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City limits: sexual politics and the new urban left in 1980s Sheffield

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ABSTRACT

In the 1980s Sheffield had a vibrant political milieu made up of labour and new social movement activists who were variously supported by a left-wing Labour-led City Council. Sheffield City Council developed their own form of local socialism which fed into the ideas of the new urban left and left-wing thinkers like Stuart Hall and his contemporaries at *Marxism Today*. Sheffield City Council was interested in uniting class and identity politics in a form of political renewal; however, both the Council and the city's dominant labour movement preferred to focus on material concerns. Sheffield's politics was energetic but inchoate and messy. Whilst the Council and labour movement made supportive links with peace, anti-apartheid and women's movements, certain groups were left on the outside. Uniting class and identity over gay politics proved a bridge too far. This article explores Sheffield's gay politics to show how left-wing solidarity in the city broke down. Sheffield's new urban left found its limits in the arena of gay politics.

KEYWORDS

Homosexuality; Sheffield; 1980s; labour; politics

In 2014, Matthew Warchus' film *Pride* appeared in British cinemas telling the story of how a small group of lesbians and gay men in London formed Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners; raising money for and building friendships with a mining community in Wales. *Pride* gives what was a complex, sometimes fraught, and intensely political alliance the 'feel-good British comedy' treatment.¹ Frequently mentioned in the same sentence as other films about mine closure and the 1984–1985 miners' strike such as *Brassed Off* (1996) and *Billy Elliot* (2000), *Pride* struck a chord with most reviewers in the centre-left press. Some reviewers celebrated the gains made by gay men and lesbians since the 1980s, while others seemed resigned to the failure of the strike and class politics thereafter.² The *Guardian's* Mark Kermode, a critic with a self-confessed 'banner-carrying, badge-wearing' past as a student activist, wrote that *Pride* 'reminds us of a time when things were more black-and-white—when the venality of Thatcher's government asked everyone Which Side Are You On?'³ This is something Warchus was consciously trying to portray. He wrote that the film's portrayal of 'the power of unity' was 'refreshing' and 'proof of how far we have drifted'.⁴ What Kermode saw in *Pride* and what Warchus put there is the notion that the left-wing politics of the 1980s had a sense of solidarity that is missing today, and that the left would do well to recover it.

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This analysis of *Pride* partly comes from nostalgia. This is not unique to the left, as right-wing responses to the 2011 Thatcher biopic *The Iron Lady* showed. Despite Toby Young's insistence in the *Daily Mail* that *The Iron Lady* is 'the only exception' to a 'disgraceful series of truth-twisting films' recently produced on the 1980s, the film glossed over the decade's politics in favour of presenting Thatcher as a sympathetic post-feminist heroine, rather than the divisive figure she was and still is.⁵ Yet behind the nostalgia, there is a danger that these simplified versions of events will become ingrained in public memory. In doing so they may silence those who did not experience solidarity and encourage activists today to think that solidarity and intersectionality come easily. Not to do *Pride* a disservice; there are moments of tension between the two groups where hesitation and hostility are expressed on both sides. Yet, at the heart of the film is the notion that the mining community and LGSM accepted each other because of 'bigger concepts of generosity and compassion'.⁶ For some this may reflect an emotional truth but it also cleanses the story of political machinations.

Mark Ashton, who headed LGSM, is shown in *Pride* deciding to collect for the miners at the 1984 Pride parade on a sympathetic whim. In contrast, Ashton had a history of linking his socialist and sexual politics. He hung a red flag from his window in honour of Pride in 1983, tabled motions on gay rights at meetings of the Young Communist League, and became the first out gay General Secretary of the YCL in 1985.⁷ Friends have stated in interviews that Ashton was a politically savvy socialist who planned LGSM with the intention of gaining National Union of Mineworkers support for gay rights at Labour Party conferences; a plan that seemed successful when the Labour Party conference formally adopted gay rights in 1985 and confirmed support in 1986.⁸ Likewise, the miners in *Pride* are shown to mishear who is offering the initial donation due to a dodgy telephone line, but as Diarmaid Kelliher explains; by the 1984–1985 strike financial solidarity was welcome and more achievable than expecting other threatened industries to strike in solidarity.⁹ Furthermore, Kermode suggests that due to the 'conciliatory and celebratory' tone of *Pride*, we 'laugh with ... rather than at' the separatist organisation Lesbians Against Pit Closures.¹⁰ But this act of even gentle ridicule ignores the real issues that some lesbian women had with sharing political spaces with men that led to the formation of separatist groups.¹¹ It further ignores the debates that followed on whether separatism was the correct course of action, or if it was more valuable to remain in male-dominated movements to fight sexism from within.¹²

As Lucy Robinson argues, Lesbian and Gays Support the Miners was 'unrepresentative' of how gay rights movements and the wider left engaged with one another in post-war Britain.¹³ LGSM was on the whole a 'refreshingly positive' campaign in that it allowed lesbians and gay men to campaign for a socialist cause without denying their lesbian and gay identities.¹⁴ LGSM's support was not just acknowledged but reciprocated by the miners when they led the 1985 Pride March. Yet Robinson suggests that this event has been used by the left to 'wipe clean its slate on the politics of sexuality', and in some ways the unproblematised version of solidarity expressed in the film *Pride* attempts the same revisionism. But while LGSM was a specific moment when class and identity politics were unified, the sense of unity did not last far beyond the campaign and nor was it widespread during the campaign. Although Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners groups developed in London, Huddersfield, York, Leicester, Southampton, Nottingham, Bournemouth, Brighton, Manchester, Glasgow and Edinburgh, the positive effects of LGSM did not reach other cities, and kept clear of Sheffield.¹⁵ In the 1980s Sheffield City Council engaged with a new urban left politics which attempted to unite class and identity politics through initiatives such as positive action on

race and gender.¹⁶ Council-leader David Blunkett even invited Stuart Hall, an advocate of this approach, to speak at the first of Sheffield Council's Marx Memorial Lecture series, describing him as 'a great thinker ... real, high level intellectual thinking'.¹⁷ Despite this, David Blunkett refused LGSM's request for funding towards a documentary of their campaign, deeming it an 'inappropriate' use of funds.¹⁸ Uniting class and identity over gay politics proved a bridge too far for Blunkett and the City Council. This article explores Sheffield's gay politics to show how left-wing solidarity in the city broke down. Sheffield's new urban left found its limits in the arena of gay politics.

Robinson argues that activist groups were 'constrained by *either class or identity*', with their subjectivities organised in what she terms a 'hierarchy of victimhood'.¹⁹ The structure of this hierarchy differed for each activist. Gay activists increasingly placed their need for safe expression of their sexual identity at the top, whilst members of the labour movement continued to focus on class politics and material issues; deeming the collective more important than sexuality which was often considered to be a private matter of individual rights rather than a political identity. As such, gay activists would frequently focus on gay identity politics, whether within workplace campaigns or in the social and pastoral sphere. Their reluctance to share spaces and campaigns with other movements stemmed from both a lack of interest; in issues and organisational structures, and from negative past experiences of working with left-wing organisations.²⁰ Likewise, despite limited support from trade unions for workplace campaigns, Sheffield's labour movement avoided involvement with gay politics. Stephen Brooke has highlighted how campaigns for sexual rights are examples of material as well as post-material politics, whereby the 'economic and social basis of material life is connected to sexual orientation rather than class'.²¹ This was reflected in workplace campaigns, yet when it came to building a more wide-reaching movement, the material conditions were often overshadowed by identity. Sheffield City Council found the occasional request for funding from lesbian and gay organisations especially problematic in the latter half of the 1980s as it tried to distance itself from the 'loony left' reputation of the Greater London Council under the increased scrutiny of local government finance. In 1980s Sheffield, lesbian and gay identity politics was where subjectivity trumped solidarity. This was partly because of rising homophobia and constraints to local government funding, but it was also because Sheffield's labour movement failed to recognise the political significance of sexual identity at a moment when left-wing gay activists were turning more fully towards it.

Gay rights activism in Sheffield

The politics of class and the politics of sexuality are emblematic of the problems and themes of movements coming together and the barriers which derailed the building of coherent political projects. Often, solidarity was not the same as subjectivity, and likewise, a shared subjectivity did not always lead to solidarity between activists. While this is the case for many involved in single issue movements, it was particularly acute in the politics of gay rights in the 1970s and 1980s. For a start gay politics was not always left-wing. *Checkmate*, the Checkers Society 'guide to the gay community' in Sheffield, included five 'political' organisations catering to gay people, though none were based in Sheffield; the Liberal Gay Action Group, the Gay Social Democrats, the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, the Conservative Group for Homosexual Equality, and the National Council of Civil Liberties.²² While four of these groups could be broadly categorised as left-leaning, the Conservative group could

not. Despite later attacks on homosexuality, such as Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act which directed that no local authority should 'promote homosexuality' or the 'acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship', being gay and Conservative were far from incompatible in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Indeed some affluent gay professionals 'content with the rights they had' did not see the need to campaign further.²³ Others enjoyed the rise of a 'macho homosexuality' and culture of clubbing associated with the early years of Thatcherism.²⁴ Hugh David argues that it was the Thatcher government's failure to respond quickly and adequately to AIDS which caused many gay men to 'lose faith in Thatcherism' and to react against conservatism within the gay community.²⁵ Indeed, whereas 1000 people marched at Pride in 1977, the number had risen to 10,000 by Pride 1985.²⁶ The newly radicalised, however, were not necessarily left-wing and AIDS-related organisations including the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT-UP) often described themselves as 'non-partisan'.²⁷

For those that were left-wing, bringing together gay politics and class-based politics was also not a simple matter. As Lucy Robinson has shown in her history of gay men and the left, throughout the 1970s and much of the 1980s, the Marxist left and members of the wider labour movement viewed homosexuality as a 'bourgeois deviation' which would fade in the face of socialism.²⁸ As a result of this gay activists involved in left-wing campaigns often side-lined their sexuality in favour of socialism. When the wider left did focus on the politics of sexuality responses varied. Some were negative, as seen in the homophobic treatment of Peter Tatchell in the 1983 Bermondsey by-election; some were considered to be nothing more than 'window-dressing', as with the Anti-Nazi League; and some, in the case of the Greater London Council, were aimed at the co-option of grassroots activists.²⁹ From this perspective, gay politics and socialism could seem incongruent if not irreconcilable, yet there were gay socialists who fought against this perspective to bring the two together.

Bob Cant and Nigel Young of the Gay Left Collective explained how initiatives like the Gay Workers Movement attempted to reconcile dual commitments to gay liberation and to socialism by attempting to create a 'new anti-sexist' workplace culture.³⁰ This involved making alliances with heterosexual people who were also 'oppressed by the dominant pattern of heterosexism'. These were identified by Cant and Young as single parents, disabled people, young and old people, and women who refused to conform to stereotypical roles.³¹ But working within the labour movement required gay activists to engage with politics on terms set by the labour movement. Cant and Young described how 'to get a motion accepted, there must be gays who are good at public speaking, who are respected enough for their other trade-union work to be delegated to district and national meetings'.³² This required activists to immerse themselves in trade union politics, risking becoming 'distant' from the gay community. For Cant and Young, the very structures of the labour movement were alien to many gay activists who had come to politics in autonomous, liberational movements. Gay activists were used to fighting against the oppression of their community and lifestyle, rather than against exploitation by employers or the state.³³ Furthermore the act of bringing the concepts of oppression and exploitation together was complicated by the middle class nature of gay subculture. Because of this, Cant and Young argued that gay socialists organising in the wider gay community could not have the same relationship to class as the rest of the political left.³⁴ Despite these challenges, many gay socialists recognised that linking the politics of exploitation and oppression was 'a precondition of socialism' and set about trying to achieve this in the labour movement and in gay politics.³⁵

Uniting these politics however was not straight-forward, and meant different things to different organisations. For example, in 1975 Bradford Gay Liberation Front spoke of integrating working class people more fully into the gay rights movement at the Campaign for Homosexual Equality conference held in Sheffield. Bradford GLF acknowledged the socialist criticisms of gay liberation as a movement of the 'petty bourgeois', but countered that it was 'stupid' to say the fight of the working class was more important than that of gay people because exploitation and social oppression were 'all tangled up together'.³⁶ Yet they recognised that class was important to the gay rights movement, not just because of the significant number of working class gay people in their community, but because they saw class consciousness as 'the lynch pin of radical activity in Britain'.³⁷ Despite this though, Bradford GLF were wary of engaging with the labour movement, preferring to link up with the more structurally similar squatters' rights groups and the women's movement with whom they claimed to share solidarity. Furthermore, they argued that they could only change negative attitudes within the labour movement by acting 'thoroughly independent[ly]' of it. Bradford GLF advocated growing a local working class gay community who would fight issues of job security, police intimidation, and landlord harassment alongside community groups and the labour movement, but would stand separately because 'what we do comes from our own demands and our own needs'.³⁸ Bradford GLF would give and accept 'active support' from other movements, but not 'sympathy' or 'false unity'.³⁹ For Bradford GLF, subjectivity trumped solidarity but the importance of class meant that solidarity formed a complex part of their politics.

The complexities of class politics and sexual politics can also be seen in the Gay Rights At Work campaign (GRAW). GRAW was a London-based organisation that campaigned for parity in the way heterosexual and gay workers were treated; fighting for compassionate leave to be granted to workers with same-sex partners, and raising awareness of and supporting individuals who had been fired for being gay. GRAW held their 1981 conference in Sheffield, with the financial support of fifty-seven sponsors including branches of the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO), the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF), the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) and the Sheffield branch of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW). As this suggests, GRAW worked closely with trade unions, and managed to make links with Sheffield's labour movement. Indeed the GRAW slogan was 'Defend your union'. It appeared on their 1981 conference poster, which depicted workers marching within the pink triangle of the gay movement on a black background. The pink triangle had been reclaimed from Nazi concentration camps and was later utilised in the 'Silence = Death' campaigns around AIDS in the late 1980s, which also used a pink triangle on a black background.⁴⁰

Visually the two posters are strikingly similar, yet their slogans could not be more different both in tone and in the message they presented. GRAW's 'Defend your union' placed it firmly within trade union politics, and made solidarity with the unions its main campaign tool. 'Defend your union', it stated, 'and your union will defend you' was implied. Coming later, amidst the AIDS epidemic and both the Thatcher and Reagan governments' inadequate responses to it, 'Silence = Death' was a much stronger, angrier, more desperate slogan. It suggested those living with AIDS and members of the gay community who were at risk needed to speak for themselves because no one else would, with tragic alternatives. Indeed, Robinson argues that AIDS inspired a 're-ascendancy' of gay activism that went beyond participation in 'other people's causes'.⁴¹ Gay activists saw the need for self-defence against

attacks from the political right and left, which by the late 1980s had 'burnt bridges' with gay activists. This was illustrated by the Labour Party front bench joining the Conservative majority to support the passing of Section 28 without a vote.⁴² Even in 1981, GRAW's campaign strategy did not go uncriticised by gay activists at the Sheffield conference. A report of the conference recorded that one woman argued that 'Gay rights is about humanising people... it's not just about taking on board another trade union issue'.⁴³ Furthermore, a number of activists suggested that GRAW was too focused on working with trade unions and the labour movement, and did not listen enough to gay rights organisations.⁴⁴ This problem was shared by the Gay Workers' Movement in the 1970s, which also had to contend with accusations that it was a front for the International Marxist Group. Campaigner Gregg Blachford noted that 'often other gays are totally against us and we are ignored by most of the revolutionary left'.⁴⁵ With GWM and GRAW we can see gay rights movements which worked firmly within left-wing and labour movement territories, yet their grassroots activists struggled to unite labour and gay politics.

In the mid-1980s the majority of Sheffield's gay activism was deemed non-political, and gay groups organised independently of Sheffield's wider radical milieu. The focus of Sheffield's gay rights movement was on creating a gay community and establishing safe spaces for gay people to socialise with one another. The Sheffield branch of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) hosted the annual CHE conferences in 1975 and 1982 where wider issues were discussed. The 1975 conference, attended by 1200 delegates, called for the Trades Union Congress to 'revise its anti-discrimination code to include the category of sexual orientation'.⁴⁶ The smaller 1982 conference, repackaged as 'Gayfest '82', organised its four hundred delegates into workshops discussing 'Gay Rights and the Labour Party', 'Sexism in the Gay Movement' and political issues such as law reform.⁴⁷ Matt Cook suggests that generally CHE was an ineffective political organisation. Rather its successes in the 1970s were social and pastoral; evidenced in the development of discos and counselling services.⁴⁸ This was the case in Sheffield, and Sheffield CHE was behind one of the largest gay discos in Britain having fought hard for the right to use Council premises such as the Civic Hall as venues.⁴⁹ Yet for Terry Sanderson, a gay activist who grew up in neighbouring Rotherham, these discos were inherently political. Sanderson wrote that 'the concept of "gay community" was born in Sheffield through those discos'. The establishment of spaces where 'romance could be safely experienced' was both a radical act and answering a key demand.⁵⁰ As Jeffrey Weeks has suggested, the establishment of a community helped to construct gay subjectivity through action. Community stood 'for some notion of solidarity, a solidarity which empowers and enables, and makes individual and social action possible'.⁵¹ Participation in a gay community gave gay people, political or not, space to articulate their identity, develop a 'vocabulary of values' of what issues were important to them, and learn skills which could be used in later campaigning.⁵² This was significant on a political and personal level, as 68-year old CHE delegate Trevor Thomas, who found himself quoted in *The Sheffield Star* in 1975, recalled; 'I was out, and could not have been more obviously out... I've summed it up in the phrase that three days in Sheffield did more for me than three years on Valium'.⁵³ In this way, the social and pastoral activism of gay communities was personal, but also inherently political.

In 1980 Sheffield CHE rebranded itself as the Checkers Society, and in 1983 reconstituted itself into a campaigning arm (Sheffield CHE) and a social arm (Checkers Society). The Checkers Society flourished, forming a Gay Community Council in 1984 to avoid the

duplication of social events and 'to speak with a united voice on matters of local and national concern to gays'.⁵⁴ Representing groups such as Sheffield Friend, Sheffield Lesbian Line, Sheffield Gayphone (all counselling and information services), Paulinus (for gay Roman Catholics), the Samaritans, Gay Christian Movement, Parents Enquiry, GLAD-Gay Legal Advice, Sheffield CHE, Gay Switchboard, and Group B (for gay men with Hepatitis B); the Gay Community Council continued to construct a gay community in Sheffield. Checkers Society discos grew in popularity. In May 1984 the Society celebrated the attendance of 6000 gay people at their discos since January, and predicted many more as their total for 1983 was 11,081.⁵⁵ The Checkers Society was saving to open a Gay Centre in Sheffield, but they also used the profits from discos to subscribe to the National Council of Civil Liberties and to support Sheffield Friend. In 1984 the Society gave a donation to St Luke's Hospice in Sheffield which may have been caring for patients with HIV and AIDS.⁵⁶

Sheffield Gayphone, set up in 1980, was also an important part of the gay community in Sheffield; providing a phone line for gay people to ring for counselling or advice. In 1984–1985 they received 721 calls, which rose to 850 in 1985–1986. In 1985–1986, 23 per cent of calls were for counselling and 31 per cent were asking for information. A further 3 per cent of calls were specifically about AIDS, 6 per cent were abusive or hoax calls, and a startling 26 per cent were silent.⁵⁷ While there is no way of knowing the intent behind the silent calls, it is clear that Sheffield Gayphone provided a visible place for gay people to receive counselling and advice anonymously whatever their needs or motivations. Members of Sheffield Gayphone also contributed to a Workers' Educational Association course on 'Gay Studies', and by 1986 began to discuss setting up support groups for gay people with AIDS.⁵⁸ The overwhelming majority of callers to Sheffield Gayphone were male (see Table 1). It is possible that Sheffield's lesbian and bisexual women were calling Lesbian Line, a support line for women, but the dominance of men was commonplace in Sheffield's gay community. The Checkers Society management committee was made up of seven men and three women and all of the volunteers for Sheffield Friend were men.⁵⁹ This was a familiar pattern across Britain's gay communities with many lesbian women choosing to organise autonomously or with the Women's Liberation Movement instead.⁶⁰ Despite various calls from within and outside of CHE and the GLF to address sexism within the movement this did not change. Throughout the 1980s Sheffield Gayphone attracted no more female callers and instead focussed their energies on AIDS. They developed an AIDS support group with funding from the Terrence Higgins Trust and worked with South Yorkshire Action on AIDS and the AIDS Forum to develop strategies for raising awareness.⁶¹ South Yorkshire Action on AIDS was described as being particularly important for raising awareness of AIDS in Yorkshire; 'not just in London—it's here now'.⁶²

Throughout the 1980s, Sheffield's gay community focussed on offering support and safe spaces to gay people in various aspects of their lives; through discos, counselling and information services, and support groups. Whilst this was political it was a different kind of

Table 1. Callers to Sheffield Gayphone, 1984–1987.

Year	Male	Female	Unidentified	Total no. callers
1984–85	461	50	210	721
1985–86	587	43	220	850
1986–87	442	20	107	569

Note: HCA/EPHEMERA/702 Sheffield Gay Phone, 1985–1987; Sheffield Gay Phone Annual Report, 1984–1987.

activism to that of the rest of Sheffield's radical milieu. Organising around AIDS did radicalise Sheffield's gay activists further however. By 1990 some had formed a Sheffield branch of ACT-UP; a non-partisan group which used non-violent direct action to campaign for increased medical research, public education and treatment for AIDS, and an end to discrimination against people living with AIDS.⁶³ The Sheffield group held an Aidsline stall on Fargate for World AIDS Day and started their direct action campaign by picketing Texaco petrol stations over their practice of mandatory HIV testing for employees. They used slogans such as 'No blood for Texaco' and 'Texaco wants to know: do you have HIV?' which they claimed had a 'very positive response from car drivers ... many of whom about turned and took their custom elsewhere.'⁶⁴ Sheffield ACT-UP also used the 'Silence = Death' slogan, which was stitched onto their marching banner. However, they made more use of the other half of the slogan, 'Action = Life', which represented their 'commitment to direct action.'⁶⁵ In accordance with the wider ACT-UP movement, Sheffield ACT-UP aimed to turn fear, grief and anger into action. Writing that the 'current climate of fear, prejudice and ignorance surrounding AIDS, ARC, and HIV makes easy partnerships with racism, sexism, homophobia', they called for anyone who was 'angry' to 'join us and let your voice be heard.'⁶⁶ More explicitly, in a letter between members Alison Groombridge and Sarah Spanton, Groombridge asked Spanton to publicise future meetings 'especially amongst heterosexual friends' to ensure the group's survival.⁶⁷ By linking homophobia to racism and sexism, and calling on heterosexual support, Sheffield ACT-UP attempted to speak to Sheffield's wider radical milieu. Furthermore, they addressed issues that were surfacing within the gay community, responding to men like 'Steve' who told the Sheffield AIDS Education Project that 'Black people get blamed for AIDS ... The gay community should definitely think about all the racism more seriously.'⁶⁸

However, despite the trade union membership of some ACT-UP members—press releases were written on the back of Graphical Paper and Media Union ballot papers—Sheffield ACT-UP did not engage with the labour movement. Furthermore, their headquarters was located at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Society at Sheffield University's Students' Union at Western Bank, and they preferred to meet at Western Bank ('because it's free!!') or the Nelson Mandela Building at Sheffield Polytechnic Students' Union on Pond Street.⁶⁹ They also engaged with ACT-UP movements in other cities such as Leeds and Manchester. It was noted that Leeds 'has a stronger tradition of lefty/subversive/political commitment', perhaps referring to the radical milieu around Leeds University which had been integral to the development of revolutionary feminism.⁷⁰ Rather than making use of other activist spaces in the city such as the Common ground Resources Centre, Sheffield ACT-UP preferred to organise around existing student spaces, and valued the radical University milieu over the labour movement and Sheffield's wider politics.

Due to the focus on social and pastoral causes, and then on self-defence, Sheffield's gay activism was isolated from the wider activist milieu in the city, with other, earlier gay organisations preferring to organise around the universities as well. Gay students in the Sheffield Students Lesbian and Gay Society and the Sheffield City Polytechnic Gay Soc made some attempts to link up with other organisations in the city; discussing the role of women and promoting Anti-Apartheid boycotts.⁷¹ But for the most part that solidarity was not returned. Support, especially from the labour movement, was minimal. Equally the gay rights movement rarely engaged with the labour movement. Sheffield City Council welcomed the CHE conference with a £1000 civic reception in 1975, and allowed them to use the Cathedral forecourt for a demonstration despite complaints from the Cathedral authorities.⁷² But on

that occasion CHE was bringing an estimated £60,000 worth of trade to the city, and the Council recognised the economic benefits.⁷³ When the National Front took offence to the CHE conference and put up posters condemning homosexuality, they were criticised by a number of Labour councillors.⁷⁴ This was part of a larger response to the National Front rather than explicit support of gay rights, but it was still a significant intervention. In the 1970s the anti-fascist movement was slow to come to the defence of gay men attacked by the National Front. Despite CHE's regular donations to the Anti-Nazi League, the ANL offered little active support when the NF attacked CHE meetings and offices.⁷⁵ This lack of support spread to the wider left. There was no anti-fascist coalition in Bermondsey when the National Front published Peter Tatchell's home address on their campaign leaflets and encouraged their supporters to 'question Mr. Tatchell more closely about his views'.⁷⁶

Yet Sheffield City Council's support of gay politics was severely limited compared to that of the Greater London Council. In 1982, Sheffield City Council granted Sheffield Gayphone fifty pounds for installation and line rental.⁷⁷ In comparison, that year the GLC founded a Gay Working Party, who went on to produce *Changing the World: A London Charter for Gay and Lesbian Rights* in 1985, and in 1984 granted lesbian and gay groups £300,000 in funding and designated a further £750,000 for a lesbian and gay community centre.⁷⁸ In Sheffield, the local branch of NALGO reported in March 1986 that the City Council's Equal Opportunities Code of Practice would, for the first time, make 'specific reference' to sexuality in support of lesbians and gay men, possibly in response to the national Labour Party's conference commitments on gay rights.⁷⁹ Sheffield City Council appeared to be broadly sympathetic to gay rights, but offered very little in the way of active, or indeed pro-active, support. Clive Betts, a councillor and later MP, remembers Enid Hattersley, a Labour councillor and Lord Mayor of Sheffield in the early 1980s, saying that though she had nothing against homosexuals she would not 'bend over backwards to help them'.⁸⁰ While Betts, a gay man himself, finds humour in this statement, it was indicative of how many in the labour movement, especially the older generation, felt towards gay rights and gay people.

This reticence, as Lucy Robinson's work suggests, was due to wider problems and a longer history of integrating gay politics and the left, but Helen Smith's recent work on northern sexualities sheds further light on the labour movement's reluctance to engage with gay politics. Smith explains that throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century attitudes towards men having sex with men among the working class in Yorkshire were generally tolerant. Smith attributes this to the prevalence of a homosocial culture in male-dominated heavy industry and Richard Hoggart's notion of a working class 'unidealistic tolerance'; a 'mind your own business' attitude born of hardship which allowed people to take what pleasure they could in their private lives.⁸¹ However, this tolerance had a limit. It was based upon sex between men remaining a private and unarticulated behaviour.⁸² Smith argues that the 'vacuum of language' that existed around sexuality in working class communities into the 1940s and 1950s gave some men the freedom to have sex with men without it influencing their identity or masculinity.⁸³ In parts of Yorkshire where working class masculinity was tied to heavy industry, such as Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham, men who had sex with men socialised through work and pubs rather than the identifiable gay subcultures seen in cities like London and Birmingham.⁸⁴ Smith shows the importance of work to identity; citing many cases where men on trial for having sex with men were vouched for by their colleagues and trade unions. Their identities as 'good workers' overrode their sexual practice. Sex between men was tolerated as long as it was not the main feature of a man's sense of

self. This culture proved untenable for some men, like the aforementioned Terry Sanderson, who wanted to engage with their sexuality openly and publicly and saw it as integral to their identity. However, for many northern working class men this 'was a desirable way of life and they could react negatively when gay rights activists attempted to politicise and publicise sex between men.'⁸⁵

The decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1967 and rising affluence eroded this attitude. Greater visibility and a more fixed perception of homosexuality in the popular media brought the notion of men having sex with men and what that might mean out of the private sphere. Affluence altered the homosocial culture of the industrial workplace with many men choosing to spend leisure time at home and with their families rather than with male friends.⁸⁶ However, aspects of these attitudes remained, especially in places like Sheffield where industries such as steel survived into the 1970s and early 1980s. The effects of tolerance and its limits can be seen on Sheffield's sexual politics. Terry Sanderson remembers facing jeers from heterosexual working class men every time he entered the King William pub in Sheffield in the 1970s to visit the gay pub upstairs. While this was a horrible and alienating experience for Sanderson, Smith notes that such jeering had its roots in earlier workplace 'banter' experienced by men who had sex with men which expressed an awkward form of acceptance rather than hostility.⁸⁷ Without denying Sanderson's reading of the situation, it should be noted that gay men were allowed continued use of the room in the King William. They were never asked to leave and nor were they shut down by the police. Compared to Lesbian Line's removal from the Royal Standard pub in the 1980s after complaints were made about women kissing, customers in the King William showed a level of tolerance.⁸⁸ However, gay activists demanded more than tolerance and set up Checkers and later the Women's Cultural Club as safe spaces to socialise. The development of an emerging gay identity could go towards explaining some of Sheffield Gayphone's silent calls in the 1980s as men who had sex with men perhaps struggled to articulate a newly acknowledged gay identity.

The King William pub and Enid Hattersley's comments suggest that in the 1970s and early 1980s there was still a tolerance of gay people among Sheffield's working class and the labour movement, as long as it was a quiet, unarticulated homosexuality. The 1980s eroded this tolerance further, bringing an increase in homophobia, reinforcement of the cultural understanding of homosexuality as a threat through Section 28 and the government and media's response to AIDS, and the sexualisation of local government. Despite Stephen Brooke's argument that the Labour Party's commitment in 1985 and 1986 to fight for equality on the basis of sexual orientation was a 'massive sea-change' in the Party's attitude to sexuality that should not be underestimated, these resolutions did not launch a new drive towards sexual equality in Sheffield.⁸⁹ Rather, Sheffield City Council continued to distance itself from gay politics, only engaging when it had to. In response to Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act, Sheffield City Council agreed that they would 'oppose Clause 28 of the Local Government Bill... and support the campaign launched by various organisations against the Clause.'⁹⁰ That support never materialised. They did send a member of the Policy Committee to attend a seminar in Manchester organised by the Association of Local Authorities and the Local Government Information Unit to discuss the legal issues.⁹¹ For Sheffield City Council, the legal issues of Section 28 overshadowed the concerns of gay activists. As Sheffield Film Officer Dave Godin told *The Sheffield Star*: 'I am worried ... there is a grey legal area here. It is a threat to civil liberties, and like all censorship it is ultimately the censorship of ideas. There is a whiff of fascism about it.'⁹² While speaking of 'censorship'

and 'fascism' there was no mention of sexuality. The Labour Group in Sheffield, like the wider Labour Party, made Section 28 into an issue of individual rights rather than gay rights.⁹³ Gay rights was not a popular cause outside of gay and left-wing communities, and was seen as too risky for a Labour Group recovering from rate-capping to engage with. Indeed, in 1983, 62 per cent of people were against gay relationships. This rose to 69 per cent in 1985 and reached 74 per cent in 1987 in the wake of the moralising hysteria around AIDS.⁹⁴ Prosecutions for 'homosexual offences' reached a level in the 1980s not seen since 1954, before decriminalisation, and incidents of 'queer-bashing' increased 'dramatically'.⁹⁵

For Sheffield City Council and the Labour Group, gay rights were neither a priority nor popular with the electorate. This position was exacerbated by the association of gay politics with the 'loony left' and profligate Labour councils sensationalised in right-wing media. Brooke notes that the tabloid press and Conservative think tanks 'sexualised, or homosexualised' local government rates by invariably linking high spending to grants made to gay organisations.⁹⁶ Brooke suggests that local government was negatively identified with the perceived sexual and moral 'excess of gay and lesbian rights'.⁹⁷ Robinson concurs, suggesting that the GLC's support of lesbian and gay organisations served as a justification for its abolition.⁹⁸ Sheffield City Council was at pains not to be tarred with the same brush as the GLC and the Militant-led Liverpool City Council, and this can be seen in their campaign against rate-capping. The campaign in Sheffield was run under the slogan 'Sheffield Against Rate Capping for the Right Reasons'. This articulated that there were 'right' reasons; protecting jobs and essential services such as luncheon clubs for pensioners, and 'wrong' reasons; blind opposition to central government and funding 'loony' or wasteful projects.

In May 1985 Sheffield City Council set a legal rate and planned a programme of budget cuts to meet a shortfall of £12 million.⁹⁹ By 1988, the local authority was still in a difficult financial position, and Sheffield residents were feeling a squeeze on their services. In response to a £340 grant towards the Young Lesbian Group, one Sheffield 'Socialist and miner' wrote to *The Sheffield Star* to complain;

I am angry every time ... a Labour-controlled council... [make] a grant to a lesbian group or a homosexual group. These people have chosen their way through life themselves and so should provide their own funds... there are many other more important causes in this country to support

such as health and education services.¹⁰⁰ Two months later, after Sheffield City Council backtracked on a proposed £200 grant to the Lesbian Extravaganza of South Yorkshire, another Sheffield resident wrote;

Lesbians, like homosexuals, have chosen their way of life and, of course, are quite within their rights, but it should be kept under wraps and not publicised and promoted as being 'quite natural'. It ... is nothing to be proud of.¹⁰¹

A third woman commented that she 'would strongly object to the funding of any such groups coming out of my rates'.¹⁰² What is clear from these letters is that in the late 1980s, the issue of local government spending was still being linked to homosexuality, on a national and local level, and in that climate Sheffield City Council and some of their labour movement supporters were not keen to support gay politics. However, even within these comments we can see the vestiges of tolerance. On the whole, homosexuality itself was not the problem, rather it was the use of rate-payers' money to fund lesbian and gay groups and promote events that was deemed troublesome and wasteful. Lesbians and gay men were 'within their rights' to be gay, but these *Star* readers did not want to hear anything about it and they certainly did not want to fund it. Sheffield City Council's limited support of gay politics was

both a matter of reputation and also because gay rights organisations, with their focus on social, pastoral and personal issues, were not seen as a labour concern.

Despite this, Stephen Brooke and Lucy Robinson argue that Section 28 galvanised the campaign for lesbian and gay rights within the labour movement nationally, with Neil Kinnock ultimately bringing sexuality 'into the fold' of Labour politics, and in doing so transforming the way Labour politics related to sexual politics.¹⁰³ This change did not influence Sheffield's politics until the 1990s when Sheffield City Council began to engage with the organisation Lesbian and Gay Fightback. LG Fightback campaigned against Paragraph 16 of the Children's Act which, in an original draft, stated that "'Equal rights" and "gay rights" have no place in fostering services' and Clause 25 of the Criminal Justice Bill which categorised soliciting and procuring as 'serious sex crimes.'¹⁰⁴ LG Fightback held a demonstration in Sheffield and met every fortnight in the Town Hall, though their mailing address was also the Students' Union at Western Bank. They drew a direct comparison with Section 28, writing 'FIRST it was "pretended families" NOW it's "suitable environments."¹⁰⁵ However, unlike Section 28, Sheffield City Council agreed to meet with LG Fightback to listen to and support their concerns about fostering. This was a big development from the early 1980s when youth worker Ros Wollen, having completed a fostering course with the Council, informed them that she was a lesbian and was told that she had no chance of fostering.¹⁰⁶

Furthermore, by 1993 prominent figures of Sheffield's labour movement such as David Blunkett, Member of Parliament from 1987 onwards, and Bill Moore, Communist and founder of the Holberry Society for the Study of Sheffield Labour History, began to rehabilitate early gay socialist Edward Carpenter into Sheffield's history. In 1991 a Nottingham group named OUT HOUSE Project claimed Carpenter for the gay movement; arguing that the search for gay roots in the 1970s had saved Carpenter and his ideas from the 'dustbin of history'.¹⁰⁷ They organised guided 'rambles' of Millthorpe, Carpenter's home, in 1988 and 1991. But in 1993, Blunkett and Moore were ready to claim Carpenter for Sheffield's socialism. Blunkett wrote the forward to the 1993 edition of Carpenter's 1916 pamphlet 'Sheffield and Socialism' and Moore spoke of Carpenter in an address to a conference on 'A Vision of Britain: Industrialisation and Beyond, Sheffield' in September 1993.¹⁰⁸ However, whilst ready to bring Carpenter back into the fold and praise his politics and commitment, neither Blunkett nor Moore mentioned Carpenter's sexuality. The closest Blunkett came to acknowledging Carpenter's connection to the identity politics of homosexuality was writing that Carpenter 'recognised that our inter-dependence and the rights of the individual are not in conflict'.¹⁰⁹ Yet this could also be read as an indication of Blunkett's developing New Labour politics, as he specifically praised Carpenter for noting 'the way in which ideas can permeate society ...—something understood in the twentieth century by Friedrich von Hayek and Margaret Thatcher'.¹¹⁰ The early 1990s brought another wave of pit closures in South Yorkshire, and a labour movement and wider radical milieu that was beginning to interact more with the politics of sexuality. Yet Sheffield's politics still had a complex relationship with gay politics. Even in 2013 Kate Flannery, member of the Friends of Edward Carpenter, the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign, and daughter of Sheffield labour stalwarts Martin and Blanche Flannery, argued that the labour movement considered Carpenter too controversial a figure to commemorate because of his sexuality.¹¹¹

Conclusion

Owen Jones, writing in the *Guardian*, suggested the importance of the film *Pride* is that it 'manages to convey what solidarity is to an audience who have been taught to abhor it' by Thatcherism.¹¹² Yet, for all its celebration of solidarity, *Pride* offers us the optimism without showing the practical difficulties. For all that Thatcherism asked everyone 'Which Side Are You On?' it also exacerbated an already existing 'hierarchy of victimhood'.¹¹³ Labour-led local authorities defended their services at the cost of supporting gay communities and other causes considered to be 'loony' or wasteful. Whilst parts of the labour movement did join with gay organisations on occasion, for example in Welsh mining communities and the GLC, others did not. Furthermore gay activists, made wary of working with the left to their 'mutual discredit', increasingly organised themselves in social, pastoral or self-defence campaigns.¹¹⁴ Not only was solidarity not the same as subjectivity, but often, when it came to sexual politics, it was not even on the same page, never mind banner.

Through exploring how the politics of sexuality fit into Sheffield's politics this article has shown how solidarity broke down in the city. Many gay socialists were looking for active support from the wider left, but they also wanted to be able to organise themselves on their own terms; to be openly and politically socialist and gay. Campaigns such as the Gay Rights at Work Campaign and the Gay Workers Movement offered gay activists this to a certain extent, however even these organisations faced criticism from gay members that they prioritised labour movement concerns over the politics of sexuality. As a result, many gay activists took their politics out of the traditional sphere and into social or pastoral causes. Not always recognised by the wider left, the development of gay discos and counselling services was inherently political. In those spaces Sheffield's gay community was formed, and with it came a solidarity that was based on shared subjectivity.

Sheffield's labour movement was broadly sympathetic to the concerns of gay people; on occasion speaking out against National Front attacks. Yet members of the labour movement, many of whom had come of age at a time when and in a place where homosexuality was tolerated as long as it was unarticulated and discreet, held the view that sexuality was a private and individual concern and not an issue for collective politics. Sheffield's labour movement, and to a certain extent its wider left-wing milieu, failed to understand the significance of the liberational aspect of gay politics and the importance of identity; a concept made even more significant by AIDS where openness was vital. Furthermore, unlike the women's movement in Sheffield, there was no comparative crossover organisation like the Working Women's Charter Committee to bring class and sexuality together. Likewise, although the Sheffield Campaign Against Racism was problematic in that it was led and dominated by white trade unionists, it offered a forum, albeit it a limited one, for black and minority ethnic activists to express their concerns which was not available to gay men. Labour councillors criticised the National Front's views on homosexuality but, like the Anti-Nazi League nationally, the wider anti-fascist organisations in Sheffield were passive about homophobia. Solidarity in Sheffield broke down over theory and practice.

The reluctance of Sheffield's left-wing milieu to engage with the politics of sexuality was further exacerbated by the sexualisation of Labour-led local authorities by the media and Thatcher's government. Rate-capping narrowed Sheffield City Council's remit and important figures such as David Blunkett worked hard to distance themselves from the GLC and Liverpool City Council, 'loony' and 'hard' left respectively.¹¹⁵ Sheffield City Council did not

begin to engage with lesbian and gay politics again until the early 1990s, when they met with Lesbian and Gay Fightback to discuss legislation on fostering. Paragraph 16 of the Children's Act infringed upon gay people's right to foster, a right to parenthood, and therefore could be fought as an issue of individual rights. By the 1990s, the Labour Party had brought sexual politics into the fold where gay rights could be dealt with as individual rights, and some gay organisations—notably Stonewall—were content to break with party politics.¹¹⁶ Blunkett's praise of Edward Carpenter in 1993 was symbolic of this shift in attitude and pointed towards a moment where class and the identity-based politics of sexuality could co-exist; side by side, but separate. Not 'in conflict', but not united either.¹¹⁷

Despite what *Pride* depicts, moments of solidarity were not widespread in the 1980s. Section 28's attack on lesbians and gay men and on local government produced, not a united reaction, but a divided one. Local authorities attempted to disassociate themselves from sexual politics, and some gay activists blamed Ken Livingstone and the GLC's perceived radicalism for giving Thatcher's government an excuse to implement the clause.¹¹⁸ Robinson writes that 'it is unclear how to escape the hierarchy of victimhood or how to gain any meaningful semblance of equality with a binary model' of class or identity. But what this article shows is that the hierarchy of victimhood was not just about class and identity. Rather, solidarity broke down more than that; into subjectivities, spaces, and organisational methods. Different subjectivities were able find points of solidarity, but as with 'race' in 1980s Sheffield, for many, sexuality represented a definite limit to the left-wing milieu.

Notes

1. For recent academic accounts of LGSM see Kelliher, "Solidarity and Sexuality"; and Leeworthy, "For Our Common Cause."
2. MacNab, "Two Tribes and Plenty of Nostalgia."
3. Kermode, "Power in an Unlikely Union."
4. Warchus, "Why I Made a Romcom."
5. Young, "Enough to Make You Weep."
6. Warchus, "Why I Made a Romcom."
7. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 164, 165.
8. Nakhnikian, "Film Review: *Pride*"; and Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 235, 245.
9. Kelliher, "Sexuality and Solidarity," 2.
10. Kermode, "Power in an Unlikely Union."
11. Vittorini et al., "Lesbians Against Pit Closures," 145, 146.
12. Kelliher, "Sexuality and Solidarity," 7; and Crews, "Politics: Lesbians Against Pit Closures."
13. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 168.
14. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 164.
15. Leeworthy, "For Our Common Cause," 2.
16. For more on local government in the 1980s including local socialism and the new urban left, see Boddy and Fudge, *Local Socialism*; Gyford, *The Politics of Local Socialism*; and Lansley et al., *Councils in Conflict*.
17. Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal*, 209, 178; Hall and Jacques, *New Times*, 303; *The Sheffield Star*, March 15, 1983, 8; Interview with David Blunkett, January 10, 2014.
18. Kelliher, "Solidarity and Sexuality," 13.
19. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 194, 187.
20. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 162.
21. Brooke, "Sexual Rights, Human Rights," 128.
22. Hall Carpenter Archives: HCA/EPHEMERA-940 (8319./1938), Checkers Society, *Checkmate*, 1984.

23. David, *On Queer Street*, 240.
24. David, *On Queer Street*, 254, 255.
25. David, *On Queer Street*, 256.
26. David, *On Queer Street*, 240, 256.
27. Sheffield Archives, X608/2/1, ACT UP—Sheffield, Leaflet.
28. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 141, 146.
29. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 117, 145, 146.
30. Cant and Young, “New Politics, Old Struggles,” 119–121.
31. Cant and Young, “New Politics, Old Struggles,” 121.
32. Cant and Young, “New Politics, Old Struggles,” 122.
33. Cant and Young, “New Politics, Old Struggles,” 124.
34. *Ibid.*
35. Cant and Young, “New Politics, Old Struggles,” 127.
36. HCA/CHE/13/39: General Papers: Material from other groups 1970s and 1980s, Gay Liberation Bradford 1975—Published at the CHE Conference in Sheffield, August 1975.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*
40. These two images can be found respectively at the Hall Carpenter Archive (HCA/EPHEMERA/103 Gay rights at work, 1980–1982, GRAW Conference in Sheffield, March 28, 1981), and online at ACT-UP, New-York, <http://www.actupny.org/reports/silencedeath.html>.
41. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 174.
42. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 6, 171.
43. HCA/EPHEMERA/103 Gay rights at work, 1980–1982, Newsletter May 1981.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 126.
46. *The Sheffield Star*, “Gay to be Gay song ends conference,” August 26, 1975, 5.
47. *The Sheffield Star*, “City Hosts Gay Festival,” August 21, 1982, 3; HCA/EPHEMERA/103: 1982 Sheffield Gayfest, August 27–30, 1982: Draft Programme.
48. Cook, *A Gay History of Britain*, 184.
49. Cook, *A Gay History of Britain*, 184; and Sanderson, “Faltering from the Closet,” 88.
50. Sanderson, “Faltering from the Closet,” 88.
51. Weeks, *Making Sexual History*, 185.
52. Weeks, *Making Sexual History*, 192.
53. Cook, *A Gay History of Britain*, 185; and *The Sheffield Star*, “Glad to be Gay Song Ends Conference,” August 26, 1975, 5.
54. HCA/EPHEMERA-940 (8319./1938): Checkers Society, “Sheffield Regional Gay Community Information Guide,” Issue 3.
55. HCA/EPHEMERA-940 (8319./1938): Checkers Society, Newsletter, May 1984.
56. HCA/EPHEMERA-940 (8319./1938): Checkers Society, “Sheffield Regional Gay Community Information Guide,” Issue 3; Checkers Society, Newsletter, May 1984.
57. HCA/EPHEMERA/702 Sheffield Gay Phone, 1985–1987; Sheffield Gay Phone Annual Report, 1985–1986.
58. *Ibid.*
59. HCA/EPHEMERA-940 (8319./1938): Checkers Society, Newsletter, May 1984; HCA/FRIEND/ADDITIONAL/3/45—Sheffield Survey, 1982–1987 Survey for National Friend Annual Report.
60. Rees, “Taking Your Politics Seriously,” 99.
61. HCA/EPHEMERA/702 Sheffield Gay Phone, 1985–1987; Sheffield Gay Phone Annual Report, 1986–1987.
62. Sheffield Local Studies Library: MP4196S, Sheffield AIDS Education Project, “HIV, AIDS and Us: Gay Men in Sheffield Talk About It,” 1992.
63. SA, X608/2/1, ACT UP—Sheffield, Leaflet.
64. SA, X608/2/1: Flyers, newsletters, stickers etc., 1991–1994; and SA, X608/2/2: Campaign banner, early 1990s.

65. SA, X608/2/1: Flyers, newsletters, stickers etc., 1991–1994, Texaco Leaflet.
66. Ibid.
67. SA, X608/2/1: Flyers, newsletters, stickers etc., 1991–1994, Letter from Alison Groombridge to Sarah Spanton, 1990.
68. SLSL: MP4196S, Sheffield AIDS Education Project, “HIV, AIDS and Us: Gay Men in Sheffield Talk About It,” 1992.
69. SA, X608/2/1: Flyers, newsletters, stickers etc., 1991–1994, Leaflets, Letter from Alison Groombridge to Sarah Spanton, 1990.
70. SA, X608/2/1: Flyers, newsletters, stickers etc., 1991–1994, ACT-UP Manchester, Minutes of a public meeting held on December 6, 1993.
71. HCA/EPHEMERA/427: Sheffield Students Lesbian and Gay Society 1985; and HCA/EPHEMERA/939: Sheffield City Polytechnic Gay Soc, Gay Soc Winter 1985.
72. *The Sheffield Star*, “Gay Delegates...” August 16, 1975, 6; and *The Sheffield Star*, “Letters: ‘Gays’ and the law of God,” September 11, 1975, 13.
73. *The Sheffield Star*, “Gay Delegates...” August 16, 1975, 6.
74. *The Sheffield Star*, “Letters: National Front View,” September 11, 1975, 13.
75. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 115.
76. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 162.
77. SA, CA-POL14/450: Lottery Sub-Committee minutes, July 23, 1982.
78. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 144.
79. Andy D’Agorne Personal Archive, Sheffield NALGO, *Root and Branch*, No. 4, March 1986.
80. Interview with Clive Betts, July 19, 2013.
81. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 111–113.
82. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 114.
83. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 216.
84. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 150–157.
85. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 246.
86. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 245.
87. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire*, 244.
88. Interview with Ros Wollen, September 13, 2013.
89. Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 246.
90. SA, CA-POL/31/34: Women’s Panel, January 15, 1988.
91. SA, CA-POL/34/139: Policy Committee, April 26, 1988.
92. *The Sheffield Star*, “Clampdown on the Gay Image,” March 3, 1988, 4.
93. Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 241.
94. Cook, *A Gay History of Britain*, 205; and Weeks, *Making Sexual History*, 171.
95. Weeks, *Making Sexual History*, 171.
96. Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 241.
97. Ibid.
98. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 145.
99. *The Sheffield Star*, “Rate is Set after Split by Labour,” May 8, 1985, 1.
100. *The Sheffield Star*, “Letters: Misuse of the Funds,” March 22, 1988, 4.
101. *The Sheffield Star*, “Letters: Lesbianism Should Stay Underwraps,” May 24, 1988, 4.
102. Ibid.
103. Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 250, 251, 254; and Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 173.
104. SA, X608/2/1: Flyers, newsletters, stickers etc., 1991–1994, Lesbian and Gay Fightback Leaflet.
105. Ibid.
106. Interview with Ros Wollen, September 13, 2013. Later Wollen did foster children and teenagers in Sheffield.
107. SLSL: MP 3052 S, Out House Project, “Edward Carpenter Ramble,” 1991.
108. Carpenter, *Sheffield and Socialism*, 1; and SLSL: MP 4682M, Bill Moore, Address on “What attracted Ruskin and Carpenter to Sheffield?” at Conference on Ruskin, Morris and Carpenter. Sheffield, September 11–12, 1993.
109. Carpenter, *Sheffield and Socialism*, 1.

110. Ibid.
111. Interview with Kate Flannery, December 3, 2013. Martin Flannery was the Labour MP for Sheffield Hillsborough from 1974 to 1992 and Blanche Flannery was the President of Sheffield Trades Council from the mid-1980s.
112. Jones, "The British Tradition that Thatcher could not Destroy."
113. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 194.
114. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 146.
115. Price, *Sheffield Troublemakers*, 155; and Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 139, 140.
116. Brooke, *Sexual Politics*, 252.
117. Carpenter, *Sheffield and Socialism*, 1.
118. Robinson, *Gay Men and the Left*, 146.

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