of radical printshops (see Fig. 3), including those of the organised left, many of which also emerged during the 1970s.

As with the other types of printshops there was considerable diversity amongst the printing co-ops, in scale, working practices and ambition. Part of this diversity was the existence of several women's printing co-ops. They were set up for similar reasons as the other service printers but within the contexts of feminist activity and a male-dominated printing trade. Describing the opportunity to transform the community printshop Moss Side Press into a

women printshop in the mid 1970s, Angela Cooper explained, "Women needed a press…
lots of people were writing stuff and the women and manual trades ethos was around, so
obviously we thought it was a pretty darn good idea if women were seen to be able to run a
press" (Intv. Cooper 23/7/13). The women's service printshops not only attempted to provide
a print service for the movement, their very existence was felt to be an example of feminism
in action, therefore in both ways to contribute to the culture and 'illusio' of the women's
liberation movement (Crossley 2003). Nevertheless despite being established to support
feminist activity none printed exclusively for feminist organisations.[25] To some extent this
was pragmatic; "We couldn't survive printing women's stuff alone" (MSWCP 1979). Although
the WLM was a large and diverse social movement it did not generate enough suitable
material to economically sustain the women's service presses, none of which had a machine
larger than A3. Books were difficult so were long-run magazines. Furthermore many groups
still used duplicators, so minimal were their resources. The decision to print for groups
'beyond' the WLM was not always without issue. It had split the London-based group that
formed in the mid 1970s to set up Women in Print, with those *for* the wider remit establishing
the workshop (Cadman et al. 1981: 58). Therefore although the all-women printshops were
part of the women's liberation movement/s, they were also partly dependent on printing work
from the same alternative field as the other radical service presses.

The growth of print co-ops
The number of print co-ops expanded in the late 1970s (Marshall 1983). In 1979 a national
'Alternative Printers' conference was held, with representatives of all printshop types
present, and those that described themselves as service printers were in the majority.[26] By
1982 the Co-operative Advisory Agency Directory reported that there were 42 printing co-
ops nationwide, many of them radical service presses. Alan Marshall, a well-informed
participant of the radical printshops scene and author of *Changing the Word: The Printing
Industry in Transition* (1983) attributed this general expansion to three factors: "commercial
and organisation pressures" on the earlier community press, "more awareness of [a] role as
a service industry to political and campaigning movements" and the "increasing engagement
of community politics with traditional labour politics" (Marshall 1983: 36). More broadly the
increase of print co-ops coincided with that of other types of worker co-operative enterprises,
many of which were also orientated towards the cultural needs of the 'alternative' left such
as publishing, bookshops, whole foods and bicycles (Stott 1985). This general growth

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25 The amount of 'non-WLM' work varied between these printshops. For example from the late 1970s onwards, most of WiP's printing came from women's groups (Intv. Chong 5/10/11, Intv. Levy 19/8/11), while a mid-1980s client list from Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op shows that women's groups constituted just 16% (the majority being the same mix of left, community and voluntary sector groups that typified other service presses' users).

26 The conference was held at Beechwood College near Leeds, a new co-operative college. The information about printshop types is taken from the conference registrations forms.

included women-only co-operatives, which by the early 1980s comprised 25% of UK co-ops (May 1985), a figure not much above the proportion of women's service printers.[27]

The period in which the growth of print co-ops occurred can be characterised as simultaneously one in which the earlier optimism for mass social change had begun to wane (Lent 2001) and also one of diverse and widespread left oppositional activity. One of the founders of Trojan Press (est. 1979) described the motivations for setting up in this context,

> I'd spent the whole of my life, from 16 to my late 20s, living outside the system with the notion that the system is going to collapse and then you come to terms that the system is not going to collapse but you think maybe you can live still outside it. And this [Trojan Press] felt outside, under our control, it was right on, it was a workers co-op, everyone you met was political and it was interesting… and outside that Thatcher was running amok" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11)

Thatcher's election victory (1979) had come as a demoralizing and unexpected shock to many on the alternative left who believed that the 'intense socialist agitation' of the preceding years was evidence of changing 'mass' consciousness (Rowbotham et al. 1980, Hall & Jacques 1983). It did however provide a clearly identifiable and shared target for the left more widely. Piers Carey who joined Fly Press in 1983, described the aims of the press as "to promote the left opposition to Thatcherism by means of print... That was the core of what we wanted to do" (eIntv. Carey 12/11/12). In the first few years, opposition also created plenty of print, "Thatcher was a real boon to us in a way – lots of campaigns!" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11).

The late 1970s and early 80s were marked by the increasing movement of alternative left radicals into the Labour party, once considered irredeemable (Lansley et al. 1989). Various factors facilitated this apparent change of heart towards traditional political structures. Adam Lent (2001: 168) has maintained that there was a decline in 'mass' active support for social movements by this time, not helped by the weakening effect of 'factional squabbles'. The decline of 'autonomous' leftist community activism, as evidenced in the previous section was another factor. The Labour party was also changing, with the left of the party becoming increasingly influential, especially after Thatcher's victory but also prior to it. Crucially, local government, once seen by the left of the party as marginal to the proper business of politics was reconceived as not only a powerful base from which to conduct opposition to Thatcher's government but also by some as an arena in which to "prefigure a wider socialist society" (Gyford 1985: 33). The effect of this was the 'municipal socialism' of the early 1980s, and a series of policies, sub-committees and support relating to some of the activity social

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27 In 1982 there were about 30 movement service printshops in Britain (excluding the north of Ireland) of which seven were women's printshops (in Nottingham, York, Manchester, Sheffield and London).

movements and the alternative left had otherwise been autonomously pursuing, as indicated in the section on community printshops. Left Labour councils also used their resources to campaign against government policies and to support other groups that were doing so, all of which directly or indirectly generated a significant amount of print. The influx of people into the Labour Party (and local government) who had come through the participatory politics of the late 1960s and 1970s alternative left also contributed to an ideological commitment to industrial democracy and worker co-operatives, which fed into municipal socialist economic strategies particularly in Sheffield and London (Lansley et al. 1989, Gyford 1985). Some of this will be taken up again in Chapter 6, however in short, within certain locations these developments impacted on the field of contentious and civil society activity, and while they lasted offered some direct and indirect benefits for the radical service presses (Marshall 1983, Elston et al. 1983).

The 1970s and 1980s also witnessed expansion of the voluntary sector and campaigning charities. The 'rediscovery of poverty' had already prompted a steady proliferation of independent voluntary organisations throughout the 1960s and 1970s. This particular growth has been partly attributed to the inflow of socialists, frustrated by left organisations, into the voluntary sector. It was, and is, a highly differentiated field, but left wing perspectives, not just in organisations concerned with poverty, became far more common within a sector that had also once been considered with suspicion (Hilton et al. 2012: 39). This in turn influenced new approaches that were less about 'dispensing charity' and more concerned with 'rights', along with a more democratic and less elitist approach than had been characteristic of the field (Hilton et al. 2012). Broadly, this meant there was a developing, overlapping field, of often politically sympathetic 'voluntary sector' activity, that did not necessarily *need* to use the services of a left or women's printing co-operative but due to political goodwill towards its orientation and democratic structure might be inclined to.

The expansion of campaigning charities and the growth of left Labour local authority funded projects and campaigns together then meant a wider 'potential market' for the radical service printshops than had previously existed. New funding for 'alternative' and 'socially engaged' arts produced another viable customer base. The revival of protest movements such as the anti-apartheid movement and especially CND in the early 1980s also created some new demand for politically sympathetic print services, as did the various campaigns relating to de-industrialisation, most notably the 1984-85 miners strike.

Co-ops relationship to their constituency
Unlike the early community presses, both as a whole and individually the printing co-ops – with the exception of the women-only presses and the few that came out of anarchist milieus – were not orientated towards a *particular* movement field. They all worked with a similar

range of groups across the general field; explicitly political organisations, social movement groups, campaigning charities and other voluntary sector organisations, the labour movement, arts groups, left publishers, and other co-ops. The presses were also sometimes used 'after hours' by members to print for their own political involvements (Intv. Booth 20/4/11, Intv. Gard 31/8/12, eIntv. Grimes 2009, Intv. Whellens 15/12/11). Many placed advertisements in social movement and left publications, from the local radical press to national publications such as *Spare Rib* and *Peace News* as well as traditional left entities such as *Labour Herald,* usually stating their worker co-op credentials. They were listed in ICOM's[28] 'co-operative directories' and guides such as the long running *Alternative London.* The women's printshops also advertised in women's centres and the internal newsletters of the WLM.

Most of the presses had policies about what they would *not* print, the constants being racist or sexist material, although they might include "anti-socialist" (Paupers Press c1976), "not reactionary" or "anti-working class" (Community Press 1979), "party-political" (Bath Printshop 1979) "electioneering material" (Tyneside Free Press 1979), or content "of a religious or rightwing nature" (Fly Press 1984). Besides this, some would ban content emanating from organised left groups "like the SWP" (Women in Print 1981) or simply "anything offensive to us" (Dark Moon 1979). Several interviewees recalled intense debates about whether they should print a particular job or not. This could range from the discovery of 'dodgy' South African connections in an ostensibly benign family newsletter to whether a publication for paedophiles should be accepted on the grounds of sexual freedom or rejected because of exploitation (Intv. Gard 31/8/12, Intv. Millett 8/5/13). These policies and debates were part of the political integrity of the presses and general social solidarity with the groups they printed for.

The other *potential* limitation with regards to what was printed came from the print unions (NGA and SOGAT), of which many, especially the 'second wave' co-ops, held membership. In part, they were members for reasons of general, albeit critical, solidarity (Intv. Gard 31/8/11, Intv. Swash 22/9/11, Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11). The other reason was more pragmatic; they had to be unionised '(TU)' to do labour movement printing. Although they could have joined other unions, and some smaller presses did, being in a print union also created a connection to 'the trade', "it meant you were part of the print establishment… a recognised trade union business" (Intv. Gwynn-Jones 25/9/11). Union policy was that members should refuse to handle 'copy' unless it had the appropriate trade union stamp (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). Compliance could be problematic as copy from poorly resourced

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28 ICOM was the Industrial Common Ownership Movement, the main UK organisation that promoted worker co-ops, provided 'model' rules, published research and so on.

campaigns was unlikely to be generated by union 'approved' sources. Neither the typical customer base nor the co-ops themselves fitted into the trade union conception of labour relations (Intv. Swingler 1/9/11). As such even getting into these unions had been difficult for many of the printshops. This account by Charlie Cattell from Tyneside Free Press resonated with those of other interviewees,

> We were generally pro-union but initially the print unions were suspicious of our employee-owned set up and wouldn't enroll us, [they] were very protective in those days. They kept sending people to inspect our records but never actually allowed us to join. Consequently we couldn't do much for other unions because of the closed shop policy which required that only union members could be employed. Eventually the local secretary of the NGA came up for retirement; he had liked us all along and signed up the entire workforce as members just before he left the post (eIntv. Cattell 9/1/13).

Apart from the defense of worker's interests against employers and the state, for the most part there was not a natural allegiance. Not only were unions obviously 'reformist' (at best) and often suspicious of co-ops; the print unions in particular had excluded women, were historically nepotistic and operated a rigid demarcation of job roles (Intv. Gard 31/8/12, Intv. Swingler 1/9/11, Intv. Lyser 16/5/11). However not only did some printshop co-op members become actively involved in working for change within the print unions (Intv. Ball 28/8/11, Intv. Booth 20/4/11, Intv. Green), the Thatcher government's 'onslaught' against trade unions undoubtedly produced a greater political sympathy towards them from the 'non-aligned' alternative left. The 1984-5 miners strike in particular, generated support groups and fundraising activity amongst the left nationwide, to which most printing co-ops contributed. Many in the London print co-ops also actively supported the printers in their 1986-7 dispute with News International. Some were also key participants in Lesbians and Gays Support the Printworkers (LGSP) (Intv. Booth 20/4/11, Intv. Gard 31/8/12, Intv. Brill 23/9/11, Intv. Todd 30/9/11, Intv. Gwynn Jones 25/9/11).

The attitude towards 'commercial' work varied between presses, some seeing it as antithetical to the purpose of the press, others as a way to subsidise it and the work they thought socially important – further implications of which will be returned to later in the thesis. Answers to the question of whom printshops were 'open to' in the questionnaires from the 1979 *Alternative Printers Conference*, along with the consistent and expected 'left/minority/community' type of answer contained additions such as "lesser evil commercial work" (Black Beetle Co-operative), "acceptable 'commercial' jobs" (Spider Web Offset), " a small proportion of commercial 'bread and butter' work" (Fingerprints). Concerned about the lack of profitable work, in 1979 Calverts even tried a 'dual marketing' strategy, one leaflet for sympathetic organisations stressing their co-operative values and another directed towards local businesses where this was omitted (Calverts Archive 1979).

Nicola from the press recalled that in the early years,

> There was a lot of discussion, all the time about the balance of work, because in order for this place to carry on succeeding you have got to make a profit, therefore how do you make profit out of the printing that you think is socially useful, those people might not have any money so there was the whole discussion about charging people different amounts depending how much we collectively agreed with them etc. (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12)

An example of the sort of judgments the presses had to make is given by Phil from Blackrose,

> Some things we wanted to print were for groups that had financial problems, so like [.....] was one thing we did, and they were awful at paying their bills and accumulated huge debts. But on the other hand, we felt its existence was important and were willing to be far more tolerant of them that we would have been to many other publications. So it was a balance of how much do we want to do something, and how could we help them and resource it (Intv. Green 2/8/11)

The presses relationship with their 'natural constituency' was based on a shared support for each other's general aims, and varying degrees of a shared habitus. From the print co-ops this was partly enacted through low pricing, 'right on' policies and an approach towards 'service' that aimed to be helpful and demystifying.

Despite all this goodwill there were problems. As is evident, the weak economic base of many of the organisations the co-ops initially printed for potentially undermined their own survival, hence the quest to find work from more financially secure organisations. In the 'Left printers' workshop at the 1980 conference, '*How can Radical Publishing survive the 1980s?*' this issue was made central by Frank Elston, co-founder of Spider Web Offset and workshop convener. (Elston later co-authored a report on London's printing co-ops for the GLC's enterprise board, GLEB). The conference was called by Minority Press Group to address various "looming crises" for radical publishing and brought together 150 radical publishers, publications, booksellers, printers/typesetters, distributers and librarians from across the "radical progressive spectrum". Similar themes emerge across the workshop papers and reports; undercapitalisation; political integrity versus economic efficiency; mutual support across the field; to what extent should organisations be attempting to move 'out of the ghetto'. Seven print co-ops attended the printers workshop.[29] Elston's paper, 'Left Inprint' argued that survival was only possible through the marginalisation of political work in favour of commercial work *and* a commercial approach, which he claimed would put the print co-ops in a better position to support political work. For Elston the problem was not just the radical market's lack of funds, but that "as customers the left are exasperating, over-

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29 Aberdeen People's Press, Spider Web Offset, Community Press, Calverts Press, York Free Press and Blackrose Press.

demanding and therefore difficult to satisfy and unsatisfactory to work for". Furthermore they had little loyalty to particular presses. There was a mismatch between the printshops level of "skill, quality and efficiency" and what their "peer group ghetto" expected (Elston 1980). To what extent Elston's experience of the 'left as customers' were entirely shared is difficult to say, however the issues were not unfamiliar. The workshop write-up acknowledged problems of quality by left printers and lack of skill on customers' part as well as stating that given the amount of left printing being generated, the radical printshops actually did very little of it. Possible reasons given were credit terms, 'union stamping' and the limited technology of the printshops (MPG Conference Printing Workshop Report 1980). While commercial printers are regarded as competition, the printshops of the 'organised left' are not mentioned, who were in fact used regularly by the 'alternative left'.

The position of the women's service presses, regardless of printing for 'mixed' groups, as both part of and an expression of the women's movement could mean additional expectations. The issue of costs, common to all alternative left printers, had a particular 'charge' amongst feminists; that of "women ripping off other women" which as one feminist bookshop recalled "any women selling things at that time [1970s-80s] was likely to be accused of" (Jones 1988: 235). Other aspects of the women's printshops could come under scrutiny in the internal 'organs' of the WLM. For example, Cath Booth from Women in Print recalled a heated debate in the pages of the *London Women's Liberation Newsletter* (LWLN) about whether a calendar the press had produced contained 'problematic' images of lesbians (Intv. Booth 20/4/11). A more profoundly affecting scrutiny of a women's press occurred in Manchester in the late 1970s, in relation to a dispute within Moss Side Women's Press. The wider Manchester feminist scene became involved, with feminists outside Manchester also debating the matter in the internal WLM national newsletter (*WIRES*). During the period of the dispute the press suffered a boycott not just by certain women's groups, but also by mixed groups who took sides, which de-stabilised the press for a period (Somerset et al. 1979)

Changing field, changing demands
As indicated earlier, by the time (1983) that Elston et al. produced their report for GLEB on printing co-ops in London, several printshops had in fact begun to "break out of their peer group ghetto" (Elston 1980) in terms of what they printed, if not before. By 1980, Blackrose had acquired a larger press and was moving away from "just campaigns and into producing for charities and larger-scale print jobs… more mainstream but still campaigning in the direction that members wanted" (Intv. Ball 24/8/11). This decision was contested by some Blackrose members who felt it would dilute the close relationship they had with what was printed (Inv. Ball 24/8/11). As the 1980s continued many of the co-ops came to realise they could not "survive on the ebb and flow of political work" (Intv. Gwynn-Jones 25/9/11).

Although the general customer base of the co-ops was expanding to include the kinds of groups discussed earlier; that is, more charities, local authority based or funded work, arts organisations and the labour movement, it all mostly remained within the generally left-leaning and 'non-profit' field. A c1985 joint promotional brochure of the four largest London co-ops (Blackrose, Calverts, Lithosphere and Spider Web) demonstrates how by this time each was attempting to 'position' itself. Between them they are 'experts', 'highly skilled' and 'top quality'. Otherwise an attempt has been made to differentiate the 'markets' of campaigning, labour movement, voluntary orgs and arts between them, despite what may have been the reality.[30]

In their conversations with various print co-ops, Elston et al. (1983) reported a trend that according to several of my interviewees continued throughout the 1980s. Along with new types of clients, more freelance designers were using the co-ops. Both these and existing customers requirements and expectations were becoming more orientated towards 'quality over quantity'; better paper, glossier, more colours, more complex. Elston et al. (1983) described customers showing, "a greater awareness of promotional material being designed to achieve a specific aim." This was not confined to London. For example, David Bartlett from RAP recalled that increasingly "people were looking for something more professional, less cobbled together… a new standard", something that RAP did not have the resources to deliver. The new demand for quality led to RAP extending their technical resources in order to meet it (in Dickinson 1997: 162). Trojan Press also remember that their charity and voluntary sector customers "were getting more professional and wanted corporate identity sort of stuff" from them (Inv. Gwynn-Jones 25/9/11). It is evident from Hilton et al.'s (2012: 41) historical account that greater attention to marketing materials was part of the general trend within the voluntary sector towards professionalisation.

Mirroring the experience of the mixed co-ops, both Women in Print (WiP) and Amazon Press (previously Moss Side Women's Community Press) recalled that by the mid 1980s their feminist customers had also started to expect a higher level of service and product. Amazon Press in particular had, post 1981, made a concerted effort to become more "professional", however, as Angela explained in relation to the now rather exacting expectations of certain groups, "I think we seemed to end up in a place where we wanted to do all of that [feminist work], but quite often we found ordinary people a lot more forgiving and easier to deal with" (Intv. Cooper 23/7/13). Lyser from WiP also spoke about how, by the mid 1980s, "there were less issues going on and it was like everyone went more individual" and the groups that did come had "got all artsy… and we just couldn't do what they wanted us to do" (Intv. Lyser

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30 For example Calverts Press describe their market as "educational, arts, professional and voluntary orgs", however a market analysis of their clients during that period showed that after charities and charitable campaigns, 'political and political campaigns' was the second biggest share (Calverts archives 1986). While these could be categorised as voluntary orgs it is not usual to do so.

16/5/11). If part of the broader trajectory of feminist activity is considered, these new demands can be put into some context. Da Chong who worked at WiP between 1980-1983 said that during her time the press's involvement with the women's movement "felt terribly organic…. we were all part of it… and then more groups were getting funding, needing print work done and we tried to provided it" (Intv. Chong 5/10/11). By the mid 1980s, an increasing range of once voluntary feminist activity had become 'professionalised' through that funding and the new roles for 'municipal feminists' that had been created within left Labour councils (Lovenduski & Randall 1993). As a member of one women's press said, it was a time of "Equalities units and Women's units and BME units all with budgets and printing needs…" (Intv. May 29/9/11). In London, as Lyser recalled there were more 'alternative' theatre and arts groups, also as referred to earlier in the chapter, beneficiaries of sympathetic funding policies. Consequently while this meant that there were (for a period) new sources of printing work that could also pay beyond the previously expected minimum, some of the recently 'professionalised' contexts – along with an increasing emphasis on 'fancy work' by other groups – meant a higher level of 'product', often beyond that which the women's presses were capable of producing.

The demand for 'fancier' print that the co-ops started to experience during the 1980s was arguably part of a wider spread contemporary concern with design and 'style'. A factor, which I suggested earlier played into some of the challenges for the other types of printshops. Design historian, Rick Poyner recalls that during this time "the obsession with design was so pervasive… that the decade even before it was over was christened the 'design decade'… Style had become a public issue and even the Left started to wonder whether it needed to dress up its political issues more stylishly" (Poyner 2004: 39). That the re-launched and re-packaged Communist Party journal *Marxism Today*, afforded design a central role, advertised in the style magazine of the decade *The Face* and spent thousands on glossy advertising brochures (Pimlott 2004: 211), is indicative of Poyner's observation.[31] The growth of 'design consciousness' was closely tied into the expanding sphere of consumer and promotional culture (Crowley 2004). In this context, parts of the left recognised that a new generation "could be reached through their pleasure in consumption" (Phillips 2007: 56). From the innovative lefty lesbian and gay periodical *Square Peg* to the Labour party's *New Socialist* magazine (re-designed by *The Face* designer Neville Brody), there was aesthetic evidence of different kind of left-sensibility emerging in the 1980s, one that has been described, not uncritically, as 'designer socialism'. This slicker approach put greater demands on the often-undercapitalized print co-ops.

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31 *The Face* under Neville Brody's design direction heralded an innovation in magazine design. Brody, a left sympathizer re-designed the Labour party magazine *New Socialist,* the broad left publication *New Statesman* in the 1980s, covers for the left listings magazines *City Limits* and the logo for the left arts alliance Red Wedge.

The other problem that the print co-ops faced was losing customers as they became larger organisations. Tracking this issue into the 1990s, Steve gave me a detailed description of the experience at Aldgate Press,

> A lot of things that we used to do, that were local… got big and disappeared, or got subsumed. For example we used to work for Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and Amnesty but they just expanded and got print buyers and disappeared off somewhere else. We used to do… lots of work for small housing associations and then they got bought by bigger housing associations and then they suddenly became government policy and then disappeared. A lot of local pressure groups like the Tower Hamlets law centre, all the CHCs [Community Health Centres], came in, we started doing work for them and again they became part of the mainstream, the NHS took over, law centres became something else and went away, so a lot of that. We found, as soon as they became successful almost, they would just go somewhere else… (Intv. Sorba 22/2/13).

Steve thought the reason for these organisations changing printer was "bigger print budgets so somebody doing print buying… no longer the actual activists within the organisation dealing on a one-to-one basis" (Intv. Sorba 22/2/13). Steve's account tallies with the historical record of the increasing institutionalisation and professionalisation of social movements and the voluntary sector (Lent 2001, Hilton et al. 2012). As Chris recalled even the smaller local end of the charitable and voluntary sector, which in the 1970s and early 1980s "was infected by the co-operative and collective ethos", by the late 1980s "decided that they needed directors, structures, hierarchies" (Intv. Todd 30/9/11), further moving members of this 'sector' away from the practices and as such aspects of 'radical habitus', they had once partially shared with the print co-ops.

By the mid 1990s, most of the print co-ops had closed. In London only Calverts and Aldgate Press remained. One Calvert's member described the feeling of continuing in the wake, not just of the demise of the other shops, but the radical field more generally, as "ploughing a lonely furrow" (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11). Outside of London, it appears that just Tyneside Free Press and Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op (SWPC) continued. The other women's service presses had all closed by 1988. Rochdale Alternative Press (RAP) still existed but had become a conventionally managed business.

The survival of SWPC beyond that of their 'mixed' print co-op competitors was unusual. As we saw the women's service printshops needed work beyond feminist organisations to survive which meant competing with the general movement service printshops. For Women in Print in London for example, by the mid 1980s there were about nine such general printshop co-ops, mostly with larger membership and often with more advanced equipment and skill levels. As such, the mixed presses possibly had more connections with a wider range of potential clients, and were also able to technically handle a more diverse range of work, including that now being asked for by feminist organisations. When describing how

Amazon Press were *not* approached by certain campaigns of the 1980s, Angela raised the issue of networks, "we were women… we weren't on the lefty ale drinking networks" (Intv. Cooper 23/7/13). Although SWPC came out of a similar 1970s WLM milieu as these other two all-women printshops, they appear to have been positioned within their broader local field of contentious and community based activity in a way that WiP and Amazon were not. Despite being an all-women press, they seem to have secured a role as the main 'alternative' service printers in Sheffield. Former member Jacqui felt that their status as a women's co-op, rather than marginalizing their position, strengthened it, "Even if we were occasionally more expensive people used us because we were the women's printing co-op, it was a conscious act. I think we had an advantage over the mixed co-ops… [there was] a political reason for supporting us" (Intv. Devereux 2/10/11). Sheffield was also a small city with a large 'lefty scene', suggesting far more overlap in social and political networks than is likely in larger more dispersed cities such as Manchester and London, factors that help create social and symbolic capital for a press, along with, one suspects some peer pressure to support them.

The changing women's movement of the 1980s also undoubtedly affected the women's service printshops. On the one hand the funding, professionalisation and institutionalisation that occurred (Lovenduski & Randall 1993) generated more print that in principle the womens' service printshops could have benefited from. However, because of the concomitant greater demands on quality this often was not the case. Less related to actual printwork was the demise of the WLM milieu that the women's printshops had come out of. The part of the women's movement that had once thought it vital for women to run their own presses, and that saw the existence of them as part of a growing 'women's liberation reality', no longer existed in the same way. It is not that this movement could sustain the women's printshops financially, but it gave them meaning and afforded them other kinds of sustaining value. Although local feminists were disappointed when Amazon closed in 1988 – it had been an important 'sign' of Manchester's women's movement – there was no new generation of women willing to pick up the baton (Intv. Cooper 23/7/13). The same appears to have been true for WiP (Intv. Lyser 16/5/11).

In 1983, Elston et al. had asserted that due to the political origins, rather than financial motivations, of the printing co-operatives, new ones would continue to appear, presumably as the older co-ops either closed or moved away from their roots. The field did not however continue to reproduce itself after this time. Many of the interviewees, saw the print co-ops as coming out of the effervescence of late 60s and early 1970s radicalism, supported by and part of a growing alternative left field, which despite being partially boosted by the Thatcher opposition and in some places municipal socialism, had been exhausted long before the end of the decade. The next most significant player in the field of contention, radical

environmentalism, was by comparison tiny, typically impoverished and more likely to be using photocopiers and resource centres or adhoc set ups in anarchist centres for their print needs. Supported by their party subscriptions and benefactors, the services presses of the organised left continued.

4. 4. Conclusions

This chapter has served to both generally introduce the different kinds of agents and activities that comprised the printshops field and to address the first sub-research question: *What were the relationships between the printshops and their movement field constituencies and how did they respond to changes in these fields?* This was done through taking each type of printshop in turn, initially outlining the contexts in which they emerged. The respective sections went on to discuss the roles they had set themselves in relation to their various movement constituencies, through what they were printing and how they 'engaged' with their wider movement field populations and 'users'. This was followed up with discussions of the challenges to these relationships and the printshops' purposes in the light of inevitably changing movement, aesthetic and technological contexts, along with their own attempts to 'survive'. As we saw there were both differences and points of overlap between the three types of printshop regarding these issues.

Initially both the poster workshops and the community printshops were, as might be expected, closely engaged with movements. For the poster workshops this was not just through directly responding (with new posters) to movement issues – along with working with specific groups on particular themes – but also through the distribution of posters at movement events and radical cultural spaces. Furthermore the 'situation' of their posters in workplaces, centres and domestic spaces gave them a distinct and recognised cultural role. There is a certain crossover with the community printshops in terms of some of this movement interaction, especially the relationship with groups, which for the community printshops was defining. The community printshop was however also 'open' as a site for any politically acceptable group to come and make their own media. As the chapter showed, several were also bases for a host of other locally engaged activities. This was the part of the purpose of the community printshop, to be enmeshed within local struggles and campaigns, as part of a wider community activist movement, as well as to encourage self-representation on the cultural front.

The service printshops role and relationship to movements on the other hand was more restricted – although the women's presses by their nature, had a close association to the WLM field, seeing themselves, and being seen as, a direct expression of it. For service printers their solidarity with movements and their 'clientele' was most obviously through being there to meet their print needs. It was also typically enacted through particular polices

about pricing, what they would and would *not* print, and later, employment policies that attempted to redress the discriminations of the trade. More broadly they attempted to provide a service that was supportive, 'cost effective' and 'demystifying'. However unlike the poster workshops and community printshops, they were also dependent on print sales from their 'customers' to earn their own wages, a factor that raised some difficulties and contradictions.

The poster workshops and community printshops had all been born in a particularly dynamic period of movement activity. However by the late 1970s the community activism that had provided the context and energy for many printshops, was fizzling out. It had failed politically, although many of the kinds of activities that had been part of it developed into more formalized initiatives. By the early 1980s the Women's Liberation Movement, although very much alive, had distinctly changed character. More generally the sense of radical promise that had fuelled the diverse flourishing of movements had abated, although especially with the new Thatcher government there was still oppositional activity and (new) causes to protest. So although, as Fligstein and McAdam note, if a field is dependent on another field for "production of input and consumption of output" (2012: 100), a crisis in the proximate field will likely produce one in the field in question, this was not quite yet the case for the printshops. Their responses varied; Poster Film Collective (PFC), as their name implies, had begun to diversify but also to make poster series to be used as radical teaching tools in schools. See Red, on the other hand, continuing as they had previously, began to find it hard to represent WLM concerns, and then even identify them, due to its increasingly fractious climate, particularly in London where they were based. They gradually became primarily service printers to a range of grant-aided groups.

Many community printshops had also been resources for movement and cultural groups who were not locally orientated, so the decline of community activism did not necessary spell a loss of purpose, although their more extended activities generally ceased. Their responses partly hinged on whether or not they were funded. The unfunded community printshops transitioned into becoming general movement service printers, a move also informed by economic pressures, as we saw. The formalizing of earlier initiatives, along with growth of a left-leaning voluntary sector, a few new protest movements and the new municipal socialism keen to support opposition to the Thatcher government meant there was potentially still a useful role for them. However this also put them in competition with the newer radical service printshops.

The situation for the grant-aided community printshops varied. The new municipal socialism was funding locally orientated groups, however this did not recreate the earlier dynamic climate. Union Place and Paddington Printshop clearly felt this and rather lost their role, although they carried on through the 1980s in receipt of funding, as a resource for these

funded groups. LRW on the other hand had developed a close association with the women's movement in addition to locally based activism and cultural projects and during the early-mid 1980s, through the connections of new workers, became an important resource for then flourishing black women's movement in London. This raises the unexplored issue of the relationship between the specific memberships of printshops and the extent to which they developed or retained the printshops movement and/or local connections. Lastly some of the community printshops outside of London had their role buoyed for a period in the 1980s by new local struggles around redevelopment or de-industrialisation.

For the service printshops, an issue from the beginning had been the low economic base of their customers. This meant balancing printing work they thought politically important with their attempts to earn a living. The issue could be exacerbated by lack of skill on both sides and high customer expectations. For the women's printshops there could be additional expectancies, not only to be very cheap, but as part of the womens' movement they were sometimes seen as also 'accountable' to it. Typically the service printshops tried to expand their customer base to include better paying work, although for many it remained an ongoing issue. As indicated above, there was a developing potential market of left-friendly organisations with more money. Another issue that they began to face however was one, which in different ways affected all three types of radical and community print activity.

Along with the shifting of both specific and larger movement contexts, but somewhat related, was the growing attention to 'aesthetics' amongst sections of the diversified left. This was expressed through a rejection of the 'anti-commercial' markers of 1970s radical visual culture and pressures for a more professional looking 'product'. A combination of factors had brought this about; concerns about the communicative power of the left's aesthetics, new entrants to movement fields, professionalisation of activities. The broader cultural frame was possibly a general rise in 'design-consciousness' during the 1980s (Poyner 2004). Limited technology and sometimes skill base meant that different kinds of printshops struggled to meet these new requirements.

This chapter has not only introduced the printshops field and attempted to flesh out the relationships and challenges different kinds of printshops had with their constituencies, it has also provided an outline of the field's overall trajectory. To conclude it and link to the next one, a few remarks about this overall trajectory are useful. The general rise and fall in terms of approximate printshop numbers is shown below in Fig. 2, and in a basic way indicates the three field phases identified by Fligstein and McAdam (2012); emergence, stability and crisis. It shows that the peak of growth was around 1980, about a year after the briefly mentioned Alternative Printers conference took place, and not long after the newer movement service printers had started to appear. All three types of printshop attended this

conference, and its occurrence suggests some sort of "field settlement" had been or was being established by this time (Fligstein & McAdam 2012). A 'settlement' is when it becomes apparent that field participants generally share 'means and ends' and routinely act to reproduce them and thus the distinctive value(s) of the field itself. However as the chart shows, by the mid 1980s the field was ceasing to reproduce itself and that by the early 1990s it had irrevocably shrunk. Fligstein and McAdam's definition of a 'field crisis' is "a situation in which the legitimacy of the principles of the field is threatened to such an extent that they are no longer able to deliver valued ends… and when incumbents begin to fail this is a sign that the underlying principles of field are not working" (2012: 176). The two main principles of the field, its 'settlement', were a) providing/enabling print media for radical and progressive movements cheaply, and b) commitment to egalitarian working practices. As we saw in the chapter, the first of these principles was challenged, either as those movements faded out, or as they developed different kinds of aesthetic requirements – and by resource issues, which will be further discussed in Chapter 6. The second principle, of democratic practices, was also part of the 'valued ends', not only as evidence for movements of actually existing alternative institutions, but also internally, for printshop members. However the relationship between a field and its practices are recursive; changes in practices change the field and changes in the field impact on practices. The next chapter turns to these particular practices, shows the forms that they took, how they were part of the field settlement, but also how they were also subject to different kinds of challenges. In doing so it further elaborates the field of the printshops, its 'means and ends' and its changing character in relation to those.

Figure 4. Trajectory of printshops field *(based on known starting and closing dates of 42 workshops).*
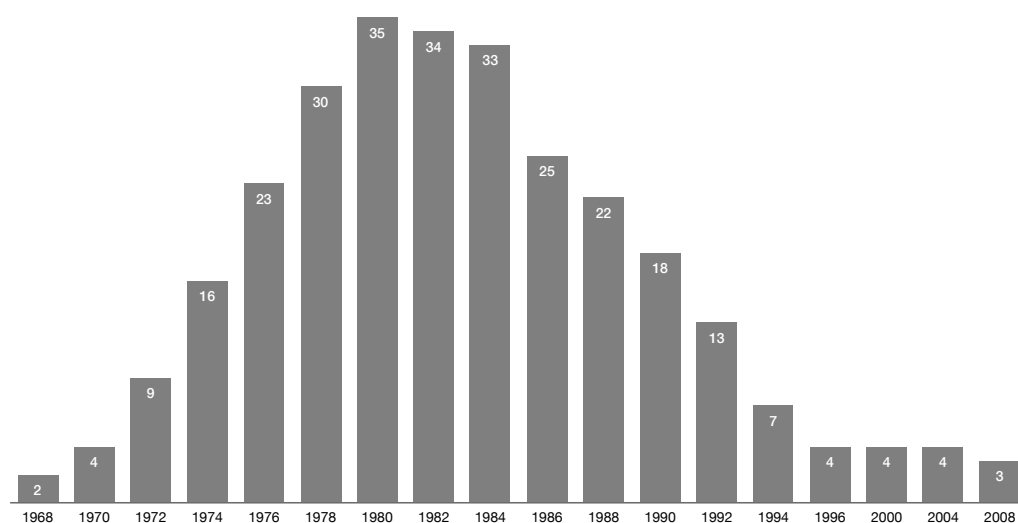
Chapter 5: Democracy in Action: the practices and challenges of democratic production and organisation

The preceding chapter, 'Constructing the Field' showed how the printshops emerged out of, and were co-constitutive of, particular politico-cultural milieus and interests within the field of alternative left activity. It showed something of the dynamics between this wider field and the printshops. Part of what determines a field as such is that it an arena of particular, related, recognised and shared practices (Postill 2013). 'Printing', is clearly a field defining practice, or a 'complex' of practices (Shove et al. 2012) and choosing to printing with and for movements a possible variant of that practice; a variant because the *meaning* of carrying out the practice is, on some level, presumably different to that of printing things you do not support. What also defined the printshops of this study was their participatory-democratic practices and the focus of this chapter is an examination of those. The printshops variously associated their participatory-democratic beliefs, intentions and practices with the equitable/radical 'distribution' of knowledge, resources (and power); ideas of 'cultural democracy'; empowerment; equality; 'autonomy'; 'self-management' and new social relations. These were not notions invented by the printshops but part of the developing discourses and emergent practices of the wider field of alternative left contention. The chapter aims to explore how these ideas/ideals were also part of the motivation for the printshops, how their attempted translation into specific practices took shape, and the challenges and changes to those within the printshops. This introduction firstly sets out relevant criteria for democratic participation and then identifies the types of democratic practices of the printshops. I then go on to briefly restate the core chapter concepts of practice and habitus. The last section of the introduction, after explaining the chapter structure, introduces the 'radical habitus' (Crossley 2003) of the printshop members.

(Normative) criteria for the participatory-democratic organisation
While political theory and media theory has provided various normative criteria for democratic participation (e.g. Dahl 1989, Habermas 1989, Dahlgren 2009), what is necessary here is relevant criteria at the level of the democratic *organisation*. The criteria identified by Rothschild and Whitt (1986: 62-3) for an ideal type of 'collectivist-democratic' organisation is generally applicable for the printshops. Rothschild and Whitt established their criteria in comparative fashion with that of the ideal 'bureaucratic organisation', however since the difference in norms is fairly self-evident, this is omitted in my modified version of their framework shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11. Normative criteria for the participatory-democratic organization

Dimension	Normative criteria
Authority	Authority resides in the collective as a whole
Social stratification	Egalitarian, no hierarchy of positions. Concept of career advancement not meaningful
Job roles	Minimal division of labour; administration shared with production tasks; separation between intellectual and manual work is reduced Generalisation of jobs and functions; holistic roles.
Skills and knowledge	Democratisation of skills, skill sharing, demystification of expertise May be commitment to actively extend this beyond the membership
Recruitment	Recruitment based on social-political values and experience, social and political networks, informally assessed knowledge and skills May include commitment to inclusivity
Social relations	Ideal of community. Relations are to be holistic and of value in themselves
Incentive/purpose	Normative and solidarity incentives are primary, financial incentives secondary or marginal
Rules & social control	Minimal written rules of conduct/performance, assumption of self-regulation. Discipline based on moral or personal appeal.
Remuneration	Equal rate of pay (if any) amongst all members, or worked out on basis of need

(After Rothschild & Whitt 1986: 62-3)

The printshops attempts to enact democratic-participatory beliefs comprised three distinct practices:

1. Collective management (democratic self-management)
2. Job rotation/holistic job roles (democratic division of labour)
3. Self-help/DIY (mostly via participation in production by 'users').

The first two practices relate to internal democratic participation within the organisation. The first practice, collective/democratic self-management was common to all printshops in the study. A significant proportion also practiced job rotation, and saw it as a logical and necessary extension of collective management. The third practice, DIY printing, relates to participation in production by non-collective members and was mostly the domain of the community printshop, of which it was often a defining activity. New left advocates of citizen participation such as Arnheim (1969) and Pateman (1970), and their more recent heirs in media studies such as Carpentier (2011) make a distinction between different kinds of participation vis a vis their actual democratic value. The ultimate democratic value is that which represents equal control/power. To that end, in his media related model, Carpentier differentiates between arrangements of access, social interaction and participation. Regarding the three printshop practices orientated towards democratic participation, it is only collective/democratic self-management that directly equates to a condition of equal decision-making power. Job rotation or holistic job roles in and of themselves do not create this, but were perceived as a means to create an equality of experience and knowledge that would support collective self-management. The third practice, DIY, sits on a different register

regarding its democratic value, in that it was seen as 'democratizing' skills, knowledge and the (technological) means of representation beyond the collective. In turn, this particular practice was freighted with the *aspiration* that through engagement and media generated it would help politically 'empower' participants and their audiences *towards* a situation of citizen power. In Carpentier's model this is participatory practice at the level of 'access' or 'social interaction'. I am not concerned here to measure the democratic value of a type of practice, but rather get to grips with how they manifested as practices in the printshops.

Practice

While the concept of field is important for explaining some of what the printshops' practices were invested with and their context of development, in order to understand how they actually manifested, a clear concept of 'practice' itself is required. While this has been outlined in the conceptual framework, it is worth briefly recapping before proceeding with the chapter. A practice is taken to be an activity that is performed and repeated, which requires developing know-how/competence, is understood by its practitioners as 'a practice', is co-constitutive of habitus (and vice versa) and constitutes a wider dynamic field of related practices. As explained in the conceptual framework, the variant of practice theory mobilised here is that advanced by Shove, Pantzar and Walker (2012). The authors propose that all practices are comprised of the linking or integration of three 'elements': *meaning, material and competence*.

- Meaning refers to the social and symbolic significance of participation in the practice.
- Material denotes the objects, infrastructures, tools, hardware (and the bodies) that are deployed in the practice.
- Competence is the know-how or capability that enables the practice.

'Elements' may be new or existing and when integrated as a practice through their linkages they become not only interdependent but also "mutually shaping" (Shove et al. 2012: 32). For a practice to exist there must be a linkage of these three elements. The evolution or disintegration of practices occurs as the elements that constitute them alter. This formulation of practice, minimally sketched here, offers an analytical device for explaining how and why practices evolve, persist, change, fail to take hold, or disappear over time. For example, the participatory-democratic practices of the printshops derived part of their 'meaning', their social and symbolic significance, from the wider alternative left field, however fields change, 'distinctive values' mutate. Changes in field and printshops membership ('material') could also mean that the link between 'material' and certain aspects of 'meaning' was weakened, or simply not there. The issue of 'competence' is an element that operates at the level of the individual member and the printshop collective, as well as the printshop user with regards to DIY practices. The aspects that comprise the 'material' of the practices necessarily vary according to the practice in question. The chapter subsections, addressing each of the three

practices in turn, will use this 'elemental' breakdown to describe and attempt to explain the various trajectories of these practices in the printshops.

Habitus (link between field and practice)

Practices, especially emergent practices are performed and developed by participants that they 'make sense' to (which is not to say there are not resistant practitioners). This is where the concept of habitus, especially shared habitus comes in, in order to account for the necessary disposition and *illusio* (belief) for participatory democratic practices to be taken up. As indicated above, and following Bourdieu, the supposition is that 'practices' are shaped by *habitus* and vice versa and that practices are the results of a "*relation between the habitus and the specific social context of the fields in which individuals act*" (Thompson 1991: 14). As such, some initial attention to the 'practitioners' and their habitus is necessary and helps set up the subsequent focus on democratic practices. The second part of this chapter introduction provides this. Bourdieu's conception of habitus from which this formulation derives, refers to the long-term embodied ways of being that accrue through social subjectification, and although I draw on this in the chapter, initially, and in particular parts of the chapter it is Crossley's (2003) more particular notion of 'radical habitus'*,* that I adapt. The concept of 'radical habitus' is useful in explaining why and how such practices were brought into and sustained in the printshops as well as in some cases the challenges to their successful enactment. It can be used to help describe the *aim* of democratic and self-help practices. Participatory democratic modes of organising have been described as 'prefigurative' (Breines 1982) [32] or 'educative' (Pateman 1970) – however they can also be conceptualised as the attempt to engender, through practice, a particular type of 'radical habitus'; a radical-*participatory* habitus (see Haluza-DeLay 2008). Bourdieu's more encompassing notion is useful for trying to understand some of the challenges to this.

In summary then, the chapter will explore the practices of participatory democratic organisation and production within the printshops, locating them within the wider changing radical movement field. It will establish the enactment, variation and problems of democratic participatory practices across different printshops. Secondly, it will consider what, if any, kinds of changes their participatory practices and associated discourses underwent during the printshops existences – and why. It will draw on Shove et al.'s (2012) 'elemental' approach to unpacking practices in order to do this, and these elements (meaning, competence and material) will also be used to help structure the discussion. As indicated above, linked into this will be the issue of involvement, the 'who' and habitus of participation, that is, the practitioners themselves. The chapter consists of three core sections, each

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32 Although see Yates (2014) for a problematisation of the concept and its (ongoing) application.

concerned with one of the three practices identified; democratic self-management, democratic division of labour, DIY practices.

Collective participants and their radical habitus: an introduction

As we saw in the previous chapter the printshops were connected into the developing field of alternative left activity and as such instigated and joined by people with an existing desire to support that activity. From this we can assume that to some extent the members of the printshops had acquired a version of what Crossley (2003) has identified as a 'radical habitus' through involvement in this field. This was born out by the interviewees with the overwhelming majority having prior and often simultaneous involvement in some type of compatible political activity.[33] The nature of this varied. Sarah, for example, explained that her long involvement in printshops "coincided and complemented political involvement in GLF, the women's movement, collective childcare questioning nuclear family structures, squatting and community politics, the Troops Out movement, class and trade union activities" (eIntv. Grimes various). Chrissy, on the other hand: "I'd been an active trade unionist… [and] involved in a lot of organisations defending local communities against redevelopment" (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11). Multiple interests were common, evidencing a *general disposition* to critique and contest.

Crossley (2003: 52) identifies four dimensions to a 'radical habitus': 1) perceptual-cognitive schemas which dispose agents to question, criticize and distrust political elites and processes; 2) the political know-how to transform this distrust and criticism into action; 3) an ethos that encourages participation and binds it to a sense of individual meaning and worth 4) a 'feel' for protest and organising that allows participants to derive purpose and enjoyment from it, to believe in it and to feel at home doing it. What he also draws attention to, and what is of crucial significance here, is that radical habitus carries through into different areas of life beyond activism, into ways of living, working and self-presentation. Arguably much of the politics of the alternative left field sought explicitly to do that, by attempting to develop lifestyle and modes of being in the world that were consistent with their radical and social movement aims, in other words critical, habitus transforming practices (c.f. Haluza-DeLay 2008).

Woven into the overwhelming majority of accounts[34], as hinted at in Sarah's account above, was evidence that part of the pre-existing shared radical habitus of many printshop members was the belief and engagement in collective and participatory democratic

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33 About two-thirds had been committed to particular groups, the remainder 'adherents', regularly taking part in actions/protests and providing a generally supportive role. The high figure of involvement is skewed as discussed in the methodology chapter, as most interviewees had joined printshops before the mid 1980s.

34 Only two interviewees had no prior involvement in collective organising or living.

practices.[35] The following statement by Geoff captures this; "We were always trying to work out how things might change, having intense arguments but I think the main thing we all adhered to was lifestyle. We were very much of the belief that if you lived it, that was part of the way to make it happen. So you lived and worked communally, in collectives" (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). This is about change, personal and social, not just as something cognitive, but also via physical, embodied practice. The relevance assigned to participatory democratic practices spanned from those, such as Geoff who had been 'radicalised' in the late 1960s, through to those politicised in the early Thatcher years, despite distinct historical differences in their 'movement biographies'. Remarks by Ingrid, also highlight the adoption of participatory practices as a type of resistance; "It was part of the politics that you sought an alternative route to the mainstream because it rejected you for race, gender, sexuality, anything so it was ok we'll do it ourselves and we'll do it in a different way that is non-hierarchical." (Intv. Pollard 16/5/11). The collectively run printshops were then, for many, places where there was a 'fit' with their existing or nascent radical and participatory-democratic habitus, and this aspect of them part of the attraction (Intv. Brill 23/9/11, Intv. Levy 19/8/11, Intv. Winter 19/8/11, Intv. Gard 31/8/12).

Another dimension to the motivations of many printshops members was the desire to be doing something tangible and 'useful' for the field of radical contention. That this might also offer a new kind of social identification is apparent in Charlie's statement; "It was the first time in my life that I had really done something that was solidly practical and it fitted in with my fantasy of being a working class person doing useful work." (Intv. Rose 19/12/11). To a fairly large extent the social profile of those joining the printshops, at least until the mid 1980s[36], conformed to that of 'new' social movements (Eder 1993); university educated and middle-class. Stott's 1985 analysis of 'alternative' worker co-operatives produced the same finding. For the university educated and/or middle class to devote their time to printing, which – with the exception of the rarified sub-field of fine art and 'private press' printing – was a working class and often 'male' trade[37], suggests a degree of 'disidentification' by participants; a desire to contest their proscribed identity and possibly "re-identify with different social categories" (Keucheyan 2014: 175). Arguably, the new social space set in motion by the movements of the late 1960s and 1970s generated a context that offered possibilities for re-identification, new kinds of internal orientations or habitus (Ross 2002). For certain participants printing, beyond its practical value, fitted into a leftist class-conscious

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35 For an example of drawing on Crossley's 'radical habitus' to derive a concept of a specifically 'participatory habitus' see Howard and Lever (2011).

36 The changing profile of members will be discussed later in the chapter.

37 There are some qualifications here. The unskilled and semi-skilled 'finishing' (post-printing) part of the trade employed many women. The developing area of electronic typesetting with QWERTY keyboards began to employ women — with much resistance from the union (see Cockburn 1983). New small lightweight printing technologies used by inhouse plants were also sometimes operated by women (see Marshall 1981).

understanding of labour, 'production' and worker identity (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11, Intv Tompsett 14/9/11). For some of the women, the gendered connotations of printing as skilled 'manual' work offered habitus transforming potential (Intv, Levy 19/8/11, Intv. Mair 14/4/11, Intv. Somerset 18/4/11). This outline of the radical habitus of instigating and joining printshop members reveals not only the expected political and activist affiliations, but also a commitment to democratic practices. The next section of the chapter focusses on the practice shared by all the printshops, democratic self-management.

5.1. Democratic self-management (Collective working)

The collective method of working aims for tasks, planning and decision-making, that is, responsibility and control, to be shared equally amongst members. As such, it denotes organisation without formal 'leaders' and assumes equality between members in terms of status, capability and the right to participate. Rothschild-Whitt (1979) coined the term 'collectivist-democratic' in her studies of alternative producer co-ops. Shukaitis has suggested that 'collectivist-democratic' workplaces "operate as *immanent critiques* of existing forms of work" (2010: 63). The service printers and many of the community presses referred to in this study also described themselves as (worker) co-ops. There is a technical distinction between collectives and worker co-operatives in that the latter may or may not be collectively run, but they are collectively *owned* and democratically controlled by their workers, which as Cheney (2006: 73) points out "links economic and democratic rights". This section of the chapter will firstly outline the broader field context of collective working, and then go onto look at the practice of democratic self-management in the printshops.

Field context
The political inspiration and impetus for the uptake of collective/co-op forms by the alternative left in Britain came from a variety of overlapping sources. While it is not possible here to unravel them comprehensively, there are key strands to mention. Firstly, and more generally, the rallying cry of the non-Communist left in 'Mai 68' for 'autogestión' ('self-management') was no doubt significant in dispersing and confirming the political salience of such practices of organisation (Franks 2006). The concept derives from social anarchism, libertarian Marxism and other forms of "obsolete communism" (Cohn-Bendit & Cohn-Bendit 1968); political strands that many members were sympathetic to. Autogestión also potentially connects to a more 'generalised' concept of self-management that exceeds the economic or organisational unit and encompasses creative resistance to 'repression' in all levels of life (Rose 1978, Vieta 2014). Black Beetle Co-operative for example described worker coops as a way to "further the struggle against alienation and humiliation, prevalent both at work and in our leisure hours" (1979). By the early 1970s the companion call to 'autogestión', might have been the oft-cited injunction, 'take control of our lives'. The British

newsletter, *In the Making: A directory of proposed productive projects in Self Management or Radical Technology* (1973-83) – itself an indication of a growing 'movement' – explained that "[i]t's about *working together to have more say in your life*" (ITM 1975: i). The generalised idea of self-management drew on and resonated with a second dimension of influence, the anti-authoritarian and 'self-creating' energies of the counter culture from communes to the 'Arts Lab' movement. The third strand of influence came from the ideas of 'participatory democracy' heralded by North American New Left of the early 1960s[38], which filtered into certain British left milieus. Finally, and also derived from the participatory democratic ideas of the North American New Left, partly via their uptake in the US women's movement (Sirianni 1991), collective working became intrinsic to the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) in Britain.

By the mid 1970s, the 'collectivist-democratic' mode had become not only the assumed way of working for much of the alternative left field in the UK, but perceived as the most 'legitimate' one (Fligstein & McAdam 2012). An indicative illustration of the extent to which this way of working had "given rise to a normative order" (Schneiberg 2013: 656), was the condition set by the newly formed Federation of Alternative Booksellers in 1975 that membership was *only* open to collective shops.[39] As Charlie from Union Place recalled, "It was a sort of fundamental assumption that 'progressive' people chose that form of anti-authoritarian grouping to do something politically useful" (Intv. Rose 19/12/11). From political organising to CR groups, radical newspaper production, theatre groups, therapy groups, nurseries, women's centres, law centres and wholefood shops, collective practices prevailed. The 'collective idea' was also practiced within the broader politicisation of everyday life: collective households, collective childcare and open relationships, any or all of which might also combine with a collective work situation. Altogether, as the previous section of the chapter indicated, this undoubtedly helped shape a radical 'participatory' habitus.

Democratic self-management in practice
The situated practice of self-management in the printshops can, as proposed earlier in the chapter and following Shove et al. (2012), be understood as the integration of particular understandings and know how, communicative processes, symbolic and political significance, bodies, tools, equipment, resources and decisions. These dimensions can be grouped under one of the linked 'elements' necessary for an activity to comprise a practice; meaning, material and competence. As indicated, part of the usefulness of this breakdown is to be able to understand how variations in 'elements' affect the carrying out and life of a

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38 In particular the Student Non-Violence Coordinating Committee (SNNC) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

39 In 1980 they became the Federation of Radical Booksellers, and opened up membership.

given practice. While the meaning and resonance of democratic self-management has been mainly established, and which carries over from alternative left ideals, the elements of competence and material related to the practice in the printshops needs to be outlined. The diagram below (Fig. 5) suggests the content of these elements. Some of the 'competencies', as with meaning, carry over from collectivist practice more generally. However some are particular to the printshops in terms of specific understandings. The 'material' of democratic self-management perhaps seems a disparate list ranging from decisions, to meetings, members and the entity of the printshop. 'Material' needs to be understood as *that which is worked on and with* to create a practice through its linkages with meaning and competence.

Fig. 5. Elements of democratic self-management (after Shove, Pantzar & Watson 2012)

Elements of democratic self-management

Competence:
Communication skills. Ability to see someone else's point of view, to take criticism. Inclusivity, compromising, self-discipline, reflexivity/self-awareness. Understanding financial information, comprehending the linked processes and operations of the printshop. Ability to grasp implications of decisions

Competence: know how, understandings, background knowledge

Meaning:
Equality, equal power, politics into practice (prefigurative), workers control, new social relations, contests division between manual and intellectual labour, democratic culture, autonomy/self-determination, empowerment, anti-hierarchy, anti-authoritarian, alternative/oppositional

Meaning: social and symbolic significance

Material:
Decisions to be made
The collective membership of the printshop. The meeting and its related paraphernalia (agendas, documents, minutes book). The composite social, economic and material entity of the printshop

Material: objects, tools, bodies, infrastructure, hardware

Drawing again on Rothschild and Whitt's analysis (1986), in this case the internal conditions that facilitate organisational democracy, I have drawn from the above elemental content (Fig. 5), along with aspects of the normative criteria outlined in Table 11, the following list of (ideal) facilitating conditions (Table 12):

Internal conditions facilitating democratic self-management	Related to elements of practice	Rothschild & Whitt (1986)
Shared participatory habitus, political outlook, values and commitment to the process	material, competence, meaning	Homogeneity
A fair distribution of the competences required	material, competence	
Mutual and self-criticism	competence	Mutual and self-criticism
Democratic information and knowledge sharing	material linked to competence	Technology & diffusion of knowledge [partly relates to division of labour]
Shared aims for the organisation itself	material (i.e. membership) and meaning	Provisional orientation
Limits to size	material	Limits to size
Movement/field support base	supports meaning	Internal support base e.g. customers/users

Table 12. Internal conditions facilitating democratic self-management

Along with inverse of the above conditions, there are three potential factors that can also provide a challenge to the practice of self-management: time, emotional intensity and individual differences (Rothschild & Whitt 1986).

Material: meetings

As with other collectivist-democratic or horizontally structured organisations, the central tool of self-management was the collective or co-op meeting. 'The meeting' is the seat of collective authority, its legislature (Müller 1991), and ultimate decision-making body. The meeting creates the equal *opportunity* for all members in shared management. This in turn (in principle), depending on the dispersion and congealing of competencies, enables equal *power* in management. It is only really through the routinised practice of shared decision making via the meeting that the collective as a democratic formation exists. In many ways 'the collective meeting' is the *sign* of democratic self-management as well as its apparent implementation/practice. More substantively perhaps, meetings are a 'sense-making' practice in relation to the tasks that need to be done, the decisions that need to be made, the information to be shared, for the relationships between its members and for the organisation itself (Schwartzman 1987). Furthermore, as Ferguson (1991: 112) puts it, "meetings are the site where individuals are shaped into members of the collective", whereby different priorities, positions and allegiances emerge and where the "culture of the collective" becomes evident.

Inevitably the approach to meetings varied both across printshops and within their individual life histories. This could range from the rather structured approach of Calverts with pre-agendas, minutes and time-limits to the regular meeting that occurred without time limits or records or the situation claimed by Steve at Aldgate Press; "we are more famous for forgetting to have meetings because we are too busy working" (Intv. Sorba 22/2/13). Generally those printshops that had begun on the initiative of just a couple of people, rather

than a group, had a more ad-hoc approach in their early years. The initial labour of setting up and doing the printing could mean attention to explicit democratic processes took a back seat. Founder members felt they knew the most about what needed to be done, and initially those that joined them mostly agreed (Intv. Green 2/8/11, Intv Scott 19/9/11). Not only this but despite the political commitment to self-management, for some such as Tony, who was part of the duo that set up Trojan Press, there was a resistance to formalised structures to enact this, "there wasn't a great deal of structure... I didn't come from a political culture that that thought note taking and agendas were important, so everything was done on a fairly informal basis. It's only later that we started to have weekly meetings, notes and stuff" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11). The resistance to formality was a part of the wider alternative left structure of feeling and could mask various power imbalances. Calverts was especially attenuated to this, as their origins were born out of such a situation at IRAT, a supposed printing co-op at the London Arts Lab. An internal dispute revealed that only one person had any legitimate authority (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). Calverts, set up by sacked workers following the dispute, tried to ensure that shared authority and co-ownership rights were built into their constitution.

Typically printshops had weekly collective meetings to discuss immediate, often production related issues and periodic longer meetings to discuss larger or longer-term matters. Weekly or longer meetings usually took place either at the press or the homes of members. Consensus was overwhelmingly the preferred mode of reaching agreement, although majority vote was also used. The more recent structures that have developed in social movements to equal participation were a long way off (c.f. Maeckelbergh 2011). They did however attempt to create the basic conditions for participation. This included the sharing of documents and financial information, trying to ensure everyone could attend by holding them at times (and places) that made them accessible to those with caring responsibilities, rotating the jobs of chair and minute taking (where the latter existed). While equal access to information was seen to be important, writing up meetings, which help keep collective track of discussions, decisions and their reasons, was seen as less so in some places (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15; Intv. Gwynn-Jones 25/10/11). Partly the latter related to the above-mentioned resistance to formality, but also as Yael from See Red said, as a small collective in work at the same time, they talked every day and all *knew* what decisions they had made (Intv. Hodder 8/4/11). Information was inevitably shared informally and in discussions outside of meetings, not just while working but also through the sociable relations amongst members, often in the pub. In some printshops (e.g. Union Place, Community Press, Poster-Film Collective) there were periods where some or many of the collective were also living together, as well as the usual couplings that take place. The beyond-meeting discussions amongst different members about the press are also where consensus building can take place. Hence while there were general practices to aid the conditions for equal involvement, the invariably uneven nature of relationships beyond the press – amongst other factors that

will be addressed shortly – could impact on the degree to which an individual felt informed and able to participate (Intv. Halsall 4/10/11, Intv. Palmer 3/4/11, Intv. Rose 19/12/11).

The retrospective experiences of meetings were in many ways consistent: valuable, necessary, time-consuming and sometimes vexing. Paul for example, "The frustration of decision-making processes… sometimes that's frustrating but it's better than the other option to have no input at all. So although it's frustrating it's better than being really frustrated!" (Intv. Santer 29/6/12). Chrissy's recollection of the weekly meeting at Fly Press gives a descriptive account,

> [W]e went round and expressed how we felt the week had gone, including very personal remarks about everybody!... the decision-making was by consensus rather than majority and sometimes we stayed in this bloody meeting until all hours of the night to get everyone to agree. It was very long-winded, it was very emotional, it was very labour intensive — and much more rewarding than having some sort of arbitrary external judgement (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11).

Chrissy's statement points to two of the constraints on democratic self-management, identified by Rothschild and Whitt (1986), time and 'emotional intensity'. The process of collective decision-making especially by consensus takes time, and the time this takes is contingent on a combination of factors including communication styles and the meeting culture of collective. Chris from Community Press for example described their 'hippy' style of meetings where "if someone felt the need to go on and on about something we would just sit there and let them carry on about it!" (Intv. Whitbread 3/4/13). This was not uncommon and part of the informality that characterised an anti-authoritarian approach to management. The issue of 'emotional intensity' is also often part and parcel of working closely together where different personalities, motivations and interpersonal relationships affect group dynamics and processes. The other factor that can influence the time and intensity of decision-making processes is the type of decisions to be made. These constitute a particular aspect of the 'material' of democratic self-management.

Material: decisions to be made
The issues that the printshops had to plan for and decide upon in meetings were ostensibly similar to those of their non-democratic equivalents. The types of decision a printshop might need to make included:
- Planning of tasks and production (and perhaps how a particular task should be carried out)
- Issues relating to technology, materials, suppliers
- Working conditions and remuneration
- Resolving internal conflicts and 'personnel' issues
- New members

- Costing policies and investment
- Determining desirable (and acceptable) work and 'users'
- Solidarity work
- Directional issues (i.e. social and material aims)

Following Bernstein (1982) we can see there is continuum of 'issue' levels at which decisions needed to be made, from the individual task level through that of the operational level or 'means' (to achieve basic goals), about which the bulk of decisions are made, to the 'higher' realm of overarching aims and principles. Inevitably the most difficult decisions were those that were seen to conflict with the perceived aims and values of the press, which could in fact derive from issues at any level. While to some extent the purposes or goals of the printshops were taken to be self-evident, differences of priority could arise when an issue emerged that seemed to contravene them. Many of the other decisions that members were expected to assume responsibility for might well go beyond their experience, knowledge or even interest. Bernstein's notion of levels is useful not just for identifying where participation was expected, but as significantly, if not more so here, for where different members were also most interested, or felt able, to exercise it. This theme will be picked up below, under the heading of competence and equality. Before addressing this, I will turn to two examples of 'difficult decisions', which raised the matter of shared aims, one of the internal conditions that arguably facilitate democratic self-management.

Difficult decisions

The kinds of decisions that could be particularly difficult were those perceived to present a threat to either the values and social aims of a printshop or to its material survival. Difficult decisions were often those where one was pitted against the other. This could range from the problem of how to deal with an individual's work quality or behaviour, to new working arrangements, to recruitment, to equipment and premises decisions.

The first example of a 'difficult decision' was initially equipment-related; the proposal by a long-standing member to expand the press from small offset to large offset. To do this meant taking on a large loan and finding more profitable printing work to make the press pay for itself. As mistakes would be more expensive on the larger machine (and its pre-press), there were other implications, such as needing to build up the skill levels in the printshop by moving to specialisation of roles. Phil, the proposer of the idea was certain that if the press were to economically survive this was the only way forward. For most of the others these changes conflicted with their ideas about what the co-op was for and why they wanted to work there. It meant losing key aspects of collective working, especially job rotation which made working there significant and enjoyable (Intv. Booth 20/4/11). In other words, it conflicted with the *meaning* of democratic self-management. Partly it was a difference about

the extent to which specific egalitarian working methods were central to the 'mission' of the press. For the small offset group it was also about retaining a small-scale low-cost operation for small-scale groups. This was also a 'mission' issue, *who* were they there for. The kind of work needed to make the larger press pay would be from organisations with bigger budgets such as charities and unions, and even commercial work. The membership of the press at this time was entirely drawn from the alternative left milieu but clearly within this significant differences of priority and motivation could emerge, that otherwise may have been tacitly assumed to be shared.

To some extent those that wanted to remain small-scale held what Rothschild and Whitt (1986) describe as a 'provisional orientation', whereby organisational longevity is not necessarily the point, especially where it seems to conflict with the purpose in the present. For Rothschild and Whitt this provisional orientation is a necessary condition that prevents goal displacement in democratic organisations. However as Phil himself said, they never at any point went back to try and collectively determine what their aims were, what the press was actually there to do (Intv. Green 2/8/11). The other factor perhaps in the resistance to 'growth' is that of competence regarding the kind of knowledge and confidence to make a decision that involved financial risk. Aside from any potential political un-palatability regarding this, few if any collectivists would have had experience of this kind of decision. In the end no acceptable compromise could be reached on the proposal and a decision was made to split into two, a large offset group and a small offset group sharing the same premises. The latter in fact folded in relatively short time without much distress (Intv. Todd 30/9/11).

A second example of a difficult decision relates to the relationship between recruitment and democratic aims. While I have picked out one instance of this, there were several others. In the early days of the printshops, the issue of recruitment was mainly one of finding enough willing committed people, often friends or political allies. However as the presses became more established, some members felt that the aims of the press should incorporate a consciously inclusive approach to recruitment, in order to address the exclusions of the wider print industry as well as the inadvertent ones of the printshops. This could mean taking on someone with no printing skills, or someone who did not happen to have the same shared radical habitus, both factors that other members might feel were detrimental in different ways for the press. This situation occurred at Trojan Press, about whether they should take on a skilled male lefty printer or a lesbian with little experience, creating another situation whereby economic survival was felt to be in tension with the democratic priorities of certain members. When the job was advertised, the first time Trojan had done this, they had not agreed the selection criteria because according to Tony, "You just think, everybody's the same, we're all part of it! It's common sense!" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11). However after people

had been interviewed and a decision needed to be made, a clear difference of priority emerged with Tony representing one position, and a newer lesbian member, another,

> I just thought it was obvious that we should have him [the male printer]… and Cath said if we had any social commitment, we should be trying to break down stereotypical employment patterns, we shouldn't be employing white men just because they know how to print. And I said, that's great, if we had any resources with which to do that (Intv. Swash 22/9/11).

The collective were divided. Both Cath and Tony maintained their strongly held positions; Cath privileging inclusivity and social commitment, Tony the material stability of the press. For Tony also, it was not a situation whereby skills were sought over shared values, the male lefty printer had a compatible movement background and experience in radical printshops; he would fit in. In the end Tony's position prevailed. However, as he recalls, consensus was ultimately based on resigned compliance by the rest of the collective rather than genuine mutual agreement. In his own words he won the argument through "relentlessly attritional debate… so I won and it was right but I would have preferred that they'd come around to my point of view, rather than that they'd just got so sick and tired of me berating them, that they'd given in" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11). The point about consensus, in principle, is that once it is reached, it means accepting ownership over that decision and implementing it, the minority vote that enables would-be dissenters to remain righteous, is forgone. Both this example and the above have raised not only issues whereby the material entity of the printshop explicitly link with variations in the membership aims for the organisation, but also that of 'competence' in democratic self-management.

Competence and equality

The principles of equality and equal power were central to the meaning and purpose of collective self-management and in some respects these are normative ideals. The tacit assumption was that, with other collective practitioners of self-management, all members after a period of getting to understand the 'business' of the organisation, are equally committed to its purpose and aims and are equally capable of reasoned decision making for the organisational and collective good (May 2010). However the elemental content of the competence (i.e. know-how, understandings, background knowledge) required for the practice of self-management is potentially demanding, and inevitably both partial and unevenly distributed. Although in terms of democratic habits and values, previous experience and commitment (radical-participatory habitus) created a significant amount of positive orientation, as Pateman (1970) and others have remarked, this rarely rests upon on longer-term social experience and environment given the wider context of individualistic, competitive capitalist society. Furthermore differences in upbringing and education, experience, personality and motivation can all contribute to variance in competencies

undermining ideals of equal participation and shared power. Significant technical and operational experience brought to an issue may be marginalised in favour of a position argued with greater articulacy and persuasive style (Müller 1991). Influence may rest on a variety of undemocratic factors. This is by no means a fixed situation, as democratic organisations are where individuals can and do develop competencies.

a) founder members

To some extent the founder members of a press represent an obvious source of inequality in terms of the distribution of certain competences. By dint of experience, they often had the most comprehensive understanding of the presses operations and its finances. They had also contributed the sweat equity to get the printshop going and as such were (usually) heavily invested in the press. They might be held in regard or come to be seen as the old guard whose politics had lost their radical edge.

The earlier examples of difficult decisions in fact both involved founder members, in order to show here how sometimes this position could create a challenge to democratic self-management. In both instances a particular originating drive and ambition for the press came into conflict with the differing motivations of newer members. In both cases, consensus was ultimately less important for these founder members than forcing the right thing, as they saw it, for the press's survival.

Generally founder members did not want to be the repositories of knowledge or influence, the point was the sharing of responsibility, however as with other long-term members they could unwillingly end up in this position. In later period at Fly press for example, Chrissy found herself in this position, "I was being seen as the mummy and anything somebody didn't know it was 'ask Chrissy' and I didn't actually feel that I was capable of answering all these questions and I didn't like that role. I felt I was being separated by that. It could be seen as an accolade, but I didn't see it like that" (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11).

b) friendship groups and cliques

A broadly shared radical habitus combined with the mutual endeavour of 'the printshop', frequently created the conditions for friendship amongst members. During Dave's time at Community Press for example, "it was with friends. There were lots of interconnections… It was the mishmash of the social scene and work with politics thrown in" (Intv. Gwynn-Jones 25/9/11). Similarly Beryl from Notting Hill Press recalled "The great thing about it for us was that… politics, friends, work, everything was all of a piece" (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). For many, involvement in the printshops fitted into, or further enabled, a sociable and coherent, habitus affirming radical life. Furthermore this might be seen as part of the 'glue' that helped hold a printshop together, creating a particular basis for collective working. Jane Mansbridge

(1983) has made the case that the new left models of democracy were unconsciously based upon a exemplar of friendship, which is what makes consensus both desirable and possible.

However if all are not part of a friendship group within a collective it can operate as a clique of influence and power and delimit equal participation in self-management (Freeman 1971). This exclusionary factor can go unnoticed by those in the clique, who may also feel that it is they who are the most committed. Phil for example admitted that "We discussed that a lot in political groups, as a problem on structurelessness, [but] I was totally blind to that within the co-op" (Intv. Green 2/8/11). Geoff recalled that "there was a lot of cohesion based on friendship, informal hierarchies, we used to talk about that at Community Press and in communes I lived in… It can be challenged but I don't know if it ever was really" (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). Arguably reflexivity about this tendency and finding ways to counteract it is one of the difficult competences of democratic self-management.

c) feeling equal

Confidence in one's own worth and capabilities as well in the ability to influence decisions is self-evidently part of what enables participation in self-management. While political experience may have provided some degree of self-assurance other aspects of background such as class and education could hinder communicative competence and confidence and thus equal participation and influence. As Sarah acknowledged, "members class positions for example might impact on how well we 'did' meetings, how articulate we were" (eIntv. Grimes 20/3/10). As shown previously, although less than the typical social movement profile, a significant proportion of printshops members certainly in the first few years shared a background of (white) middle class upbringing and university education. It is then perhaps indicative that those who spoke of not feeling quite equal were either from a working class background or had not been to university. Cath described her sense of this at the first printshop she worked at,

> Everyone else was university educated and I was Joe Spud who had moseyed in and didn't know what I was doing… I did know what I was doing… [but] in terms of confidence and *knowing you could do something*. I hadn't achieved that much really… I didn't feel that I was adding enough to the workplace and they would be better off if I wasn't there (Intv. Booth 20/4/11).

While this changed for Cath over the years and in different printshops, Philip on the other hand despite participation in meetings on issues was passionate about, felt that throughout, his confidence limited his contribution, "I'd just come from an ordinary working class background. I never went to university, in fact I had no qualifications really, so I never had the knowledge or the confidence to do some of the things or maybe even the ability to do some of the things" (Intv. Gard 31/8/12). Several presses were in fact established by people without university education from

working class backgrounds, although in each case these individuals had a considerable prior history of movement involvement/organising and alternative living. Therefore it was not that class and/or education *determined* participation in management, rather that it was a shared feature amongst those who felt they had less to offer. This is not surprising because despite the principle of equality that collective self-management rests on, the individual sense of 'right' and capacity to manage rather be managed, acquired through background, social position and schooling (habitus), does not simply manifest when you are declared equal.

d) 'straight printers'

Membership within the printshops could be fairly heterogeneous in left/movement terms and often became more so as they continued. More self-evident differences between members in terms of motivations, competence and the meaning ascribed to self-management occurred when people from outside the alternative left milieu joined the presses. This was especially the case with those that came directly from the printing trade, an occurence specific to the service presses. While the assumption might be that trade printers joining did so because they were willing recruits to the practice of self-management, this tended not to be the case in practice. The prospect of not having a boss held some appeal but it also meant "there was no one to blame" (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11), and as such a familiar aspect of work and identity removed. The 'straight printers' had to deal with a new way of working and with people and often lifestyles outside their social milieu. Often their engagement in self-management rested on classic union issues of pay and conditions or those directly related to the technical area they worked in (Intv. Green 2/8/11, Intv. Pennington 4/11/11, Intv. Swingler 1/9/11).

This could make more apparent a distinction in the collective/co-op between those who, "just want to come and do the job and go home", and those who felt personally and politically invested in the press (Intv. Pennington 4/11/11, Intv. Brill 23/9/11). In printshops that took on 'straight printers', the 'leadership' of the press remained in the hands of those with a movement/left background, although partly this coincided with longer-term or founder member status. This could on occasion replicate a classic "us and them" situation, with class differences firmly in place. Possibly part of the reason that most of the 'straight printers' were less engaged in self-management, is not just that they did not share the radical/participatory habitus that supported this way of working, but that their class, educational and employment background (habitus) had not prepared them for it.[40] This also connects back to the comment above about the distinction between those who saw working at the printshops as

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[40] See also Mellor et al (1988: 137), in particular relation to how the lack of opportunity in most working class jobs "to exercise discretion and participate in decision-making" provided a weak basis for self-management in the 'job creation' co-ops of the 1980s.

'just a job' and those for whom it was something more. This might be seen as a typical distinction between an educated middle-class expectation of work as something fulfilling and personally developmental and a traditional working-class one of work as primarily a necessary means to an economic end.[41]

Accepting differences

While acknowledging that certain factors affected the way that individuals took up self-management, there was also a pragmatic acceptance that involvement would necessarily be uneven. Geoff for example, felt that although they were aware of the 'tyranny of structurelessness', that it was also a case of accepting "that some people like to do more of certain things than others" (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). Paul, also felt that, "Everyone's different; some people want to be involved… they're that type of people and that's the people you want but not everyone can be like that" (Intv. Santer 29/6/12). Nicola admitted, "I don't know really how you…[change that]" while going on to say that there were those "who *feel* they have less power, whether they have or not... There are people who are happy to grumble about what decision is being made, but don't really want to make a decision themselves."

This was partly reflected in the comments by Sylvia regarding competency in financial understanding, and which were rather representative amongst interviewees.

> I'd sit in those meetings with the figures and to be honest fairly glazed over… I didn't feel I was particularly valuable in that and I know […] didn't either. There were certain people who seemed better at it and we were quite happy to let them control the flow in a way that we probably wouldn't have been in a straight business. So in that way it made for better relations in the place. (Intv. Scott 19/9/11)

Sylvia's sense that her and her colleagues' acquiescence in collective financial matters aided work relations suggest that part of successful democratic self-management involves allowing for uneven competencies and different interests. This can be seen of course to chime with Marx's principle of "from each according to his ability and to each according to his need". In their booklet on co-op management Berry and Roberts (1984: 19) make this point suggesting the principle is "a rich, underlying vein in co-operative thought." One drawback with this as indicated earlier, is that some have had more opportunity to discover what their abilities (and needs) are than others.

Summary

This section has tried to capture the relationships between the elements of the practice of self-management in the printshops. These were regularly in flux as memberships and

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41 Landry et al. (1985: 73) argued that "unless we can create forms of organisations which also satisfy the needs of those who view work as 'just as job', those who work democratically will always remain a self-enclosed middle-class group, a semi-religious order, [leaving] the 'inequalities' they wished to tackle fundamentally unchanged"

motivations changed, as competences varied and as new challenges about which decisions had to be made arose. Despite the openly acknowledged difficulties of self-management it remained intrinsic to the identity and purpose of most printshops. What did change in many cases was the second distinctive aspect of their participatory-democratic practices, division of labour, which in turn had implications for the practice of self-management. It is to the carrying out and life of this particular practice in the printshops that the next section of the chapter turns to.

5.2. Democratic division of labour

The organisation of labour was a key aspect of the printshops' attempts to create a democratic work practice. 'Egalitarian' divisions of labour, namely the practice of job rotation, were thought to strengthen the basis of self-management as well as helping to create a more intrinsically rewarding work experience. Internal education practices aimed to develop and equalize members' capabilities. The printshops endeavours in this direction echoed those of numerous other collective and co-operative organisations of the period and since. However the nature of the actual work in the printshops involved a range of specialised skills that on the one hand perhaps meant an ideological challenge to cultural and trade notions of special knowledge but also some potential difficulties to surmount. This section begins with the field context that made such arrangements thinkable and doable, and gave them politically resonant meaning. It looks at what the elements of this practice were and how practitioners linked them together. It shows the variety of approaches between printshops, the difficulties encountered in achieving or maintaining the necessary integration between the elements (meaning, material and competence) of job rotation, including external pressures. Throughout it addresses the relationship between democratic self-management and the organisation of labour. Finally it address the challenges brought by more conventional organisation of labour, specialisation.

Field context, and proto elements of a practice
As discussed earlier, general ideas about the organisation of work in the printshops derived from the broader alternative left field. They may be understood, to some extent, as implicitly carrying forward ideas seeded in the event of Mai 68, which Ross (2002: 6) has argued "sought above all…to contest the domain of the expert, to disrupt the system of naturalised spheres of competence" [42]. While this most obviously applies to the division between manual and intellectual labour (and thus in part to self-management), the labour practices in many of the printshops also 'contested' the divisions particular to the 'trade' or 'profession' of printing.

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[42] The aim to dissolve the divide between intellectual and manual labour comes from Mao's ambitions for the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-76), and was alighted upon by radicals in France, and more widely, including the UK

In the general field of printing and graphic reproduction, production functions tended to be aligned to very specific job roles.[43] Each involved a particular training, historically in the form of apprenticeships, was represented by a different trade union or sections within trade unions and as such had their own job identities, hierarchical status and wage scales. The boundaries of job roles were reinforced by the protectionist regulations and practices of the print and graphic trade unions that had developed over the decades[44] (Cockburn 1983). In other words within the printing trade the significant divisions of labour were not simply that between management or 'office' and workers but also between the domains of production workers' expertise. The other type of division contested in the printshops related to the field of art production, and as such more relevant to the poster workshops, was that which related to Romantic discourse of the artist as a singular figure, unique in his gift and vision, and which remained culturally pervasive.

Although there was variation between them and over time, most of the radical and community printshops initially rejected these divisions of labour seeing them as antithetical to the opportunity for democratic production. For example, those in the poster-making workshops often designed collectively, eschewing the doxa of the artist as lone creator, or as See Red put it, "getting over the ideas drummed into us at art school…and challenging the idea of the artist as a self-engrossed individualist" (See Red 1980: 53). The Poster Film Collective rarely even put a collective attribution on their posters, "there was this sort of thing about anonymous almost to an ultra degree, it was a reaction against that culture of 'this is mine'" (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). More widely across the printshops, collectivists aimed to 'demystify' knowledge through 'skill-sharing' and to declassify positions through the adoption of holistic job roles and the practice of 'job rotation'. Although a short lived set-up, Black Bindery's founding statement of 1974, provides explicit clues to the ideological influences and justifications for practices of 'undivided labour',

> If we are really going to overthrow capitalism and alienated modes of production, we must find ways of transforming the process of production and nature of work. What we're trying to do is break down the divisions between work and play and between working and living. Nobody would be a specialist in the Black Bindery; nobody allowed to have a monopoly of any skill. We would all learn to do all of the tasks involved, whether it's the benchwork, machine operating, sweeping the floor, or the small amount of paperwork we do (Black Bindery 1974).

The authors draw on Marx's concept of 'alienation' (or estrangement) in relation to the proposal and need for alternative ways of working. Marx had identified four dimensions in which workers were alienated through their labour and its increasing division under industrial capitalism; from themselves, from their fellow humans, from the process of production and

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43 For example: press operator/machine minder (printer); film-planner and plate-maker; camera operator; designer; typesetter; artworker/paste up artist; finisher, print estimator, print production manager

44 This rigid demarcation between roles was less apparent in very small and un-unionised firms

from the products they produced (Marx 1844). Elsewhere he famously wrote that "As soon as the division of labor sets in, everybody has a determinate and exclusive sphere of activity that is imposed on him and from which he cannot escape" proposing that in communist society there would be no "fixation of social activity", but that different activities "in any branch whatsoever" could be learnt and carried out (Marx 1845). Herbert Marcuse, whose speeches and writing contributed to the diffusion of Marx's ideas and of the critique of 'alienation' taken up by the radical movements and milieus of the 1960s and 70s (Kellner 1984) called for creative experiments in production, proposing that there might be 'freedom' to be found *in* labour (Marcuse 1970). In Black Bindery's statement we also see that the division of labour relates on the one hand to the grind of monotonous work, and on the other, to the expert who *monopolises* skills; egalitarian 'non-specialisation' would circumvent both these problems. It additionally ensured that no one in the collective would have a better or worse job than anyone else, making for what Parecon[45] theorist Michael Albert (2004) has termed a "balanced job complex" whereby onerous and rewarding tasks are equally shared. The following Fly Press description of how they worked, further illustrates the meaning and rationale for anti-specialisation in the printshops,

> Fly Press is commit[ed] to job rotation… We work to demystify skills in others and ourselves, combatting skill-based hierarchies, and give each of us an overall perspective of and involvement in the direction and potential of Fly on a day to day as well as long term level. (Fly Press 1984).

Again skill is perceived as a type of capital to be 'demystified' through its equitable redistribution and in doing so break down the hierarchical boundaries that divide one type of knowledge (and one type of worker) from another. It also tells us how the aim towards 'universal competence' was seen to support collective self-management through the extension of shared knowledge and experience. The acquisition of practical knowledge of the entire production process facilitated a 'worker-manager' overview, aiding the full and equal co-*operation* and direction of the organisation. This point has been considered key for advocates of collectivist-democratic working (Rothschild & Whitt 1986, Hunt 1992). Before going on to discuss the varieties of practices of labour, there are other specific considerations to outline in relation to the adoption of job rotation and the common approach towards skills acquisition, *'skill sharing'*.

Firstly, few of those that joined, or even set up the printshops, especially in the early years had come from the 'trade' background outlined above or had a significant level of prior technical skill acquired otherwise. They might have had no printing related skills at all. Alan's remarks about the situation at Aberdeen People's Press were indicative, "It was a permanent job transmitting our skills, sharing our skills. People never came from printing,
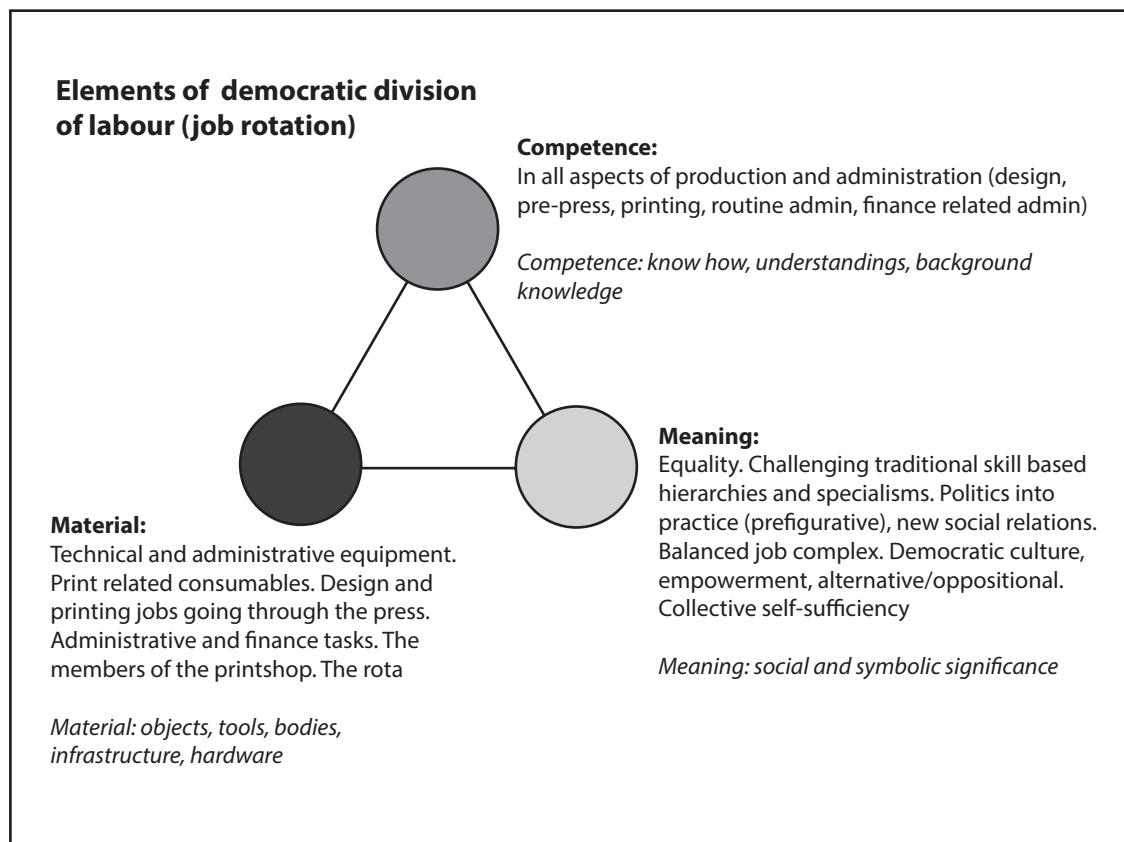
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none of us had ever printed [before] apart from the last person" (Intv. Marshall 10/2/11). People taught themselves and each other, obtained second hand manuals, occasionally attended evening classes or went on the short courses provided by press manufacturers. Some of those setting up presses went to pick up skills at existing radical presses, shown by people who were mostly self-taught. Some had acquired basic screen-printing skills at art school. Of those interviewed, over three quarters had learnt 'on the job' in one of the printshops. As such very few had experience that aligned them to a particular production function/role in the first place. This also meant that 'skill sharing' within the presses was often also a necessity.

Secondly, the wider alternative/counter cultural context in which the printshops set up and in which their instigators and joiners taught themselves and each other, was one in which the 'critique of the expert' can be seen to have already taken on a very practical form. The experimental and creative energies of 1960s and 70s counterculture had set in motion numerous kinds of do-it-yourself/self sufficient activity, which spread across the expanded field of the alternative left, constituting a sort of movement in itself. It was not just that people were doing it for themselves, outside of 'the system' of experts, professionals, institutions and sometimes the law, but that they communicated how others might do it too. 'How To' articles, sharing and 'demystifying' uncommon knowledge, were a regular feature in the alternative press, and all manner of self-help handbooks could be obtained by mail order or found in alternative bookshops. This radical socialisation of do-it-yourself meant that there was an existing culturally resonant meaning ascribed within the wider alternative left field to the non-institutional/informal acquisition of 'specialist' practical knowledge. Politically it connected to notions of autonomy and 'taking control of our lives'. New kinds of practical activity came into the realm of the thinkable and doable; including printing. The first alternative printing manual, *Printing It* (Burke 1972) was eagerly passed around nascent radical printers (Intv. Green 2/8/11); in 1974 the WLM magazine *Spare Rib* ran a series of 'how to print' articles, (*Undercurrents* did so in 1977); in 1975 Jonathan Zeitlyn began publishing the self-help printing handbooks *Print: How You Can Do It Yourself*. Even the *Alternative London* (Saunders 1971/1974/1978) guidebook began to include pages on 'how to print'. While this wider alternative do-it-yourself movement is obviously of particular relevance to the aspirations and practices of self-help community printshops, it was also clearly of significance for the printshops in general, at least in the first few years.

The above two factors, that is the background of printshop members and aspects of the alternative cultural field start to suggest a recursive relation between habitus and the specific social context of the field, and indicate the social significance (meaning) that could be attached to the emergent practice of non (or anti) specialised job roles within democratic organisations. The other crucial aspect, which encouraged the accessibility of printing was

material. The printing technology taken up in the early printshops was thought to be easier to use than that which prevailed in the general trade. This applied to both screen-printing and the small offset presses that were favoured to start with, as well as much of the pre-press equipment. The small offset presses that had become increasingly available were also being marketed as 'office' rather than industrial equipment, despite using the same process as the larger 'industry' versions. There now appeared to be printing technology that lent itself to use by the enthusiastic novice, or Rothschild and Whitt's (1986) 'ideal collectivist', the *amateur-factotum*.

Fig. 6. Elements of democratic division of labour (job rotation)

Elements of democratic division of labour (job rotation)

Competence:
In all aspects of production and administration (design, pre-press, printing, routine admin, finance related admin)

Competence: know how, understandings, background knowledge

Meaning:
Equality. Challenging traditional skill based hierarchies and specialisms. Politics into practice (prefigurative), new social relations. Balanced job complex. Democratic culture, empowerment, alternative/oppositional. Collective self-sufficiency

Meaning: social and symbolic significance

Material:
Technical and administrative equipment. Print related consumables. Design and printing jobs going through the press. Administrative and finance tasks. The members of the printshop. The rota

Material: objects, tools, bodies, infrastructure, hardware

Variations in practice (or degrees of rotation)
"Generally rotations were the name of the game" (Intv. Todd 30/9/11), said Chris who worked in five different London printshops between the mid 1970s and mid 80s. However, each printshop organised work in its own distinct way and had its particular trajectory of change, making it difficult to generalise too neatly. Rotation practices existed on a continuum, from those who were committed to it and saw it as an integral part of democratic working, to the minority that eschewed it from the start and whose approach to job roles mostly mirrored that of the general trade. The clearest instances of the latter were the service-printing co-ops, Spider Web Offset and Lithosphere. Rotation practices occurred

across the different types of printshop and typically included the different production functions and 'admin'.

Islington Community Press rotated jobs for most of its history (1972-1987). Sue from the press, explained how its key value was greater understanding between workers in relation to the pressures particular to each aspect of the process,

> I liked job rotation; I thought it was a great idea. I thought and this was the collective idea; if you knew what everybody was doing and you knew how to do it yourself then you understood how the flow worked instead of all this shouting at each other, you know, production controllers saying to darkroom 'why haven't you done it yet', would actually understand what the issues were (Intv. Millett 8/5/13)

She continued, "I can't remember whether we actually rotated on a daily basis but there were jokes about how quick it was. There was this mad thing where everybody came in the morning and switched jobs… we realised that wasn't very productive and we slowed it down, to weekly and then monthly" (Intv. Millet 8/5/13). The length of time spent in each area varied between printshops and was something that tended to be modified, through experience, within them.

Chrissy from Fly Press described how skill-sharing worked in conjunction with rotation,

> In our weekly meeting we decided for the next week who would go in which area. If someone was going in the darkroom who did not have the foggiest idea of what they were doing, someone would be seconded to come in and instruct them. That other person would also be responsible for another bit of the work load. It was quite a stretch and I'm surprised there weren't more mistakes (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11).

In general skill-sharing combined with rotation tended to serve as in-house training into all the areas of work. At Lenthall Road, a self-help community screen printshop where they also 'skill-shared' with users, Rebecca recalled the paradox in attempting "the demystification of a process of something you didn't entirely understand yourself!" (Intv. Wilson 31/7/11).

There were also very practical reasons for holistic job roles, "One of the things about being so small was that at any one time any of us had to know how to do any one of the jobs, we had to have a totally flexible workforce" (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11). Although challenging 'skill monopoly' can be cast in political terms, it is also a practical issue for any small, economically precarious enterprise. In the printshops context multi-skilling meant *collective* self-sufficiency in the face of absences and variable workloads.

This kind of pragmatism informed printshops who did not practice full rotation. As Jacqui from Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op (SWPC), explained,

> printing is deadline driven… we had to deliver… But to make that happen, it's better if more than one person can do a certain thing… So we had to try to help people have other skills that they might not naturally have had. I'm not a designer, but I could do it if I had to. We all had the skills to do everything, although we weren't necessarily going to do it as well. I mean that's part of being co-operative. (Intv. Devreaux 2/10/11)

Clearly feeling the need to differentiate themselves to their customers from co-ops that practiced rotation, SWPC made the point on one of their later publicity newsletters that, "Under workers' control… doesn't mean 'everybody does everything'! Each of us is responsible for an area of work where we have skills and experience" (SWPC 1990). That SWPC did this suggests a) the extent to which job rotation was widely assumed to be intrinsic to self-management and b) that it was a practice that may not have engendered 'customer confidence'.

Calverts Press were also very clear about *not* practicing job rotation, so much so that they added this rule to their constitution "That we do not operate a system of job rotation like some co-operatives as we see this as incompatible with the necessity for developing skills (printing is a five years apprenticeship)" (in Cockerton et al. 1980: 73). Calverts citing of the five-year apprenticeship is partly explained by the fact that they were using larger (A2) 'industry' offset presses, unlike for example Women in Print, Community Press, and SWPC. Philip from Calverts told me, "I know there were certainly other co-ops where they rotated jobs but I think the feeling in Calvert's was it was quite inefficient and we were never in a strong enough position to really support that. Like in an ideal world everyone would maybe..." (Intv. Gard 31/8/12). However Calverts did operate what Wright (2014: 25) has called "a less extreme form" of job rotation, 'job transfer', where you could apply to the general meeting to change job role.

While the degree of rotation of direct production related tasks existed on an identifiable continuum between printshops, the 'office' function or administration held a rather anomalous position. There were three basic aspects to this work; routine administration book keeping and production co-ordination. For those in receipt of funding, this also included grant applications and associated tasks. Until the early-mid 1980s most printshops shared out the office work, even those that otherwise specialised. Coordinating production, a specialised role in the printing industry was mostly worked out in a weekly collective meeting. That printshops who saw the various production functions as distinct job roles and skills sets did *not* apply this rationale in relation to the office functions suggests a number of things. On the one hand it points to connections being made between sharing these tasks and effective egalitarian self-management, as in SWPC's statement "we aim to share out administration in such a way that all co-op members take equal responsibility for both day to day running and long term development" (SWPC 1989: 5). More generally however it tallies

with the constant refrain in much of the literature on collectivist democratic workplaces; that the role of administrative management is minimised. It may be seen as less important than the actual 'productive' work, or negatively associated with bureaucracy and 'business', or boring or difficult (Mellor et al. 1988, Hunt 1992). Many interviewees confirmed this, for example "I took on the finance thing because no one else felt like doing it" (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12), "nobody wanted to be bookkeeper… [but] it was something everybody had to do their best at and nobody is keen to do." (Intv. Chong 27/9/11). This ambivalence is not especially surprising given that this type of work is very different to the physically productive nature of printing.

Stress on links between material and competence
Despite its benefits there were a number of challenges for the practice of job rotation. As we have just seen, one problem was that administration, especially book-keeping was widely disliked. Although sharing it out lessened the burden, antipathy towards it could mean little interest in becoming more proficient. The issue of aptitude and interest, with regard to job rotation, was raised (by interviewees) almost solely in relation to administration although the issue of skill more generally featured significantly.

The word often used to summarise the issues or to critique rotation is 'efficiency'; "I have to admit it wasn't the most efficient" (eIntv. Carey 12/11/12), "it wasn't the most efficient way of working in the short-term" (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11), "obviously its not supposed to be economic, time efficient" (Intv. Millett 8/5/13). The issue of efficiency was most pertinent in relation to service printing. Rotating tasks between production areas/stages meant that printing jobs would be handed over at varying points of completion, needing to be explained and slowing the process down. Although longer rotations meant greater focus and consistency in one area it could mean more time to adjust as the gap between performing different kinds of task was greater. Linked into all of this was the issue of differing skill and experience levels. While rotation provided a structure for learning, minimising production mistakes and keeping to deadline required universal competence among members, something that could be rare. If the turnover of membership was high, and new people coming in were not fully skilled, it might be a constant process of trying build up the collective skill level. The situation that Piers from Fly Press described was not uncommon, "by the time I left after three years I think the whole membership changed, that rate of turnover was very bad for any group because you were constantly having to replace skills" (eIntv. Carey 12/11/12). Recruitment practices based less on skill and more on political fit and interest in collective working *or* a commitment to rebalancing the exclusions of the printing industry, combined with high staff turnover, could ensure an ongoing skills shortage.

Balancing the commitment to egalitarian modes of production with the overarching aims of the printshop depended on what those aims were. At Women in Print, although it was a service press, for much of its existence there was the twin aim of enabling women to gain experience in printing (WiP 1979). During a period when all of the collective were inexperienced, rotating in pairs around the areas to learn, decisions were sometimes made to not take on work that "put on pressure and meant being forced not to learn together" (in Cadman et al 1981: 64). It is not simply that the novice cannot produce work in time but also that the person needed to 'skill-share' with them becomes less 'productive' (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11). Additionally there is the matter of wastage, as Alan from Aberdeen People's Press (APP) said, "economics enters into it, you do actually have to print stuff on paper, you can't afford to waste paper" (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15). Paper was the not the only material cost, almost every stage of the printing process used some type of cost incurring consumable. For economically self-sufficient printshops in particular, wastage decreased their already slim margins.

Lack of technical competence means potential loss of 'product' quality. The issue of quality may not have been especially critical in the early-mid 1970s when the first printshops were setting up, given that many of their users/customers would have been accustomed to poor quality duplicated media. Offset-litho, even badly done tends to be more legible. Simply being able to get it sympathetically and cheaply printed may have also outweighed 'quality' concerns. However a number of field related factors mentioned in the previous chapter undoubtedly changed this situation: a) the growth in number of radical printshops (competition), b) a widening of user/customer base, c) the growing attention to quality amongst users/customers. For some of those service presses that aimed to simultaneously make a reasonable living while providing a service to the left, quality became an issue against rotation. As Dave from Trojan Press put it when explaining their move away from initial non-specialisation, "it was pragmatic, people should try and build up skills in one area to do the job properly if you are going to start charging people real money for something proper!" (Intv. Gwynn-Jones 25/9/11). APP, who had also started with the idea that "we all share everything", gradually settled into a system of *limited* rotation, which excluded the actual printing. Alan explained,

> [W]e had got to the stage where we were earning a living so we had to turn out
> reasonable quality, we had to maintain the continuity of service printing… and the
> shift to longer kinds of work like pamphlets and publishing pamphlets and books and
> local history and stuff like that, also changed the perspective... you have to make
> structures work (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15).

Another challenge to 'universal competence' and the practice of rotation was the acquisition of more sophisticated technology in order to develop the press. We have already seen that even with ostensibly 'simple' printing technology there could be difficulties. As we saw in the

previous section the move into large offset printing by one press (Blackrose) resulted in a split around the issue of job rotation. Initially the collective backed the proposal to get the press, however only Phil, who had made the proposal, had enough skill to run it (Intv. Todd 30/9/11, Intv. Booth 20/4/11). To make it economically viable mistakes needed to be minimised in the pre-print stages (platemaking in particular), so Phil thought that these roles as well as printing should be specialised. Cath reflected,

> I can now see Phil's frustrations… he had the capacity to set up the press… he wanted people who knew how to do platemaking properly so it wouldn't go wrong, people who knew how to feed plates to keep the work going and some us thought just platemaking was quite a slavish sort of job, the person doing it didn't mind… but we did mind (Intv. Booth 20/4/11)

The large offset press gained more specialised workers and went on for another 12 years, those that resisted the change and carried on with the small offset struggled to survive and wound down within a fairly short time. While this might seem to 'prove' the efficiency argument, without more wide ranging information about the small offset group's attempt, judgement is best suspended.

Rather less contentiously, the purchase of more sophisticated machinery at Women in Print in 1984 also pushed them away from job rotation, to an extent. Lyser explained,

> When I started everybody did a bit of everything… But processes in print started to get more technical and more specialised… the machines got more complicated, we got the Ryobi Perfector… so the more specialised the skill sets became… so people were specifically employed as such and such because they'd done the courses generally and sort of knew what they were doing (Intv. Lyser 16/5/11)

Similarly to APP, it was printing that ceased to be rotated at Women in Print, and while the aim was for pre-press and admin to be fixed roles there was in fact considerable task sharing of these, but primarily for practical reasons.

The examples above are representative of a move towards more fixed job roles in the printshops during the 1980s, especially by the movement service printers and the offset litho community printshops that migrated into this category. Fly Press who as we saw were still committed to job rotation in 1984, also collectively decided the next year (1985) that in order to expand the press and put up their subsistence level wages, they needed to specialise roles. At See Red, the poster workshop, the end of a three-year funded period (1983-86) and a subsequent move towards increasing service printing to survive also led to specialisation of roles, "we all found our roles… because it turned into more of a business so we needed to produce a particular kind of quality" (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11). Part of this was the one college trained member becoming the sole designer. In the self-help community printshops who received funding, such as Lenthall Road Workshop and Union Place, a

reasonable degree of rotation mostly continued. However before a number of places specialised and even among those that retained a significant degree of rotation, there was a notable move to specialise the administration role. For example Union Place, See Red, Lenthall Road and all did this (in 1983, 1984 and 1988 respectively). Whilst the rest of the collective may still have done some routine admin, the particular issue for these three printshops, all in receipt of grants, was book-keeping. A requirement for grant aid was the production of comprehensive accounts and budgets. For any earlier ideas held, however diffuse, about breaking down the distinction between different kinds of labour it is clear that accounts retained a shroud of mystique and dread.

Job rotation required a wide range of competence amongst workers in several specialised areas but provides less time to *gain* competence in any of them. At a particular level of collective skill, technology and quality expectation it worked reasonably well, especially amongst a fairly stable collective, able to then skill share with new members. But membership turnover could be high and getting in adequately skilled new members difficult. While as more people passed through and learnt in the printshops this meant a growth of potential recruits, this was less than might be expected because a good number of those did not continue in this type of work. For example, of the six women who were all learning at WiP in 1980, none continued in radical printing after they left. It might be argued that job rotation suited people who did not see this type of work as something they would do for a significant period of time. Neither Soreh or Da for example had an interest in printing as such but were attracted to the idea of working in a women's collective and learning a manual skill. These desires are particular to the women's movement context, but versions of the motivation to work in an alternative, politicised environment doing something practical and useful for a period were apparent amongst those in the mixed printshops. To stay with the example of Women in Print, both Cath and Lyser who joined in the early 1980s did spend several years in this area of work. It is perhaps indicative that neither had a university education to fall back on, or expectations – however vague – of a future career otherwise. Cath raised this point,

> I still say this now, some people did it for good reasons but were sort of like playing at it, they didn't know they were playing at it but they were doing something… for politics or for personal growth. Legitimate reasons but it was just something that they did and they would move on and they had a background to fall back on. For me I didn't. This was what I did (Intv. Booth 20/4/11)

Chris once a core member of Islington Community Press, rather confirmed this,

> It wasn't that people [at Community Press] were particularly taken with the idea of printing… it was a political motivation, to be radicals and spark people up… it wasn't a technical thing about wanting to be a printer or making a living… none of us had any training whatsoever, we were all just trying to pick it up by trial and error. There

wasn't really much interest in improving our skills for its own sake (Intv. Whitbread 3/4/13)

The in-house training or skill sharing that occurred that in the printshops was rarely supplemented by any formal training. Chris remarked that at Islington Community Press "that thought never entered into anyone's mind, maybe it should have!" (Intv. Whitbread 3/4/13). Rebecca from LRW studied printing *after* she left, and admitted that, "it would have been so much easier if I had [done it] before" (Intv. Wilson 31/7/11). There were exceptions, at Women in Print for example a number of members regardless of possible long-term aspirations got some training at the London College of Printing (Intv. Levy 19/8/11). New members that joined Blackrose after its move into specialisation also did this and the press was unusual in later instigating a formal apprenticeship (Intv. Green 2/8/11). The do-it-yourself approach to skill was part of what enabled most of the printshops to set up and gain amenable members. Job rotation and task sharing facilitated this. However as the printshops field developed and those involved wanted to create a more stable basis for survival, these practices became harder to sustain.

The apparent waning of job rotation in the printshops was coterminous with a slightly wider critical discourse in the alternative left field about the problems of 'alternative organisation'. As indicated previously in the thesis, Landry et al. (1985) astringently raised the issue of 'inefficient' egalitarian production practices in their *What A Way to Run a Railroad: An Analysis of Radical Failure*. The authors made a swingeing critique of collective working, skill-sharing, job rotation, attitudes to management, finance and 'the market' in the radical field. This critique expanded some of the points made by Frank Elston of Spider Web in his paper at the printing workshop of the Minority Press Group conference five years earlier in 1980, where he argued that the survival of radical printers in the 1980s depended on "more efficient and streamlined production" (Elston 1980 np). Elston and another Spider Web member, Ken Harrison also co-wrote the 1983 GLEB report which again proposed that radical printers needed to become more professional and adopt working methods that mirrored that of the general trade. The new handbooks coming out about worker co-ops in the 1980s, spoke about job rotation with caution, "be realistic... how long does it take to learn the books" (Cockerton & Whyatt 1984: 59), "in more complicated production processes a division of labour may well may be necessary" (Berry & Roberts 1984: 8). Given that Fly Press's decision to give up rotation was based on advice from a co-op advisory agency, further indicates that amongst those radical co-op workers[46] now turning their hand to advising others, rotation was frequently perceived as one of the barriers to success.

46 Many involved in the new co-op advisory groups and development agencies and authoring of handbooks had been or were involved in co-ops themselves. This included those from printshops.

Practices that once held a certain positive and emancipatory meaning were to some extent being recast as impractic*able*, especially when skilled tasks were involved.

Specialisation, benefits and challenges for democracy
In the early 1990s Hunt argued that the evident tendency to move towards division of labour in democratic workplaces did not necessarily undermine organisational democracy, if it did not involve pay or status differentials, and the decision to do so could be felt as an expression of that democracy (Hunt 1992). The advantages were that it allowed for greater skill development, more ownership, investment in and control over ones immediate work area, along with increased efficiency in terms of production flow, all of which together should be beneficial for individuals and the collective organisation as a whole. Yael and Jacquee from See Red spoke about the development of their skills, "the more you did something the better you became at it and everyone recognised that as well" (Intv. Hodder 8/4/11). Members of Fly Press and Trojan spoke about greater efficiency after 'transitioning' (eIntv. Carey 12/11/12, Intv. Gwynne-Jones 25/9/11). Joy from Lenthall Road Workshop recalled "the relief" of no longer having to do the book keeping (Intv. Kahumbu 15/9/11). Sheffield Women Printing Co-op interviewees spoke about how the move away from shared admin "really improved things... customers appreciated it… it took a while for us to realise that people liked to have a particular name they ask could for" (Intv. Osborn 2/10/11).

There were two means to fill newly created specialised roles. Either the role/s were taken up by existing workers or a new member with the requisite skills was sought. At Fly Press for example, they worked it out between themselves, a process that meant individuals did not always get the role they wanted. Nobody particularly wanted to take on the fixed admin role. Richard's recollection was that,

> I wanted to run the big press that we bought and not be in the office and I managed to get my way. We worked out what the roles were going to be… there were seven of us… It didn't fit completely so I think we drew straws for the last bit and Chrissy and Piers also wanted to run the press and I got the long straw (Intv. Swingler 1/9/11)

New members filled the specialised admin roles created at See Red, Lenthall Road and Union Place as no existing members had the inclination (or felt they had the skills) to take it on. At Union Place, Chris recalled that the lack of knowledge in the collective at the time (c1983) extended to the selection process for this new role,

> We took on someone as an administrator, we'd decided this would be one role not to rotate. So this guy would be responsible for finances and so on, and I remember interviewing him and somebody asked, 'have you had any experience in dealing with money?' And he said, 'yes, yes, I used to work at a petrol station, and handled thousands of pounds everyday.' A key element, finance work but he'd only been a cashier (Intv. Todd 30/9/11).

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They took him on, it was a disaster and he left (Intv, Todd 30/9/11, Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11). In the service printers with otherwise relative specialisation but who began to create distinct office roles, as with Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op, it was often existing members that moved into these roles, at least at first. In many ways this was practical because they intimately knew the nature of the printshop and it diminished the potential sense of administrators as separate 'managers' with little understanding of the stresses of production. At Calverts for example who decided quite early on that there should be a distinct role of production co-ordinator, it was felt to be vital that this person came from "the shop floor" and that "we should never get an outsider to do this job" (Calverts Minutes April 1979). Nicola explained,

> more problematic than the finance [role] is the thing about production coordination…
> in terms of your everyday life whoever is organising the work has a far more profound
> effect on your working day…and [it] depend[s] on the level of knowledge about what it
> means to put that job on in front of this… most people who went into the office in the
> early days and even still a few people… we had all worked on the presses… we know
> quite a lot about what it means… that was one of the good things… you had the circle
> going round (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12).

Nicola went on to say that she felt the relations between this role and the 'production' workers became more strained when they moved away from this earlier policy and took on 'outsiders' without a background in production work (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12).

While acknowledging the benefits for the organisation, those that moved into administration roles in the printshops often realised a new type of stress. Jess from SWPC, "I felt like I had an overload of the brain a lot of the time… I had to hold in my head every single job…and what was difficult in terms of responsibility was the budget and figures" (Intv. Osborn 2/10/11). Richard from Fly Press contrasted his new role as large offset printer with that of Piers who had ended up in admin, "he used to get very stressed… it was very tough for him…I was happy as sandboy comparatively" (Intv. Swingler 1/9/11). The extent to which this separation of the office role affected the dynamics of internal democracy varied. At one of the community printshops, an interviewee recalled that although it took the stress of that part of the work away from the rest of them, which "was great… *but* it does kind of shift the balance, it did make us slightly less of a collective I think" (Intv. Murray18/9/11). There was no mention of a changed power dynamic, but as all the interviewees from this press remembered the nightmare of getting grant applications done, it seems likely that sharing the difficult admin tasks was part of the shared experience and bonding in the collective. At Fly Press, Chrissy felt that the transition to separation of roles, especially admin, pointed towards "becoming capitalist in a way, by that division of who is doing that job [admin] and who is holding the purse strings, I don't think its healthy" (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11).

The fact that the admin functions in the printshops concerned not only finance but also the external facing aspect, especially in the service print co-ops, meant that those doing it developed a very different sense of the organisation to those doing the production work. Linked with the fact that it was often longer-term members that moved into the admin this could consolidate a very particular distribution of knowledge and influence. Tony, the Trojan founder member who moved into admin, spoke about the difference that emerged, "On one level you begin to think, I know what the business is, and people come in and they don't know what the fuck they are talking about… me and Dave were sitting at the admin end… you know the shape of the business, what's costing money, what's making money" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11). Siôn at Calverts also spoke about this, "I'd say that tension has always been running through… reinforced by the fact that in traditional firms the people who are customer facing and in the office are the bosses of the people on the shop floor… it's a really big bear trap for a collective equal type co-op" (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11).

One of the effects of creating specialised job roles was that while it created more ownership over a particular area it could also mean that participation within the democratic management of the printshop became fairly 'sectional', "darkroom just want to talk about darkroom, meeting after meeting… the printer wants to talk about inks or paper, I want to talk about the new software" (Swash 22/9/11). This could be exacerbated by an increase of printshop members who had been recruited primarily on the basis of a specialist production skill, rather than commitment to collective working or what was being printed. The drive to get skilled specialist workers could also conflict with egalitarian employment policies, given the demographic that *had* those skills, especially with regard to running large offset presses. Calverts' minutes of the early 1980s recorded that, "Employment policy in favour of women/minority groups difficult to put in practice with Calverts needs for more skill and experience" (Calverts Minutes October 1983). Members of the smaller offset presses, Community Press and Trojan, felt the demograph started to change in other ways by the late 1980s, with people coming in who liked the more relaxed 'alternative' environment but were not very interested in the self-management aspect (Intv. Brill 23/9/11, Intv. Swash 22/9/11, Intv. Millett 8/5/13).

To summarise, specialisation led to taking on people for skills, which sometimes meant a change in demographic. As the service printshops in particular became more skill focussed there was less opportunity for those from radical milieus to be involved; the basic levels of skill that might have been acquired in a community printshop was no longer felt sufficient, especially given the more complex technology being used. This gradually coincided with the felt waning of the radical movements that had produced the recruits to the printshops at least up until the early-mid 1980s. Moving away from job rotation did not necessarily undermine internal democracy; the issue seems to have been that an effect of it along with

an ongoing cultural shift was more people coming into the printshops who were less interested in participating in it. This meant in *some* instances that the authority or 'leadership' could be concentrated, or felt to be, by the older printshops members who had moved into the office roles. This issue very much pertained to the service printshops. For See Red the poster collective that became more service orientated, the move to a degree of specialisation had none of these consequences. They still worked out strategies for survival together, all met customers, answered the phone, stressed about the finances. Size and a stable membership that considered each other friends may well have been a crucial contributing factor.

In the self-help community printshops, specialisation was mainly limited to the administration function and because of their generally outward facing characteristics everybody dealt with users, giving a more extensive view of the organisations activities than might be had by someone in a fixed role in a service co-op. However the changing demographic towards people that perceived it as more of a job and were less actively interested in the cultural/political ambitions and collective working was apparent here too (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11, Intv. Bruce 25/8/11). Self-help or 'DIY printing' was itself, another of the printshops practices with a participatory democratic aim, and often part of the 'bundle of practices' that initially defined a number of the community printshops in their bid to 'democratise access' to print media production. In the following, and last, core section of this chapter, this ostensibly different kind of practice will be unpacked, again drawing on the elemental approach to try and understand what held the practice together and the points at which it starts to pull apart.

5.3. Democratising access: DIY printing

This section of the chapter discusses the third and final practice by which some of the printshops attempted to apply their participatory democratic beliefs: DIY or self-help printing. This invitation for users to come and 'print their own' was the domain of the community printshop and to some degree part of what defined that type of printshop. This practice, and the aspirations for it, was in some respects an extension of the internal skill-sharing practices and 'anti-expert' ethos that informed many of the printshops. Similarly to the other two sections of the chapter, this section will draw on the 'elemental' practice approach in order to understand how the (also) aspirational practice of self-help printing emerged and was practiced, as well as its problems holding together as a practice. Again it provides some of the specific field context for the practice. This section is shorter than the other two. This is partly because it was only one type of printshop that carried out this practice and as such there was limited interview data to draw on. The data is also one sided in that how users experienced the practice is only available through the reports of the printshop workers. However the practice was a significant aspect of the printshops' history and attempts at

democratic practices. As the chapter introduction explained, in terms of its democratic register, DIY printing operated at a different register than both self management and democratic division of labour, both internal practices to the printshops that related to equal participation in organisation. Directly it was participation at the level of access to spaces, skills and media production (material and competence), understood by the community printshops and community arts/media field to effect on a small scale a democratisation of hitherto inaccessible knowledge, resources and communicative power. The aspiration by its advocates was that through being able to collectively represent and communicate their own identities and struggles through poster making, newsletter production and so on in a politically encouraging atmosphere, previously marginalised social groups would develop a stronger sense of identity and collective political empowerment (meaning). This is participation *through* media production.

Field context

The DIY orientated community printshops were often initially part of a wider community arts/media field that similarly sought to involve local working-class populations ('communities') in creative production and collective self-expression. Contemporaneous material shows that, similarly to community action, practical involvement in community arts/media making was seen to be potentially habitus shaping and politically transformative. According to Owen Kelly, communist media activist and author, the general aspiration was that "people's new found effectiveness in the area of creativity would raise their morale and lead them to seek to empower themselves in other areas of their life" (Kelly 1984: 21). The other belief was that increased participation in collective creative production was a step towards creating a meaningful democratic culture. This was felt necessary because on all fronts the experiences and lives of 'ordinary people' were excluded from dominant cultural expressions. Su Braden, a vocal advocate of cultural democracy and community arts argued that, "the great artistic deception of the twentieth century has been to insist to *all* people that this was *their* culture (Braden 1978: 152 emphasis in original). On the other hand, in Adornoesque (or Situationist) fashion, 'popular' or 'mass culture' was also typically suspect as it was driven by capitalist commercial interests that sought to pacify its audiences through facile entertainment and its 'passive' consumption. John Phillips for example from Paddington Printshop summarised the situation like this, "Most of Paddington culture is to consume, to accept you can't make a mark on the world; that you're there and your only pleasure is to say, 'I bought'; never to say 'I made'… [but] It can be our culture as opposed to someone else's culture that we've had imposed on us" (in Braden 1978: 164). The self-help community print manuals *Print: How You Can Do It Yourself*, produced by Jonathan Zeitlyn of InterAction claimed, "The powerful world of professional print can undermine the rest of us by making us passive consumers" and stressed in running headlines that "we don't just have to consume, we can create what we need" (1975: 2-3). The author goes onto

to declare, "The confidence established by seeing your own article, drawing, photo or artwork in print is extremely important. This confidence can begin to counteract the undermining effects of a society in which most people play a silent passive part" (Zeitlyn 1975: 38) and that "Using the minimal techniques described here, we can… start the collective task of re-inventing our own culture" (Zeitlyn 1974: 3).

Encouraging 'ordinary' people to get involved in community art and media making was seen then to facilitate the politically necessary and habitus-shaping move from atomised 'passive consumer' to collaborative, active and critical producer. While this may seem to position the community arts/media worker as a quasi-vanguardist or social-reformer, and therefore separated by their advanced consciousness or concern, from 'ordinary' working class people in need of political confidence building (and authentic cultural forms), this was not necessarily how those involved saw themselves. This is partly evident in the use of the 'we' and the 'our' in the above quotes by Phillips and Zeitlyn for example. While the claim of and to the 'we' has been part of vanguardist and 'old' left rhetoric, its invocation as an identity of resistance (Burke 1998) by the libertarian left, because of their location of oppression and repression across multiple sites, assumed a wider constituency. The need to 'take control of our lives' included all those subject to the forces of oppression. The following line of text in an early leaflet by Islington Community Press provides an example, "One of our main objectives is to create a situation in which people do things for themselves and when we say people we include ourselves" (Open Workshop, 10 July 1972).

The practice of DIY printing also had particular resonance for feminists. The concept of 'empowerment' was of course central to the politics of the women's movement and one part of how this might be achieved was in acquiring skills 'denied' through their gendered associations. Similarly to the politics of community action, this empowerment was linked to the notion of autonomy, individually and collectively. In a documentary featuring Lenthall Road Workshop, a worker explains; "once you start seeing yourself as someone who can *do things*, then you are in a position to take control of your life" (*Somewhere in Hackney* 1980). These points were raised in the first section of the chapter in relation to the motivations of some of those that set up and joined the women's printshops. As for the community arts aim of creating a meaningful visual culture, the parallels with the women movement are self-evident. Although Lenthall Road Workshop was the only women's printshop that had a clear identity as a self-help workshop, most of the other women's printshops had also set up with the aim of sharing printing skills with other women (Intv. Scrivener 2/9/11, Women in Print 1979, See Red 1974). This was part of feminist praxis. The 'Printing Workshop' from the 1977 *Womenprint Conference* reported, "It was generally felt that…other women should be able (in theory at least) to go to established presses to learn printing" (*Womenprint* 1977: 1). This conference was for women involved in feminist print-related activity ("writing, printing,

publishing, graphics and distribution"), and the report noted of the approximately 60 attendees, "Everyone who can't print wants to learn" (ibid: 5). It is unlikely that this was because the attendees wanted a 'career' in printing but more that it was considered a politically useful and personally empowering skill.

Central to the possibility of DIY printing was the availability and perception of relatively simple print technologies that had enabled the establishment of the radical printshops more generally. Small offset litho presses and screen-printing tables provided the technological base for self-help printing, as well as duplicators of various types. The claim that they were easily learnable was no doubt partly informed by the fact that many involved in the printshops had taught themselves or learnt in a printshop. As Sue from Islington Community Press, who had learnt at the press, said "We saw no mystique about running an offset litho press, we thought it was something straightforward to learn" (Intv. Millet 8/5/13). The job was to provide 'access' to this media making equipment and 'demystify' its processes to those in need of political and cultural expression (Nigg & Wade 1980, Intv. Wilson 31/7/11). From the above the elemental 'content' of the practice of DIY printing can be gauged, schematised below in fig. 7.

Elements of DIY printing

Competence:
DIY teachers i.e. printshop workers: creative and technical skills, communication and teaching skills
DIY users: mechanical and craft aptitude

Competence: know how, understandings, background knowledge

Meaning:
Enabling social and political empowerment through self-expression, self-sufficiency, autonomy, equality, inclusivity. Democratization of media and cultural production. New authentic democratic culture. Affordable/cheap printing

Meaning: social and symbolic significance

Material:
Low tech printing equipment (screen printing, typewriters, small offset, paper plates). Equipment gathered in amenable context. DIY users (local 'communities', women). DIY 'teachers'. Publicity material and cultural products for grassroots

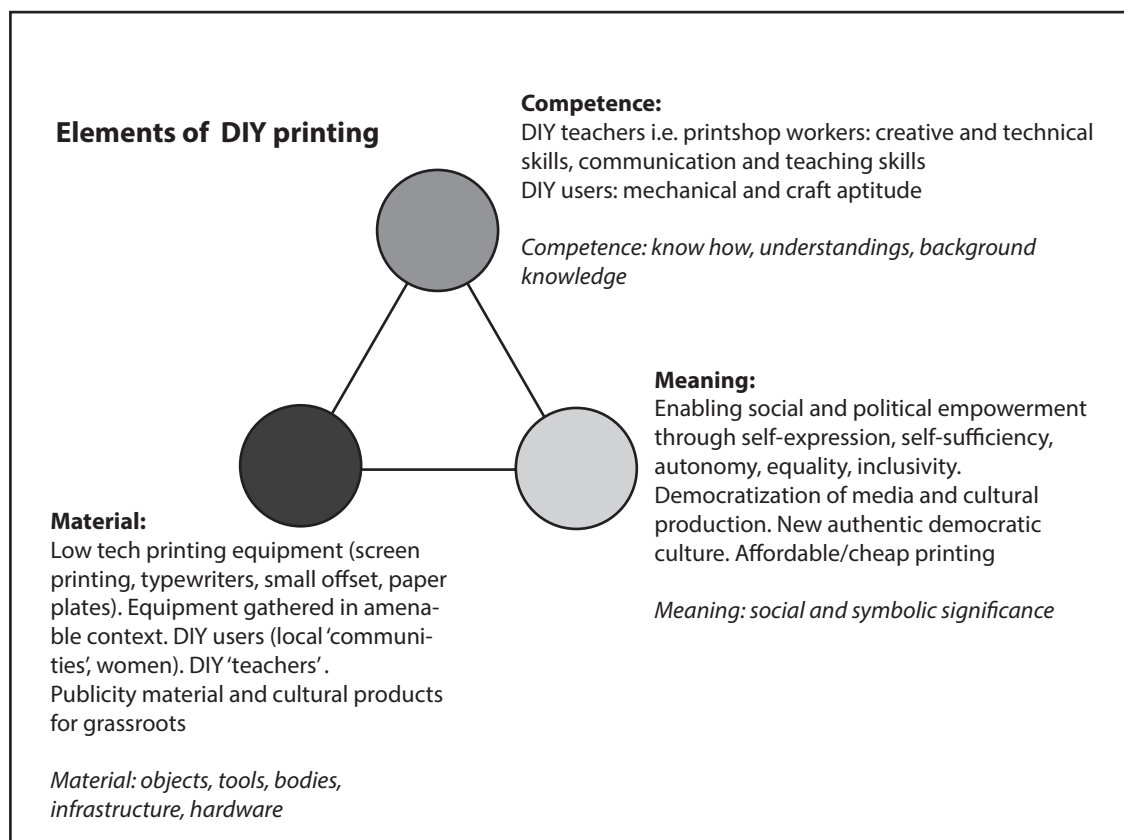*Material: objects, tools, bodies, infrastructure, hardware*

Fig. 7. Elements of DIY printing

Promoting and practicing DIY

The invitation to come and print was spread through word of mouth via community activist, feminist and alternative left networks. Facilities were also advertised through posters and leaflets displayed in the growing number of community, advice and women's centres. Both Islington Community Press and Union Place produced intermittent newsletters that publicised their self-help facilities. In addition to the printshops' own publicity, guides such as Nicholas Saunders *Alternative London* listed 'self-help' printing resources, as did Zeitlyn's manuals.

The aspiration was that users would acquire some self-sufficiency in the whole process of producing their materials; from creating artwork through the pre-press stages to the printing and finishing. The necessary materials equipment were provided at the printshops along with support and some tuition ('skill sharing'). Instructional information in the form of wall posters and leaflets, often printed for distribution, helped convey the necessary steps. Apart from the implicit incentive of learning a skill, the other inducement was that it was cheaper. The standard cost of DIY printing was based on materials used. The extent to which users actually wanted to get involved inevitably varied as did the degree to which they were given a choice.

Islington Community Press, for example, began with a fairly strict policy, "We do not do printing for people, we ask them to come and help and learn how to use the equipment themselves, especially if they are printing something regular" (in Zeitlyn 1975: 50). As Geoff recalled "there was definitely a period say 1974 to 1976 when literally that was all that was done and people came in and we showed them how to do it and they struggled away and we would be there to help but they would do it themselves" (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). By the end of the 1970s however, the invitation and expectation to actually 'print it yourself' at the press had ceased, although groups got involved in the rest of the process (Intv. Whitbread 3/4/13). On the other hand at Union Place, although initially the general *idea* was "that we'd show people how to do it and they'd do it for themselves" (Intv. Williams 21/911) people did not have to learn to print unless they wanted to, but would help out (Intv. Rose 19/12/11). A similar practice developed at Tyneside Free Press Workshop, as Charlie explained,

> The original vision was the "workshop" element, [not] to print things for people but to provide a resource where the community could come and do its own printing. So we ran endless courses… [in] origination, printing and finishing skills, and a key element of everyone's job was to supervise community users. [Many] couldn't be bothered to learn all that was necessary and then get their hands dirty, though, and soon we were doing most of the printing ourselves. However a significant number of customers liked to do some elements, if not all of them (eIntv. Cattell 9/1/13).

Conversely at Lenthall Road the "big emphasis on not doing it *for* people… [but] to facilitate them to print" (Intv. Wilson 31/7/11), remained central until their last couple of years in the early 1990s (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11).

The struggle of practice

There were various difficulties with the practice of self-help. Above, Charlie from Tyneside draws attention to the issue of people not wanting to spend the time learning and 'get dirty'. Regardless of the social aims of the self-help presses, people mostly went to them because they needed something printed cheaply; they may or may not have had a desire to learn to print. While some parts of the process can be learnt fairly quickly, running a litho press or getting a good run of screen prints takes skill, which in turn takes time to acquire. Fabian from Union Place identified part of the problem; "on the printing press… unless you are actually going to do it on a regular basis, the teaching didn't really stick. So you have somebody coming in and doing a quarterly magazine and by the time they come in the next time they're back to square one" (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11). Deadlines, a normal feature of printing, could also work against creating an atmosphere conducive to learning new skills. At Aberdeen People's Press for example they found that trying to 'demystify' the skills of production conflicted with putting out a regular and readable campaigning newspaper, "Time devoted to passing on the rudiments… only clashed with the pressures of deadlines. Neither commitment was kept very well" (Rigby & Marshall 1980: 37). Geoff from Islington Community Press also recalled that, "people doing it for themselves worked to an extent but it could also cause a lot of headaches; we'd often be printing late into the night!" (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). Self-help printing meant that the process was far slower than if the printshop members did it for people, "that was one of the challenges, to step back, it was a teaching process rather than a printing run… you had to live with that kind of tension" (Intv. Wilson 31/7/11). The other issue was that of the *quality* of the end product. The underplaying of the central role of design in creating effective and attractive publications, sometimes through the emphasis on printing, but also through the aim for groups to find their own appropriate aesthetic forms, could compound the problem. Framed within his critique of community arts, Kelly illustrated what he saw as the tendency of community arts to focus on mechanical techniques, with an example of "the community printshop where 'clients' are shown the minutiae of screen printing" but given no real advice about design (1984: 54).

Evidence of the growth of mixed feelings about the value of self-help as a practice was captured in the earlier mentioned exhibition catalogue for *Printing is Easy…? Community Printshops 1970-1986*, produced by Greenwich Mural Workshop (GMW), which also included a community printshop. The very title of the catalogue, based on the poster by Paddington Printshop mentioned earlier, drew attention to the issue. GMW had surveyed over thirty community printshops and had found that "several of the longest-established and

best-known printshops had abandoned the open-access DIY philosophy of community printing that they themselves had done so much to popularise" (Kenna et al. 1986: 7). Contributions from workshops described the practice as 'punitive', 'discriminatory', 'patronising', 'a subtle form of oppression', that it denied the process of skill acquisition and devalued skills per se. Islington Bus Company devoted their entry to negating the DIY system and explained how they worked in a consultative manner that made better use of their own skills (Howard 1986: 27). Paddington Printshop described how they now ran on a 'design advisory' basis with community groups, either taking on the printing themselves or referring users elsewhere. The question about self-help had come out of differences and subsequent changes at GMW itself. Rick Walker, who joined GMW in 1984 from a jobbing left printing background, found the self-help system at the workshop contradictory,

> [W]e had some disagreement about the whole DIY ethic and the process versus product argument. I was more towards the product end than the process end. To me, insisting people should do the work themselves and that it would be cheaper if they did, could be seen as a form of punishment for people who were too poor. The acid test would be what would you do if you could afford it? Do you want to learn?... If [so] that's fantastic and if its an empowering thing for you… we should help you and subsidise that… if you want a really nice product without having to spend three days doing it then why should you have to. It took longer for them and longer for me and didn't give the best result either. It was an ongoing debate (Intv. Walker 22/8/11).

With the leaving of GMW workers that were, as Rick put it, on the "process side of debate", by the mid 1980s the printshop settled into a system of working with people on creating an effective design, but usually printing for them, with users helping with basic tasks. This greater focus on product and the role of design, and thus the need for a different kind of input from printshop workers, was echoed in several entries in the above-mentioned catalogue. Union Place went in a similar direction, with the emphasis on involvement in artwork rather than printing, although based on what they found users were most interested in and able to learn, rather than an explicit concern about design. As Fabian recalled "first of all people weren't really interested [in printing], the artwork was okay, people could get that because, okay, this is how it will look. That worked [and] we spent a lot of time doing that" (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11).

Excluding those community printshops in the *Printing Is Easy* catalogue that had become essentially management-run training centres for the unemployed, a few still valued the 'full' DIY system. Nottingham Community Arts for example, "we're convinced that our interpretation of community arts; skill sharing, emphasizing process rather than product works for us, for this place" (Bailey 1986: 55) or Hulme Community Arts Co-op "it can still be the most exciting atmosphere that you can get. We don't find teaching people from scratch tedious, every time someone comes in to do a job and says 'I can't draw' it's a reminder of what you are up against" (1986: 38). For Lenthall Road Workshop, distinct as a community

printshop that prioritised female users, the DIY ethic also remained bound up with their aspirations, "it was [always] about empowerment, personal expression, build up your self-esteem by being able to do this" (Intv. Pollard 16/5/11). In each of these cases however the printshop seemed to have a strong relationship with a local or particular constituency.

The community printshops represented in the *Printing is Easy* exhibition/catalogue were all screen-printing workshops, mostly funded on the basis of providing some sort of self-help or learning facility for 'the community'. The reasons for modifying the practice of self-help tended not to be economic. The situation for the few solely offset litho printshops that practiced self-help printing was different. Mainly sitting outside of the 'community arts' funding remit, and thus more financially independent (and precarious), the economic issues of self-help bore down. The changing practices of Islington Community Press provide a case in point. By the late 1970s, they had established a weekly 'training day' when users could come and learn the relevant skills either for producing their own materials or out of interest, working on jobs already in the press. This system enabled more efficient throughput of service work during the rest of the week. The training day was partly supported by an Arts Council grant. In the early 1980s however they lost this, which as Sue said "was a big thing, it made an enormous difference [and] traineeship faded after the grant went and we slowed the amount of open access groups coming and doing their stuff" (Intv. Millett 8/5/13). Groups that had gained sufficient experience could still come and do their pre-press and others were given advice about creating their own printable artwork, but economic pressures forced a continuing move away from self-help. As we saw earlier, another of the few offset litho community self-help printshops, Aberdeen People's Press (APP), found a conflict between the aims of producing their newspaper and the practice of DIY. More generally though, as with Community Press, the practice also undermined APP's growing need to establish a sustainable and economically self-sufficient printshop (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15).

As we can see the challenges to the practice of self help printing were varied. If the practice is considered in relation to Shove et al.'s (2012) notion that for a practice to form and sustain there needs to be a linking of 'meaning', 'material' and 'competence', we can see that these elements were strained. The issue of competence was crucial, it was through its acquisition, that the original political aspiration was based but this was premised on the notion that this could be fairly easily attained and that users would want to attain it and presumably would ascribe the same meaning to it. Although undoubtedly there were a number of groups and individuals for whom this 'worked' in the intended way to some degree, there were many factors that also militated against it. Some people simply did not want to learn, they just wanted cheap printing for their cause. Users could find the printing process difficult and frustrating, and as such self-help, rather than build confidence could have the inverse effect. Substandard results could exacerbate the issue. Lastly, not all prospective and actual users

had the free time necessary to develop competency because of employment or caring commitments, and there is a case that the practice discriminated against those with such responsibilities (Walker 1986).

The privileging of the technical aspects of the print process over the design stage could – especially in the realm of poster production – also contribute towards a final product that was not especially effective. The lack of attention to competence here is complicated. Community printshop workers own understanding about the role of design in communicating messages and connecting to audiences could be limited. Workers often gave limited guidance about design and 'style'; partly they did not want to impose their own tastes and/or believed that this would interfere with transformative process of self-representation. Aspects of this caution were not without cause. Workers could be part of cultural milieus and taste cultures quite different to those of their users. The potential mismatch of aesthetic preferences is illustrated in a 1985 documentary showing the community print duo Artivan, working with the wives of striking miners to produce a fundraising poster. Artivan's suggestion of using a miner's helmet as the central design element, is immediately rejected by the women as unattractive (*Print it Yourself* 1985). Artivan later remarked that even though the resulting posters that were made, 'A-Z of a miner's wife' sold out, "no one has it on their wall" (Heywood & Cross 1986: 59).

Regarding the issue of competence, while most obviously applying to the printing and design process, to conceive of self-help as a practice, the issue of the workers competence at teaching or skill sharing also needs be included. This factor was unmentioned in accounts of the problems of self-help and as such it appears that effectively teaching people how to do things was perhaps unrecognised as a skill in itself. A political aspiration that self-help printing is habitus transforming does not necessarily equate to the social and tacit skills of teaching, or in fact enjoyment of doing so.

It is also evident from the *Printing is Easy* catalogue that by the mid 1980s, some of those working in community screen printshops had a greater sense of themselves as skilled designers and printers, and it was partly the expression and furthering of this, albeit in the service of community print, that was frustrated by the demands of self-help. This is especially clear in one entry whereby the author felt that their (or his) identity as designers/printers was *reduced* to that of teachers (Howard 1986: 27). The move by some community printshops to a more professional 'advisory' and print service probably reflected not just the preferences of those involved but also the growing professionalisation of the wider community arts field. While the growth of community arts into an established field, suggests the continuation of a commitment to the 'empowerment of communities', this cannot be detached from the employment opportunities it now provided.

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The changes to, and demise of, self-help practices arose through the accumulation of experience and reflection within the printshops, along with the changing interests of workers. As Shove et al. (2012) remind, to survive, any practice needs willing recruits, and here that means both 'users' and workers. These changes also occurred within a wider context of criticism towards the 'aesthetics' of community arts. This criticism came from others in the field, such as Braden (1983) – who also applied it to the more skilfully produced output of the poster workshops – and Kelly (1984), but had also been expressed by funders, notably the GLC (1982), all mentioned in the *Field* chapter of the thesis. These criticisms came from a position of fundamental support and were distinct from earlier ones about whether the Arts Council should fund community arts, given it could not be assessed on existing measures of quality (see Hoggart 1980). The point about this more supportive criticism was that it felt community poster making needed to work better as an agitational and cultural form. In the early-mid 1980s given the political context of a virulent Conservative government that vowed the break the left, it is perhaps understandable to see how the argument for product over process seemed obvious to some.

Conclusions

The question that has focussed this chapter was '*How did the concepts of participation and democracy shape the organisational and production practices of the printshops and what were the challenges?*' I also wanted to find out, '*What role did habitus play in the uptake of these practices?*' In order to address these I have mainly drawn on Shove et al.'s (2012) 'elemental' practice approach to identify, break down and understand the trajectories of the democratic practices adopted by the printshops. The role of habitus, both in terms of a radical-participatory habitus (Crossley 2003) and the longer-term Bourdieusian concept of habitus (1984) was especially connected to self-management.

Of the three practices discussed, collective self-management emerged as the most stable in terms of persistence. Democratic self-management assumes that all participants are equal in terms of status and the capacity for reflexivity, responsibility, and informed decision-making towards the collective good of the enterprise. However as in thousands of other collectives, there were challenges with regard to equal participation and influence. The well-known issue of how friendships could create clusters of influence was raised but felt by interviewees to be unavoidable; the mingling of politics, work and friends, was frequently felt to be part of the glue of involvement and commitment, one of the 'intrinsic goods' of membership.

Difficult management decisions were those where political/social aims came into conflict with economic survival. However diverse memberships and motivations for involvement meant

differences regarding aims. Founder members could play key roles here. Along with long-term members they could represent a source of inequality in terms of influence, which they sometimes used if they felt that survival was at stake, but on the other hand, greater responsibility with regards to decision-making could also be put upon them, which they found difficult and undermining of the democratic endeavour.

The role of class background and university education could undermine participation in self-management. Those that felt 'not quite equal' in this regard typically did not have a university or middle class background. This suggests that despite the possibility that new fields create new kinds of internal orientations, longer-term aspects of habitus often continue to shape what it feels possible to do and be. Class might also have played a role in the apparent 'lack of interest' in participation in self-management of some printshop members that joined from the general printing trade, and saw it as 'just a job'. (This can also be seen in terms of class-based assumptions about the role of work; a necessary means to an economic end or something personally developmental).

I did not address all of the issues that were raised by interviewees in relation to the strains on the practice of self-management; to do so would comprise another thesis. Three need to be acknowledged. One was the issue of interpersonal conflict and the fall out (or in) of sexual relationships between members. Another relates to the tension between individual autonomy and collective self-determination (Mendel-Reyes 1999). This relates to 'discipline' and work styles, and can expose divergent ideas about what working in a collective should be about. For reasons of ethical caution, examples of the above have not been discussed. Thirdly is the influence of collective *numbers* on self-management. Where collectives had expanded in size, interviewees related this as a stress on the (relative) cohesion that enabled self-management, an issue frequently cited in studies of the democratic workplace. Despite the problems however, some of which are to an extent inherent to the practice of self-management, only two or three interviewees out of over 50 actually left a printshop because they were fed up with collective working. This may however have been a bias in the interviewee recruitment, as those with miserable memories may not have wished to relive them!

Job rotation, or the 'democratic division of labour' was to an extent particularly radical and challenging because of the skills involved. It connected to discourses of 'demystifying knowledge', 'skill sharing', and 'un-alienated' work. While the degree of the rotation between production tasks existed on a continuum across printshops that the role of 'admin' was far more nebulous. Admin and especially 'book-keeping' were typically the least desirable area of work. Generally ongoing skills shortages, high member turnover, and recruitment practices based more on political fit than technical know-how tested the practice of rotation.

And yet it also could do exactly was it was intended to do; create a more varied work life, democratise knowledge, provide ongoing 'training', and create a sound basis for self-management. To some extent job rotation was possibly suited to a 'provisionally orientated' membership (Rothschild & Whitt 1986) that did not envisage working in a printshop in the longer term but as something interesting and politically resonant to do for the time being.

The practice generally maintained in funded community printshops and poster workshops, although often excluded the admin role, but in service printers striving to economically survive it generally gave way to more fixed roles. The latter needs to be seen in a context of the growth of printing co-ops, especially in London, and greater demands for 'quality' as discussed in the field chapter. More sophisticated equipment to improve production also militated against its viability. Greater stress on specialised skills lead to certain changes in membership. The pool of alternative left candidates was made smaller by the requirement to bring greater skill levels. As we saw earlier this could have knock on effect on the practice of self-management.

Specialisation' brought both benefits and potential challenges for democracy. The sense of working in a group where each were taking care of a necessary 'stage' in the process, along with respect for the skills of each, underpinned by equal pay in a self-managed situation was not necessarily experienced as a lesser form of democracy but a practical one that also enabled a decent and sustainable service. The sense of 'departmental' ownership could however engender a 'sectional' approach to self-management. The development of administration into a specialised area could isolate responsibility and stress about finances, especially if the main concerns of the production workers were sectional ones. It could also concentrate authority in the office, or appear to, particularly if longer-term members took these roles. The extent to which this happened was however contingent on the membership of the printshop at any given time. In the main it was less of an issue in smaller printshops.

The move away from rotation tallied with wider discourses in the alternative left field about 'inefficient' organisational practices. Its relative decline also coincided with interest in and support for co-operatives, from the municipal left, who wanted them to be seen as viable socialist alternatives. New advice for co-operatives generally advised that it was detrimental to economic survival. These wider discourses and moves towards less socially ambitious practices might be seen as the attempt to salvage some kind of 'alternative' in the context of a rising assertion that were none.

The third section of the chapter focussed on DIY printing. Various challenges and contradictions to this practice also emerged over time. The hoped for sense of empowerment, by its advocates, could be thwarted by users' frustrating experiences of

printing and disappointing results. The ostensibly accessible technologies of screen printing and small-offset, were perhaps less so than claimed. Economic issues also undermined it in unfunded presses. The practice of 'full DIY' had waned in many self-help printshops by the mid 1980s, if not earlier, partly through recognition of some of these problems, and gave way to a more service approach to printing combined with support to do design and artwork. These changes also occurred during a period of criticism towards the aesthetics of community arts and its purported social value (GLC 1982, Braden 1983, Kelly 1984).

The three practices analysed in this chapter were attempts to put different kinds of 'democratic' and emancipatory ideals *into* practice, with equality as both an assumption and a goal (May 2010). In different ways these were all ambitious, testing on those that performed them and held together by often-precarious linkages between their 'elements' (material, competence and meaning). Inevitably the challenge to 'successful' performances of these practices meant that other less politically inspiring meanings also sometimes became attached to them within the printshops field; collective working was exhausting and frustrating, job rotation was 'inefficient', DIY printing 'wasteful' and even 'punitive'. However these practices were also subject to pressures external to them.

One of the threads weaving in and out of this chapter – and the previous one – has been that of resources, particularly finance and technology. In order to continue addressing the main research question of this thesis, the issue of 'resources' needs to be explored and analysed more closely. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Material Resources: Field opportunities and challenges

One of the questions that runs through the thesis concerns identifying and explaining the particular conditions of possibility that enabled the printshops to proliferate and to take the forms that they did. The field chapter showed a cultural-political field that sought to create its own media and alternative institutions and in which a radical spirit of self-help prevailed. The previous chapter has shown that the emergent habitus of field participants assumed democratic participatory practices of organising, living and working. Aspects of the 'material basis' of the printshops' emergence and practices has fed into these discussions, such as the initial uptake of ostensibly low-tech printing equipment and the role of squatting in relation to field positioning as well as of some of the issues of charging for print. Printing is a resource hungry activity using equipment (that needs fixing), bulky specialist consumables and significant space and service requirements, all of which typically require paying for. It is also time-consuming, needing several consecutive hours to get anything done. Set up to support movements and groups with scarce resources mostly by people with relatively limited access to funds and either slight experience of or interest in 'business', the printshops were to a large extent a recipe for financial precarity if not disaster. It was only through various forms of subsidy, volunteering and taking advantage of certain resource opportunities that emerged during the 1970s and 1980s – along with dedication and imagination – that they were able to survive and in many cases grow.

This chapter focuses on the material basis of the printshops not only as a crucial component of their possibility but specifically as a historically contingent constellation of resource opportunities and challenges. What I mean precisely here by material basis is: 1) the *spaces* in which to conduct the activity of a printshop, 2) the *technologies* and materials with which to do so and 3) the sources of *finance* available. While these categories obviously intersect with each other and with finance as all pervasive, each raised their own issues, aligned to particular opportunities, and connected with distinct and larger arenas of change – such as that within the very different fields of reprographic technology and urban development, or agendas within institutional cultural and political fields.

The resourcing of the printshops often necessitated engagement with fields and logics, beyond that of the alternative left field of contention. The extent to which each printshop engaged with these fields and logics however varied (and most clearly so with regard to finance), from those that mainly drew on resources internal to the movement field – and ideally retained a sense of autonomy and political integrity vis a vis the vagaries and regulations of institutional agendas and external 'market forces' – to those that became heavily dependent on external resourcing and as such more subject to those logics. For example one might contrast anarchist publishing in the 1970s and 80s with the community

arts movement, whereby the former was highly autonomous and internally resourced and the latter whose very growth was premised on its fit with institutional agendas, and which in fact sought to make this so in order to externally finance its activities (Kelly 1984). The degree to which any field is autonomous depends upon the extent to which other fields influence its structure and logics, and arguably some positions within a field or subfields are more heteronomous than others. Furthermore as Gorski (2013: 330) notes, heteronomy can be "a two-way street". These issues will be further discussed in the chapter.

The chapter is divided into three main sections based upon a corresponding three-model categorisation of the printshops resourcing. The three models I have identified sufficiently map onto the printshop typology, as shown in the table below (Table 13). In turn these models relate to the types of resource opportunities that were available, and pursued (not always the same thing). As can be seen in Table 13, these ideal categories are mapped out showing alignments of financing, technology, remuneration, premises and so on. The three types are 1) The autonomous model, 2) The grant funded model and, 3) The 'commercial' model. The actual detail of resourcing was of course more complex than the three model schema suggests, with degrees of hybridity and oscillation over time, particularly when resource opportunities opened up or closed down, or as printshops 'changed type' (as will become evident in due course), however the core distinctions hold up.

Three (ideal) printshop resource models			
	'Autonomous' model	'Commercial'/market model	Grant funded model
Alignment of type	Community printshop Poster workshop	Movement service printshop	Community printshop Poster workshop
Example	Poster-Film Collective	Blackrose Press	Lenthall Road Workshop
Autonomy	Operates outside funding regimes (state/institutions) Operates outside market/capitalism	Operates outside funding regimes (state/institutions) Negotiated relationship with capital and market	Operates outside market/capitalism Negotiated relationship with state/institutional funding regimes
Finance	Fund raisers, donations, members resources	Sales, members resources, loans	Grants
Charging	Charges to cover basic costs. No labour charge	Charges to cover costs plus labour and reserves	Charges to cover basic costs. No labour charge
Wages	Voluntary labour	Aims to provide living wage through returns on sales	Grants pay wages
Technology	Basic, old, cheap, Acquired through donation, members money	Aims for up to date equipment Acquired through profits and loans	Often basic but may get grants for better equipment
Print process/s	Small offset litho Screen printing	Mostly offset-litho (large and small) Some screen print	Mostly screen printing Some small offset-litho
Space	Squatted, or rent free otherwise	Rented	Rented, often 'peppercorn' or supported by rent grants

Table 13. Printshop resource models

With consideration of finance, space and technology the chapter then aims to, a) unpack and position various resource opportunities as contingent on the historical activity in the particular fields from which they emerged, b) discuss how printshops took up these opportunities and the experience of doing so and c) in certain cases the effect of their withdrawal. Running through this is attention to the field changes within the alternative left, and the recursive relation between that and the habitus of its participants. I continue to draw on the notion of field as a useful concept that helps position and track the movements of printshops within the broader alternative left context, and as indicated above, their interactions with other fields.

6.1. (Im)possibilities of autonomy[47]

The material basis of most of the printshops in their instigation and early years strongly conformed to the 'autonomous' model, in that finance was derived 'internally', they used rent-free space, mostly printed with old or basic equipment and members worked without pay. By internally derived finance, I mean internal to the membership, their milieus, and the movement field. The autonomous model is in theory the morally and politically untainted model; motivation is pure, dangers of contamination or compromised aims and practices limited. However in most cases, there was also little choice other than to be 'autonomous' at least to begin with; wages, modern equipment, decent rented premises all require finance, which was in short supply. This factor pertains to the instigation many of small 'enterprises' set up by people with little experience, funds or creditworthiness. These also start in garages and basements with money loaned by family and friends and without pay. There are a number of differences however. Firstly the ability of the printshops to access conventional sources of finance was handicapped not just by their lack of experience – and potential resistance to such sources – but also by the inherent conservatism of UK financial institutions towards 'alternative' projects and structures (Stott 1985, CAG 1986). Secondly with the exception of printshops that started with the aim of also operating as wage-paying economic enterprises, the motivations for setting up were political and social, not economic or only marginally so. (Therefore the terms of 'success' were also unalike). This factor is the source of another key difference; as part of wider variegated field of political and social activity, and set up to support it in some way, printshops of any type could also appeal to that field for material assistance. Lastly, the 'self-help' culture from which many of the printshops were born meant that the problem of premises (and equipment) might be solved in an alternative manner. This section of the chapter discusses what enabled the autonomous model, its sources of finance and how it operated with regard to getting equipment and space, as well as personal sustenance. It will address the obvious

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47 This subtitle is borrowed from the title of a 2010 article of the name by Bohm, Dinerstein and Spicer.

challenges and the reasons for the move away from it. As we will see, it was rare that a printshop maintained the autonomous model for more than a few years. In some cases it had just 'run its course' and simply closed (Poster Workshop for example), however for those that desired to continue, the transition to either a grant-supported model or a 'commercial' model (or some kind of hybrid) was typically in response to new external resource opportunities and/or internal pressures of sustainability.

Sources of finance

While people *may* be able to work without pay and find rent-free space, unless equipment and consumables have been entirely donated, some sort of finance is self-evidently necessary to acquire them. This subsection fleshes out some of the detail of the internal sources of finance that the printshops obtained. Firstly as to be expected, a number of those involved in starting up a printshop put in some of their own or their families money to start with, "Linda's mother… wasn't hugely well off but she gave us a hundred pounds" (Intv. Foster 17/4/13), "Roger had some savings and bought us a press" (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). This was most evident with printshops begun on the initiative of one or two people. If the printshop started as a collective or group, this input was often in the form of loans by individual members, for example; "two people lent £500, someone lent £200, a few lent £100… we agreed they would be interest free loans" (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). However many of those involved did not have any personal or family resources to draw on, or perhaps chose not to. Union Place for example, were, as Paul explained; "originally entirely financed by us collecting furniture and clothes from people who rejected them and auctioning them off once a month" (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). More commonly, the second source of finance that 'autonomous' printshops especially drew on was donations and loans from politically sympathetic individuals and groups, basically 'movement support'. Accessing movement support partly depended on connections, trust and a degree of shared beliefs or sense of *illusio*.

With the exception of Aldgate Press none of the printshops were associated with a particular political group that might have been an obvious and consistent source of finance. Aldgate's initial funding was raised by Vernon Richards of the anarchist organisation Freedom (Intv. Sorba 22/2/13). This is one of the key distinctions between the radical printshops of this study (and of the alternative left) and the printshops of the revolutionary left. Party benefactors and members subscriptions effectively underwrote the latter. However the 'non-party' nature of the printshops also meant that support could come from a variety of sources within the alternative left field and its networks and local milieus. Some printshops were also of course part of distinct movements; most obviously the women's presses who could appeal to specifically feminist sympathisers. Ramoth Press in Nottingham, set up as a women's press, for example were given money to get started by women they knew from the

local women's liberation movement network (Intv. Scrivener 2/9/11). Onlywomen Press and See Red Women's Workshop in London received donations from a particular figure active in the anti-sexist men's movement and generally known to the movement for his generosity in redistributing family wealth.[48] It is perhaps reasonable to assume here that the dominant middle class social profile of 'new' social movement participants (Eder 1993), combined with a left wing morality about personal wealth, played some part in the availability of such help from individuals. Support from the women's movement went the other way too; in Wales the local Cardiff Women's Action Group donated money to the 'mixed' Fingerprints printshop to help them establish themselves (radicalprintshops.org 2012).

Like many of the early printshops Fingerprints was associated with the community activist movement, which comprised a wide range of participants and sympathisers. Notting Hill Press (NHP) for example, which starting in 1968, preceded the alternative left flourishing of 1970s Britain, was given money by 'new left' Mayday Manifesto Group, a "self-organizing, self-financing socialist intellectual organisation" (in Widgery 1976: 207). Mayday Manifesto Group were born of frustration with both the old left and the revolutionary left and attentive to the potential of the new community activism.[49] NHP was also helped out by the political persuasion tactics of more local supporters to get some 'working capital', as NHP co-founder Beryl explained,

> The black power boys from Notting Hill said 'we'll sort that out'… and took us off to the home of Lord Tony Gifford, and they did a whole number on him about what his family had made from their colonial past and how he should be putting a lot more back into the community… Linda and I were mortified… anyway he guaranteed a £300 overdraft for us and that was how we could buy [materials] (Intv. Foster 17/4/13).

The Student Christian Movement (SCM), a radical association during the 1960s and early 70s, along with other Christian groups and individuals were also supportive of urban community activism and provided 'no interest' loans to both Moss Side Press and Aberdeen People's Press.[50]

The degree to which movement support was available seems to have partly depended on the strength of the networks or 'social capital' of the printshop. As social movement scholar Mario Diani (1997) explains – drawing on Bourdieu (1986) and Putnam (1993) – networks are a key factor in creating social capital. Social capital is not so much about shared collective identity but rather mutual respect and recognition between actors. Diani (1997)

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48 Danny Cohen. Reference to this is in the minutes of both organisations. Danny Cohen was also contacted when I was at See Red in the early 1980s.

49 The May Day Manifesto (edited by Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams and EP Thompson) sold 10,000 copies in 1968, its second edition published by Penguin.

50 See Dickinson (1997) for an interesting discussion about the Christian involvement in the alternative and radical press outside of London.

argues that it is not just (often) the case that movement formation relies on social capital, but that movements and movement actors also *produce* social capital. This insight can be applied to the printshops. The range of support Notting Hill Press received for example is indicative of the networks that fed into Notting Hill community activism at the time, but also the social capital accrued *through the instigation* of the press, which in turn opened up sufficient resource opportunities for them to operate. "We couldn't have done it without all the help we got… It wasn't just luck, it was because of what we were doing and why" (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). On the other hand Islington Community Press seems to have had little 'social capital' when it first set up. There was not a particularly extensive and connected network of community activism when (1972) and where they started and they were also new to the area. The press had been entirely enabled with the financial input of one person, who kick started it from a vague idea of some community project in a squat into what would become a well used and known community printshop and long lasting radical newspaper (Islington Gutter Press). Neighbouring squatters had introduced them to this person (Roger Colman) as someone "who made things happen" – and had some savings (Intv. Holland 10/11/11). Through the connections and recognition built up through the persistence of their activities, Community Press would however gain substantial social capital, which assisted them further down the line (Minority Press Group 1980, Segal 2007).

A source of movement financial support for some presses that did not depend on existing networks, was that established by BIT, a counter cultural information service set up in London in 1968. In 1973, BIT began an Alternative Society Ideas Pool with cash prizes to seed new projects, which were then listed in the BIT/Time Out *Book of Visions* of the same year. Out of BIT grew the Community Levy for Alternative Projects (CLAP), a voluntary income levy to similarly help fund non-profit projects "too unusual, imaginative or revolutionary to get money and support from the regular sources" (CLAP in *IT* July 1974: 6). CLAP ran from 1974 to the late 1970s, projects needing money/awarded money were listed in newssheet printed by and inserted into *Peace News* (a nationally distributed, long-running magazine), as well as sent to subscribers of the levy. A number of printshops were awarded 'start up' money from either BIT or CLAP including Aberdeen People's Press, Fingerprints in Cardiff and Rochdale Alternative Press. BIT and CLAP were born of the counter-cultural efforts in creating an autonomous 'alternative' society in which all kinds of innovative cultural, social and technological projects might flourish and the competitions and newssheets provided an opportunity for nascent and existing 'projects' to appeal across a wide range of unknown potential supporters. Both had ceased to exist by the late 1970s, neither were they replaced by any equivalent. In a less systematic way, 'appeal' notices by emergent or existing individual printshops in alternative press publications such as *IT, Resurgence, Leveller, Spare Rib,* as well as *Peace News* or even *Time Out* along with smaller or specialist publications, could partly serve this purpose. Certainly some of the

women's printshops (See Red, Onlywomen Press, Women in Print, MSWCP) made use of the feminist press in this way during periods of financial crisis. For example, "Women in Print a six women collective… are broke – they made a loss of £2500 this year…anyone who thinks women's presses are important, help them by giving them work or a donation" (in *Spare Rib* March 1981). The appeal attached to a Community Press 'advert' explaining the non-profit free-labour basis of the press, is also illustrative, "On account of the way we run the press, we seem to be in permanent financial difficulties. Any contributions and money or typewriter ribbons or paper, ink and stencils will not be thrown back in your face" (in *Print: How You Can Do It Yourself*, Zeitlyn 1975: 50).

Movement financial support mostly seems to have been strongest in the instigation of a press rather than in its on-going survival. The exception was Poster Workshop (1968-1971), which was maintained throughout by donations along with fundraising benefits put on by radical arts and theatre groups, especially CAST (Wilson 2009). However – and similarly to Notting Hill Press – its three year life coincided with and was born of a particularly dynamic period of 'collective effervescence' and as a unique operation connected into the concurrent swell of student and anti-Vietnam war activism, probably also had significant social capital. Further movement support for other printshops tended to be the result of emergency appeals for donations as indicated above. The presses in any case had not been set up to be supported by the movements as such but rather to support them, or ideally to exist in some sort of mutually sustaining arrangement. There is also the factor that movements are not stable entities, participants and organisations disperse or regroup, new entrants and contexts transform priorities and so on. Changing printshop memberships could also mean fluctuation of alignments, connections and networks and as such, access to movement support.

Equipment

The central material resource for a printshop, in terms of transitioning from some people with an idea to a functioning printshop, is obviously the equipment and initial fundraising was inevitably to 'get the press'. As explained in the previous chapters, part of what enabled the emergence of the printshops was awareness of accessible, as in affordable, available and quickly learnable, printing technologies. Screen-printing had become popularised in art schools and through the visual artefacts of the counterculture, and as a relatively simple technology, the necessary equipment to operate at a basic level at least could even be hand built. The spread of small offset litho – a more complex and fully mechanised process – as an 'in plant' printing technology in the 1960s on the other hand, had meant second hand machines soon became easily obtainable (Marshall 1983). A press was not all that was needed; a printshop also needed 'pre-press' and 'finishing' equipment, or at least access to these. Before the advent of digital reproduction, this meant a 'process camera', film

developing equipment, 'exposure units' for stencils and offset litho plates and possibly typesetting equipment. A guillotine was needed to cut paper and perhaps collators and folders for pamphlets and newssheets. The finance that could be obtained 'internally', although crucial to the instigation of most printshops, was inevitably still limited and as such the essential equipment needed with which to start, was invariably at the 'bargain' end of the market and what could be built by hand, was. It was not just finance that was limited; given that many starting up had no previous experience, sometimes it was knowledge too.

Equipment was frequently sourced either through political networks or via the growing network of radical printers. The passing on of 'kit' between printshops, both donation and sale, was something that continued throughout. The Calvert's Press minutes books for example are peppered with '[X] have a [Y] to get rid of, do we want it?'. NHP found a cheap press to buy through existing connections between the earlier radical peace movement and community activism; an old machine hidden in storage after its owner had gone to prison for printing illegal leaflets.[51] Connections in Leeds provided Blackrose with the name and their first press, "a rubbish old Rotaprint… and a few other pieces" (Intv. Green 2/8/11). The very few 'straight' but sympathetic presses that did some work for radical groups were another source of equipment. Magic Ink in Margate, some-time printers for the anarchist group Aldgate was associated with, helped them find their first press, another Rotaprint, "held together with elastic bands and bubblegum" (Intv. Sorba 22/2/13), while Aberdeen People's Press bought an old press, also a Rotaprint, from the amenable Expression Printers[52] in London (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15). Particular machine makes such as the Rotaprint (R30 and R20) and the Multilith (1250 and 1850) were the mainstays of the early radical printshops; suitable for the work, durable, available and especially if 'well used', most crucially, they were affordable.

Making stuff and making do
Screen-printers had an advantage over the offset-litho printers in that the main printing equipment *could* be hand built and there seems to have been sufficient making skills for a number of printshops to do so. John Phillips of Paddington Printshop for example managed to make their basic equipment "from the debris of the 1974 Ideal Home Exhibition… wooden screens were stripped down, their laminated surfaces transformed into workbenches and screenprint equipment. Straight nails were recycled for their original purpose; bent ones were used to fine-tune the counterbalance weights" (Phillips 2005: 129). More prosaic is

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51 This was Terry Chandler, a Committee of 100 activist who had used the press in 1967 to print leaflets that looked like US dollar bills with the words 'is this worth all the slaughter in Vietnam' on the reverse. He was charged with forgery. The printers he ran was Pirate Press.
52 Expression Printers should not be confused with Express Printers. The latter (est. 1942) was the letterpress forerunner of Aldgate Press and the printers of Freedom Press publishers. Expression was a conventional printers run by young and sympathetic owners and used by many community and campaigning groups.

Paul's description of their efforts at Union Place; "We built our own homemade vacuum silk-screening bed out of wood, 6' long by 3' wide, a lot of holes to drill out… And a vacuum cleaner stuffed up the bottom. It sort of worked!" (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). The piece of equipment commonly built by both types of printers was the 'light box', conventionally just used for working on negatives, these frequently doubled up as a home made alternative to the expensive 'exposure units' for screen and offset litho printing. Some presses also used them instead of the even more costly but usually deemed essential 'process cameras' for transferring the design onto film (the intermediate stage between design/artwork and printing plate/stencil). The Rotaprint engineers that became a vital source of free technical support to NHP, suggested this method to them, "we couldn't afford a process camera obviously and wouldn't have known how to use one, so they came up with a way… it was pretty crude" (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). Moss Side Press who had 'learnt' at NHP, also evidently adopted this method until they eventually got a 'process camera' (Duncan in Dickinson 1997).

Presses also shared equipment. See Red and Women in Print for example moved into adjacent premises partly so they could share the costs of darkroom equipment (See Red Minutes 1974-1982). Arrangements were sometimes made whereby better-equipped presses gave access to some of their equipment. (Intv. Ball 24/8/11, Intv. Shulman 14/4/11, Intv. Whitbread 3/4/13). This happened especially with equipment breakdowns or disasters such as premises attacks from right wing groups (See Red Minutes 1974-1982, Calvert's Press Minutes 1976-1990, Community Press Minutes 1981-1987). The emergent Poster Film Collective spent its first couple of years entirely using equipment owned by someone else, in this case the Slade School of Art, where one of those involved was a student and the other a worker. This was not with open permission but rather stealth by (tacit) agreement, "basically we were allowed to do what we wanted as long as we did it at night and no one knew about it… a bit of blind eye syndrome" (Intv. Miles 20/9/11)

Ownership
The issue of who actually owned the equipment, effectively the 'assets' of the printshop, could be rather vague. Later members of LRW did not know that the equipment belonged to Centerprise for example (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11). The flow of people through organisations probably meant that no one in Centerprise by that time knew either. The printing press that Moss Side Women's Community Press took over from the original Moss Side Press was 'under debenture' as a condition of the Student Christian Movement (SCM) loan that had paid for it in 1970, "debenture, we always wondered what that word meant!" (Intv. Cooper 23/7/13). As it passed its radical phase, or even during it, the SCM might not have wished to be providing a press for a group of unrepentant lesbian feminists, (as opposed to the housing activists that set the original press up), however there was never any follow up. Chris from Islington Community Press recalled a conversation where someone from a left

publishing co-op (Zed Press) asked him, "who owns the stuff and I said no one owns it and he said Chris, everything is owned by somebody! And then there were people in the co-operative movement who said we should do it (become a registered co-op) because we'd all be liable and I was saying liable for what! I couldn't understand what they were on about!" (Intv. Whitbread 3/4/13). Common ownership of the equipment by the entity of the printshop, which would be in line with collective principles, was not covered by a straightforward legal procedure when many of the printshops set up. In any case the alternative and informal nature of many printshops may have meant eschewing legalistic-type procedures, especially with regards to 'property'. The introduction of the Industrial Common Ownership Act in 1976, offered 'model rules' to facilitate this and which many printshops subsequently adopted. Nevertheless, even after the ICO Act as in the case of Community Press above, a number of printshops were not fully aware of these procedures, or the implications of adopting them. Common ownership, which also means whatever an individual puts in to start with (unless set up as loan), cannot be taken out or profited on by that individual when leaving, could also occasionally cause tensions as a press grew and founder members moved on (Intv. Swash 22/9/11).

Materials

Poster Workshop alone seems to have managed to get considerable donations of materials especially piles of printed commercial posters that they used the blank side to print on (Wilson 2009). Mostly printshops had to pay for their materials. However a good number of them benefitted from the 'redistributive' deeds of sympathetic (or crooked) workers of their trade suppliers; drivers for paper merchants who would "inadvertently deliver a palette of paper" (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12) or more commonly who were running a side line in cut-price 'knocked off' supplies (Intv. Mair 14/4/11). In London where several presses co-existed, the latter contacts were often shared, creating a receptive distribution network for the 'dodgy' and vitally useful suppliers. Not only this but various crises in the printing industry in the 1970s such as the increase of imports and the rise of 'in-plant' printing, meant print factory closures (see Gennard & Bain 1995) with auctions of heavily discounted supplies that printshop members trawled for bargains. Poster Film Collective who had started off by using the 'free' materials at the Slade art school, which they saw as "a kind of social distribution", would later not only get much of their own equipment via these auctions but also "incredibly cheap" materials (Intv. Miles 20/9/11, Intv Halsall 4/10/11).

Free Space

There were two rent-free options available to the printshops. One was permission to use a 'spare' space paid for or owned by someone else, or occasionally by one of the printshop workers, as in the instance of Rochdale Alternative Press (RAP) who were based for nine years in the basement of one worker's house (Dickinson 1997). Aberdeen People's Press's

first three years were also in a domestic basement, but provided by another supporter, a politically sympathetic psychiatrist. More frequently, free space was provided within an existing organisation. Notting Hill Press for example were offered their first premises in the basement of a Christian movement (Toc H) run hostel by the warden who was also involved in the area's community activism.[53] The shop-front of Camden Tenants Association provided initial space for See Red Women's Workshop, and after a brick through the window, the South London Women's Centre squat. Poster Film Collective went from the Slade to a room in the Keskidee Centre, a black arts organisation, and so on. Typically these spatial opportunities arose through the printshop members' networks and milieus and as such recognition of the endeavour by their hosts. Only Aberdeen People's Press (APP) however continued into a permanent and secure rent-free situation. A few individuals in the Aberdeen radical alternative network with inheritance money they wanted to put to good use, bought a building together in order to house APP and the radical bookshop, as well as to provide meeting and office space for campaigning groups. APP had to pay rates for the first time, but not rent.

The other type of rent-free option was squatting. By the early 1970s significant portions of Britain's main cities contained streets of uninhabited housing, rows of empty shop fronts, deserted warehousing and vacant industrial premises. This abandonment was partly a consequence of urban planning established decades previously to counteract the 'congestion' and overpopulation of metropolitan centres and to disperse industries and their economic benefits across the country. The depopulation of the inner cities was also related to long-term slum clearance plans, set in motion after the first world war and then again after the second (Cockburn 1977). Local authorities had bought up much of the old housing and shopfronts with plans for demolition and redevelopment at some future date; in the meantime, which was often a long time, they typically lay empty and unmanaged (Kearns 1979). This combination of factors not only helped generate the housing activism and domestic squatting movement but also created the spatial opportunities for alternative enterprises to obtain a base for their activities, from squats to 'peppercorn' rentals.

Although the thesis research is London-centric, with less 'coverage' of printshops in other regions, it nevertheless appears to be the situation that the squatted printshop was primarily a London specific occurence. If this was the case then there are perhaps obvious reasons for this. Squatting, both numerically and proportionally, was a much larger phenomenon in London than elsewhere in Britain (Wates & Wolmar 1980, Reeve 2009). At least six of the London based printshops referred to in the thesis were based in squatted property, although

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53 Chris Holmes (1942-2014), who would go on to be a hugely significant figure in the housing activism movement, including director of North Islington Housing Rights Project, Shelter and CHAR.

rarely for their entirety. In the main squatted premises combined with a squatted living situation either in the same building or nearby, either by all or some of the collective. Union Place in south London was perhaps one of the first, squatting a pair of council owned shops in 1972, "we completely refurbished them, they were totally derelict" (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). The same year on the other side of the river, what would become Islington Community Press, as we saw earlier, also began by squatting an abandoned shop with accommodation above. A little later the group who set up Stepney Community Print Workshop, already living in "five, six or seven streets of squats" decided that "squatting would be ideal" for a printshop premises (Intv. Todd 30/9/11). When it didn't work out for them at the Keskidee Centre, Poster Film Collective joined a large existing squatting population in Euston (Tolmer's Square). All of the London printshop squats were located within wider squatting communities in which printshop members also either lived or had close associations with.

Free labour

In his description of Crest Press, Dave Gwynn Jones's remarks were probably be applicable to any of the autonomous printshops; "it almost relied on people being unemployed or being able to afford not to work" (Intv. Gwynn Jones 25/9/11). This was usually underpinned by an ethos that involvement was because of the politics and an understanding that, as Brenda remembered, "you didn't expect at that point in the 70s to have a job doing it" (Intv. Whisker 9/5/11). Even in the early 1980s for some, "It didn't seem to matter about being paid. I guess because you're young and you're living in some cheap place and anyway we were signing on and getting housing benefit" (Intv. Robinson 1/11/11). The time consuming and space-bound nature of printshop activity did not, for the most part, allow for people to be earning their living full time elsewhere and 'doing a bit' at the printshop on evenings and weekends. The availability of social security benefits for single people, fairly minimal though they were, and the urban spatial opportunities that were enabling squatting and housing co-ops, along with the anti materialistic/anti consumer values and egalitarian financial practices of the alternative left, (e.g. income sharing in collective households) together created the underlying but marginal material support that many alternative ventures of the 1970s relied on, including a good number of the printshops. Leslie's description of her lifestyle during this time, was not untypical, "we lived very frugally, a housing co-op where the rent was a pittance, we drank cider, you know how it goes… and clothing wasn't exactly a big outlay [laughs]… it was possible and the lifestyle was fine" (Intv. Mair 14/4/11). As to be expected in any 'anti-establishment' milieus there were also a few recidivist approaches to 'supplementing the income' or keeping costs down, from selling drugs to insurance and social security scams, 'cheque book jobs' and 'doing things with electricity and gas'. It was also not the case that 'everyone was on the dole'. At See Red for example, most of the members for the first several years supported themselves with part-time jobs elsewhere and arranged their time in the workshop accordingly. To some extent the nature of what they

were primarily doing, designing and printing their own posters, rather than acting as a community resource facilitated this. However cheap communal living and the alternative left lifestyle also enabled members' personal economic sustenance (See Red 2016).

Pressures on the autonomous model

The combination of dilapidated presses, home-made solutions to pre-press, the high costs of machine engineers and sometimes limited skill levels, meant that technical problems could be frequent. Three recollections from different presses suffice to illustrate the issues: "the press was so old and the quality was awful… if you got it just right you could get nice solids of colour and then it would just go wrong. And it would misfeed. And it was very slow" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11); "the Multilith was an absolute sod, it was old and quirky and some people knew how to make work but I found it hard to" (Intv. Booth 20/4/11); "the presses were always breaking down and we didn't have proper contracts with anybody so it was always very expensive to mend them" (Intv. Osborn 2/10/11). However although old equipment was the cause of much frustration (and in most printshops) in and of itself it was less a pressure on the autonomous model than issues of space and free labour, although there is a relation with the latter. The other major and on going problem which will be raised again, but which put particular pressure on the scarce resources of the autonomous model, is the fact that their users were also typically under resourced. How printshops were treated by their constituencies once they had moved from being a nascent project to be supported to a resource to be 'used' has been discussed in the Field chapter. However this simple comment in the *Womenprint* conference report gives an indication, "Quite often people do not pay for jobs done until a long time afterwards, if at all" (1977: 1).

Difficulties of free space

Both types of free space outlined above were obviously enabling in that the burden of rent was absent, however the conditional nature of each put printshops in a potentially vulnerable position. Notting Hill Press for example were only secure in the basement of the Christian hostel while the sympathetic warden was in post. The replacement warden "a very fixated New Zealander, was appalled to find a printing press in the basement... horrified. So eventually he evicted us (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). As guests in an understaffed community centre, Paddington Printshop soon found themselves to be "printshops workers by day and youth and community workers by night", which had not been the intention (Phillips 2005: 129). In the Resource Association space in Sheffield, SWPC were a women only service-print set-up sharing a cramped space with a self-help printshop run by, in one member's view, "some pretty rabid left wing men". The sharing arrangement came to be operationally, socially and politically incompatible (Intv. Devreaux 2/10/11). The overhanging risk of squatting on the other hand was always eviction. Squatting had grown in London partly because it was possible to evade eviction for years, and in certain boroughs 'authorized'

squatting became a prospect. With pressure from housing activists, some local authorities conceded – to an extent – that while they could not afford to do anything themselves with their swathes of decaying properties, licensed squats as 'short-life housing' did something about the housing problem and prevented vandalisation (Kearns 1979). Much depended on the borough's written and unwritten policies, the state of the plans for the street in question and so on, factors which were subject to regular change. Poster Film Collective, managed to stay in squatted premises for about seven years, however eventual eviction by Camden council made them homeless (Intv. Halsall 4/10/11). See Red's two-year stay in the South London Women's Centre ended when the building was evicted. After three years of squatting, Islington Community Press was also evicted and the building demolished.

Limits to free labour

As we saw the dependence on unpaid labour to run a printshop assumed enough regular bodies willing or able to sustain this. Regardless of who this excluded in the first place, for those involved it could become untenable and individuals would need to get some paid work to aid their personal finances. Charlie for example from Union Place "I would go off and work on building sites at Myatt's Fields estates to supplement my income" (Intv. Rose 19/1211). The minimal dole dependent lifestyle was also freighted towards those without dependents and those prepared to or able to live in the above-mentioned way. Christine from Poster Film Collective, for example, despite her housing needs being met by squatting, found that after having a child, 'signing on' was not sufficient "if you've got a kid its not same… I did all sorts of jobs after I had […], I worked on building sites as a snagger… another job was as the photographer for the finish of the races at Haringey dog track… [and] it was struggle to be there [at PFC] and do that when we had to live" (Intv. Halsall 4/10/11). Char at Ramoth Press also came up against the financial limits of existence when her domestic situation involved rent and children, "At Ramoth we'd been taking it turns to go on the dole but then I was living with […] and her kids and we needed money, we were broke, so I went and got this paid job running the community press in Leicester" (Intv. Scrivener 4/11/11). People having to 'go off' to earn money could also impact on the press in turns of keeping it all going on a practical level as well as the shared commitment that fuels the energy and the will to do so. Some of the tensions regarding the issue of 'free labour' are expressed in another part of the 1977 *Womenprint* conference report, attended by women from ten different printshops: "There is the problem of how to pay wages, and the possibility of exploiting ourselves (many of us are still on S[ocial]S[ecurity]) which has to be balanced against the very positive aspects of working at something we enjoy" (1977: 1). It is not just a question of being *able* to work without pay, but there usually comes a point at which people start to find it not just personally constraining but also to *feel* exploited, which also obviously pertains to low wages as well. This point in relation to low wages will be returned to later in the chapter with particular regard to the commercial/market model printshops.

The issue of self-exploitation, well known as a characteristic of 'alternative' ventures (Shukaitis 2010, Cohen 2012) was raised by Landry et al. (1985), as both symptom and effect of what the authors felt to be a wilful and even snobbish ignorance in alternative left enterprises regarding economic viability and 'bourgeois' commerce. As we saw in the previous chapter there was frequently a lack of interest and/or knowledge by many in the printshops of 'how the money worked'. Along similar lines Landry et al. (1985) argued that because of the ideological basis from which alternative left organisations sprung, profit was an awkward concept, implying capitalism and as such could not be a decent aim, "At best it [profit] is expressed as 'surplus' and remains a pious hope rather than a practical goal. The real aim is 'breaking even'" (1985: 30). However only 'breaking even' maintains financial precarity for there are no reserves with which to replace equipment, create a buffer against bad debts and so on and usually means continued 'self-exploitation', because the subsidy of free or cheap labour is the only cost variable the organisation is really in charge of.

The extent to and manner in which any of this was felt important or relevant in a given printshop depended on various factors; the nature of the activity, the duration of existence and of membership, motivations for involvement, and practical aspirations for longer term survival. Certain types of activity, such as creating cheap attractive screen-printed propaganda posters were unlikely to ever generate enough income for a liveable wage, (never mind a 'surplus' over and above that). Neither was the open access printing of the community printshops.

Transitions and persistence

Considerations of a slightly more economically sustainable way to proceed, and away from the 'autonomous model', was often bound up with getting more secure premises and/or starting to pay rent. After their eviction from the Christian hostel Notting Hill Press's only option was commercial premises, "we found a disused basement under an opticians… we had to make it habitable, a lot of work. The rent wasn't a lot but to help this and the debts from doing it up we began to work further out not just the neighbourhood but a wider ring… and we paid ourselves something, about £5 a week" (Intv. Foster 17/4/13). For Aberdeen People's Press, moving from the psychiatrist's basement into the building bought for them coincided with a rethinking of how to run the press and pursuing a "more structured approach" that would enable them to pay a regular wage (Intv. Marshall 10/2/15). Frequently particular dimensions of the 1970s urban spatial context, considerably eased the transition to rented space. The availability of abandoned commercial properties acquired on compulsory purchase by local authorities made it possible for See Red and Women in Print to move from their respective squatted premises into (relatively) more secure council owned

workshops[54] at very low rent, due to their poor condition. As with other printshops acquiring similar premises, the work of wiring, plumbing and rehabilitation all had to be done themselves on the cheap. Although it would be several more years before See Red looked for external funding to enable wages, they were now able to take on more service printing work to help pay the bills and save for better equipment.

In Lambeth, where Union Place were based, an active squatting scene inhabiting numerous empty shop fronts[55] as well as domestic properties had led to a degree of negotiation taking place for both types of space (Intv. Rose 19/12/11, Cockburn 1977). They managed to secure their squatted premises from the council for a 'peppercorn rent' that lasted for the near twenty-year duration of the printshop (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). This coincided with new availability of 'community arts' grants, which as the next section shows they quickly took advantage of. Following their squat demolition, Islington Community Press, through connections with the radical community worker[56] at the local council's new 'Participation Office' – representative of institutional policy for dealing with 'deprived' and disenfranchised areas discussed earlier in the thesis – secured a long lease on an abandoned council-owned building at a very low rent (email Edney 8/4/16). The move was accompanied by other changes towards creating a more stable basis for survival; taking on 'service' work to cover rent and rates but also towards payment for workers. This was followed by applying for grant aid towards wages as well. Similarly to Union Place, the latter decision was prompted by the new community arts grants (Intv. Holland 10/11/11, IGP in MPG 1980: 59).

The printshops mostly diverged into two models of resourcing; those that attempted to survive and pay themselves on the basis of sales and those that went the grant aided route, the former aligned with the service printshops and the latter the community printshops, especially those that were screen-printing based. The offset litho community printshops mainly evolved into becoming movement service printers, although there were occasional 'hybrid' models such as Community Press and also Tyneside Free Press Workshop that were partially grant aided and partially surviving on sales. The only long lasting printshop that maintained the autonomous model throughout and deliberately so – with a couple of specific exceptions where they applied for one off grants for outsourcing printing – was the Poster Film Collective. It was point of political principle, "we wanted to be completely autonomous… no grants… we thought we could run our own economy, so we were quite

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54 This was in Iliffe Yard in Southwark, south London, a working class borough affected by the decline of local industry as in many other such areas. The yard was part of the Pullens Estate, a Victorian housing and workshop development that was taken over by compulsory purchase by Southwark Council in 1977 (Batcher 2011). In fact the council hoped to demolish the estate and in the 1980s a long battle with the tenants association and squatters that had taken up there ensued. The yards are now semi-gentrified as arts and crafts hubs.

55 One of the more concentrated areas of this in Lambeth was Railton Road in Brixton.

56 Leo Smith who wrote about the work of the Participation office in Islington in *Deprivation, Participation and Community Action* (Smith & Jones 1981)

proud of that. It was a kind of purist thing… a bit hypocritical in that we were collecting dole money" (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). Rarely did anyone's own model of autonomy exclude using the welfare system. Charlie from Union Place was the only person that recalled any particular qualms, "I used to think is it right us taking this money… and I thought yes because we do stuff " (Intv. Rose 19/12/11). There were other presses that would probably have considered themselves to have retained the 'autonomous' model in that they received no external financing and lived a fairly hand to mouth existence, such as Little A, who primarily existed to service the anarchist movement. However they moved outside the autonomous model I have constructed here in that they were based in rented premises, aimed to cover more than materials costs on print sales and paid a minimal wage ("we'd see what was in the tin" Intv. Whellens 15/12/11). They would perhaps sit at the impoverished end of a continuum of 'commercial/market' model printshops. The overriding theme of the autonomous model is how much it was enabled by movement support and culture along with the 'sacrifice capital' of those involved.

As the rest of the chapter will show, the above mentioned grants were part of a range of external 'resource opportunities' that opened up during the 1970s and 80s and which many of the printshops were able to take advantage of. These opportunities were in some cases an effect of how the movement field of the alternative left influenced certain institutional fields and in that sense help us to position the existence and trajectories of the printshops within a larger cultural and political economy. The next two sections of the chapter continue with the typology related resourcing models shown earlier; firstly the 'grant aided' model and then the 'commercial/market model'. The focus is on the financial resources that became available, but also with attention where relevant to the three key sites of typical expenditure discussed in this section, space, equipment and wages.

6.2. Grant aided model

The grant-funded printshops were for the most part self-help (initially) community printshops. Their endeavours might be 'packaged' to fit the institutional agendas of grant giving agencies and in some cases they were part of the politico-cultural forces that had informed those agendas. Initially the activity of the community printshops could be seen to resonate with new institutional concerns for the 'inner city' albeit to rouse rather than ameliorate; a little later as part of a new arts movement; then as aids to urban regeneration and employment, and then as sites of production for a new (and funded) oppositional culture. The poster workshops could also fit into some of these agendas, especially the last. Printshops could obtain grants for equipment, materials and wages. Premises might also be supported, however as we shall see this featured rather less as the printshops had mostly found their own low cost solutions. The section begins with this topic of space, the grounds

of operation. To an extent this follows on from the discussion of space in the previous section, the conditions of possibility here being part of the same urban spatial context. Following this is an explanation of the various sources of grant aid and the context of their availability. After this we will see how the money was spent, taking wages and technology separately. Finally I turn to a discussion of some of the challenges expressed about being a grant-reliant printshop.

Space: the peppercorn rent

Most of the grant aided printshops referred to in this study were based in local authority owned premises and paying 'peppercorn' rents, either through initial squatting, such as Union Place, or other arrangement with the typically Labour run council. These premises were almost always acquired *before* becoming grant aided and usually considerable amounts of members' free labour and internal fund raising had gone into making them habitable. Charlie Cattell's description of taking on the "derelict council owned workshop unit" for Tyneside Free Press Workshop is indicative, "It needed everything doing: wiring, floors, walls, plumbing, ventilation, heating, all undertaken with volunteer labour, many thousands of hours of it… we had to raise funds and beg equipment and materials throughout… I took a part-time job at the gas board so I could buy plumbing materials at trade prices" (eIntv. Cattell 9/1/13). Having acquired low rent premises these printshops mostly remained in them; Tyneside Free Press Workshop, Union Place, Lenthall Road Workshop and Islington Community Press for example all stayed in their council let properties. Some Labour councils also provided rent (and rates) grants that waived the already low sum. Lenthall Road Workshop for example managed at various times to get rent grants from Hackney council (LRW Tri Annual Report 1975-1978, LRW Annual Report 1983-84), as did Union Place from Lambeth council (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11). Local councils might offer more than this, especially under the influence of 'new left' Labour entrants in the late 1970s and early 1980s – all the above printshops acquired their peppercorn council premises before this period, in the early to mid 1970s, under 'old guard' Labour authorities. The 'support' of the latter was less related to direct political sympathy but pragmatic concession to use their unmanageable/unmanaged 'portfolios' of neglected property, in a similar way to the licencing of squats and short life housing arrangements (Intv. Rose 19/12/11, Kearns 1979).

The 'peppercorn rent' was reliant on the combined contingencies of spatial opportunity and a local council attitude somewhere on a continuum ranging from tolerance, recognition or support. This was not always a static matter, it could be enhanced by sympathetic new Left entrants into the council, but also subject to departmental or wider council agendas. Islington Council for example which had provided the building for Community Press in the mid 1970s at peppercorn rent, declared a five-fold rent increase in the early 1980s. The building, which

was shared by other campaigning groups and jointly managed them all, was subject to a right wing arson attack in 1981 (Intv. Millet 8/5/13). They were not destroyed but damage was sufficient ("the presses were up and running the next day as a gesture of defiance" radicalprintshops.org 2010) and eventually the council paid for refurbishment, with the press having to shut for a year because of the time taken. It was during this period that the council announced the huge rent increase. Islington Council were now a radical 'new left' council, much maligned by the Conservatives for their 'political spending', and the expectation would be that they especially would maintain the support of minimal rent for something like Community Press and its fellow building occupants. However the councils own finances were under attack with a decrease in their central government grant, 'exposés' of their 'political' spending in parliament and the press along with demands for an 'extraordinary audit' (*HC Deb 08 March 1983 vol 38 cc812-20).* The other factor may have been that while council leadership were 'radical', this was not necessary reflected within the departments. In any case, while attempting to negotiate compensation for income lost due to the lengthy closure and the possibilities of a rent grant, neither of which came to fruition, Community Press withheld their rent in protest of the forthcoming increase; they could not afford it (Islington Community Press Minutes 1981-1986).

The frustrations felt of working in a rundown or make-shift environment and the will to improve it beyond the founders usually substantial efforts varied immensely. Dependency on annual grants and the peppercorn rents, along with membership churn, possibly contributed towards a provisional outlook by some in this regard. Also now as council tenants, major repairs were the council's responsibility. However these could take years to happen, if at all e.g. "despite endless phone calls and letters the roof is still dripping water and now part of the ceiling has fallen in" (Community Press News June 1979). Peppercorn rent payers were unlikely to be a high priority.

Sources of grant aid

Grants for inner city deprivation

Briefly explained in Chapter 4**,** the urban community activist field that began emerging in the late 1960s was accompanied by various experimental state initiatives that sought to address the issue of urban 'deprivation' and citizen disengagement on the basis of recommendations from a series of commissioned reports. One of these reports was commissioned by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (*The Gulbenkian Report: Community Work and Social Change, 1968*). A key recommendation and one that would shape a general approach to funding, was that the council's should start "helping local people to decide, plan and take action to meet their own needs with the help of available outside resources" (*Gulbenkian Report* 1968: 149). This not only suggested new kinds of 'community worker' job roles to facilitate this, as indeed did other reports of the time such as the *Skeffington* and *Seebohm*

reports (also both 1968), but access to space to meet and organise and technologies and funds to produce communications. The arrival of a new radical head of the Gulbenkian UK branch in 1972 (Peter Brinson), also then directed the foundation's own funding priorities for the next ten years towards "giving practical support to increasingly beleaguered groups by encouraging community arts, community enterprise, and self-education" (Hewison & Holden 2007: 5). The Gulbenkian soon became known as a source of finance within the field of community arts and activism and in 1974 alone gave out some £90,000 to community arts projects (Field 1977: 140). They were the first source of funding for Union Place, Paddington Printshop received grants from them as did WARP. The otherwise autonomous Stepney Community Printshop got a single sum and so on. Gulbenkian funding for printshops was limited as a regular source of maintenance, especially as other funding opportunities emerged but for a period in the early 1970s it was the only significant available source of external funding (Intv. Williams 21/9/11).

In the early to mid 1970s there were however also quite small sums that could be obtained from the Urban Aid Programme policy funding, via local authorities. The Urban Aid Programme had been established by the Labour government in 1968, influenced by the reports mentioned above, and was one of the state institutional moves to explore ways of "easing social tensions in the inner cities" (Tallon 2010: 36). The funding, which was administered by the Home Office to local authorities in designated 'areas of special need' was meant to encourage local councils "to innovate with small-scale locally-based projects" (Winwood 1977: 8), which might in turn help them identify how to best allocate their own budgets to support social equality. Small grants (capital and revenue) could be given to a variety of voluntary agencies and projects, to support playgroups, educational projects, pay community workers, and most relevantly here, for the purchase of basic equipment for community newspapers, again to encourage 'active citizenship'. This was rarely at the level of printing presses but money for duplicators, typewriters and office equipment could be obtained (Intv. Rose 19/12/11).

The emphasis of Urban Aid funding ostensibly changed later in the 1970s with the incumbent Labour government's white paper of 1977, *Policy for the Inner Cities* (DoE). The socially orientated analysis of 'urban problems' gave way to that of environment and economic opportunity: regeneration. The Urban Aid Programme funds were redirected particularly through an initiative called Inner City Partnerships (ICP). Local and central government would in theory coordinate to regenerate deprived areas. The London boroughs of Lambeth, Islington and Hackney were targeted areas (as well as London Docklands, Newcastle, Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool). However the types of projects that local authorities distributed funds to under the auspices of ICP varied significantly and often reflected their own political sympathies (Nabarro 1980). Far more significant sums were also

now available. Union Place managed to obtain revenue funding between 1978-82 through Lambeth's ICP funding, for example £10,000 for 1978–79; £50,000 for 1979–80; £62,000 for 1980-81 (Hansard Reports 1979-82). Lambeth of all the partnerships spent the least on environment improvements and 'economic stimulation' and the most on voluntary groups and community projects (data from Nabarro 1980, Parkinson & Wilks 1983). Arguably they were still funding under the pre White Paper guidance. This factor, and especially their funding of Union Place did not go unnoticed by the tabloid press and conservative MPs (Intv. Todd 30/9/11, Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11). Lambeth (along with Islington) was one of the local Labour administrations representative of the emerging municipal socialism, and as such a key target for political 'exposure' of their wasteful and 'ideological' spending. The issue of this targeting will be returned to later. Smaller amounts of Inner City Partnership funding were obtained by Lenthall Road Workshop in Hackney but for specified projects, such a summer holiday schemes for local kids, rather than on-going revenue (LRW Annual Report 1975-8).

The other relevant, grant giving central government initiative towards urban problems was the Manpower Services Commission (MSC). The MSC grew out of the Department of Employment (DE) and existed between 1974-1988. Its 'Special Programme' job creation and training schemes had been launched as a response to urban unemployment and attendant "anti-social behaviour" (Howells 1980: 323). It provided organisations with a grant to cover a very basic wage to previously unemployed 'trainees' for a set period, usually a year. Although a desired outcome for the architects of schemes, there was no obligation for organisations to employ the 'trainee' afterwards, making it an attractive proposition for employers and a viable short-term solution for both community and service printshops. The wages were low and the year limit very far from ideal but it was something (Kenna et al. 1986). There were various iterations of Special Programme schemes (Job Creation Programme, Special Temporary Employment Programme, Community Enterprise Programme, Youth Opportunity Programme and so on). In the late 1970s Tyneside Free Press Workshop and Paddington Printshop both got funds via the Job Creation Programme. This was one of the better schemes in that the wage was set to be the 'local rate' for the job up to a maximum determined by MSC, however it had run out by the end the 1970s (Lourie 1996).

Grants for a new arts movement
Before the Inner City Partnerships appeared, another rather different source of central government funds had become available to community printshops. This was the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB), which took over from the Gulbenkian as the main grant giver for community arts despite its own misgivings. The Arts Council, mostly financed by the state, had traditionally funded art forms that fell into the recognised categories of high

culture. However the growth of experimental art practices in the 1960s led to the formation of the New Activities and then Experimental Projects grant committees, to which this diversity might apply to for grants. Increasingly, activities that came to be described as community arts were applying and against which the Arts Council found it even more difficult to apply their usual criteria of excellence and quality. In order to lobby for their case, a group of these artists set up the Association of Community Artists (ACA) in 1972. This led to the commission of an Arts Council report on Community Arts in 1973, (*The Baldry Report*), to investigate whether they should be funding this kind of art, and in 1974 the Community Arts Committee of the ACGB was established, with members of Association of Community Artists (ACA) on the panel. It was all rather tentative on the Arts Council's part, which grasped that new forms of creativity were taking place with "as much sociological as artistic justification" (ACGB Annual Report 1974-5: 28). However a designated committee in the main UK distributor of arts funding was hugely significant, and is generally seen to be responsible for the growth of community arts (Kelly 1984, Kenna 1986). A number of community printshops effectively rode on the back of this and obtained a small but steady percentage (around a tenth) of the committee's grants (ACGB Reports 1975-1982). John Phillips from Paddington Printshop came across the *Baldry Report* by chance, saw that "funds were to be made available to support the kind of work we were doing", hastily prepared an application "and when the first community arts panel met we were the first group waiting to meet them" (Phillips in Kenna et al. 1986: 20). Lenthall Road Workshop, Union Place and Community Press soon followed.

Fairly quickly the Arts Council decided that because of their inherently 'local' nature, funding for community arts should be assessed and granted by Regional Arts Associations (RAAs) rather than centrally. The RAAs got their money from the Arts Council, and had their own local agendas. Applicants were encouraged to apply to their regional arts authority quite early on although it was not until 1981 that this process of shedding was complete (ACGB Annual Reports 1975-81). Nevertheless in the five years between 1975-1979, Paddington Printshop directly received almost £50,000, Union Place about £30,000, Lenthall Road Workshop £22,00 and Islington Community Press £17,000. A reasonable contribution, but rarely sufficient alone. After this time they had to apply to the London regional arts association, Greater London Arts (GLA). The feeling among community arts groups, including some of those involved in the printshops, about the Arts Council push towards the devolution of community arts funding was that it was indicative of their fundamental antipathy towards their activity and a way of getting it off their hands (Kenna et al. 1986, Goss 2002). The community arts lobby was felt to be a thorn in the side of the Arts Council, with their protests about allocations and inherent rejection of cherished standards of quality and value. According to Secretary General, Roy Shaw, their funding also raised the issue of "whether it was the duty of the state actually to subsidise those who are working to

overthrow it" (ACGB Annual Report 1978-9: 9). Furthermore because what they did was 'sociological' they should *also* get funding from those types of agencies, usually local authority funding for urban improvement or social provision such as that available through Urban Aid monies. The ACGB report of 1979/80 noted approvingly that almost half the funding for Community arts projects (funded through the RAAs or directly from themselves) now came from non-arts sources. In 1979 for example Tyneside Free Press Workshop, were receiving money from Priority Area Project (for areas of educational deprivation), the community arts panel of Northern Arts (their RAA), and job creation funding from MSC. A snap shot of Paddington Printshop's funding up to 1978 reveals a similar mix, ACGB, GLA, Westminster Council of Social Services, Community Relations Council, MSC. It also belies a lot of administrative work in securing funds.

Grants for an oppositional culture

Municipal socialism was to feature more widely in support for the printshops in London with the overtaking of the London wide administrative body the Greater London Council (GLC), in 1981 – two years into the Thatcher government – by a radical Labour group led by Ken Livingstone. What permitted the GLC and the other local left Labour authorities to provide financial support to groups whose aims they agreed with were two provisions in the Local Government Act 1972; Section 137 which allowed them to spend up to 2% of their income from rates[57] contributing to non-profit organisations and Section 142 which allowed them to provide funds for publicity in any media or exhibition form concerning locally relevant information. There were two main facets to the GLC's policy initiatives, one cultural, the other economic. The opportunities in relation to the latter relate to resources available to printshops that fitted into the 'commercial/market' model (movement service printers) and will be discussed in the next sub-section. The GLC's cultural policy was based on a belief that support of a diverse and dynamic 'peoples' culture was essential for developing necessary political momentum to reinvigorate the left in order to successfully contest the opposition. The future of London's left lay not in its fragmented and small industrial unions, an effect partly of the decline of manufacturing in the capital, but in the heterogeneous constituencies of new social movements, the alternative left and youth, black and migrant populations (Bianchini 1987). This was a very different rationale to funding 'community arts' than that of either the Arts Council or the Regional Arts Associations, and much closer to the sympathies of those in the community printshops and poster workshops. The Arts & Recreation committee of the GLC had two relevant sub committees to this end, Ethnic Minority Arts and Community Arts. Radical and community printing groups gained significant financial support from the latter. According to figures in their swansong brochure, *Campaign for a Popular Culture* (GLC 1986), during its five-year existence the panel awarded over £26

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57 Prior to Council Tax and 'poll tax', local authorities raised income through 'rates'.

million across twelve print *related* groups in the capital. This included print projects that were part of multi-activity community arts projects, or management committee run, which are excluded from the study here. A third of groups funded by the panel provided opportunities for groups to acquire poster making skills, about a fifth actual printing skills, fitting in with the GLCs declared commitment to training and education.

Of those printshops referred to in the thesis, sums granted (rounded to nearest £1k) from the GLC Community Arts panel in its four years of existence were: Islington Community Press, £18,000; Onlywomen Press, £24,000; Poster Film Collective, £26,000; Paddington Printshop, £41,000; Lenthall Road Workshop, £42,000; See Red Women's Workshop, £66,000. Even the otherwise autonomous Poster Film Collective applied for some money (Intv. Miles 20/9/11). The largest sum to a single project (£120,000) was for the Dockland Community Poster Project, worth mentioning because it indicates the explicitly political nature of the funding. The Docklands Community Poster Project – who also acquired various other forms of grant aid including from Inner Cities Partnership – campaigned against Thatcher's flagship private property led London Docklands regeneration project. Unlike applications to the Community Arts panels of the Arts Council (and many Regional Arts Associations) explicit mention in GLC applications could be made of support for campaigning groups and a poster workshop producing propaganda materials was as likely to get support as the community printshop 'demystifying the printing process' to empower socially marginalised groups.

The other source of GLC grants for some printshops was via its Women's Committee. This was set up in 1982 and in its four years of existence it had spent about £30 million in grants to local and national women's organisations and campaigns (Coote & Campbell 1987). Much of this was spent on women's service and support organisations and centres, many of which had been previously run voluntarily. It also gave money to existing feminist publications such as *Spare Rib*, and new ones such as *Outwrite* and to both Lenthall Road Workshop and significantly to See Red Women's Workshop. The Women's Committee ran advisory sessions on how to get the money and advertised its availability in the feminist press. It also promoted applications by women's groups to other GLC committees and along with new Women's Units on local Labour authorities contributed towards a sort of municipal feminist network. It provided a serious injection of cash into the metropolitan women's movement and beyond. When the formation of the committee was announced word went around the London feminist scene that there might be sympathetic funding available, and of course debate about co-option (See Red Minutes 1974-83, Onlywomen Press Archives).

Of the groups mentioned it was only See Red Women's workshop that became dependent on GLC grants alone, the others such as Lenthall Road Workshop and Paddington

Printshops as indicated earlier drew on a mix of grant sources. Islington Community Press, (similarly to Tyneside Free Press in Newcastle), on the other hand were only partially grant sustained, the rest of their income came from printing sales. A comparison of the balance can be made with Lenthall Road Workshop, of a similar size and income. In 1983 Lenthall Road Workshop received just over £30,000 in revenue grants (from GLC, GLAA & Hackney Council) and generated about £5,000 in charges/sales, whereas in the same year Islington Community Press had sales of £32,000 and a grant of about £4,000 (LRW Annual Report 1983-4, Community Press Minutes 1981-86).

Table 14. Key sources of grants to community printshops and poster workshops

Grant giving agency	Available	Source of agency's funds	Printshop beneficiaries	Used for
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation	1972-1978	Private foundation fund	Union Place, Paddington Printshop, Stepney Community Printshop, WARP	Equipment Some running costs
Urban Aid Programme (including Inner City Partnerships – (ICP)	1972-1979 ICP 1977-c1988	Central Government via local authority	Union Place (ICP), Tyneside Free Press Workshop, Lenthall Road Workshop (ICP)	Equipment (small) Wages, Running costs One off projects
Manpower Services Commission (MSC)	1974-1988	Central Gov.	Paddington Printshop, Tyneside Free Press Workshop	Wages
Arts Council of Great Britain (ACAB) Community Arts panel	1975-1982	Central Gov.	Paddington Printshop, Lenthall Road Workshop, Union Place, WARP, Islington Community Press	Wages Materials
Regional Arts Association (RAA)	1980-	Central Gov. via ACGB	Paddington Printshop, Lenthall Road Workshop Onlywomen Press, Poster Film Collective, Islington Community Press, Tyneside Free Press	Wages Some equipment
GLC Community Arts Committee	1981-1986	Local Gov. (s.137)	See Red Women's Workshop, Paddington Printshop, Lenthall Road Workshop, Poster Film Collective, WARP, Onlywomen Press, Islington Community Press	Wages
GLC Women's Committee	1982-1986	Local Gov. (s.137)	See Red Women's Workshop, Lenthall Road Workshop	Wages Some equipment
Local authority	1982-1990s but variable according to authority	Local Gov. (s.137)	Union Place (Lambeth), Lenthall Road Workshop (Hackney), See Red Women's Workshop (Southwark)	Rent grants Wages

Spending on wages

As the above table indicates, wages were the key expenditure of grant aid to printshops. The nature of self-help printing and poster making alone could not support getting paid. The only option was to simultaneously act as service printers, which to a degree most of these types of printshops did. However given that generating enough surplus income to pay liveable wages could be a struggle even for those devoting all their time to service printing, the returns achieved by doing this on a part time basis were obviously extremely limited, especially given the usual commitment to low pricing. The funding of wages facilitated

people to dedicate themselves to the core activities of the printshop. Furthermore being able to offer 'proper' wages meant that working in the printshops was in principle more accessible a) to those who had neither the qualifications or cultural capital to pick up adequately paid part-time work to subsidise involvement and/or b) to those not participating in the 'squatting and claiming' lifestyle of the alternative left (Intv. Robinson 1/11/11, Intv. Bruce 25/8/11, Landry et al. 1985). Fabian for example compared the marginal existence of working at the service printers Little A to getting a regular and reasonable wage at Union Place, "I thought this is alright, I thought, I'll stay here" (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11).

Funding for wages moved once voluntary activity into a defined 'job' within a growing Community Arts sub-sector of community printshop workers. Whether this was an adequately paid job seems to have varied according to funding bodies. The wages funded by the Arts Council at Lenthall Road Workshop and Community Press in the late 1970s for example were significantly below the average wage and not much more than social security payments (LRW Annual Report 1975-1978, Arts Council Annual Reports 1977-79). GLC and local authority funding of the 1980s on the other hand allowed for significantly higher remuneration, in some cases even higher than the national average. The GLC in particular advised grant applicants that they should be paying themselves fair wages. For example, in their first application for GLC grant, See Red Women's Workshop asked for a modest £4,000 per annum (gross), to which the GLC recommended increasing by £2,000 in line with a national average and commensurate with the type of work (GLC/WSU Archives 1982-1986). In 1984 when Union Place were fully funded by Lambeth Council, their job adverts offered a salary of well over £7,000 per annum, a very 'decent' wage for the time. The contrast with nearby Fly Press – set up by an ex Union Place member partly through the desire to be free from grant applications (Intv. Williams 21/9/11) – is notable; their wages at the time were about half this (Fly Press LCEB Loan application 1984).

Spending on technology

The community printshops, especially the self-help variety, as we have seen were built on the notion of accessible technologies. It was what made 'self-help' or democratic participation in the means of representation possible. The basicness of the technologies, and it was screen-printing that could only really stand up to this claim, was important. More sophisticated and therefore more expensive equipment was also less easy to fix without specialist help, and possibly even inappropriate to the task. Furthermore, endless use by novices takes it toll on mechanical equipment; the less parts the less damage. Lenthall Road Workshop essentially used the same printing equipment that had been set up by their predecessor in the early 1970s until they closed in the early 1990s. There were additions obtained by grant aid, some necessary print darkroom equipment in the late 1970s, but otherwise additions seemed to have opportunistic as much as anything else. LRW's lack of

interest in 'improving' their printing equipment as they continued however was perhaps not just the nature of the work, but also a particular attitude to technology; "It wasn't a priority for us… there was something quite nice about having equipment that you just made work, it broke you fixed it, you tied something to it, you taped it." (Intv. Kahumbu 15/9/11).

The situation at Paddington Printshop was rather different, founder member and mainstay John Phillips, was a skilled printer who had even invented a system for community screen printers that was taken up by various workshops across the country (Kenna et al. 1986). Grants were used to help create a well-equipped workshop, along with his own practical innovations (Phillips 2005). The suggestion here might be that it was a gendered issue, and that might play some role in terms of confidence and interest in technology. However once grant aided, the women of See Red soon took serious advantage of what was on offer to reequip at a more sophisticated level and 'up their game'. "There was a woman at the GLC women's committee who really liked us. We got a new table, backlit jet wash, huge exposure unit… everything" (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11). Partly they did so due to the external pressure they felt as a poster workshop, rather than a community printshop, to be producing at a different quality, a factor mentioned in Chapter 4. As the 1980s progressed the 'crunchier' aesthetics of the 1970s did not align to the sharper visual language of opposition in the unfolding decade; nothing looks so dated as the recent past! Also the frustrations of working with old and knackered equipment were perhaps more felt by See Red than LRW as they spent more of their time producing work for sale, either the workshops own posters or bits of service work. It is the distinction between product and process orientations of their printing activity, which although put too crudely in terms of the community arts critique of the time (see Kelly 1984), there is a distinction in terms of balancing priorities and making decisions about technology. See Red equipment grants were also, like LRW's more modest proposal, opportunistic. They knew the resource of the GLC grants was not going to last and so made the most of it to try and set up as best they could for future survival 'in the market' (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11).

Changing technologies
The printing technology commonly associated with the 1970s is the photocopier; accessible, cheap and indelibly linked with the DIY zines of punk culture. In fact affordable machines that could be bought rather than expensively leased only really appeared in the very late 1970s. Those used by the growing instant printshops and large institutions and businesses had been prohibitively expensive to actually acquire. Despite the arrival of the new cheaper ones – aimed at individual and small business use and running at about the tenth of the speed of the high end models – small offset litho for any reasonable number was still often the cheaper and more flexible option. It could also *do* more, such as reproduce photographs with tonal values, use more than one colour *and* make colours fit together. These were not

matters of particular concern to punk zinesters and 'Copy Artists' who creatively exploited the limitations of cheap photocopying. Furthermore it was not initially an obvious alternative to the screen-printed poster, with its colour and size limits on all but the most expensive models. As such, there was no rush of funding applications for copiers from the community printshops to replace their existing processes. Union Place procured one, although without grant aid, but mostly this was to "bring people in off the street", with the lure of free photocopying of their benefit or rent books (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11). The exception was the specialist Community CopyArt set up by artists in the late 1970s, who in the early 1980s got GLC grants for more copiers (and wages) to encourage the creative use of photocopiers for propagandist purposes.

The rise of the photocopier during the 1980s, through better machines, greater and cheaper access in local copy shops and small organisations buying or leasing their own, was however felt by several of those in the community printshops to begin to diminish their own role: "you suddenly think hold on why are we sweating our guts out and exposing yourself to all these chemicals for no reason when people can [photocopy]," (Intv. Tompsett 14/9/11). For Marie at another community printshop, "I noticed more people were getting things photocopied… it was incredible to have instant images in that way… not have all this laborious process… I think the photocopying revolution was the beginning of the end" (Intv. Murray 18/9/11). The lack of significant uptake is understandable for other more defining reasons too. For community printshops that believed in the idea of 'empowerment' and/or enjoyed 'skills sharing' and the 'demystification' of knowledge, the photocopier as a black-boxed technology that required no skill to operate and that was becoming widely and cheaply available elsewhere, would have offered little towards their aims or interests.

By the late 1980s it was desktop publishing technologies – presciently described by the community printshop advocate Jonathan Zeitlyn (1992) as the 'commercialisation of DIY' – that might have been the obvious equipment for grant aided printshops to purchase. The rise of DTP omitted the need for other pre-press equipment and processes. As Fabian (Intv. 14/9/11) recalled "we spent £4,000 [of grant money] on a process camera and within two years it was worth £250 because Macs came in… and then we got the Macs in, that became the main thing". Union Place had been able to get sufficient grants from Lambeth Council to do this, however this was very much under the auspices of training for employment, as mentioned in Chapter 4.

Grant aid: experience and ambivalence
The availability of grants that would either partly or almost entirely finance the community printshops, and in some cases poster workshops, not least by paying wages was clearly

what enabled continuation and very occasionally, for example, Lenthall Road Workshop, instigation. It has also been recognised within the field of community arts that it was funding that created the expansion of this kind of activity more generally (Kenna et al. 1986, Phillips 2005). However it has been simultaneously recognised that with funding comes a certain loss of autonomy, potential goal displacement and dependency (Kelly 1984, Bilton 1997). We have already seen in the previous chapter how the tasks of accounting, application writing and administrative follow up for grant aid led to a certain division of labour within printshops, undermining the ideal of holistic job roles, or the 'balanced job complex'.

Fitting the criteria

One of the self-evident challenges for being grant aided is showing that the organisation's aims and activities 'fit the criteria'; criteria that vary between funding bodies and their departments and which can also vary from year to year. The GLC for example had different annual themes (Peace Year, Anti-Racist Year, Jobs Year), against which funding applications were checked for fit (Sofer 1987). The rather woolly conception of community arts at the Arts Council, aided by the Baldry Report, had allowed for a disparate range of practices and aims, and other than appearing to support a significant new field of creative practice, with a nod to democratic accountability, arguably there was little that could be directly instrumental about the Arts Council funding of the activity. This was less likely to be so in the case of the Regional Arts Authorities to whom the funding was devolved to; each had their own interpretation of 'community art' and local agendas to pursue. The non-arts funding bodies such as the Urban Programme and local authorities had specific funding rationales that related to their own responsibilities for social provision, un/employment and training needs, welfare and so on (Kelly 1984, Bilton 1997). This meant proving the necessary criteria fit could be increasingly complex. Joy from Lenthall Road Workshop recalled, "We used to have a set, 'this is what we do, this is why we do it, this is why you need to give us money' and one of the things that [became] really, really difficult to get money into the organisation, to keep it going, was you had to bend yourself inside out to fit the criteria of whoever was offering the money" (Intv. Kahumbu 15/9/11). The typical approach to 'being funded' was often that of pragmatic cynicism. There was the language used and priorities outlined on the application form to get the money and then there was what the aims and activities actually were, in other words, there was usually an understood distinction between the two. However increasingly specific criteria, along with a drift in illusio, or a less coherent set of ideals, could lead to a sense that the criteria itself was determining the activity (Intv. Murray 18/9/11). To take but one example of this, adjacent to their self-help printing LRW had for many years produced their own feminist posters, but this did not meet the funding criteria, which in itself may not have been an issue, but increasingly prescriptive demands to carry out and evidence that which did, left little time for this more self-determined activity (Intv. Kahumbu 15/9/11).

One of the increasingly common criteria for funding, especially by non-arts organisations, was that a printshop provided 'training'. Part of the community printshops' self identity had been that of 'self-help' and skill-sharing but this was never really conceived as 'training', a concept that disassociates the process from the product, as well as the notion of social empowerment through involvement in collective media/creative production. Poster workshops too, frequently showed groups and individuals how to print, but this was not conceived in terms of employment needs. The demand for 'training' however related to the economic and employment related objectives of funders, including to an extent those of the GLC. The GLC's explicit challenge to the Thatcher administration and support for others that were doing so, meant that there was often a general, albeit conditional, sympathy towards them and a reasonable affiliation of (temporary) objectives. However at the level of funding criteria, as Yael from See Red recalled, "although we were pretty much in line with the GLC, there were things that were not necessarily what we primarily wanted to do, like the training of young women, but it was valid and training and development was one of the boxes, so we felt to a degree [saying] that was going to tick boxes…" (Intv. Hodder 8/4/11). In See Red's case it was not so much that the funding criteria came to determine what they did, but this was less to do with a clear agenda of their own and more to do with the other challenge of being funded; dealing with the bureaucracy.

Bureaucracy

Funding from the municipal left authorities was often coupled with deep frustration with its administrative processes. While those that sat on the new grant-giving committees were mostly 'modern', politically sympathetic peers, the legal and financial departments were sedimentations of previous eras. It was not only this but in order to ensure legality, each application had to be scrutinised in a way it rarely (if ever) was at committee. Anne Sofer (1987), a lone SDP member on the Women's Committee at the GLC, described the process of grant awarding at the GLC generally as one where papers were never given in advance, where certain 'right on' trigger words indicated immediate approval and in which decisions were made in seconds from a quick scan. However from there on in, it became complex. The GLC committee archives for example show that numerous memos went back and forth from the legal department asking members to ensure that women's organisations were not in breach of the Sex Discrimination Act, that black groups were not in breach of the Race Relations Act, that applications were often lost in the machinery, that groups were subjected to delays of several months in receiving funds, that groups had to legally change their constitution to make sure the funding could be properly awarded under Section 137.[58] See

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58 Explained earlier in the chapter Section 137 was the legislation that allowed councils to spend up to 2% of their income from rates (the local tax paid by residents to the council) on 'matters of local benefit'.

Red Women's Workshop was subject to most of this, Lenthall Road Workshop, Community Press and Union Place to some of it. 'Waiting for the grant' became a common malaise, and particularly chronic if from a single source and the focus on this a more significant distraction than meeting the criteria. It was in the waiting that the dependency was most evident; "We would be sitting around going what are we going to do... so often the work we were doing was trying to get the grant, that's so, so sad!" (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11)

Paid to be 'radical'?
While funding for wages potentially provided the important stability of income for workers, not only was this supposed stability subject to its reverse it also raised a few other issues. As Rebecca from LRW put it "it was quite tough always having to apply for your own job every year" and not knowing whether you would meet the criteria this time contributed to the sense of insecurity (Intv. Wilson 31/7/11). It was not just this insecurity but also the fact that grant payments as indicated above might be subject to delays, the implications of which for wages are obvious. This could sometimes make for a personal economic existence more precarious than that of being unemployed where at least benefits might cover the very basics. The other issue that the funded wage brought was as suggested earlier, the conversion of an ostensibly socially or politically motivated activity into 'a job'. Carol Kenna raised the issue in her reflections on funding in the exhibition catalogue, *Printing is Easy: Community Printshops: 1970-1986*; "let me pose some questions I think need answers… Does paying a regular wage increasing hopefully in line with inflation at least, mean that community artists have 'sold out'; must we starve to be radical; is it wrong to want to live by our skills?" (in Kenna et al 1986: 15). Kenna's questions could be asked of earning wages via grants or self-generated income of course, however the point here is the only way that wages were possible for these kinds of printshops *was* through grants. The view (from the Community arts 'lobby') was that because what was being done was socially relevant that it should be funded by the state in one way or another, and that those involved should be paid reasonable wages. In turn however this meant that they were all effectively employees of whatever state agency funded them (see Kelly 1984).

Some worried that the funded wage could become the overriding reason for participation and about what this meant for individual printshops and the political culture that produced them. For example, after several years of voluntary involvement, the new prospect of funded wages at See Red had created a split in the collective with insistence from newer members that these paid jobs should go to black and working class women and not necessarily those that had worked there for years without pay. However for Anne, although these arguments were important they missed the point about "that real passionate commitment to political ideals, which is what this kind of thing [See Red] is about" (Intv. Robinson 1/11/11). Brenda from Onlywomen Press, raised similar issues about the general impact of funding for wages

"I thought the rise of the GLC and all those jobs…it was part of the liberalisation of the women's movement, that once it becomes a job, you care more about keeping your job than being radical, I saw that happen to lots of women (Intv. Whisker 9/5/11). Jonathan from PFC discussed this in relation to the wider radical movement,

> I didn't like what funding was doing, it changed the culture and it became what some people did [for a living] and it lost all…I also didn't like the way that there were workshops that were seen as community workshops who got funded and political workshops who didn't. At the time I thought that there was some sort of control happening (Intv. Miles 20/9/11).

On-going funding could, it appears, also induce a sort of lethargy, especially when the sense of shared 'higher' aims for the activity had waned. This was most remarked upon by later members of Union Place. Fabian for example related it to individuals within the press, "Some people because you are getting wage anyway… were very uninvolved and didn't see it as an opportunity. I don't think it particularly helped them". He had experience of working at unfunded movement service presses such as Rye Express and Little A, where money was a constant worry, "So that wasn't there and some people didn't appreciate not having that pressure" (Intv. Tompsett 9/9/11). For Chris the issue at Union Place, while he was there in the early 1980s, was more generic,

> There was a problem of grant funding there, you could be quite relaxed about a lot of things, I think it is the nature of grant funding, you develop a grant-funded mentality. In a sense the good times were in getting the grant. And this is probably why I left, I kind of foresaw we wouldn't be funded forever. I saw that grant as a springboard for what we wanted to do… become in today's terminology, 'sustainable', but there wasn't any feeling of that (Intv. Todd 30/9/11).

Interviewees from the movement service printers, spoke of new members who had 'GLC' attitudes to jobs, meaning unrealistic expectations about conditions and rather echoing Fabian and Chris's points, little grasp of the realities of surviving without grants (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12, Intv. Gard 31/8/12, Intv. May 29/9/11)

Allegiance by default?
Along with other movement organisations, printshops funded via local Labour authorities, including Union Place and See Red, were offered up by right wing media and politicians as evidence of the profligacy of municipal socialist spending or 'ideology on the rates'. In parliament, local Tory MPs repeatedly raised the issue of Lambeth Council's support for Union Place. The following from MP William Shelton is indicative:

> I am talking, as I said, about gross inefficiency – Marxism in action. I am talking about the Lambeth loonies who are running the council… We have dances and carnivals on the rates. We have grants to fringe Left-wing groups. The Union Place Resource Centre continues unabated – its march – led, no doubt, by the 'Under Fives Against Fascism' and 'Rock Against Thatcher' groups (*HC Deb 02 May 1980 vol 983 cc1771-836).*

This type of ranting by Conservative politicians, further fuelled by right wing tabloids, intensified when Ken Livingstone took over the GLC which rapidly became depicted by both as Marxist, undemocratic, unpatriotic, providing only for various "categories of undeserving 'other'" (see Curran et al. 2005). However the actual effect on those groups highlighted is difficult to ascertain.

It is perhaps more that the attacks on the councils and the organisations they funded created a mutual political and symbolic association, which had hitherto been absent, antagonistic even. The diversified field of the alternative left was perceived by municipal socialism as an articulation in the offing, the proto components of a contemporary labour movement (Hain 1980). But parts of the diminishing alternative left were ambivalent about both the association and the chief cause of it on their part, the funding. For some people it had created a situation that led to 'professionalisation' and the subsequent watering down of radical ideas, *"*You could either see it as a liberalisation process or you could see it as part of a success that we were assimilated" (Intv. Whisker 9/5/11). For others it was almost a conspiracy, "I always think the fight stopped because of the funding. It was fantastic the way it happened. All of a sudden we all got funding… and you've got all this and then you take the funding away and everything is disbanded. Its very clever actually I'm hoping that wasn't the big plan but its what happened" (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11).

Shrinking of grant aid
The disbanding of the GLC and the Metropolitan County Councils (1986), along with a crack down on local authority budgets and spending closed down the funding opportunities that had arisen during the 1980s for the community printshops and poster workshops. There were other, albeit greatly reduced, funding possibilities beyond the late 1980s and early 1990s through Regional Arts Associations and new types of urban regeneration funding, however the focus was on meeting local employment and training needs (Matarasso 2013). The impact of this loss of funding opportunities was the closure of the types of printshop referred to in this section. The only printshop that attempted to survive after the loss of full funding and adopt a 'commercial' model seems to have been See Red Women's Workshop. After end of their grant aid in 1986, they tried to sustain the workshop and generate a wage from service printing. They even made up a separate trading name to attract service customers that might be put off by the words 'red', 'women' and 'workshop', The Printing Palace, but they could not get enough work and after four years admitted defeat and closed. Islington Community Press who had recieved a partial maintainance grant, had for some years been generating a reasonable amount of its income through sales. After losing the grant, despite concerted attempts to make up the much needed difference through sales, they failed. Although the press shut down in 1987, the workers and equipment joined the

service printers Trojan, who fitted clearly into the 'commercial' model of resourcing, the subject of the next section of the chapter.

6.3. 'Commercial'/market model

One of the aims of most movement service printers, at least by the late 1970s and early 1980s was to provide their workers with a reasonable wage. As ostensibly 'commercial' entities, they were not eligible for the kinds of grant finance described above. In many cases they were also suspicious of this type of support, seeing it early on as vulnerable to agendas not of their own making and detrimental to self-determination (Intv. Williams 21/9/11, Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). The self-sustaining path to paying wages was usually seen to be through investment in better equipment, which given their own lack of capital, required loans. As we saw earlier borrowing money from external sources was difficult and beyond internal resourcing, there were few options in the 1970s. Limited sums could be obtained from the independent co-operative movement, which a few printshops secured. Or there was the possibility of getting an expensive loan from an asset finance company, an option in fact taken up by several printshops over time. In the early 1980s a surge of interest in worker co-ops provided a new financial 'resource opportunity', for some printshops at least. During this period co-operatives began to be heralded by new left Labour councils as having economic potential with socialist credentials and therefore deserving of support. A range of loans (primarily), grants and premises opportunities became available to the movement service printshops that resided with the catchment of the new left Labour councils. The London-centric nature of this research means this was many of those included in the study.

Regarding the issue of premises for the movement service printers, the same initial spatial context as previously discussed applies, in that cheap but decrepit premises were available as an effect of wider structural processes. The above-mentioned left Labour interest of the 1980s also created some new prospects. On the other hand the changing urban context also meant the diminishment of spatial opportunity, or at least that which had enabled them to initially 'set up shop'.

This third section of the chapter contains the same elements of explanation and discussion as the preceding sections: space, sources of finance, wages and technology. These aspects of resourcing are more complexly entwined in various instances however and the structure partly reflects that. Firstly as with the other sections, the subject is space or premises, then however the issue of wages for the movement service printers is raised in more detail. After this are explanations regarding sources of finances and the contexts of their availability. This is followed by the challenges and implications of obtaining 'improved' technology, the

perceived route to financial stability – and wages. Some of this connects back to issues raised in the previous chapter regarding the role of technology in organisational practices.

Space: cheap rents

Unlike the community printshops, the service printshops had no need to be located in a *particular* area as their users were drawn more widely, although it was still preferable to be relatively 'central' both for those working there and their customers. The solutions found to cheap space were fairly heterogeneous, although still mostly contingent on the context of 'urban decline' described above. However, with the exception of those that had evolved from community printshops, or at least developed a hybrid self-help community/service printshop model – such as Community Press and Tyneside Free Press Workshop – the dilapidated, council-owned property at 'peppercorn' rent featured less. This is possibly because the movement service printers were established later in the 1970s by which time these sorts of direct opportunities were lessening as councils paid more attention to managing their empty properties (Kearns 1979). On occasion these moves enabled space for printshops however. Fly Press for example spent its ten years life in sub-rented council property that was on temporary lease with Lambeth Self Help Housing (Intv. Williams 21/9/11). The building was shared with other co-ops (wholefood delivery, typesetting and building) along with Lambeth Self Help and various campaigning groups. It was a comparable arrangement to that of Community Press in Islington. Blackrose also found sub-rented premises in a disused council warehouse in Clerkenwell, once a thriving area of employment, hit by the evacuation of its major employers. The building was leased by an entrepreneurial group called Urban Small Space (USS) with the aim of providing affordable workshops for new small enterprises (Towers 1995). Fellow inhabitants included other radical organisations such as *Spare Rib* magazine and Cinema of Women and conventional small business. Little A got cheap space in one of the many redundant dockside warehouses in east London. With the final decline of the docks the warehouse owners had begun renting floors out to small enterprises and artists to stop them being vandalised while redevelopment plans were in the offing (ACME 2008). The spaces were usually filthy and impossible to heat, but cheap. As for the other types of printshops, these affordable premises frequently required endless hours of free labour to make them serviceable. For example, Phil's description of Blackrose's Clerkenwell workshop; "Very cheap the first few years because we put in all the services and built the walls… It was completely done on a shoestring. We had it on a monthly license, which gave it an air of fragility" (Intv. Green 2/8/11).

In the early 1980s some new opportunities for *decent* affordable premises for service printers had come about, in London and Sheffield at least, with new municipal socialist support. Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op for example was able to move into a disused cutlery factory (closed because of the decline of the steel industry) acquired by the council's

new worker co-op supporting Department of Economic and Employment Development (and leased from them by Yorkshire Art Space). In London, after survival in various "ghastly" places, Trojan Press became a beneficiary of a similarly supported and extensive co-op development project in Hackney[59], "a spanking new place that had been designed and we'd had input" (Intv. Swash 22/9/11). Lasso a new design and typesetting co-op actually started in decent premises; the London New Technology Centre, a GLC initiative with subsided rents, and a cheap crèche. These premises potentially came with some of their own precarity, given they had arisen through local and contentious political agendas. Lasso for example had but three years in their subsidised municipal socialist space. They were evicted following the 1986 abolition of the GLC. Other premises beneficiaries were luckier, either closing before such eventualities in the case of Women in Print or Trojan or getting a more substantial period of residency, as with SWPC who were secure for well over a decade, and eventually displaced for different reasons as we will see.

Given the inner city locations of the printshops, it is inevitable that subsequent processes of regeneration and gentrification would eventually affect some of them. This came quickly for Little A, as their location in London's 'Docklands' became a prime target for extensive and violent commercial redevelopment under the Thatcher government. In 1984 a mysterious weekend fire in the roof left the premises and equipment wrecked, and the press finished. Similar fires had happened in other docklands warehouses, with same effect, and the general suspicion was of was 'dirty tricks' by the developers who had since bought up the area (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11, Intv Tompsett 14/9/11). It is of course a claim that cannot be verified but it was certainly a convenient coincidence. The combined effects of creeping gentrification and the pressures on municipal socialist councils in the late 1980s, led to Fly Press (and their co-building inhabitants) losing their Brixton premises when council took them back from Lambeth Self Help and sold them off to a private developer (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11). They were unable to find a viable alterative, the kinds of spatial opportunities once available for low finance operations having closed up.

Otherwise the disruptive effects of urban regeneration and/or gentrification were mostly reserved for the (very) few printshops that stayed the 1990s. After nearly a decade in their cramped Clerkenwell premises (1977-1986), not far from Blackrose, Calvert's Press for example had moved to more spacious (and expensive) premises under a rag trade sweatshop in a still run-down part of east London (Shoreditch). It was not until the end of the 1990s that rapidly increasing gentrification priced them out of the area. Around the same time SWPC's fifteen year tenure in their council owned premises, came to end with

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59 Bradbury Street leased by Hackney Co-operative Developments from the council and developed with £300,000 from Inner City Partnerships. It opened in 1983 with 18 co-ops moving in, including Trojan (Stott 1985)

regeneration plans for the 'Sheffield Cultural Quarter' into which now incomprehensible entities such as a 'printing co-op' did not fit (Intv. Osborn 2/10/11); they moved to a small unit on an industrial estate and into their demise. For the most part however the service printers had mainly disappeared before the intensification of the urban revival[60] and the social and economic restructuring that unfurled. In general, during the main period of their existence, and certainly when most of them began in the late 1970s, affordable space in a reasonably central area, or that of their relative convenience, was available. It usually came with some hard labour and underlying precarity, yet arguably these were conditions participants were acculturated to, through the wider situations of living and 'getting things going'. In a sense this was simply part of the general risk of the endeavour.

Getting paid

Generating enough return on sales to enable reasonable wages whilst still providing a 'cost effective' service to the left, the twin aims of most 'commercial' or movement service printshops, contained an inherent tension, described here by Jacqui from Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op,

> We got paid, just about! We certainly talked about wages… we'd get into the 'we need to do more work' to up the wages, but then you need more people to do the work, so you need more wages, so you need to charge more. And *that's* where it became difficult because of the clients… it's like, what is the market rate, and what rate can we get away with... In that sense people did it for the love of it. But we earned some money (Intv. Devreaux 2/10/11)

As to be expected there were also different attitudes between and within the service printshops about how important an aim 'reasonable' as opposed to subsistence wages were. Calvert's for example began with the commitment that if after six months they could not pay everyone they would "call it a day" and aspired to at least the minimum union rate (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). While they achieved more than subsistence, the pay was still low and as Phillip recalled for the first several years "there was a big element of self-exploitation and certainly times when I worked for nothing… people without that conviction weren't interested in this because the wages and conditions were not good" (Intv. Gard 29/6/12). Calverts were very conscious that the pay was low and that they *should* be trying to pay themselves a decent wage (Calvert's Minutes 1977-1989). At Fly Press on the other hand subsistence wages were deemed acceptable until newer members in the early 1980s began to challenge this. As Richard recalled, the remaining founder member of the press at this time "certainly thought that wages should be low, that it wasn't right to take a lot out, the press was there to service the left cost effectively and that the collective shouldn't take much out, you should be putting back in". Richard had in fact moved from a private rented flat into an income-sharing

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60 They, like the other 'alternative' outsiders that moved into run down areas of inner cities might be cast as 'pioneers' that helped pave the way for what was to come – although they cannot be blamed for Docklands!

housing co-op collective so he could afford to work at the press, but in a sense this was part of the adventure (Intv. Swingler 1/9/11). Chrissy on the other hand joined the press as a single parent, the only person in the collective with dependents, and felt strongly that "that we should not exploit ourselves, that we were not there to get rich but that we should be able to meet our needs through our earnings" (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11). Having dependents, years of working for little money, long investment in the press, were all factors that contributed towards more concern about wage levels, also expressed here by Ali from Blackrose, "those of us that had been there a long time or had children by then, didn't want to be constantly subsidising the work with our wages," (Intv. Ball 24/8/11).

The problem of achieving better wages was partly that raised above by Jacqui from SWPC; the limit on what they could, or wanted to, charge their typically under resourced customers. In order to make a greater return on printing they needed to take on work that could subside the low-cost political and community work. To do this they needed to be able to produce more efficiently – better quality, faster, with less mistakes and wastage – yet their equipment was not up to it, and they did not have the capital, and were not viable for bank loans, to replace it. They also had to get that work. Producing more 'efficiently' also related to skill, however to attract greater skill levels into the printshops, possibly from outside the milieu, required offering better wages (Intv. Gard 29/6/12, Intv. Ball 24/8/11). These were the conclusions that many of the service printshops eventually came to, the second usually a little later and not by all. The first move towards a strategy for improved wages was invariably trying to get a loan for better equipment. Before going on to discuss the sources of external finance that were available for this to the movement service printers, or became so, one other temporary solution to the problem of wages, taken up by a few printshops needs to be mentioned.

Direct funding for wages: Manpower Services Commission (MSC)
In the last section on the material circumstances and opportunities of the grant aided printshops, we saw that some made use of the wages grants available from the government employment services agency, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC). A few printshops at the more marginal end of the commercial model also made pragmatic use of these schemes. For example, Moss Side Women's Community Press had a significant boost in 1977 with funding for five jobs at one time albeit only for the one year, Women in Print were able to get funding for two positions for a few years in the early 1980s, while Trojan Press even made use MSC's Youth Opportunities funding when they were starting up (Intv. Swash 22/9/11). The condition that participants had to have been unemployed beforehand was not usually a problem, given the constituency of printshop membership. Sometimes printshop members would take it in turns to be unemployed, so the funding could be maintained. In very low finance operations what was acquired would be equalised amongst the collective,

or in other situations or better times, topped up (Intv. Mair 14/4/11, Intv. Booth 20/4/11, Intv. Lyser 15/5/11). However the fact the funding was only ever for a years 'training' at maximum was limiting if the only source of paying wages for members who were staying longer than this, which in the main they did.

MSC schemes also began to be publically criticised as unemployment distraction tactics that did little to address the real problems (Benn & Fairly 1986, Evans 2002). A judgement the alternative left, while sometimes making instrumental use of the schemes for their own ends, simultaneously shared. These wider attacks lead to criteria for employers uptake becoming more stringent, with youth – whose unemployment figures especially needed massaging – and 'benefit to the community' projects being privileged. The latter the community printshops could claim, the service printers less so.

In 1983, the first year of Margaret Thatcher's second term, a new MSC programme was introduced to promote entrepreneurialism and 'self-reliance' amongst the jobless. The first of its kind, the Enterprise Allowance Scheme (EAS) provided assistance for unemployed people to set up their own small business, in the form of a £40pw allowance for a year. This scheme, central as it was to the type of economic culture and values the government wanted to encourage, outlived the MSC and money was pumped into it (Corner & Harvey 1991). After they lost their GLC funding and became essentially a service printer, See Red Women's Workshop, along with Women in Print 'went on the EAS' to get something towards wages (Intv. Bruce 25/8/11, Intv. Lyser 16/5/11).

Sources of external finance

Commercial loans

One option for external finance was commercial lending or hire purchase. While banks were unsympathetic even the Co-operative Bank (until later), commercial 'asset finance' companies were less fussy, but with a cost of high interest rates and personal guarantees for security. Taking on such a loan meant dealing explicitly with the capitalist world of hard exploitative finance. Personal guarantees meant named printshop individuals had to guarantee their own private assets as collateral. It meant collectively committing to generating more income and having faith that this was possible, it raised issues of commitment and trust, and it all meant risk of a new kind (Intv. Green 2/8/11). Having discussions that the wages could be better is one thing, but committing to a large high interest debt from a company that only cared whether it was paid and would show little mercy for defaulting was a serious undertaking. Despite this, for lack of other options, many of the service presses took out this kind of loan to finance equipment purchase. Blackrose, Calverts, Aberdeen People's Press, Aldgate Press, Spider Web and Trojan Press all used this type of finance at various points.

Co-operative movement: ICOF

In the 1970s, the one *sympathetic* external source of finance came from the worker co-operative movement. This was ICOF (Industrial Common Ownership Fund), a revolving loan trust for co-ops, set up in 1973 with funds from the Quaker movement and individual co-op movement supporters. ICOF loans required no personal security and were at very low interest rates. In 1976 under the provisions of the new Industrial Common Ownership (ICO) Act , the fund received a quarter of million pounds from the Labour government significantly increasingly the available pool, although in relative terms it was still quite small. The ICO Act gave legal recognition to common ownership cooperative structures and in the same year ICOM, the group that had lobbied for its introduction created a set of 'model rules' to make it easier for worker co-ops to register as businesses. These moves belie a more generally ambivalent attitude towards co-ops from Labour though, about which more will be said shortly. By 1981, ICOF had issued about fifty loans (Stott 1985) including to Aberdeen People's Press, Blackrose and Calvert's Press, who got these before contending with commercial loan companies. Although relatively small the loans were far more than they could raise otherwise. Calvert's for example, "we were very much helped by getting an ICOF loan which we never have got from anyone commercial, it enabled us to buy a decent press" (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). However under the Banking Act of 1979, brought in under Thatcher (her 'first act'), ICOF's lending polices were considered un-commercial and imprudent, and it was unable to get the now required deposit-taking license from the Bank of England (Jeffris & Mason 1990). It was not until later in the 1980s that ICOF became significant again when they forged links with municipal Labour driven support structures for co-ops.

Municipal socialist support for co-ops

New and far more substantial financial support for worker co-operatives emerged in the wake of the 1981 local elections in which a number of left Labour groups had gained local authority power. This was significant not just in terms of the money made available – several millions – but, as with the community printshops and poster workshops, for the new interactions between the field of institutional politics and the alternative left field of the printshops. While support for the other kinds of printshops related to the cultural policies of municipal socialism, that for the movement service printshops related to new left Labour economic policies. As indicated above, although two minor pieces of legislation under the Labour government had recognized worker co-ops, and injected some cash into the ICOF fund, historically the attitude of the British left towards co-ops was ambivalent to say the least. The Labour Party constitution that declared the aim "To secure for the workers… the most equitable distribution… upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange"[61] tended to be interpreted as state ownership with

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61 This is Clause IV of the 1918 Labour party constitution and its key socialist content. It was removed by Tony Blair in 1995.

unions at the negotiating table, rather than actual worker ownership. For the revolutionary left, worker co-ops were a petit bourgeois distraction from the real struggle between labour and capital. For trade unionists they similarly muddied the waters, and were a recipe for needless self-exploitation.[62] While the introduction of the ICO Act of 1976 and the CDA Act of 1978 under Labour indicated some nominal change of position, what had gained more substantial attention from segments of the Labour party were various larger scale experiments in industrial democracy during the 1970s in the wake of unionised factory closures and redundancies. These connected the more traditional constituency of the labour movement to the possibility of workers control (Cornforth et al. 1988, Wainwright & Elliot 1982) in a way that the activities of a few alternative type non-aligned leftists setting up wholefood and printing co-operatives did not, but it made the connection. These relatively brief factory experiments and the causes of their failures[63], informed the economic and industrial aspirations of the left Labour groups that shaped the municipal socialism of the 1980s.[64] This new recognition was of great interest to many of the service printers. Tony from Trojan Press for example described their particular elation,

> I remember going to a very early meeting after Ken [Livingstone] took over the GLC, and coming back and being immensely excited, because it felt like suddenly, this revolutionary socialist was in power, and they were talking about workers co-ops, and we were a workers co-op, and they had money, and we were like 'wooh!' (Intv. Swash 22/9/11)

In 1982, the Greater London Council set up GLEB, (Greater London Enterprise Board) to carry out the economic policies for London laid out in the 1981 GLC Labour manifesto. West Midlands County Council, Sheffield and Leeds also launched similar 'socialist' local economic strategies, including support for co-operatives.[65] Local economic strategies were a chance to position Labour as practically committed to issues of employment; not just saving and creating jobs but also addressing working conditions *and* the democracy of work. GLEB for example stated that it was committed to "the encouragement of new forms of industrial ownership and control and increasing workplace participation in the planning and development of individual enterprises" (GLEB cited in Stott 1985: 349). The growing contemporary literature on worker co-ops, itself indicative of the new interest, repeatedly

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62 There is not space here to reiterate the British history of the relationship between worker co-operative and working class movements and parties (see Mellor et al. 1988 for an introductory unravelling)

63 See *State Intervention in Industry: A Workers Enquiry* (1980)

64 Even the Labour leadership pledged support for worker co-operatives in its 1983 election manifesto; the manifesto later described as 'the longest suicide note in history' by one of Labour's Gerald Kaufman, a phrase that stuck as evidence of Labour's radical un-electability during this period.

65 Attention to the local economy also grew out of the analysis of radical community development of the 1970s, which had concluded that the focus on welfare and 'participation' in poor areas obscured underlying issues of capitalist restructuring, the local economy and employment (Benington 1986, Cockburn 1977).

pointed out the problems for co-ops of access to capital. The local authorities could provide this, and it was to be the key plank of their co-op support strategy. As with grant funding to the community printshops and poster workshops, the councils used their powers under Section 137 of the 1972 Local Authority Act (2p in the pound of their income from rates permitted for spending on matters of local benefit). They offered workers co-ops 'soft loans', direct investment, support organisations (Co-op Development Agencies), training courses, premises deals and so on. Several printshops tapped into the new range of 'municipal socialist' support, especially the loans but also help with premises, and occasionally grants. Beneficiaries included Trojan Press, Fly Press, Lithosphere, Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op, Lasso, Range Left and Women in Print.

Printing, as one of London's significant existing trades, and in general trouble, was of particular interest to the Greater London Enterprise Board (GLEB), as were the printing co-operatives as an already existing sub-sector serving causes GLC/GLEB supported and that practiced 'industrial democracy' albeit on a micro level (GLEB 1984). To help guide their input, in 1983 GLEB commissioned two ex (and founder) members of the movement service printers Spider Web Offset, Ken Harrison and Frank Elston to write a report on London's printing co-ops. Combining Harrison and Elston's recommendations along with their own objectives GLEB funding for printing co-ops required that, a) it related to expansion, b) aimed at getting into new markets, c) the co-op showed profitability within two years, d) agreement by the co-op to be 'monitored' either directly by an appointed 'project worker' from GLEB/LCEB or via a local Co-operative Advisory Service. Applications had to include a report on the current issues, markets, membership and working practices, an analysis of the issues and a business plan addressing the above. In line with GLC policy GLEB also required that applicants show they were addressing issues of equal opportunities (Mackintosh & Wainwright 1987). It was far more involved than an application to an asset finance company. A municipal left co-op loan, was also still a 'proper' loan. For Fly Press, who had been a small, virtually subsistence level operation and who successfully applied for a loan from the GLEB funded London Co-operative Enterprise Board (established for loans up to £25,000),

> It was a big step, stepping into debt in that way. All the other debt was motivated by the goal of ethical or political or whatever. This was a business transaction even though it was from a co-operative development organisation. We were a bit frightened about whether we would be able to replay it… and we all felt very inadequate in making that kind of financial decision but we went for it… and paid it back (Intv. Thirlaway 23/8/11)

Not all the movement service printers jumped at the new financial opportunities for co-ops. The GLEB/LCEB requirement that applications needed to be related to 'expansion' and 'new markets' as well as the potentially intrusive follow up monitoring, made it variously

unappealing or out of reach.

The period of municipal socialist financial support for co-ops was relatively short lived, due to the disbanding of the GLC and the Metropolitan Councils in 1986. Abolition along with already increasing restraints on municipal socialist council spending through rate-capping and enquiries into allocation of resources under Section 137 (e.g. Widdicome Enquiry 1985) meant the rapid shrinking of these resource opportunities for the movement service printers, as it had done for the grants for community printshops and poster workshops. The latter did have some recourse to the Regional Arts boards however. Some funding for co-op support agencies continued via the European Social Fund or Urban Programme monies, but not towards loan funds. However in some cases where municipal support for co-operatives had established favourable arrangements with the Co-operative bank, such as in Sheffield, relatively 'sympathetic' loans were still possible (Intv. Osborn 2/10/11).

Table 15. Sources of external finance used by movement service printshops

Body		Source of funds	Printshop	Spent on
Manpower Services Commission (MSC)	Grants	Central Government	Moss Side Women's Community Press, Trojan Press, Women in Print	Wages
Commercial loan company	Loans	n/a	Calverts, Blackrose, Aldgate, Spiderweb, Trojan	Equipment
International Common Ownership Fund (ICOF)	Loans	Individuals, co-ops, Central Gov.	Calverts Press, Aberdeen People's Press, Blackrose	Equipment
Local authority enterprise boards and co-operative support	Loans Grants Buildings	Local Gov. (s.137)	Lithosphere (GLEB), Range Left (GLEB), Fly Press (LCEB), Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op (DEED) Lasso (Camden, GLC), Women in Print (Southwark) Trojan (HCD)	Equipment Some premises (Trojan, Lasso, SWPC)
Co-operative bank	Loans	n/a	Fingerprints, Trojan, Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op	Equipment
DEED – Department of Economic and Employment Development (Sheffield) GLEB – Greater London Enterprise Board HCD – Hackney Co-operative Developments LCEB – London Co-operative Enterprise Board				

Improving technology and keeping up

The above table outlines the uptake of the various sources of external finance by some of the movement service printers. The extent of sums acquired varied immensely and partly related to the scale of different printshops, both in terms of members and turnover, but also 'ambition'. At one end were small offset printshops with four or five members, and annual turnovers that might be as low as £22,000 (SWPC in 1982) to those with bigger presses, double the membership and maybe ten times the turnover. Fly Press for example with turnover that had gone up from about £30,000 in 1980 to £85,000 by 1984, had five members, a small offset press and screen printing and applied that year for a loan of £25,000. Lithosphere with ten members, large offset presses and a turnover of more than

£400,000 in 1984 had applied for about £200,000 in loans[66] the year before. Printshops got loans for improved printing presses, prepress and typesetting equipment. Mostly they had started with little real choice about what equipment that they owned, it was what they could afford, what they could scrounge and what was passed on to them. The spectre of substantial loans meant making judgements about good manufactures and models of equipment. There were perceived 'gold standards', such as a Heidelberg printing press, with second hand prices equivalent to a new press of an inferior make. They had to acquire knowledge about what was a good press or piece of equipment for their needs, what would hold value and what were known issues. The informal networks between printshops were useful for trading information, but also they were often learning together (Intv. Green 2/8/11). Getting it wrong could mean a worse financial situation with much higher stakes, or just more of the same but now 'in hock' to a finance company or municipal co-op loan fund; the latter less threatening of course.

Part of the challenge was that printshops did not simply buy better quality versions of their existing equipment. They purchased more sophisticated and/or larger presses to enable them to better cater for wealthier customers such as trade unions, NGOs and arts organisations and their greater and more exacting print demands. Any hope there might have been for getting more profitable work suitable for simpler smaller printing presses was undermined by the development referred to previously; the advances in photocopying technologies along with its increased availability.

Skill became much more important, not just to produce 'better quality' but even the level required to operate the machinery at all. Economic pressure on making new equipment productive limited the extent of internal training. As we saw in the previous chapter the acquisition of more sophisticated technology pushed the moves towards specialisation of job roles, as well towards employing more people primarily on the basis of skill. It is not just that job roles tended to become more distinct but the increasing sophistication of the technology could make what each other did feel more remote and unknowable (Intv. Gard 31/8/12). Furthermore in order to maximise the productivity of their printing equipment, notably the large printing machines, printshops frequently introduced the shift working practices typical to the general printing trade, making a further distinction between job roles. In some printshops the economic drive to 'keep the presses running' excluded those printers from co-op meetings; their attendance would cost too much in 'down time' (Intv. Abel 13/8/16). The area where decisions about 'what technology' became especially challenging was in the area of 'pre-press'. Typesetting had already been undergoing significant technological development during the 1970s, enough so that radical typesetters were having discussions

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66 Some this was awarded in grants from GLEB (Intv. Pennington 4/11/11)

about how these new technologies might be shaped in a socialist manner (Range Left 1980). By the mid to late 1980s with developments in the computerisation of the process, it was unclear which of the technologies on the market were going to hold and therefore what to invest in. There was more complexity and risk involved, and increasingly so, in making decisions about this area of technology compared to deciding which new printing press to get, which could be difficult enough. A printing machine was not going to be obsolete in three years, and customers did not need to have compatible technology. It was partly down to chance whether printshops made the 'right' decision about the technology, not just because for a period the 'right' choice was not at all clear, but it also depended upon the extent of interest, knowledge and usually enthusiasm about the new developments amongst individuals within the collective (Intv. Parker 15/5/12). This also of course depends on the rest of the collective being persuaded. With increased job specialisation, collective members to an extent had to assume the role of the 'expert' in their own domains of work (Intv. Palmer 3/4/12). When the technology was highly sophisticated and hard for others to understand this could put greater pressure to propose the right technology, partially isolating the responsibility – and also difficult if it proved otherwise. At Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op for example, they took out a large loan in the late 1980s to upgrade their typesetting equipment,

> It was an IBM phototypesetting machine, this man sold it with this special offer, because he knew that that technology was going to be finished. So we were landed with this, not defunct, but redundant technology. We spent years paying that off. It affected the financial viability of the co-op for the rest of its life. And, on one level you could say, we couldn't have seen that… the PC revolution was around the corner. But, I think there was some element that […] should have known better. As the typesetter, she pushed it through, but it was a bad decision…It wasn't just her decision, it was a collective decision (Intv. Obsorn 2/10/12).

With the element of risk and the responsibility of new debt it is easy to see how some printshops tried to avoid making these kinds of decisions or ignored the technological developments that might push them to. The other issue overhanging the new digital pre-press developments, which also made its acquisition different to getting a more sophisticated printing machine was the disruptive effect it was evidently going to have on specific job functions. One printshop member explained,

> [The] designer was really into DTP and we were having discussions at the time we were buying the Linotron [typesetting machine] about whether to do this… DTP was still quite primitive and I didn't like it… I didn't have as much control as I'd had because it wasn't set up as a typesetting machine… but I could see we would have to do the desktop route and I didn't want to partly because I'm not a designer (Intv. May 29/9/11).

Committing to the new technology could effectively mean the loss of skills people had developed and having to move into areas where they had little interest or ability. It was not a clear case of the 'deskilling thesis' at all (Braverman 1974), if anything job roles were poised

to become more complex but required acquiring new skills while eliding specific historical functions (see Boreham & Parker 2007). It was also not just typesetters and designers jobs that were going to be affected by bringing in the new technology, although they were the first. The area of 'film planning', which could involve quite complex skills especially with the move to more higher end presses and 'quality' work, was also clearly going to be affected. Ali, for example, who specialised in this area, realised after going to look at some of the new digital equipment that, "I just didn't fancy doing work in that way, I didn't fancy going digital" (Intv. Ball 24/8/11).

To what extent 'going up market' excluded the field constituencies that the movement service printers had set up to print for is a difficult question. The field of alternative left activity was shrinking and transforming while all this was taking place, access to cheap photocopying was now widely available, desktop publishing meant groups could do a certain amount by themselves, 'the internet' was emerging. In other words the movement service printshops were less needed by them. Also by most accounts, even with the pressure to be 'competitive' they usually continued to print cheaply for the few radical groups that did come to them, if they thought the cause worthwhile. Perhaps a more significant factor, but that also cannot be detached from the wider processes of change in the movement field, is that the uptake of increasingly complex technology professionalised the service printers, and their need for skilled workers, restricted who could join. The broader decline of the printing industry, and the achievement of reasonable wages, also meant that the printing co-ops became viable prospects for trade trained, but apolitical workers (Intv. Gard 29/6/12, Intv. Green 2/8/11). Siôn from Calverts, "we weren't prepared to take people on who couldn't do it… we needed skilled labour, probably as a co-op we failed on principle five, which is the principle of education. We didn't grow our own skilled political activists" (Intv. Whellens 15/12/11).

Many and perhaps all of the smaller printshops in London had gone 'broke' by the late 1980s; Rye Express (1985), Women in Print (1986); Islington Community Press (1987); Fly Press (1989). Fly Press had taken out, and later paid off, a GLEB loan in 1984 and had a period of some financial stability and better wages. However losing their cheap premises as a knock on effect of the clamp down on left Labour authorities, with no hope of an equivalent by the late 1980s, was definitive. Trojan who had significantly upgraded with substantial support from GLEB funds, including premises, went into liquidation in 1990. Blackrose one of the larger presses, but who missed the digital revolution, did so in 1992. Lithosphere the largest of them all and a flagship co-op for GLEB who were actually financially *successful* for most of the 1980s ran into trouble and closed the printing operation in the early 1990s. Spider Web, another large press had its own problems and had 'privatised' by the 1990s, and then sold their customer book to another 'gone straight' printshop Rochdale Alternative

Press (RAP) in Yorkshire. In Manchester, Amazon Press (Moss Side Community Women's Press) shut its doors in 1988. Open Road Printing Co-op in York the same year, Cambridge Free Press in 1990, Albyn Press in Sheffield about the same time. Also in Sheffield however, as we saw earlier in the thesis, the women's printing co-op, (SWPC) who got their modest loans from co-operative loans funds established by the left Labour council, continued into the early 21st century. In Newcastle, Tyneside Free Press ran until 2013. At the time of writing, Calverts and Aldgate Press in London are still going.

In London those service printers that utilised the GLC support for co-operatives through soft loans, premises help, and in some case grants, lasted no longer than their peers who did not. This perhaps raises some questions about the impact of the GLC bid to create a co-operative sector and its tactics in doing so (see Newman 1986). Possibly relatedly there is also the issue of competition between the London service printers, which although not raised in the chapter will be briefly mentioned in the thesis conclusion.

Conclusions

This chapter has focussed on the 'material basis' of the printshops, proposing that part of their conditions of possibility were various historically contingent 'resource opportunities'. The enquiry was guided by the third sub-research question that asked: What combination of internal and external field resourcing enabled the printshops? What were the different positions and strategies regarding resourcing? What were the material opportunities and challenges for the printshops created by developments in other fields? How were these negotiated? I presented three basic models of resourcing; the autonomous model, the grant aided model and the 'commercial' model whilst acknowledging some movement between them, most obviously so from the typically initial autonomous model into one of the other two. The key areas discussed were sources of finance (internal and external to the field), and the main areas of (potential) expenditure for a printshop; space, technology and wages. The changes and pressures upon each model, or route adopted, were also discussed.

The autonomous model was shown to be the usual basis for starting up, with funds and equipment derived from members' own input and the support of movement allies; in other words with resources 'internal' to the alternative left field. The *extent* to which the support of 'movement allies' was available emerged as generally dependent on the 'social capital' of the printshop. Here I argued that Diani's (1997) insight that movements and their actors also *create* social capital rather than just being an of outcome it, can be applied to the printshops, with Notting Hill Press and Islington Community Press as examples. Movement financial support was found in the main to have been strongest in the early days of press rather than in their subsequent survival. This I suggested may have been partly due to the changing nature of movements, as well as changing printshops memberships. Movement related

support also came in the form of free space, with various printshops being provided working space by an existing sympathetic organisation. The chapter also showed how equipment was frequently sourced through movement connections as well as others in the emergent field of radical printshops – and that the printshops field continued to be a space of passing on equipment as well of sharing it, especially in times of crisis.

The particular urban context of 1970s Britain was shown to have created important premises opportunities for a number of printshops. The excess of dilapidated empty council-owned properties in this period combined with a revival of housing activism created prospects for squatting, and somewhat more securely, leases on semi derelict buildings at 'peppercorn rents'. The first might lead to the second. Working without pay was found to have been facilitated by a combination of the availability of state benefits for single people at that time, an alternative left lifestyle of low consumption, cheap housing and communal living and an attitude that did not expect to earn wages for engaging in politically motivated activities. However there were as to be expected various strains on maintaining the free labour and free space aspects of the autonomous model. Not everyone could afford to keep working for free, the attendant lifestyle it required was not everyone could subscribe to, even if they wanted to; the arrival of dependents for example could test it severely. Free space was usually precarious and/or involved other unwelcome conditions. While some shorter-lived printshops such as Stepney Community Print Workshop were able to maintain this model throughout their four-year life, of those that ran for a significant length of time it was only Poster Film Collective that, on principle, maintained it for their duration. To some extent their status as a poster workshop rather than an 'open to the public' community printshop or service printers, which requires regular bodies at reasonably regular times, may have made this a more viable prospect. Otherwise the need for a printshops to obtain secure premises, usually marked a transition towards finding ways to become more sustainable, either by seeking grants or taking the 'commercial' route.

The second part of the chapter focused on the grant-aided model of resourcing, mainly taken up by self-help community printshops, as well after several years of unwaged labour, the poster workshop See Red. I claimed that to some extent, the resource opportunities these printshops took advantage of had been created through the influence of alternative left field actors on other institutional fields. In the case of the earliest source of funding, this was perhaps less explicitly so, however its origin was a contributory factor to the development of radical community activism. As the chapter explained, government concerns about 'inner city deprivation' and community cohesion led to funds (Urban Aid) becoming available in the early 1970s through local councils for small-scale initiatives that might help address these issues; basic pieces of equipment to make community media fell into this remit. This was accompanied by input from the influential Gulbenkian Foundation, newly headed in 1972 by

an alternative left radical committed to encouraging community activism and arts and providing grants for it. The sums obtainable from each of these sources for printshops were nevertheless quite small. Around the same time however activists from the growing community arts field formed themselves into a national lobbying group (ACA) to demand funds for this new 'peoples' arts movement from national Arts Council, resulting in the latter becoming a key source of funding for community printshops throughout the 1970s. The Arts Council's move to 'regionalise' in the early 1980s, meant printshops had to then apply to new local arts boards. These were more stringent and often expected community arts projects, including printshops, to also get funding from agencies dealing with 'social problems', such as Urban Aid or social services. The rise of municipal socialism in the early 1980s – also arguably aided by alternative left moves into the Labour party in the late 1970s and early 1980s – especially through the GLC in London, who were also politically sympathetic to the printshops, became the next substantial source of grants. The GLC were keen to encourage an oppositional visual culture and committed a large amount of money to doing so.

This part of the chapter showed how the printshops that took the grant-aided route had typically secured 'peppercorn' premises usually before becoming funded and that the primary expenditure of the grants they applied for was wages. Although grants for wages ostensibly meant that printshops workers could devote themselves full time to the aims of the printshop, various issues related to being grant funded were raised in the chapter. Not only was it actually rather precarious because of delays in getting the money and wading through the bureaucracy of local councils in particular, fitting changing criteria became increasingly difficult. There were also fears of 'mission drift' with the criteria leading the way, concerns which resonated with wider critical debates within the community arts field about co-option. Relatedly there were also concerns expressed about 'being paid to be radical'. On the one hand 'secure' and reasonable wages – generally higher than in their 'commercial' model equivalents – was seen at least by some feminists to open up membership to those unable or not wanting to participate in the typically white middle-class alterative left lifestyle. On the other there was the fear, and interpretation, that funded wages, especially by the 1980s, sometimes attracted less committed people, or in fact produced them, either way resulting in a de-radicalisation of aims. Both of these positions were reflective of debates within the alternative left and women's movement fields of the time, and something commented on by members of non grant aided printshops as well.

Although wages were the prime expenditure of grants, there was some spending on improved equipment. However a distinct range of attitudes toward technology between the funded printshops was discovered, from that of Lenthall Road members that rather celebrated their 'rubbish' equipment, and saw it as part of the self-help attitude, to those that

used grants and their own knowledge to build quite 'swish' set ups. For the self-help community printshops who dominate the grant-aided category, basic technology was seen to be what enabled the practice of 'doing it yourself'. What is perhaps significant here is that grants were not used to purchase photocopiers, historically associated with DIY 'print' media practices of the 1970s and 80s (and beyond). The exception was CopyArt a community copyshop set up artists in the early 1980s, with GLC funding, who were however a one off.[67] I argued that there were distinct reasons for the lack of uptake. Firstly copiers tended to be leased rather than purchased. Secondly their limitations of size and colour did not make them obvious alternatives to screen-printing or small offset litho, but a possible supplement if the lease could be afforded; litho was also cheaper for more than about 100 copies. Thirdly the black-boxed nature of copiers and lack of skill to operate would not have especially resonated with self-help aims of 'demystification' and 'skill sharing'. However it was also found that a number of those in the self-help printshops strongly felt that as cheap photocopying became more widely available through the 1980s, their own role began to diminish.

The disbanding of the GLC and the metropolitan councils by the Thatcher government in 1986 ended that source of funding. Combined with a narrowing focus on projects that met employment or training agendas by remaining grant agencies, as well as a reduction in sums available, available grant aid for the printshops effectively dried up by the early 1990s. Those that had taken that route to survival almost invariably closed down. Notably only one of those (See Red) that had been fully funded by grants attempted to 'go it alone' and adopt the 'commercial' model to try and survive post grant-aid, although there were also transitions into more conventional entities, or absorption into other organisations[68]. None attempted a 'voluntary' existence, suggesting the kinds of conditions and bodies that had once made that possible and worth doing had gone, at least for those involved at that point. Neither does there appear to have been a new generation waiting in the wings willing to do so. This is a point that will be more fully explored in the thesis conclusion as it connects to wider issues of changes in the alterative left field and the role of printshops more generally.

The third section of the chapter concentrated on the 'commercial' or market model of resourcing, that of the movement service printshops. One of the aims of these printshops was to generate enough surplus from serving movements and acceptable groups to pay themselves a wage. Although only a few of these obtained the peppercorn rents that other

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67 CopyArt's history goes back further than this, 'pre GLC'. However they greatly expanded with funding. After the loss of it they ceased operating as an independent collective and were absorbed into the director led multi-arts community resource InterChange (previously known as InterAction).

68 Paddington Printshop, under the initiative of founder member John Phillips formed into a new entity, run by Phillips, thelondonprintstudio, a still existing gallery and printing space for artist-printmakers.

types of printshops secured, the general context of 'urban decline' meant that affordable if often similarly dilapidated premises could be found. Some were able to obtain relatively plush premises via the new support for co-operatives that accompanied the municipal socialist wave of the 1980s. The main 'resources' issue for the commercial model was the in-built tension between providing a service for their typically under resourced users and achieving their aim of paying themselves a wage. Pressure of dependents and/or years of breadline working and financial anxiety about the press tended to militate towards a common decision to try and attract higher paying but still 'acceptable' customers through upgrading their technology, to enable the better quality and greater efficiency needed to do this type of work. Until other more sympathetic sources of external finance became available, their low capital base usually meant the only option for acquiring the requisite technology was a high-interest commercial loan, therefore engaging with fields and logics beyond the alternative left field. Albeit not without significant anxiety, a number of printshops did this. Of note is the way that collectives managed the issue of the 'guarantor' required for these loans. Those *without* any assets would sign it. If their circumstances changed then a complicated counter signing process would be worked out between members.

The rise of municipal socialism in certain cities in the early 1980s, especially Sheffield and London, provided a new sympathetic, and far cheaper, source of loans for those in these areas for a period. While the municipal left grants to community printshops and poster workshops derived from municipal left cultural policies, loans for service printshops were a result of their economic policies. The politics of the new municipal socialism was indicative of changes in parts of the Labour party, discussed earlier in the thesis, partly as an effect of radicals from the alternative left field moving into the party in the late 1970s and early 80s. Worker co-operatives, typically seen as counter-productive by the Labour party (and the labour movement) were now on the agenda as viable socialist economic alternatives to be encouraged. Revolving loan funds for co-ops were newly established and word went round the service printshops. As part of local economic development plans however, applicants had to show expansion plans, new jobs, and new markets to enable this, as well agree to be monitored and advised by the growing number of 'co-op advisors'. While these conditions were objectionable to some printshops, and the less interfering relationship with a commercial loan company preferred, several others successfully applied, with some of these receiving significant amounts of support not just in loans, but grants and help with premises. The success of which will be discussed shortly.

The purchase of more sophisticated equipment and trying to 'make it pay', had as we saw earlier, various impacts on the internal workings of the printshops with greater specialisation, and more pressure to take on more highly skilled workers, particular press operators, who were rarely found in the alternative left milieus. Closely following this were other pressing

issues regarding new technology; massive changes and technological uncertainty in the area of 'pre-press'. High-risk choices had to be made and increased specialisation put more pressure on individuals within presses to be experts. It was chance as to whether a given press had members able (and interested) to 'read' the new technological developments and advise the collective; ignoring the changes as one or two presses did, or making the 'wrong' choice usually proved financially disastrous.

The extent to which attempting to go more 'upmarket' excluded the printshops original constituencies, and the types of printing they had once thought important, I suggested was complicated by the shrinking of the movements that generated that work, or in some cases their parallel professionalisation. Added to this are factors mentioned in relation to the funded community printshops; greater access to cheap copying, as well as the rise of the instant printshop, which in combination with the advent of desk top publishing created greater self-sufficiency for those once in need of a radical service printers.

Finally, and perhaps partly resonating with the immediately above, the fact that the closure of the community printshops after the decline of funding opportunities and the closure of many unfunded movement service printers coincided with each other, suggests that some broader shared factors might have been at play. In order to consider what these might have been means bringing together themes from across the thesis, a task for the next and concluding chapter.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to explore and account for the historical phenomena of the democratically-run alternative printshops that emerged in 1970s Britain in sufficient numbers with sufficient shared aims and practices that they can be seen to have comprised a 'field'. These printshops, I have argued, fit within the wider history of alternative media, meeting many of its general criteria, as organisations that have mobilized available communication technologies in order to, in some way, contest different kinds of power; symbolic, political and economic. However they have been mostly absent from scholarship that makes reference to the history of such attempts. Acknowledged precedents for the democratic and participatory practices of contemporary alternative and community media, for example, may include early video projects, pirate and community radio, photocopied zines, or publications where these practices stop short of the actual printing. The printshops have also not been considered in their own right as part of this diverse broader narrative. This study is an attempt to begin to address this gap, and to contribute to the rich, messy and often-elusive history of such endeavours; to understand what has made them possible, what the challenges have been and also what kinds of factors contributed to their disappearance.

Similarly to many radical and alternative organisations (Bosi & Ritter 2014), the printshops did not much consider their own historical record – this is partly why these histories are often elusive – and it became evident that fairly limited material information would be available for the research. As such ex-participants would be a vital source. Not only this but in order to properly understand how and why the printshops existed, the stories of 'those that were there' were fundamental. Initial conversations made it clear that the printshops had emerged in particular albeit quite complex circumstances of alternative left movements and culture and certain kinds of material opportunities, and that their histories were not easy separable from these contexts. Bringing this awareness to my general aims led to the formulation of the main research question: *What political, cultural and material conditions gave rise to the emergence of a field of collectivised radical and community printing in 1970s Britain and what combination of external field activity and internal processes contributed to the dissolution of this field?*

As the research question indicates, the concept of 'field' provided an analytical tool to conceive of the printshops as a relational assemblage of organisations that together constituted a particular historical social space, defined by largely shared aims, activities and practices. Printshops within the field were categorised into three main types; poster workshops, community printshops and movement service printers. Drawing on both Calhoun (2010) and Crossley's (2006) proposals for Bourdieu's field theory, in Chapter 2, I argued that their wider social space of operation could be conceived as the 'alternative left field of

contention', an arena that included various groupings, networks, milieus and social movements, the latter with their own internal field structures. Part of the rationale for attention to wider space(s) of operation was not simply to understand 'context' but also to address the issue that the printshops, not least because of the nature of their activity, were also dependent, in different ways, on other fields (Gorski 2013, Fligstein & McAdam 2012). My aim to understand the overall trajectory of the printshops field, from its emergence to its effective disappearance, led me to Fligstein and McAdam's 'theory of fields', which usefully conceptualizes three phases of fields; formation/emergence, the stable field and field rupture/crisis/resettlement.

In order to unpack and analytically separate the central themes and concerns of the main research question, three sub-research questions were developed with an empirical chapter devoted to each. The first sub-research question and empirical chapter (Chapter 4), internally structured by the above printshop types, focused on the relationships between the printshops and their alternative left and movement field constituencies. This first empirical chapter also served to provide an introduction to the printshops, establishing aspects of the wider field contexts in which they emerged, and an outline of the field's overall trajectory. The second sub-research question and related chapter (Chapter 5) addressed the printshops participatory-democratic practices; collective working/self-management, 'democratic' divisions of labour and DIY/self-help printing. This chapter drew on Shove et al.'s (2012) variant of practice theory in order to try and track the 'life' of these particular practices across the printshops field. The third sub-research question and associated chapter focused on the material resource opportunities and strategies taken up by the printshops, differentiating between those that were internally derived and those that were dependent on negotiations with external fields.

This final concluding chapter of the thesis is divided into four sections. It begins by reflecting on the research approach in terms of research design and methodological approach. I then go on to review the key empirical findings in relation to the main research question. The third section reflects on theoretical approach and contributions. The last section comprises a concluding discussion and possible avenues for further research.

7.1. Reflections on research design and method

The decisions and strategies undertaken in carrying out this research were shaped by both the questions I wanted to ask and the kinds of material that would be available to me. Within that however choices were made in terms of the overall design that inevitably influenced the findings. Firstly in choosing a multi-organisational 'field' approach over a comparative case study approach meant a certain sacrifice of the depth and nuance with regard to some of the

areas discussed. This decision was, as indicated in Chapter 3, initially partly informed by uncertainty about whether I would have been able to gain access to sufficient material about a limited selection of printshops to do justice to a case study approach. I acknowledge that the multi-organisational approach has also, on the one hand, somewhat flattened out the considerable diversity that existed within printshop types, and on the other hand shown this diversity in quite a reductive way *across* types. However, to try and gain an understanding of the printshops as a collective historical phenomenon, I believe this was probably the best approach. The choice to include different types of printshops – poster workshops, community printshops, service presses – has meant similar play offs between the 'bigger picture' and more detailed description and analysis. The advantage of the multi-organisational approach that was taken consists in being able to account for the crossover of activities and practices between the types, as well as the transition by some community printshops into service printers all of which enabled useful contrasts and greater understanding of what enabled certain practices to maintain, for example. Conversely the decision to generally exclude printshops that were part of multi-activity community arts or resource centres has meant forgoing greater insight into the trajectory and debates around DIY printing.

In retrospect I also realize that the three large areas that constitute the themes of the empirical chapters, could each on their own have provided a reasonable basis for an historical multi-organisational investigation of the printshops. More generally the 'quest for breadth' presented a number of challenges, with difficult decisions about what to leave out as well as making for an unwieldy project at times. One particular sacrifice was a lack of a more indepth discussion of internal field relations between printshops and printshop types in the thesis. While this would not have *directly* contributed to answering my research questions it would have helped strengthen my claim that the printshops came to constitute some sort of field rather than a collection of organisations.

The methods undertaken to carry out the research were qualitative, including interviews, archival and document research, and the instigation of the radicalprintshops.org wiki. The wiki as discussed in Chapter 3, proved to be a very useful method for 'socialising' the idea of the printshops histories and for making new contacts. I had particular aims regarding the range of interview respondents; to obtain voices of people involved in different kinds of printshops and at different periods. This was achieved to a large extent. However, of the 55 interviewees, only one had not come from an 'alternative left' background. This has meant a missing perspective from those participants who typically joined from the general printing trade. This gap is particularly relevant given that the subject of people starting to join from 'the trade', or without the shared background otherwise, was raised by other interviewees in relation to collective working and motivations for involvement and features in the thesis.

More generally, one of the challenges of interviewing people about the past was, as might be suspected, issues of memory. Where possible I brought to interviews any existing material I had about the printshop/s the interviewee was involved in, as often did they, which worked well as 'aide memoires'. I also crossed referenced claims where I could, for example with other interviewees, internal documents and other sources, following up if problematic contradictions emerged. The range of internal documents and archival sources I had access to, which included minutes books from five presses, loan and grant applications, segments of accounts and publicity materials were invaluable in this regard, as well as in their own informational right.

In conclusion the multi-organisational approach was the most useful to to be able to capture and analyse the complexity and overall shape and trajectory of the printshops field. It enabled much more nuanced understanding of the diversity of practices and differnt kinds of activities, than would have possible with a case study approach. Bringing in all three types of printshop enabled useful comparative analysis to be made. And lastly the wiki was quite an innovative tool to generate data as well as establish (and re-establish) contacts. It built upon my position as a one-time participant of the printshops in generating support for the research, introduced me to printshops I had not known of, and led to rich interview material as well as access to printshop documents and images.

7.2. Empirical findings

This section discusses the key empirical findings in relation to the central research question:

What political, cultural and material conditions gave rise to the emergence of a field of collectivised radical and community printing in 1970s Britain and what combination of external field activity and internal processes contributed to the dissolution of this field?

The structure of the section follows the question but does so drawing on Fligstein and McAdams' (2012) 'three field phases'; emergence, stability/sustainment and 'crisis', or in this case dissolution.

Political and cultural conditions that helped give rise to the field

The character, composition and radical aspirations of early 1970s urban community activism emerged as central to the formation and emergence of the field, with community printshops setting up across the country first, often advising each other. The 'new' radical community newspaper was part of the rationale for several, but not all. More generally local activism was felt to need its own cheap sympathetic printshops to create its own print media, and where people might also learn and build confidence. This possibly suggests a distinct

difference to alternative/radical printshop fields in other countries. In several cases community printshops were used as bases for a wider range of activities, from helping to set up tenants groups to running 'alternative' youth club nights for young women, and as such were considered to be more than just places for getting printing done – they were in a way 'hubs' in the field of alternative left contention, or specific movement fields within it.

Very few of those setting up presses in the emergent phase of the field had experience in printing. However, the DIY culture that pervaded the alternative left of the early 1970s, especially community activism which understood itself as a "DIY politics" (Radford 2004), contributed to the cultural conditions that made it thinkable to run a press without experience. This was also a feature of the co-emergent and at this stage often overlapping Women's Liberation Movement, who were similarly organizing locally and 'doing it for themselves' by setting up their own independent resources, including printshops. The decentralized, locally based politics of community activism in particular, and to an extent the WLM, also meant that the small printing presses that were used were sufficient for many of their needs.

The growth of poster-making set ups on the other hand was partly informed by a wider, international context whereby the (often) hand-printed poster had recently become part of the visual and aesthetic repertoire of protest and contention along with a developing role as part of internal movement culture (cf. May '68). Those involved in poster making often had an art school background and the activity resonated with the concomitant critique of 'elitist' high culture, capitalist mass media, the social role of art and the figure of the artist; all of which also politically validated radical poster production for ex-art students, especially if done collectively and/or with non art trained 'ordinary' people in community printshops. These critiques, combined with developing feminist perspectives on representation and the gendered nature of hegemonic discourse about 'the artist', also created the cultural and political conditions for feminist poster-making.

Almost all those that started presses or joined them for the first several years had a background in some kind of political activity and groups as well as a belief in and experience of democratic or collective organising and/or living. This is unsurprising as anti-hierarchical ways of working and living had become established by early 1970s as part of the 'normative order' of alternative left field, and in turn helped to generate a 'radical-participatory' habitus (Crossley 2002). This created a cultural assumption that any type of activity should be organized in this way. That the printshops ran in this way also meant alternative left and feminist actors were attracted to becoming involved on these grounds as it neatly fit their developing alternative left or feminist habitus. As such the printshops were often seen as spaces where desirable blends of work, politics, friendship and love might and did occur.

Material conditions that enabled emergence of the field

Together with the cultural and political factors outlined above, specific material opportunities and circumstances – technological, spatial and financial – contributed to the setting up of early printshops and towards field emergence. The first of these was the availability of relatively affordable and learnable printing technologies, notably small offset-litho and screen-printing. Screen-printing had become popularised in art schools during the 1960s, while small offset presses had been taken up outside the general printing trade as 'inplant' printing equipment and old machines could be acquired cheaply. Nascent printshops shared knowledge about technology and advocates published 'how to' guides. Learning how to 'improvise' was also part of the DIY culture that had emerged in the 1960s and continued into the 1970s, and was reflected partly through information sharing in alternative publications about 'accessible' technologies of all kinds, including printing.

Urban depopulation processes in central and inner city areas through programmes of deindustrialisation and (incomplete) 'slum' clearance also provided spatial opportunities for printshops to set up. Local councils owned much of the empty properties and often could be persuaded to lease the dilapidated buildings at so-called 'peppercorn' rents. 'Battling' with local councils for subsidies and resources was also a central part of urban community activism, therefore the taking up of these spatial opportunities needs to be seen within that political and cultural setting. Shortages of affordable rented housing and this urban spatial context also fueled the related squatting movement, which in turn contributed to personal economic circumstances that supported participation in printshops. This combined with alternative domestic practices such as communal living and income sharing, along with the availability of state benefits for single people and an anti-materialist alternative left culture created the material basis and inter-linked political culture that enabled many individuals to be able to work for little or no money in the printshops.

'Movement' support, from individuals and groups, facilitated the establishment of several presses. The forms this took included donations of money, equipment and space to operate in. Other financial support became available through institutional political and social concerns about inner city deprivation and 'loss of community'. Creating local 'community' media was seen to be one way to help address this, and the Urban Aid programme allowed locally administered funds to be given towards this. The private and more directly politically sympathetic Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation shared these concerns and also started to offer grants in 1972. Recognition of 'community arts' by the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) in 1974, through pressure from the newly formed Association of Community Artists (ACA), created more substantial funding opportunities for printshops who could meet the general remit.

Factors that enabled sustainment of the field

An active, growing and diversifying alternative left field with cultural and print needs or – to put it in economic terms, a 'demand' – created a pivotal role for the printshops as well as within specific movement fields where they were also felt to be explicit expressions of their aims; notably community activism and the women's movement. The parallel growth in the 1970s of worker co-ops corresponding to other 'needs' of the alternative left also contributed to creating a cultural context in which the printshops 'made sense'.

The printshops offered participants socially amenable, interesting and politically useful 'work', which along with the attraction of working democratically, compensated for low wages. A cultural lack of interest in 'careerism' amongst educated alternative left milieus contributed towards providing participants, as did greater concern by the printshops with general political fit than high levels of skills. Importantly, the independent nature of the printshops and the non-alignment with specific political groups also enabled a more diverse pool of potential membership than would have otherwise been the case.

Continued grant-funding opportunities for community printshops, created relative economic stability, while new Manpower Services Commission (MSC) programmes in the late 1970s provided wages on a temporary basis for different kinds of printshops. The rise of municipal socialism after the 1981 local elections created politically sympathetic resource opportunities for all types of printshops in the relevant catchment areas, including grants for poster workshops and community printshops and cheap loans and premises deals for service printers. Municipal left funding for campaigning, cultural and social movement groups also created more viable print work, as did the continued growth of campaigning charities and voluntary sector organisations with alternative left sympathies.

Challenges – and strategies for sustainment

There could be high turnovers of printshop members. This not only had an impact on internal social stability but it also meant that knowledge and skills were continually having to be rebuilt and retaught within the group, as it was difficult to find people with political and collective working commitment *and* relevant skills. In turn, this could unsettle self-management and the efficacy of job rotation. The reasons for high turnover ranged from involvement being 'experimental', to personal conflicts or the general intensity of collective working, or individuals needing to find better-paid work, or longer-term members wanting to move on, having 'done their time'. Membership churn along with internal heterogeneity and different motivations for involvement could also create conflicting priorities about aims, typically emerging around issues of resources or recruitment; the latter often but not always tied into former.

The weak financial base of user groups, occasions of groups not paying and the expectation of very cheap service put a stress on the resources of unfunded printshops, whose workers were also usually earning very little. DIY printing could also create resource stresses. This along with a growing acceptance that learning to print, especially on offset litho presses was not especially easy and could undermine confidence rather than build it, as well as hamper basic economic survival in unfunded printshops, lead to curtailment of the practice.

The decline of community activism by the late 1970s and the formalising of certain activities undermined the broader remit and ambitions of some community printshops nevertheless their constituencies (and memberships) were generally quite diverse, and there were still political, community and cultural groups with print needs, including those activities that had 'formalised'. While there was ongoing community arts funding for printshops that could meet that remit, the demise of an energetic community activist movement and of radical movements more generally could make for a loss of political relevance and purpose beyond providing an income for its workers and a resource for other funded groups. This however depended on the movement affiliations of workers, for example at one printshop, association with a new growing movement, enhanced the momentum, at least for a period. In other situations a new local battle had a similar effect.

Ongoing grant aid but with increasingly specific criteria, combined with the pervasive resistance to 'admin', also lead to employment of separate finance/admin workers undermining earlier radical ideas about collective autonomy and breaking down the distinctions between different kinds of job functions, and reconfirmed conventional distinctions between 'creative' or 'productive' workers and administrators.

Partly informed by the above mentioned changing political atmosphere but also the evident stress on the sustainability of unfunded workshops – through offering 'full' DIY and to some extent other democratic but not 'cost effective' practices such as job rotation – was the growth of a more pragmatic model of printshop, the movement service print co-ops. This was encouraged by the above-mentioned expansion of left-sympathetic voluntary sector and the continued demand for printed material fueled by the emergence of some new protest/campaigning movements.

During the 1980s, issues relating to specific combinations of aesthetics, skill and technology began to create new challenges for all types of printshops, taking slightly different forms in each, resulting in different responses. For poster workshops the aesthetic of the screen-printed radical poster and of '1970s' radical politics began to be undermined from various directions, including; the rise of highly visible protest movements employing professional

designers and using offset litho, generational taste changes, and possibly a wider cultural 'consciousness' about design partly informed by innovations in commercial culture. This contributed to internal movement criticisms about the aesthetics of the radical screen-printed poster as lacking in design, semiotic and technical sophistication – and appeal. The women's poster workshop See Red also had demands for more uplifting and 'subtle' posters. This combined with an increasingly conflicted women's movement in fact led to the cessation of creating new posters, and See Red becoming a service printer. The other main poster workshop at this time – the Poster Film Collective (PFC) – had already begun to develop new roles for posters in educational contexts. However, PFC's last poster series and the response was somewhat emblematic; a fierce critique of technological 'progress' under capitalism – for which they could find no audience.

In funded screen-printing community printshops, versions of the above criticisms were also apparent, specifically those regarding the aesthetics and practices of community poster making (GLC 1982, Kelly 1984). Combined with both users and workers frustrations with the process and results of DIY printing, this often led to greater emphasis on the 'design end', and in a number of printshops elimination of the requirement for or even invitation to users to 'print their own'.

Beginning in approximately the same period, the service printers began to experience increased demand for higher quality and 'fancier' work, that they usually did not have technology or often skills to produce. Partly the new demands were an effect of expanding their customer range to be able to pay wages but it was also a general trend. These factors led to moves in order to upgrade technology by taking out loans, adopt more conventional and 'efficient' working practices and take on workers that had requisite skill levels to produce the work, which tended to mean bringing in people from outside the usual milieus. In London similar strategies to upgrade and 'target markets' meant several presses were competing for the same kind of work. Those that attempted to stay small, and exist on the 'lower end' of the market found themselves increasingly undermined by the growing availability of cheap photocopying and the 'instant printshop'.

Dissolution of the field: a combination of external field activity and 'internal' processes

By the mid 1980s new printshops failed to appear, beginning the start of a process whereby those that closed ceased to be replaced by new ones and by the mid 1990s, if not before, the field had effectively ceased to exist, although a small handful of printshops continued beyond this period; two of which still exist today. As the below will show the reasons for the gradual dissolution of the field were a combination of cultural, political, technological and economic factors.

As indicated above, the increasing availability of cheap photocopying facilities and the growth of instant print shops undermined the role for small offset-litho printing in service and community presses. This was compounded by the arrival of desktop publishing (DTP) which many small organisations adopted as it enabled them to undertake more of the typesetting and layout process themselves, cutting down their costs and reducing their dependency on printers. It also needs to be borne in mind that earlier problems of 'getting it printed' because of content offending or worrying 'straight printers' applied far less. Not only was much of what was printed at the printshops by this time less likely to cause objection at first or even second glance, anecdotal reports suggest less concern in the instant print and copyshops about the content of what was actually being printed.

The attack by the Thatcher government on the municipal left through the abolition of the metropolitan councils in 1986, as promised in their 1983 election manifesto, followed up by the rate-capping of Labour Left local authorities significantly reduced available funding for community printshops and poster workshops, as well as more broadly for the various groups that used different kinds of printshops. The effect of this on service printshops depended on their mix of customers, for some such as Fly Press it was fairly devastating, for others far less so. However, the loss of other benefits provided by municipal left support such as cheap loans and/or premises deals heavily impacted those that had taken advantage of them. Additionally the Conservatives' long held aim to abolish the 'left wing' Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) was completed by 1990. ILEA bought, distributed, and sometimes commissioned posters on the themes of racism and sexism, including from the poster workshops and funded youth and adult education initiatives, including those in community printshops. Other funding from regional arts boards and Urban Aid initiatives such as Inner City Partnerships not only diminished but also became increasingly prescriptive and tied into government and local authority agendas to do with unemployment and regeneration. The MSC, although ceasing to be a possible source of temporary wages for small service printers in the early 1980s had, through its various programmes, been drawn on by several community printshops after this time, but it was abolished in 1988.

The spatial opportunities that had provided premises for so many printshops contracted, as local authorities began to raise rents, sell off buildings and sites to developers to raise money and as urban restructuring processes of regeneration and gentrification began to take hold in previously dilapidated inner city areas. This along with increasingly stringent regulations regarding state benefits also meant that the possibilities for living cheaply had also significantly diminished.

Finally, and of particular relevance to the service printshops was the economic recession of the early 1990s which not least lead to the rapid shrinking of printshop overdrafts.

Internal processes contributing to field dissolution: Movement fields and the printshop field
The overlapping movement fields that the printshops had grown from, printed with and for, and drew members from, had faded over the course of the 1980s which, along with the changes in the reprographics sector and technological innovations mentioned above, meant less printing that 'needed doing' and thus less demand in economic terms. This ultimately also led to less recognition of the printing activity as something interesting and useful, as well as a shrinking pool of likely members. By the early 1990s, the grassroots women's movement had dissipated, and in the face of the mixed queer politics and commercial lesbian and gay culture that was emerging, the notion of 'womens printshops' was distinctly associated with the (restrictive) politics of the past. The so-called New Protest linked to the anarchist inflected radical environmentalism that began to gain ground in the early 1990s, was still relatively small and definitely impoverished. It was also able to meet its print needs through existing facilities, from photocopiers, resource centres, presses in the basements of anarchist centres, as well as on the downtime of machines in some of the remaining service printshops. Furthermore there were types of printing that the printshops had never been equipped to significantly deal with, such as newspapers and magazines of any size and book printing. Various non-democratically structured presses that fringed part of the printshops field, such as those of the organised left or peace movement were on the other hand able to do these – and continued to do so. (These presses were also more financially secure, partly because they were underwritten by their organisations, and in the case of organised left presses, 'cheap party labour').

The adoption of more sophisticated technology and greater demands on quality and economic pressure to 'make the machines pay' and provide regular wages also made the service presses less open to people who were politically sympathetic but did not have the requisite skill levels to 'hit the ground running'. Community arts, which some of the community printshops had aligned themselves with, had become increasingly professionalized and de-politicised, being called upon to meet variety of policy obligations. As for radical poster-making as a politically-salient cultural practice for ex-art students, the 'radical cultural field' had shifted. Distinct 'zones' in this field, one occupied by those that operated in political quarter of the avant-garde cultural field, the other by those that rejected this world entirely, and put themselves at the service of movements, had existed throughout the 1970s and into the 80s. However, issues that had concerned poster makers regarding 'representation' were increasingly being taken up in much more sophisticated ways by black, female and queer artists, who were beginning to claim their space in 'the gallery'. Rejecting

'art' for ostensibly populist forms – of which the screen-printed poster had in any case an increasingly dubious claim to – and instrumental purposes was no longer radical.

Lastly the collective and co-op ethos was felt by interviewees to be evaporating because the preexisting political communities that had produced a co-operative culture had declined, and people that had spent years working in them were tired of it. Furthermore it was increasingly regarded as 'old fashioned' by both older and younger generations. Although the anarchist affiliation with these ways of working ensured it carried through into the movements that later developed, it was ceasing to be the default mode across a wide variety of 'progressive' organisations and groupings in the way that it had been.

To conclude this lengthy section, it is first worth returning to the two core principles of the printshops field, to produce or facilitate print media for radical and progressive movements and organisations and to work democratically. The vast majority did this until their closure, and in that, despite the difficulties, they actually succeeded in these basic aims. Of the three remaining printshops still open from this field (RAP, Aldgate Press and Calverts), two still work as democratic collectives, although the balance of their printing at least in one case is barely recognisable. However in bringing together the key strands of the larger field narrative that has been described here, some particular themes emerge. As we can see the interlocking mesh of factors that enabled the emergence and temporary sustainment of the printshops field was gradually pulled apart; by change in and shrinking of the movement field, by attempts to economically survive, by the closing down of funding, by technological developments. These factors in different ways also undermined the central role of a political participatory democratic culture, necessary to the maintenance and thriving of the printshop field. There is a line of argument that would see the dissolution of the printshop field as more evidence of the failure of 'unrealistic' participatory democratic ideals in practice. The story shown here is much more complicated than that, and the challenge of these ways of working cannot be neatly untangled from these other issues. The dependency by some on state funding to survive inevitably made them vulnerable, and yet by the time that this really began to recede or that the criteria became impossible to meet, the creative political energy that had seen them through was already starting to evaporate. Technological change was also playing a role in shaping movements communicative requirements; the community printshop, the service printing co-op and the poster workshop were less needed.

7.3. Empirical contributions to theory

A field approach

The concept of field has played a central role in orientating the investigation and analysis in the thesis. In doing so, it joins a significant and growing body of research in a range of

related areas of scholarship, including work on culture and (alternative) media, and in organisational and social movement studies. While unlike many individual studies I have drawn on a range of field theoretical influences (Bourdieu, Postill, Crossley, Fligstein & McAdam), the basic principles attached to the concept have been adhered to. Firstly this is the epistemological understanding – which underpins all field theories from those in the 'hard sciences' to psychology and sociology – that the dynamics of an entity or phenomenon are not immanent to it but relational (Martin 2003, Hilgers & Mangez 2015). Secondly, and more specifically is the understanding of *social* fields as distinct and internally differentiated, relational arenas of activity organised around particular but contestable values, practices and aims. Looking beyond Bourdieu, to both elaborations of his theory and to other variants has to an extent addressed some of the reservations that Warde (2004) and Atton and Hamilton (2008) have expressed about whether field theory is appropriate for the analysis of realms of activity that are not characterized by competitive striving for dominance. Warde (2004: 25) proposed that given the concept of field was characterised as thus (competitive, strategic, orientated towards external goods), practice was a better concept for considering realms of social activity that were cooperative, pluralistic and orientated towards internal goods; the field I have depicted is in fact a hybrid of these. There were longer-term goals, external *and* internal goods as stakes, co-operation, and a little competition. It was also characterised and constituted *by* implicit and explicit cooperative practices. Field theory developments from both Gorski (2013) and Fligstein & McAdam (2012) were particularly useful in that they acknowledge that certain fields have low degrees of hierarchy and formality and may function in a collaborative way. However they still generally stress that fields are domains of constant "jockeying for advantage" (Fligstein & McAdam 2012). Gorski's approach to fields explicitly draws on Bourdieu and although extends it, does so retaining its core implications. Fligstein and McAdam on the other hand have developed their theory partly out of what they see as the shortcomings of Institutional Theory, which they argue does not sufficiently account for internal contestation and competition within organisational fields. In other words neither fully offers a conceptualisation of fields that actually allows for relatively uncompetitive domains of social activity. Arguably this is because it would seem to undermine the relational aspect that distinguishes a field from a collection of people undertaking similar activities. However, competition is not the only dynamic relational energy. Through the mapping and analysis of the printshop phenomena, in the thesis it was shown that a domain of related activity existed whereby groups took up roles and stances in relation to each other, but within a framework of generally shared aims, where there were 'legitimate tactics' about how to operate, which were also sometimes 'challenged' by changing discourses or new entrants. We are dealing thus with a field albeit not one characterised by incessant competition. This is not to make a moral claim for anti-competitiveness, or in fact to deny that competition did not exist in the field, but more I hope to claim a modest contribution towards how field theory might be extended to include some

of those realms of activity that appear to be excluded from field theoretical analysis on these grounds.

In Chapter 2, drawing on Crossley (2006), I argued that the wider social space in which the printshops emerged from and operated in was usefully delineated as the field of 'alternative left contention'. The thesis showed that this field, or specific movement fields within it, provided the printshops with participants with the disposition to become involved. The broader field of alternative left contention provided the printshops field with many of their 'users', supporters, sites of distribution, and was generally the source of their political values and sense of *illusio*, the belief in what they were doing. Furthermore, it also showed that it was from this wider field that 'legitimate' organisational and production practices in the printshops were derived.

Fields of contention, as is the case for fields in general, are in a permanent state of greater or lesser flux as new entrants join, as groups form, change or disappear, as different concerns come to be salient, articulated and contested. The extent to which, and in what ways, these dynamics impact upon *organisations established to meet movement cultural needs* are questions which not only help us understand those organisations but also aspects of movements themselves. In the thesis the trajectory of the women's printshops provided a lens on the changing character and concerns of the women's movement and similarly so, the community printshops on a particular period in the life of the urban community activist field. In this sense it can be argued that the field approach taken helps to reveal how different kinds of organisations are also the expression and testing of the (changing) politics, values and practices of a wide range of movements but also how such organisations are also challenged by the changes taking place at a movement level.

I claimed that the printshops developed into a field in their own right as more printshops set up, taking particular kinds of positions and defining themselves in relation to each other. However, as the above indicates, it was necessarily a 'dependent' field. This raises some questions about how the 'relative autonomy' of fields may be understood. For Bourdieu the autonomy of a field relates to its 'distance' from the 'field of power', by which he means economic power (capitalism) and political power (the state). This type of dependence and 'relative heteronomy' needs to be considered and as we have seen this was indeed both an enabler of (e.g. funding) and constraint on (e.g. funding criteria, funding withdrawal) parts of the printshops field, and aspects of this will be returned to shortly. However the relation to the alternative left field, or specific social movements therein, was also in a different way a source of relative heteronomy. While given the 'position' of the printshops field this may seem self-evident, conceptually clarifying this contributes to how we might partially understand the lifecycle of alternative media-related organisations. I would argue that this is

especially useful for the study of organisations and initiatives that are not tied to a particular movement group/organisation, but have emerged out of and are in particular ways 'dependent' on the/a wider movement field, whether or not they themselves constitute a particular field or sub-field in their own right. Internal field responses to this 'dependency' may indicate particular transformations in that field. This was evident in the study with the attempt by the newer movement service printers to move beyond their reliance on the alternative left field or "peer group ghetto" (Elston 1980) for printing work and even memberships, initially (in most cases) in order to create more sustainable organisations, that would in turn be better able to support work that 'really needed printing'. This also indicates that not only the state but also the market and the relationship with capitalist practices needs to be considered especially in the context of the service printers.

While the relationship between a wider field and a subfield is clearly of significance to the internal dynamics and character of the field under examination, the thesis has also made explicit how activity in other fields – which may be of varying 'distances' from the field in question – can influence processes of change within a field, or in fact be partly responsible for its formation in ways that are not always evident at the time. This is a feature of fields that, as Fligstein and McAdam (2012) have emphasised, is frequently overlooked in empirical field analyses, and one that I have attempted to address. The thesis showed how transformations and struggles within the Labour Party and local government fields would later considerably influence the dynamics of the printshops field, especially in London. It is not simply that activity in other fields may produce new 'resource opportunities' within a field (for example), but also that those opportunities in turn may trigger particular kinds of contestations around the distinctive value of a field. Attention to 'external' field activity, that in different ways may impact on a field or sphere of activity, also draws attention to the fact that there are *always* wider political and economic/material contexts at play which can and do variously enable or constrain the possibilities for attempts at building 'counter-resources' – and politics. By showing how 'external' field activity also shaped the field of printshops, the thesis has contributed to providing empirical evidence that underlines this corrective to field theoretical approaches.

So to conclude, the thesis has analysed the printshops not just as complicated 'field' in their own right, made up of different kinds of activity but as a 'dependent field' grown out of a wider field of alternative left contention. I have argued this approach is particularly suited to those media or cultural initiatives, of which there have been many, that are independent from particular movements organisations or groups but are in various ways dependent on a wider movement field. These types of resources, because they are independent in this way often exist, as Bailey et al. (2008: 27) put it, "at the crossroads of organisations and movements", and as such a field approach, can tell us about the related trajectories of both, each

providing a lens onto the other. Furthermore I have also shown in the thesis how the activity in other fields may also be crucial to take into account when trying to understand the changes that might be taking place in the field in question.

Practices of participatory-democracy

The study showed how the anti-hierarchical participatory imperatives of the alternative left were taken up in particular ways by the printshops. Practice theory was particularly helpful in order to analyse each of the distinct forms this took; collective self-management, 'democratic' division of labour and DIY printing. Practice theory is congruent with a field theory approach not least because of the understanding that fields are also defined *by* particular kinds of practices (Bourdieu 1990, Postill 2010). These practices were part of the printshop field's claim to distinctive values; values which marked them off from other kinds of radical printers of the period.

Practice theory, however, has its own genealogies, many of them distinct of those of field theory – and many empirical field analyses do not pay attention to 'practices' as such. Postill's body of work is a notable exception. On the other hand, empirical studies of practices often do not frame them within a field theoretical approach. Partly this is because practice theory is often mobilised to look at 'everyday life' activities, which are not (necessarily) part of a domain that can be considered a field (as per Warde's argument), or it is not of relevance to frame them in this way (although for an innovative exception see Toft-Nielsen & Krogager 2015). However, the research aims of this study provided an opportunity to bring the two together, by showing how different types of democratic practices gave the printshops field its distinctive value, as well as how changes in both the wider field of alternative left contention and the printshops field impacted on those practices. The alternative left field provided the social and symbolic significance (meaning), and some of the know-how and understandings (competence) for the printshops' democratic practices, as well as critical discourses regarding the value of particular practices. Demands for a different kind of quality and 'product', were brought about by changes in the alternative left field and contributed to the undermining of one of these democratic practices, namely job rotation. However, the thesis also showed how there were already different 'stances' within the printshops field about that particular practice. The (quasi) professionalisation of parts of the field attracted new entrants that did not attribute the same meanings to certain practices, such as DIY in the community printshops, or collective working in the service printers, weakening the necessary 'links' between the different elements that help to hold a practice together.

Many studies concerned with 'practices', are based on ethnographic fieldwork, in fact it has been argued that this is the only way to study practices (Nicolini 2012). Not only was that

clearly not possible here given the historical nature of the field, the aim was to generally understand both the character and variation of the printshops democratic practices and their trajectories over the period of the fields existence. Therefore in Chapter 2, I made the case that in order to analyse these practices in terms of how they 'held together', were tested and sometimes ceased to be performed, the synthesized practice theory developed by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) was especially useful for this study. Although their focus is more widely enacted practices of 'everyday life', as indeed is typical of practice studies, their interest is in the historical trajectories or 'lifecycles' of practices. The approach they have developed is especially orientated to this type of investigation. It simplifies the multiple connected elements that comprise a given practice into three: meaning, competence and material. As I have stated above some of the content of these elements for the printshops democratic practices were carried over from the alternative left field. However, in the thesis and through the analysis of the data, I argued that additional recourse to the concept of habitus enabled a more precise understanding into the uptake and 'life' of these practices in the printshops, and a clearer link between field and practice than the above suggests.

As Gorski (2013) has argued, new fields, and here I am referring to the alternative left field, not only produce new practices but are also likely to create new types of habitus. Adapting Crossley's notion of a radical habitus, I argued that the alternative left generated a particular type of radical-participatory habitus that not only predisposed members towards a range of democratic practices in the printshops, but was also in itself a politically informed intention towards the *development* of a new habitus. At the same time the analysis of the data also showed that the experiences of those in the printshops with regard to collective self-management needed to be supplemented by Bourdieu's more enduring notion of habitus in order to explain how longer term social experience can shape the way in which 'new' practice-situations of ostensible equality are taken up and experienced. While I hold that the 'radical-participatory' habitus has conceptual value there is considerable room to develop it further than I have done in the thesis, and to also consider in more depth the ways in which more enduring aspects of habitus may filter through it.

The democratically orientated practices of the printshops were, I argued, also part of a longer history of alternative-media related practices whereby actors have attempted to link different communication technologies with democratic principles in order to enable contestations of symbolic power, create new social relations, and so forth. As Maeckelbergh (2011), amongst others, has highlighted, the structures for participatory-democratic organisations more generally during the 1970s and 80s were far less sophisticated than those that exist in contemporary social movements. This is also evident from my study. There has also been, relatedly, a 'wisdom' that these practices significantly contributed to the 'failure' of many alternative projects that began life in the 1970s (for example Landry et

al. 1985, McCabe 2007), a view expressed by some of those who were around the printshops. Through identifying the different dimensions that needed to be integrated to form and sustain each 'democratic' practice – from particular specialist technologies to the range of competencies required and the meanings attributed to the practice – the analysis was able to show the kinds of stresses on the attempts towards creating egalitarian structures and relations of production in the printshops. Understanding what enables/disables practices that seek to create equitable distributions of influence and power within organisations, and that explore the possibility of the 'balanced job complex' also has much wider applicability in terms of attempts to create new social relations, realities and subjectivities. Bringing this particular variant of practice theory to the study of 'participatory democratic practices' also offers a new way in which the *histories* of these types of practices can be usefully analysed and their longer, often rhizomatic trajectories, understood.

To conclude, the practice theory approach supplemented by the concept of habitus, was able to analytically clarify how each of the three different participatory democratic practices in the printshops could hold together, what changes in their elements undermined them, and in some cases how fragile the links that held them together could be. They were all practices that were heavily freighted with particular 'meaning', they were *assumed* to be democratic, but not always experienced as such. The point about any practice is that it can hold different contradictory meanings at any one time and indeed in any one social context or situation. The most precariously linked practice was DIY printing; the links between competence, meaning and material were in a sense 'pre-designed' by its advocates, rather than its practitioners, unlike both collective working and job rotation. This perhaps of all the practices proved to be somewhat voluntaristic *in* practice. However this also varied from place to place, and no doubt from 'performance to performance', about which without further research (or the benefits of time-travelling ethnographic study), it is not possible expand upon.

7.4. Discussion and future research

This final section discusses some of the implications that the research has raised and how these might be further developed. This include more narrowly focussed lines of historical enquiry that emerge from particular types of printshops as well as that which might link more to the contemporary context.

What has emerged through the research was how not just a whole range of printshops but also the parallel mushrooming of alternative left and 'counter' cultural initiatives was in one way or another enabled by some kind of 'external' resource support, particularly that which derived from the state, often via the local state (or cross-subsidised by commercial or semi-

commercial activities). I do not mean the full grants that issued from the GLC in the 1980s, although I will come to that, but the far more 'arms length' support of peppercorn rents on council owned buildings, small pockets of money that could be acquired to support local communications and community groups, and the more substantial sums that could be acquired from the Arts Council before it 'regionalised' funding which then in turn required partnerships with more prescriptive funding bodies. Although also contingent on a huge amount of volunteerism, itself enabled by the possibility to live cheaply – which cannot be ignored, especially given the huge contrast with the present situation – this 'support', significantly contributed to the development of a diverse set of autonomous alternative local resources and media and cultural production, and as such a culture in which ideas about, expressions of, and experiments in, progressive social change could grow and flourish. I write support in inverted commas because that was not necessarily the intention of it; to a large extent these resources were obtained through exploiting fissures in policy, or failures of the local state in managing their building stock for example. However they *could* be obtained. The Arts Council at that time, believing in the 'autonomy of art', was deliberately non-prescriptive with regards to funding and in fact the community arts which they had been pressurised to fund, was for them problematically instrumental by having social aims. The point I want to make is that while the motivation and energy to create socially progressive alternatives, does not come through the availability of supportive resources to do so, it is significantly enabled by it. This is an obvious point, but what I want to do now is link this to that historical example whereby the local state *explicitly* attempted to do this. The current political context possibly makes this a pertinent time to revisit this and suggests avenues for future research.

In retrospect, the phenomenon of the 'radical' left labour administration for London (GLC), and to varying degrees in local authorities in different parts of London and Britain, during the 1980s, seems extraordinary given what followed. With the rise of Corbyn, just confirmed again as Labour party leader, the spectre of 'municipal socialism' is being resuscitated – 'for the 21st century'. Grassroots politics, socialist economics, co-operatives, community media – and digital democracy, are all on the agenda. The achievements, aspirations and bludgeoning of the 'radical councils' of the 1980s have inevitably returned as reference points. This suggests that it might be worth going back to look critically at how some of those 'radical' local state aims, policies and initiatives actually played out, what can be learnt about those attempts and how they might have resonance and use for the updating of those ideas in the contemporary and very different economic, social, political, spatial, and technological context of the current conjecture.

One specific line of enquiry given Corbyn's heralding of co-operatives – at the time of writing – and which a selection of the printshops could provide a case study for, is the impact of the

interventions by GLC's economic strategy unit GLEB (Greater London Enterprise Board) into London's co-operative printing scene. This has been briefly touched upon in the thesis, but there is considerable scope for development. GLEB, along with other municipal left economic development units such as DEED in Sheffield aimed to revive local industry in a socialist manner through the encouragement of 'job creating' worker co-operative sectors. Although they provided significant amounts of money and other forms of support, initial evidence not only suggests that those that received this proved to be no more sustainable than those that did not, but that it possibly had a destabilising effect on this sub-field as whole. While this issue were briefly raised in the late 1980s by two authors in particular (Newman 1987, Cornforth 1988), this was before the 'effects' of this intervention had really played out, therefore more work needs to be done to really explore this conundrum. Now I want to turn to more specific areas from the thesis that offer avenues for future exploration.

An issue that frequently emerged in the research and surfaced in various places but could not be adequately addressed in the thesis was that of membership. In the reflections on the methodology I wrote that the interviewee 'sample' had barely included printshop participants that came from 'outside the milieu', and this was a missing perspective in the thesis. There is research to be done here, not simply because of 'an omission' but for two other reasons. One is that the issue of recruitment was more generally, or became so in some presses, a 'political' issue in other ways, as we have seen briefly in the thesis and in my introduction. Consequently there is a wider topic here to be explored in this context, whereby taking on 'white men' from the trade was seen to undermine equal opportunities policies, however those 'policies' in themselves are worthy of unravelling. Secondly is that while in the study taking on people from 'outside the milieu' was presented, for reason of space, as purely to do with getting in the necessary skills, the picture was in fact more complex. In some presses it was not simply this. It also meant a step towards creating a printshop that did not exist as an alternative refuge of like minded souls, cut off from the 'real world' but that was a part it, showing that democratic self-management, a working environment of mutual respect and egalitarian relations was a genuinely viable way of working for everyone. This research would also be able to bring in the longer history of those two printshops that have 'survived' not least because of people from outside 'the milieu'.

Not entirely unrelatedly is there is also considerable scope for research that explicitly focuses on the issue of gender in the printshops, not only a closer look at the historical trajectory of women's printshops in relation to the women's movement but also how gender politics and gender issues played out in the ostensibly egalitarian 'mixed' printshops. The issue of what the printshops printed, and in certain cases generated, was also only dealt with in cursory manner. However if on the one hand the partial history that has been drawn here gave us one kind of lens of the narrative of a changing movement field, research

focused on more closely on the print material itself would give us another one. Through this issues of technology, skill and aesthetics would also become visible, along with the changing discourses of movements and of the changing populations of printshop users. Lastly, research into more printshops beyond London, is also clearly needed.

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Appendix A: Interview Consent Form

☐

Project Title: Radical Printshops (UK) 1968-90s >
Jess Baines j.baines@lse.ac.uk   07939 300 513
London School of Economics (LSE), Dept of Media & Communications (part time)

Consent for participation in interview research

This form outlines the rights of the interview participants in the above thesis research project that is being undertaken by Jess Baines. The project seeks to produce a historical analysis of the culturally and politically specific phenomena of the radical printshop collectives/co-ops that formed in late twentieth century UK. I have asked you to be interviewed because of your involvement in one or more of these organisations.

With your permission the interview will be audio-recorded and the entirety or parts of it transcribed. The researcher will do the transcription. The recording will only be heard by the researcher and only used the purposes of this research and kept in the researchers possession.

I, the interviewee, understand that:

1. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.
2. It is the right of the interviewee to decline to answer any question that she is asked.
3. The interviewee is free to end the interview at any time.
4. The interviewee may request that the interview not be audio-recorded.
5. The name and identity of the interviewee will remain confidential if requested (see below).

☐   I am willing to be identified in the thesis and related articles arising from this research.

☐   I do not want to be identified by name in the thesis and related articles arising from this research. My words may be quoted if they are made anonymous, as in "a former member of Sabot Press recalled that…" or if a pseudonym is used.

☐   I do not want to have my words directly associated with named printshops (as in the above example), however "a former member of one of the print co-ops said that…" is acceptable.

☐   *I would like a copy of the transcript that is produced from this interview.*

I HAVE READ THIS CONSENT FORM. I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND.

Signature of Interviewee   _____

Signature of Researcher   _____

Date   _____

If you wish to confirm that I am a research student at LSE feel free to contact media@lse.ac.uk or call the department administration on 020 7955 6490.

Appendix B: Sample Interview Topic Guide

Intro: Consent Form, intro to structure of interview and kinds of questions

Individual specific

What were the different print collectives you were involved with?

What roughly was the time period that you were doing this?

How did you get into it? What attracted you to it?

What sort of work or training/education had you done beforehand?

Did you have any print related skills beforehand?

Were you involved in any other political/feminist activities when you started and throughout?

What did you do at the various printshops? Did that change?

Skills/Org

How was the practical work organised at the various places you worked in terms of who did what? Were they very different to each other?

If non-specialised was that based on some sort of political ethos?

What was the attitude in the different places towards different skills, printing, design, repro, admin, book-keeping? Were some skills considered more important than others?

Did any of the presses you were involved in train workers? If training was done at any of the places, was it done in conjunction with any other organisations or institutions?

In general what are your memories of collective working? Did you feel that tasks and responsibility was equally shared? Did that vary significantly from place to place? What happened when it wasn't working? Do you think there were 'invisible hierarchies'?

WiP

How did you end up working at WiP?

How long were you there for?

Was being/becoming a printer part of being a feminist for you? If so in what ways?

How do you relate the experience of being in an all women collective to the mixed ones, what were the differences? Was it easier? More difficult in some ways?

What do you remember the difficulties being at WiP? Surviving etc?

Did WiP feel part of the womens movement? Connected to the various debates that when

on? How? Do you feel that WLM context of the press changed during the period you were involved? If so, how? And do you think this had a bearing on the press in some ways, and again if so in what ways?

Were there any conflicts when you were at WiP?

Was WiP connected with any specific womens's groups such as the Women in Printing Trades group or Women in Manual Trades or any groups that were campaigning for women in non-traditional trades? Did you feel part of that broad 'women doing mens jobs' movement?

Why did you leave?

Unions

Were any of the printshops you were in members of a print union? Were you?

What was the rationale for this?

Did it feel important to make a connection with the 'straight printing world'? Why?

What about Wapping? Did you support the pickets? Why?

Were the unions considered important in terms of helping women gain access to the (straight) printing trade?

Did your attitude towards unions (esp print unions) change during your time in print collectives?

Technology

Were you aware of any significant technological developments (that might relate to printing trade) while you were involved with print co-ops? Such as? Did other members seem to be? What were the attitudes? Interested? Resistant? How?

Aims/politics

Did any of the collectives seem to have specific political concerns or aims? Can you describe any of them? Did they seem to change across that 70s -80s period?

In the various collectives you worked in, were you aware of members other political involvements? What kind of activities/groups? And if so did they feed in?

Were there political differences amongst members at the various presses (e.g. around separatism/socialism etc at WiP), how did these play out – if at all?

How do you think the broader political/social/cultural context affected the various printshops you worked at?

What do you think changed during the time period you were involved that possibly made the context the printshops were surviving in different?

Afterwards

Why did you stop working in printing collectives?

Why do you think that so many printshop collectives folded? Do you think technology was a factor at all?

Are you surprised that all the women's printshops folded – pretty much by end of 1980s? Why do you think this might have been?

End of interview

Is there anything else you want to add? Vital insights..?

Appendix C: Printshop Interviewees

Abel, Janos. Interview with the author, London, 13 August 2016. Spider Web Offset.

Baird, Ian. Telephone interview with author. 7 April 2016. Aberdeen People's Press

Ball, Ali. Skype interview with the author, 24 August 2011. Blackrose Press.

Booth, Cath. Interview with the author, Manchester, 20 April 2011. Women in Print, Paupers Press, Blackrose Press, Trojan Press, Calverts Press.

Brill, Mark. Interview with the author, London, 23 September 2011. Trojan Press, Lithosphere.

Bruce, Jacquee. Interview with the author, London, 25 August 2011. See Red Women's Workshop, Lenthall Road Workshop.

Carey, Piers. Email interview with the author, 12 November 2012. Fly Press.

Cattrell, Charlie. Email interview with the author, 9 January 2013. Tyneside Free Press Workshop.

Chong, Da. Skype interview with the author, 27 September 2011. Women in Print.

Cooper, Angela. Interview with the author, Manchester, 23 July 2013. Moss Side Women's Press, Amazon Press.

Devreaux, Jaqui. Interview with the author, Sheffield, 2 October 2011. Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op.

Foster, Beryl. Interview with the author, London, 17 April 2013. Notting Hill Press.

Gard, Phillip. Interview with the author, London, 31 August 2012. Calverts Press.

Green, Phil. Interview with the author, London, 2 August 2011. Blackrose Press.

Grimes, Sarah. Email interview and correspondence with the author, 2009–12. Crest Press, Islington Community Press, Blackrose Press, Calverts Press.

Gwynn-Jones, Dave. Interview with the author, Sheffield, 25 September 2011. Crest Press, Islington Community Press, Trojan Press.

Halsall, Christine. Interview with the author, London, 4 October 2011. Poster Film Collective.

Harcup, Tony. Telephone interview with the author, 12 September 2013. Leeds Other Paper.

Hodder, Yael. Interview with the author, Bristol, 8 April 2011. See Red Women's Workshop.

Holland, Geoff. Interview with the author, London, 10 November 2011. Islington Community Press.

Kahumbu, Joy. Interview with the author, London, 15 September 2011. Lenthall Road Workshop.

Levy, Soreh. Interview with the author, Brighton, 19 August 2011. Women in Print.

Lyser. Skype interview with the author, 16 May 2011. Women in Print, Calverts Press, Lithosphere.

Mair, Leslie. Interview with the author, London, 13 April 2011. Moss Side Women's Press.

Marshall, Alan. Skype interview with the author, 10 February 2015. Aberdeen People's Press.

May, Sheila. Interview with the author, London, 29 September 2011. Women's printshop

Miles, Jonathan. Interview with the author, London, 20 September 2011. Poster Film Collective.

Millett, Sue. Interview with the author, London, 8 May 2013. Islington Community Press, Trojan Press, Lithosphere.

Moan, Chia. Email interview with the author, 30 June 2012. Lenthall Road Workshop.

Murray, Marie. Interview with the author, London, 18 September 2011. Self-help community printshop.

Osborne, Jess. Interview with the author, Sheffield, 2 October 2011. Open Road Printing Co-op, Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op.

Palmer, Nicola. Interview with the author, London, 3 April 2012. Calverts Press.

Parker, Debbie. Interview with the author, London, 17 May 2012. Service printers.

Pennington, Jim. Interview with the author, London, 4 November 2011. Lithosphere.

Pollard, Ingrid. Interview with the author, London, 16 May 2011. Lenthall Road Workshop.

Robinson, Anne. Interview with the author, London, 1 November 2011. See Red Women's Workshop.

Rose, Charlie. Interview with the author, London, 19 December 2011. Union Place Resource Centre.

Rose, Mick. Telephone interview with the author, 5 October 2013, Leeds Community Press.

Santer, Paul. Interview with the author, London, 29 June 2012. Calverts Press.

Scott, Sylvia. Interview with the author, London, 19 September 2011. Two service printers.

Scrivener, Char. Interview with the author, London, 2 September 2011. Ramoth Prints, Calverts Press.

Shulman, Sheila. Interview with the author, London, 14 April 2011. Onlywomen Press Printers.

Smith, Jenny. Email interview with the author, 24 April 2012. Lenthall Road Workshop.

Somerset, Jo. Interview with the author, London, 18 April 2011. Moss Side Women's Press.

Sorba, Steve. Interview with the author, London, 22 February 2013. Aldgate Press.

Swash, Tony. Interview with the author, London, 22 September 2011. Trojan Press.

Swingler, Richard. Interview with the author, London, 1 September 2011 Fly Press, Blackrose Press, Calverts Press, Union Place Resource Centre,.

Thirlaway, Chrissy. Interview with the author, London, 23 August 2011. Fly Press.

Tod, Harriet. Email interview with the author, 7 April 2012. Lenthall Road Workshop.

Todd, Chris. Interview with the author, London, 30 September 2011. Stepney Community Printshop, Blackrose Press, Little A, Union Place Resource Centre,

Tompsett, Fabian. Interview with the author, London, 14 September 2011. Rye Express, Little A, Union Place Resource Centre.

Walker, Rick. Interview with the author, London, 22 August 2011. Whitechapel Press, Greenwich Mural Workshop.

Waterhouse, Tony. Correspondence with the author, March–May 2013. Calverts Press, Spider Web Offset.

Whellens, Siôn. Interview with the author, London, 15 December 2011. Little A, Calverts Press.

Whisker, Brenda. Interview with the author, Hebden Bridge, 9 May 2011. Onlywomen Press Printers.

Whitbread, Chris. Interview with the author, London, 3 April 2013. Islington Community Press.

Williams, Paul. Interview with the author, London, 21 September 2011. Fly Press, Union Place Resource Centre.

Wilson, Rebecca. Interview with the author, London, 31 July 2011. Lenthall Road Workshop.

Winter, Sue. Interview with the author, Brighton, 19 August 2011. See Red Women's Workshop.

Appendix D: radicalprintshops.org

Above: wiki home page (screenshot)

Below: example of printshop page on wiki (screenshot)