

Prefigurative feminist practices of democratic city-making

TROGAL, Kim and WAKEFORD HOLDER, Anna

Available from Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

<https://shura.shu.ac.uk/37500/>

This document is the Accepted Version [AM]

Citation:

TROGAL, Kim and WAKEFORD HOLDER, Anna (2024). Prefigurative feminist practices of democratic city-making. In: BOBIC, Nikolina and HAGHIGHI, Farzaneh, (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of Architecture, Urban Space and Politics, Volume II. Ecology, Social Participation and Marginalities. Routledge International Handbook . Routledge, 551-565. [Book Section]

Copyright and re-use policy

See <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html>

Prefigurative feminist practices of democratic city-making: learning from socialist feminism and the Greater London Council (GLC)

Kim Trogal and Anna Wakeford Holder

Dr Kim Trogal is Reader in Social and Political Design at the Canterbury School of Architecture, University for the Creative Arts (UCA). Trogal completed her architectural studies at the University of Sheffield, including a PhD in Architecture (2012) for which she was awarded the *RIBA LKE Ozolins Studentship*. She is co-editor of the books: *The Social (Re)Production of Architecture*; *Architecture and Resilience*; *Care and the City*, and is co-editor of *Repair Matters*, a special issue of *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization*. Trogal was visiting professor at the *Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space* (SKuOR), TU Wien (Vienna) 2019–2020.

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3171-5442>

Dr Anna Wakeford Holder is Senior Lecturer in Architecture in the Department of the Natural and Built Environment at Sheffield Hallam University. Her research and creative work explores the relational agency of designers, citizens and clients in socially-motivated spatial praxis. Her work on knowledge production through architectural practice has been published in *The ADAPT-r Creativity book* and *Relational Knowledge & Creative Practice*. Wakeford Holder is director of social enterprise architecture practice *Studio Polpo*, with whom she exhibited at the British Pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennale 2021.

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2005-8798>

Abstract

This chapter explores feminist politics in architecture and urbanism through a focus on democratic practices of shaping the built environment. It follows the UK-based socialist feminists Sheila Rowbotham, Hilary Wainwright and Lynne Segal, in their work *Beyond the Fragments* and their entry into the radical municipalism of the 1980s Greater London Council (GLC). It describes the ethos of the feminist organizing of the women's consciousness – raising groups and their emphasis on prefigurative practices. The chapter introduces two key cases: the Popular Planning Unit and their work with communities in developing an alternative plan for the London Royal Docks, and the GLC Women's Committee, who were able to develop an alternative infrastructure of support for otherwise marginalized populations to shape the city. The chapter situates the power of socialist feminist prefigurative practices in acting within and against the state, specifically in the context of the contemporary neoliberal city and more recent municipalist movements. The chapter argues that in practicing a more equal and decentralized politics and developing self-recognition and constitution as collective subjects, municipal feminist work remains relevant today for those seeking more democratic ways of making and sustaining the city.

Key words

Feminism, Popular Planning, Prefiguration, Participation, Radical Municipalism.

Index

Beyond the Fragments

Democratic practices

Feminism

Greater London Council (GLC)

In and against the state

Matrix

Municipalism

Neoliberalism

Participation

People's Plan for the Royal Docks

Popular Planning

Prefiguration

Social Reproduction / Socially Reproductive Labor

Sheila Rowbotham

Lynne Segal

Socialist Feminism

Hilary Wainwright

Women's Committee of the Greater London Council

Introduction

This chapter explores feminist politics in architecture and urbanism through a focus on democratic practices of shaping the built environment. We revisit a socialist feminist history of late 20th Century Britain and its participatory modes of organization and activity in urban planning. Following an understanding that participation as democratic practice can be a vehicle for feminist politics in architecture and urbanism, this history is one that simultaneously embodies and embeds feminist politics as a “way of doing.”¹ Participatory democratic processes can be a means by which otherwise marginalized populations can shape the city in ways that better respond to their and others' needs. Those practices can also perform and prefigure feminist ethics in their modes of organizing. These are practices that embody ways of relating to and caring for one another, building cooperation and collective power.²

Our interest in the feminist activism of this period is shaped by our concerns in the present, and by the hope that the work of activists in 'new' municipalist movements and projects is inspiring. Movements such as *Barcelona en Comú*, *Cooperation Jackson* and *Zagreb je NAŠ! (Zagreb is OURS!)*, amongst many notable others, have their roots in urban struggle and activism, yet have entered into municipal politics. While diverse, the 'new municipalism' of the 21st Century is seen as a location from which to resist neoliberal politics, and re-make cities to be more equitable and just.

In the UK municipalism, as a crucial scale for political action, has historical precedents and lineages, yet understandings of these histories of city making are erased in dominant narratives. For example, London had a long history of socialist government throughout the 20th Century, but this history has been largely overshadowed and overwritten by the last 40 years of privatization and neoliberal development.³ Just as socialist municipal legacies have been erased as "part of a wider silencing of alternatives to neoliberal capitalism," so have the feminist labors and legacies of these radical movements.⁴

The *radical municipalism* practiced within the Greater London Council (GLC) and other councils such as Sheffield, Walsall, Manchester, Liverpool, Stirling, Islington and Lambeth during the 1980s represented a shift in how the role of the local state was understood. Where new municipal socialism saw the role of the state as intervening in production, defending and creating jobs, and restructuring sectors of the local economy,⁵ Radical municipalism also aimed to create change *within the working practices of the local state*. It aimed to transform relations between capital and labor: strengthening the position of workers through improving their conditions of service, ensuring their right to join unions, upgrading skills through appropriate training, widening opportunities for employment through addressing discrimination, and intervention in organization of employment to satisfy social needs.⁶

Feminist municipalism went even further, to bringing insights and knowledge from experiences in the women's movement, which in the UK, in the second half of the 20th Century had developed democratic,⁷ participatory and decentralized forms of organizing and mobilizing collective power to critique and to counter exploitation of both paid labor and socially-reproductive labor.⁸ The practices of the women's liberation movement can be understood as performing a prefigurative politics, namely they "perform present – day life in the terms that are wished – for, both to experience better practice and to advance change."⁹ In practicing a more equal and decentralized politics and developing self-recognition and constitution as collective subjects, this work remains relevant today for those seeking more democratic ways of making and sustaining the city.

In the 1970s and 1980s feminists brought their knowledge and experiences into other organizational contexts, to enable alternative plans, projects and ways of working, according to what were considered marginal needs and desires. This included municipal approaches where their focus for change included processes aimed at flattening hierarchies and addressing inequalities between men and women but also inequalities between women, in terms of class and race.¹⁰ The work of the Popular Planning Unit and the Women's Committee at the Greater London Council (GLC), which we discuss below, provides valuable examples of this.

In this chapter, we begin by introducing UK-based socialist feminists Sheila Rowbotham, Hilary Wainwright and Lynne Segal and the conference and co-authored publication *Beyond the Fragments*.¹¹ We follow a history of pre-figurative modes of feminist practice and drawing on a range of literature and archival sources, and we trace their entrance into radical municipal politics of the local state.¹² We look at the wider theories of activist work *in and against the state* that they made operational in their work with the GLC in the period 1981-86, before exploring two instances of activist-state spatial practice. Through narrating these areas of practice as case studies, we find socialist-feminist ideals of democratizing policymaking and funding that aimed to create support and build connections for grassroots groups. We reflect on the ways in which community activist campaigns and projects were supported or enabled through activism within the state, while also considering their difficulties, tensions and the critiques which they have received both at the time and from later scholars and activists. We conclude by briefly turning to the contemporary neoliberal city and the recent municipalist movements. We argue for the importance of this historical precedent as an imaginative resource in shaping the city. We suggest the work of British Socialist feminists acts as a counter narrative to dominant understandings of urban plan-making and spatial development, particularly questioning the roles of citizens and the local state, and the relationship between the institutions of the state and those of activist social groups.

Beyond the Fragments – collective action, interdependent organizing and transforming relations

Beyond the Fragments was originally published as a pamphlet in 1979 by Sheila Rowbotham, Hilary Wainwright and Lynne Segal, who articulated their position through an understanding of socialist feminism¹³ This meant seeing the inequalities and oppressions of sex, class and race as interconnected, and to be addressed as such, rather than focusing on women's issues in isolation or ignoring the class and race inequalities between women.¹⁴ Anticipating the rise of Thatcher in the UK and the coming assault of neoliberal policies,¹⁵ *Beyond the Fragments* sought to mediate the fragmentation on the left and within the women's movement. The underlying idea of moving beyond the fragments concerned the central question

of how to build solidarity and forms of organization that connected struggles, in order to become forces powerful enough to resist exploitation and create alternatives.

Activist, historian and writer Rowbotham was part of the London-based organization Women's Liberation Workshop, and was instrumental in her support of the National Childcare Campaign, the National Abortion Campaign and her support for the unionization of women working as night cleaners in London.¹⁶ A student at Oxford, she was also involved in the organization of the first national UK Women's Liberation Movement conference there in 1970. Wainwright, an activist, journalist and sociologist, had studied at Oxford and had, amongst other activist work, worked on the radical industrial democratic strategy at Lucas Aerospace.¹⁷ Segal, an academic in psychosocial studies, had moved to the UK in 1970 from Australia. She was a founder member of the Essex Road Women's Centre and involved in activism around family allowance, housing, training, employment and health.¹⁸

Together, their experiences in radical politics and the decentralized, self-organized and non-hierarchical consciousness raising groups of the women's movement formed their belief that "self-organization and collective action could indeed begin to transform everything, from personal lives to workplace conditions, social policy and the law, while impacting on culture generally."¹⁹ In contrast to some of the more authoritarian modes of organizing on the left at the time, these consciousness raising groups were small, local and often took open, discursive formats where each participant took turns to bring questions and discuss their own, personal experiences. They took place both inside and outside established institutions, in homes, universities, squats, social centers and cafes. Women learned and developed knowledge about oppression in their own terms. Rather than being the recipients of an external theory, they generated their own covering aspects of gender and its intersection with technology, power, rights, citizenship, labor, ethics, organizing, capitalism, Marxism and more. At the same time, these experiences within the groups, developing and learning about different kinds of relations with others,²⁰ enabled that knowledge and struggle to be extended to wider contexts.²¹

Women's movement groups are widely understood as pre-figurative, namely that the political practices of the movement embodied at once "those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal,"²² and simultaneously built power to achieve it. As activist groups, they campaigned for abortion rights, nurseries, equal pay and set up centers and refuges from domestic violence. However, while the women's groups aimed to be horizontal, they critically reflected on their processes and relations, not least the power dynamics, exclusions and unarticulated hierarchies that could emerge.²³

Beyond the Fragments did not propose that the women's movement would be a panacea, capable of solving all the problems of organizing, differences and conflicts. Rather, the authors considered it a potential means

to create “a democratic, and united – albeit loosely – socialist organization out of all those involved in fragmented movements, campaigns and politics groups which socialists are involved.”²⁴ To work beyond the fragments meant the creation of infrastructures and networks to enable solidarity, rather than unification (and suppression) of diverse groups and needs.

The publication of *Beyond the Fragments* saw a considerable response, and the authors were invited to speak about their ideas both nationally and internationally. Wainwright, Rowbotham and Segal recognized the demand for discussion and were keen that the conversation grew in line with their feminist organizing principles.²⁵ In August 1980 around 3,000 people participated in the *Beyond the Fragments* day event in Leeds. The meeting brought together themes across the spectrum of feminist and socialist organizing with a strong focus on alternative economics and labor struggles. Reviewing the workshop program, we see intersection with critical spatial questions around environment, technology, struggles over buildings’ use and user control, and questions around the built environment as a resource and support structure for social change.²⁶ This event was the beginning of an active network which continued until the mid-1980s, bringing together different campaigning and activist groups engaged with self-help delivery or cooperative provision of services, making alternative plans and resisting the demands of capital over those of social need.

From the fragments to working “in and against the state”

The 1980s in the UK saw a period of radical experimentation at the municipal level, in Sheffield, Liverpool and famously at the Greater London Council (GLC) from 1981 to 1986 under the leadership of Ken Livingstone. When the Left Labour coalition was elected to the GLC in 1981, representatives of the BtF network met with the Chair of the Committee on Employment and Industry to discuss how they might contribute to new possibilities for advancing socialist policies. They saw the opportunity to bring together grassroots groups, experts and people involved in alternative economic and social strategies.²⁷ Alongside these discussions, representatives from *Beyond the Fragments* and the GLC also took part in an Alternative Strategies Conference at the London School of Economics, exploring the political strategy of participatory and democratic alternative economic plan-making.²⁸

The ethos of new local administrations, of which the GLC was one example, was informed by socialist-feminist principles that saw elected power as a resource, which should be used to support marginalized groups including people excluded from the democratic process.²⁹ This can be seen in ideas of popular planning, working with trade unions and self-organized groups, funding voluntary projects and making local economic policy from below.³⁰

The approach taken by activists joining the GLC could be seen as intervening in a series of debates in the UK left, which from the 1960s sought to understand the role of the state in maintaining capitalism. As they no longer accepted the Leninist approach that saw the state as an institution that could be seized, the complexity of the state as an institution and the capacity for agency within it became subject to scrutiny.³¹ Reflecting on the conflict and everyday contradictions between the state and the working class, the *London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group* brought a labor perspective to the practices of the state.³² They wrote:

It is common to think of the state as being capitalist simply because of *what* it does: defending property rights, keeping pickets under control, paying subsidies to the monopolies, providing cheap labour power for industry etc. [...] at least as important is *how* the state does things, that is the social relations embodied in the organisation of the state and its activity.³³

While the authors of *In and Against the State*³⁴ did not advocate that activists take control of local government through the political parties, their more performative reading of states sees the state less as a monolithic institution, and rather identifies it as made through its workers' labor.³⁵ In seeking paths for socialist politics to be enacted in the everyday, they could be seen to take a prefigurative approach to the state itself.³⁶ As Davina Cooper has argued, the term *prefiguration* has been more widely used by social movements, particularly anarchist and left-wing groups opposed to the state. Given the state's exclusive powers and functions, "for many scholars, radical change cannot emerge from (or within) the state but only from 'outside'."³⁷ Conceptualising activist work as in and against the state, however, sees pluralism and nuance in the ways that the state is "embedded and enmeshed with everyday life" and "offers a different political strategy."³⁸

Socialist feminism within the GLC

In 1982 Hilary Wainwright set up the Popular Planning Unit, in her role as Assistant Chief Economic Advisor for the GLC's Economic Policy Group. The intention was to support development of an economic strategy for London "through the experience of resistance in workplaces and communities,"³⁹ amplifying and enabling initiatives from community and campaigning groups, trade unions and workers' movements.⁴⁰ The idea of being in and against the state was an important sense-making concept for Wainwright as she and her colleagues navigated contradictory positions within their work and activism: "becoming simultaneously both GLC 'officers' up against hostile administrative institutions and also socialist economic advisers employed to turn the GLC into an animator, resource and platform."⁴¹

Sheila Rowbotham joined the GLC in 1983 and her influence was felt across a number of areas of the GLC's work: co-editing a regular publication by Popular Planning Unit for the GLC Economic Policy Group called *Jobs for a Change*,⁴² and writing the section of policy for the 1985 *London Industrial Strategy* (LIS) that integrated domestic labor and childcare into the GLC's economic strategy.⁴³ This last was a key contribution to the particular feminist orientation of the GLC's work: not only focusing on job creation or preservation within the manufacturing industries but considering how to support and extend democracy to those involved in physical and emotional care work.⁴⁴ It aimed to change the debate from an individual/state control binary to open possibilities for creativity in forms of co-operative reorganization of everyday domestic life and user control of collective service provision.⁴⁵ The focus on domestic labor and childcare also drew attention to women's role within the paid workforce of London, making up 40% of the workforce but severely limited in terms of the roles they could access. These were for the most part poorly remunerated and often required a "desperate balancing" of their children's needs in terms of provision of care and earning a living.⁴⁶

We now turn to two examples that exemplify some of the different ways feminist work within the GLC tried to support projects that came from below. The first, which also led to the GLC's involvement in alternative land use planning and spatial projects, is the Docklands People's Plan.⁴⁷ The second is the formation of a Women's Committee, an alternative infrastructure that gave women power in the distribution of funding.

The People's Plan for the Royal Docks – catalyzing and enabling alternative plan-making

The catalyst for practices of activist-state cooperation in London's Docklands was the threat posed by a proposed new airport. This had dramatic implications for the wider area, which had seen economic decline since World War II, with closures and the catastrophic losses of industry and employment.

In 1980 powers for development control of the area had been transferred to the newly established London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), set up and financed by the central government to attract private investment and encourage private housing development.⁴⁸ This move by the Thatcher government transferred powers to the LDDC from elected local authorities (three borough councils and the GLC), the justification being to have an organization which could unite development powers to acquire or dispose of land with "single-minded concern" for the regeneration of the Docklands.⁴⁹ The proposals of the LDDC and the airport plan were in conflict with the GLC's priorities for jobs, public housing and improved local transport. While initial publicity for the airport announced it would bring 5000 new jobs, this was subsequently revised to 500, a figure that included transfers of existing jobs.⁵⁰

Unlike the LDDC, the GLC was unable to resource a significant opposition or alternative proposal, having a vastly smaller budget to focus on the area. They were, however, able to resource work in alliance with local groups and organizations.⁵¹ A campaigning organization, the Newham Docklands Forum, took responsibility for developing alternative plans, while the Campaign Against the Airport focused on opposition to the airport proposal.⁵² The GLC funded five staff for five months to work for the Newham Docklands Forum, researching and preparing an alternative plan. They made staffing appointments from within the affected communities, including local women involved in childcare groups, a school leaver, a former dock worker and union shop steward, who each brought specific knowledge of the locality and their experiences and involvement in networks and organizations.

The People's Planning Unit together with Newham Council funded a space from which to organize, a shop front unit on Pier Parade in North Woolwich was chosen to try to establish and maintain a presence on the high street and build local awareness of the plan.⁵³ Understandings of the particular needs and desires of local people for their area, as well as the human and physical resources of the area, were developed through multiple discussion sessions and local neighborhood "surgeries." These were held at mother and toddler groups, keep fit classes and bingo sessions in the local community center and visits were made to workers at the companies still in operation in the docks and the factories in Silvertown.⁵⁴

The Alternative Plan put forward by the Newham Docklands Forum, supported by the PPU, was referred to as The People's Plan. It proposed opening up the docks as a spatial resource; planning to meet needs – providing housing, better public transport, recreation and play facilities – *and* to make jobs – with the docks supporting timber depots for the direct works departments of local authorities, cargo handling and ship repair as well as over 1000 jobs created through childcare provision.⁵⁵ The plan worked with existing infrastructures and skills and also identified new opportunities through working with local manufacturers on ideas for "socially useful production," which drew on their understanding of new technologies and markets.⁵⁶ The Docklands Co-Operative Zone proposed industrial space for workers' co-operatives manufacturing heat pumps for council housing and electronic aids for disabled people, with the model of using GLC purchasing power for investment.⁵⁷ The making of a People's Plan offered an opportunity to articulate feelings of frustration and powerlessness in relation to distant decision-making processes. It also provided a forum to voice collective expectations and to critique the imposed vision of the airport plan: "We [...] believe that there must be more to our working lives, and our children's, than being porters and lavatory attendants for passing businessmen."⁵⁸

Opposition to the planning application for the airport resulted in a public inquiry, at which the GLC, Newham Council and the Newham Docklands Forum all gave evidence. The People's Plan was presented at the inquiry over two days by 14 different witnesses. These included representatives of: a local ship repair business forced out by compulsory purchase; local resource centers providing training for women and

identifying the kinds of employment in demand from local residents; a tower block campaigning group expressing the need for better-quality public housing; and trades unions identifying potential new transport infrastructure.⁵⁹ They were not represented by professional planners but sought to represent a range of different voices from across the area. The rationale behind the alternative plan, and the ideals and proposals assembled through the collective plan-making process were also presented as an illustrated report and printed and distributed to Docklands residents in order to further build local support at a point when the outcome of the planning inquiry was still undecided.⁶⁰

The inquiry resulted in a recommendation to grant planning permission for the airport, and while subsequent demands for re-opening of the inquiry failed, there were spatial and economic effects resulting from the plan-making process. The Plan Centre itself remained in operation, although without funded staff, and this led to the opening of a training center, a creche and a laundrette in Pier Parade.⁶¹ The protests and campaigning against the airport, and campaigns in favor of alternative plans for the docklands brought together docklands-wide groups, area specific groups and interest-based groups. The plan-making process influenced the ways in which residents identified with their neighborhood and its political economy and imagined the geographies and futures of their area.⁶² Keith and Pile articulate links between the work at the Royal Docks and subsequent community campaigns to oppose LDDC luxury development, such as Cherry Gardens, a riverside site in the Surrey Docks. There, campaigners worked with Rotherhithe Community Planning Centre, successfully negotiating for half of the site to be returned to Southwark Council for the provision of low-density affordable housing. A second People's Plan was produced by Newham Docklands Forum in 1992 to address the lack of planning and development strategy following the end of the LDDC.⁶³

Sue Brownhill, a scholar in urban policy and governance and expert in community-led planning who was involved in the development of the People's Plan as a research officer at the Docklands Forum, highlights the originality of the Plan at the time. In particular she points to its emphasis on interconnections between the spheres of production and reproduction, with proposals for childcare, eldercare and housing integrated with proposals for industry and employment.⁶⁴ This key feminist concern with questions of care and social reproduction was also a focus point of the GLC Women's Committee.

The GLC Women's Committee – an alternative infrastructure for the redistribution of resources

The Women's Committee was set up in June 1982 by vice-chair of the Industry and Employment Committee, Valerie Wise, in direct response to observations that GLC grant funding was more frequently awarded to established groups, such as unions, which largely represented male labor. Following concerns

around the GLC's lack of commitment to women's interests in employment policy, the committee was established to address women's paid and unpaid work.⁶⁵ Its initial aim was to rewrite the agenda of the GLC's employment policy, recognizing the "double burden," but also the economic importance, of women's unpaid work in the home.⁶⁶ Both the focus and budget of the Women's Committee grew in the four years of its operation,⁶⁷ and its increasing influence began to set a precedent for other councils.⁶⁸ The GLC's Women's Committee included elected councilors and 20 members from the community, eight of whom had full voting rights. The composition of the committee was an important part of its politics, where voting members included two selected by the Trades Unions Council and six members representing women of color, women with disabilities and lesbians.⁶⁹

The Women's Committee was not participatory, as with the work of the People's Plan, but rather aimed to establish an alternative infrastructure within the state that would itself be more democratic. This included representation from different women's groups in formal committee structures, decision-making and the allocation of funding. The committee dedicated material resources such as financing and skills, to enable changes in the organization of socially reproductive labor and enable learning and development. In the process of developing funding calls the committee worked to create conditions which supported a wider range of groups to apply, giving time to build capacity and develop relationships and networks with women's organizations:

In principle, this was the approach of 'popular planning': to help women gain the confidence, understanding and contacts to play an active part in policy making: to turn policy making into a flexible and creative process, rather than a collection of ideas coming from County Hall.⁷⁰

Their work in urban planning and the built environment included reviewing planning policy to demonstrate women's exclusion from decision-making and consultation processes, particularly highlighting the gender assumptions around work.⁷¹ This produced new knowledge around women's experiences of planning issues in London.⁷² Funding was provided for women's organizations, including the Women's Design Service, a cooperative providing advisory architectural services to community groups. Funding was also made available for research for advisory documents such as *Building for Childcare: Making better buildings for the under-5s*, by Matrix Feminist Architectural Cooperative. Capital projects also received funding, such as the Jagonari Asian Women's Centre (1984–87), initiated by a group of Asian women as a resource center for Asian Women in East London developed with Matrix.⁷³

As with other areas of GLC activity, the Women's Committee aimed to support existing campaigning groups: to bring them into the processes of shaping policy; to enable them to access resources through funding calls, and to support them through the development of wider networks. The provision of childcare can be seen as one of the more successful areas of GLC work,⁷⁴ owing firstly to the strength of feminist arguments

around the reorganization of domestic labor as a priority, and secondly to the existence of already organized groups qualifying for support.

A limitation of this approach was that it proved less successful in addressing class differences. This was particularly so in providing support for childcare, where examples of funded projects were also reliant on financial support from employers. Childcare centers serving non-unionized, 'low' or 'semi-skilled' workers were not able to exert pressure on their employers in the way their professional and unionized counterparts could, and thus could not access the same levels of support. Other difficulties emerged from the GLC's focus on building allegiances and the sharing of resources. This risked operating along identity lines and fostering partisanship, competition between diverse needs and the fragmentation of different groups.⁷⁵

The case for feminist municipalism in the 21st Century

For thinking at the intersection of architecture and politics, we see a critical resonance in the ways that a particular form of activist work within the local state can support oppositional work against neoliberal urban development, particularly in relation to the needs and desires of otherwise marginalized groups. Given the GLC's higher budget, scope and legislative remit compared to today's municipalities in the UK,⁷⁶ the idea of the GLC being a model that could be transferred to today is not possible. Indeed the relevance of any universal approaches to municipalism has been brought into question.⁷⁷ However, a number of scholars have been looking back to this innovative period of the GLC, considering what could be learnt. Cooper, for instance, sees it as a "thinking tool" capable of helping us to imagine the state as a horizontal, everyday activity.⁷⁸ Similarly, Joubert highlights the labor of local governance and the way such labor can bridge the boundary "between activism and statehood."⁷⁹ For us, the significance lies in the ways it grounded democracy and created forms of counter-institution. The work of the PPU grounded democracy by bringing citizens not only into debates about local development but rather to imagine urban futures and forms of local development that meet social need, creating and resourcing spaces to imagine together possibilities of living and working in that area of the city. It also acted as a counter-institution working against the national government and the LDDC. The Women's Committee grounded democracy differently, by bringing in different individuals and groups into formalized decision-making processes, and making resources available for marginalized groups providing everyday services outside of the state.

A range of political theorists have argued for the importance of strengthening democracy to counteract neoliberal capital and the neoliberal state's championing of private development. They claim that new kinds of institutions or counter-institutions are central to this democratic project.⁸⁰ The work of British socialist feminists is significant in this respect as they situated issues of class as equally central to their politics. This is a position that has often been marginalized in relation to other feminist concerns around equality. It

provides an important counterpoint to the mainstreaming of liberal feminism generally, and within architecture and urban planning specifically.

Contemporary feminist work, in social movements and feminist manifestos such as those by Lola Olufemi, Veronica Gago, Francoise Vergès, Nancy Fraser, Cinzia Arruzza, and Tithi Bhattacharya,⁸¹ among others, reject the dominance of liberal feminism and its attendant compatibility with neoliberalism. They highlight how the invocation of neoliberal feminist rights and demands for their protection simultaneously deepen class and racial inequalities both locally and globally.⁸² This is the feminism that, as Olufemi describes, is centered around self-improvement and individual personal gain.⁸³ Yet what appears as a gain and an increased representation of so-called 'minority' groups in more powerful positions in actuality foregrounds self-cultivation and competition, which increases precarity while weakening forms of collectivity.⁸⁴

Feminist geographers Leslie Kerns and Gerda Wekerle have pointed out that in the neoliberal city, while some feminist demands have been met, these have largely been a justification for class transformation. In particular, centering the white-middle class professional woman as subject commonly justifies planning interventions that are actively revanchist.⁸⁵ 'Revitalized' neoliberal cities and neighborhoods offer some women the advantages of easier access to work, childcare, family-friendly spaces and other amenities at the expense of other populations, particularly the growing "low-paid, insecure and de-skilled service class."⁸⁶ What feminist geographers and urban scholars have emphasized is that there is a critical relation between the growth of this service class and state support for specific forms of urban (re)development, such as those that foreground market-based growth and privatization.⁸⁷ In these models, public resources are directly channeled to support private development, and high-rise housing speculation in particular, which is unaffordable for the vast majority of the population.⁸⁸

In a neoliberal context the PPU and feminist approaches to municipalism, both then and now, are important in showing different versions of the local state, and who it acts for and with. Following Pierre Dardot, Christian Laval and Wendy Brown, we understand neoliberalism to be not only a set of economic policies, or not only processes of class restoration as David Harvey has set out, but as a set of practices that reshape *society* as neoliberal.⁸⁹ Relevant here is both the way that the state and its productive powers have been refigured and the wider shaping of subjectivity on the one hand, and the loss of democratic practices and institutions on the other.⁹⁰ Right-wing politics have already successfully 'reimagined' what local states can be and do.⁹¹ We therefore understand the importance of prefiguration and the collective approach of the PPU to be both a democratic principle and a potential re-shaping of subjectivity. It creates contexts in which people can see themselves as agents in their own lives and locality, rather than as consumers or recipients of the built environment.

In the wake of the 2008 economic crisis, local city administrations, in the US and Europe especially, have simultaneously borne the impacts of austerity while remaining responsible for the delivery of social support and infrastructures, with political decision-making able to affect change frequently dominated by the nation state and supranational levels.⁹² The more recent return to municipalism of the 2010s aims to counter the neoliberal centralization of power and its transformation of society. In Barcelona the remunicipalization of public services has been one of the strategies to expand local power and regain economic control, but there have also been moves towards innovative forms of activist commoning and state partnership. Manuela Zechner describes the possibilities for alternative service provision of childcare, initiated through the self-organized care networks of activists and citizens, supported by activist work *within the state*. In this context austerity and precarity have affected the accessibility of public nurseries and prompted parents' groups to form *grupos de crianza compartida* (shared parenting groups), associations that self-provide nursery care, collectively contracting the services of nursery workers and in some cases working with spaces supported by the state.⁹³

Zechner notes some of the contradictions of allocating publicly owned spaces for non-public activities which are thus not open to all, and raises the question as to whether public support requires that the groups should be regulated and scrutinized to a different extent. She also acknowledges that such a form of municipal social innovation requires levels of privilege to engage in – the parents active in forming the groups in question are largely lower middle-class, highly educated and white.⁹⁴ Yet the example opens up important perspectives on the value of such an initiative in its shaping of political engagement and creating a particular kind of space and set of social relations in the neighborhood. The groups are a means of picking up other social problems, needs and affectivities and of advocating for children's rights and spaces for children in the city. They create networks of parents, connections between citizens and the activist state and other social and solidarity economic activities.⁹⁵

There is some consensus in the mainstream media that neoliberal economic policy has lost legitimacy, with calls for public ownership of services (from energy and transport to health and education) remaining popular, and a push for re-municipalization at the local level. Contemporary movements thus realize that public ownership will not be an answer per se, but rather it is how the state acts, not just what it does. Processes urgently need to be democratized, and for us this is also a spatial question. The spaces of PPU and the Women's Committee, both the spaces they operated in and the spaces they sought to create or support, are the non-monumental spaces of the city. They are the everyday spaces of homes, high streets, childcare centers, laundries, youth clubs and local libraries. These are the informal spaces of daily life that do not lend themselves to representation in the ways that might be expected of architecture design projects. It is these spaces that are under threat and find themselves increasingly pushed out of the city and/or forced to adopt entrepreneurial approaches.⁹⁶ Working *within and against the state*, the PPU and the Women's Committee were trying to re-shape the institutions of the local state to care about those seemingly prosaic

things and spaces – a prospect that seems an even greater challenge yet ever more needed in the context of neoliberal logics.

Conclusion

The work of the GLC in this period is often seen as a failed experiment following its dissolution by the Conservative-led central government in 1986. However, as both Doreen Massey and Lynne Segal have commented, the force of Thatcher's attack on local municipalities, and especially the GLC, can be seen to prove the power of what they were achieving.⁹⁷ The failure of the GLC's initiatives in engaging with activist groups (critiqued as co-opting, or that their interventions destabilized groups), and the problems and contradictions experienced, are often presented as a critique of the state with a totalizing narrative. Critiques of initiatives at the time are, as Stuart Hall pointed out, a necessity for any democracy, with state structures needing critique from outside their own organizations and institutions.⁹⁸

The critique frequently leveled at the People's Plan is that it reflected the GLC's ambitions rather than local desires or, as with other areas of GLC activities, that local ideas and activism had been co-opted by a more powerful actor. We suggest another reading here is productive, beyond the binary understanding of working people vs the state. In taking a pluralistic understanding of the state, the PPU can be seen to be actively re-thinking what a state can be. In decentralizing and embedding the People's Plan Centre in North Woolwich, tied to local organizations, it tried to resist another part of the state, namely the development corporation and national government agenda, simultaneously both within and against the state.

Reflecting on our own research process into the GLC we recognise the importance of returning to feminist and activist histories of the 1980s, as the ephemeral nature of their documentation, and its concentration in analogue forms, means it is often 'lost' or underrepresented in contemporary understandings of practice.⁹⁹ The open archives of Robin Murray and Matrix, which host digitized versions of their work, are taking steps to address this. Other material we have been able to find is still relatively accessible: Hilary Wainwright and Sheila Rowbotham have both published extensively and their work is archived in public institutions, preserving their voices and experiences. As both women point out in their writings, the power that was able to emerge from the women's movement has to be seen in the context of a broader radicalization at the time, from strong unionization, gay liberation and black liberation.¹⁰⁰ We are keen to discover more about the individual projects, initiatives and networks and about those women on whom its success relied. The retelling of this history is important in so far as it seeks to properly acknowledge the role and contributions of others, rather than highlight only a few 'stars' in a much bigger constellation. These practices are relevant for the wider understanding and imaginaries of the state and its possibilities for the city. In this context, the undertakings of the GLC are a vital part of a recovered trajectory of feminist and political left versions for the city.

Bibliography

Bartolomé, Vera, Ada Regelman, Amelia Martínez-Lobo and Alexandra Spaeth eds. *Feminise Politics Now!* Madrid: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2020.

Beyond the Fragments Day Event. Conference programme. From Women's Library Archive, Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988. 7SHR/A/8/02

Beyond the Fragments meeting on the GLC, July 23, 1981. Meeting minutes. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/C/1/01.

Boys, Jos and Julia Dwyer. "Revealing Work. Interrogating Artifacts to (Re)view Histories of Feminist Architectural Practice." *Architecture and Culture* 5, no. 3 (2017): 487-504.

Blunkett, David and Geoff Green. *Building from the Bottom: The Sheffield Experience*. London, Fabian Society, 1983.

Boggs, Carl. "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control." *Radical America* 11, no. 6 (1977): 99-122.

Brown, Wendy. *Undoing the demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. New York: Zone Books, 2015.

Brownill, Sue. "The People's Plan for the Royal Docks: Some Contradictions in Popular Planning." *Planning Practice and Research* 2, no. 4 (1988): 15-21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697458808722693>

Brownson, Lucy. "Radical Objects: The London Women's Handbook." *History Workshop*, May 5, 2022. Accessed August 12, 2022. <https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/radical-objects-london-womens-handbook/>.

Bruegel, Irene and Hilda Kean. "The Moment of Municipal Feminism: Gender and Class in 1980s Local Government." *Critical Social Policy* 15, no. 44-45 (1995): 147-169.

Cooper, Davina. "Prefiguring the State." *Antipode* 49, no. 2 (2017): 335-356.

cSPACE. "The People's Plan for the Royal Docks." Accessed August 12, 2022. <https://cspace.org.uk/archive/peoples-plan/>.

Dardot, Pierre and Christian Laval. *The New Way of the World: On Neoliberal Society*. London: Verso Books, 2017.

Featherstone, David, Jo Littler and Sally Davison, "Re-empowering the Local: New municipal alternatives." *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture*, 74 no.1 (2020): 4-9.

Foster, Dawn. *Lean Out*. London: Repeater Books, 2015.

Fraser, Nancy, Cinzia Arruzza and Tithi Bhattacharya. *Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto*. London: Verso, 2019.

Freeman, Jo. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness." *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 17 (1972-73): 151-164.

Fuss, Diana. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

Gago, Veronica. *Feminist International: How to Change Everything*. London: Verso, 2020.

Gilbert, Jeremy. *Twenty-First Century Socialism*. London: John Wiley & Sons, 2020.

Gilbert, Jeremy. "What Kind of Thing is 'Neoliberalism'?" *New Formations* 80 (2013): 7-22.

Graziano, Valeria and Kim Trogal. "Handling Replacement: Tending to a Local Library and Repair Centre." In *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet*, eds. Angelika Fitz and Elke Krasny, 99-105. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2019.

GLC Economic Policy Group. *Jobs for a Change*, no. 18 (s.d.). Robin Murray Living Library. Accessed October 10, 2022.
<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:391a3eed-f8ff-4931-8efd-b9b933f3b9e9>.

Greater London Council (GLC). *The London Industrial Strategy*. 1985

GLC Women's Committee, *Changing Places: Positive Action on Women and Planning*. London: GLC, 1986.

Hansard, Lords Sitting, *London Docklands Development Corporation (Area and Constitution) Order 1980*. HL Deb 01 July 1981 vol 422 cc194-204

Harriss, Kathryn. "New Alliances: Socialist-Feminism in the Eighties." *Feminist Review* no. 31 (Spring 1989): 34-54.

Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Hatherley, Owen. *Red metropolis: Socialism and the Government of London*. London: Repeater Books, 2020.

Joubert, Tim. "Bridging Bureaucracy and Activism: Challenges of Activist State-Work in the 1980s Greater London Council." *Urban Studies*, July 2022: 1-20. doi:10.1177/00420980221104594

Keith, Michael and Steve Pile. "Introduction. Part 1: The Politics of Place.". In *Place and the Politics of Identity*, edited by Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1–21. London: Routledge, 1993.

Kern, Leslie. *Feminist City: Claiming Space in a Man-Made World*. London: Verso Books, 2021.

Kern, Leslie and Gerda R. Wekerle. "Gendered Spaces of Redevelopment: Gendered Politics of City Building." In *Gender in an Urban World*, edited by Judith DeSena, 233-262. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2008.

Littler, Jo, Mandy Merck, Hilary Wainwright, Nira Yuval-Davis and Deborah Grayson. "Feminism and 'the S-word'." *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 61 (2015): 95-112. muse.jhu.edu/article/609288.

London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, *In and Against the State Discussion Notes for Socialists*. Edited by Seth Wheeler. London: Pluto Press, 2021 [1979].

Mackintosh, Maureen and Hilary Wainwright, eds. *A Taste of Power*. London: Verso, 1987.

Manwaring, Tony and John Kelly. *Dept. of Industrial Relations, CSE/BTF Alternative Strategies Conference notes for contributors, June 21, 1981*. Letter. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/C/1/01.

Massey, Doreen. *World City*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007.

Matrix. *Jagonari Asian Women's Centre*. Photographs, drawings. From *Matrix Open feminist architecture archive (MOfaa)*. Accessed August 12, 2022. <http://www.matrixfeministarchitecturearchive.co.uk/jagonari/>.

McCrinkle, Jean, Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, Hilary Wainwright and Kenny Bell. Letter. December 3, 1979. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/C/1/01.

Members of the Women's Liberation Workshop, "An Introduction to the Women's Liberation Workshop" (1971/1972). From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/B/1.

Minton, Anna. *Big Capital: Who is London for?* London: Penguin Press, 2017.

Morphet, Janice Rosina and Sule Takemaz Nisancioglu. "Early Experiences of Women and Planning Initiatives 1980-1990," *Town Planning Review*, June 15 (2021): 1-22.

Murray, Robin. 'Local Government in Britain: the experience of the GLC,' paper prepared for the meeting on Local Government, Johannesburg October 7, 1990. Accessed October 10, 2022. Available: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bc8924fb9144917ed082349/t/5ee8ff4e44d1ca04661aa91e/1592328023439/LOCAL+GOVERNMENT+IN+BRITIAN+THE+EXPERIENCE+OF+GLC.pdf>

Newham Docklands Forum and the GLC Popular Planning Unit, *The People's Plan for the Royal Docks*. London: Newham Docklands Forum and the GLC Popular Planning Unit, 1983.

Olufemi, Lola. *Feminism, Interrupted: Disrupting Power*. London: Pluto Press, 2020.

Rowbotham, Sheila. "Robin, a Lodestone and a Lodestar," *Robin Murray's Living Library*, August, 2020. Accessed August 1, 2022. <https://robinmurray.co.uk/tributes/2020/1/20/nufot15tkrpioer02ri03v3osv0a4u>.

Rowbotham, Sheila. "Every Generation Has to Make its Own Women's Movement." *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 77 (2021): 37-54.

Rowbotham, Sheila. "Introduction (2013): Beyond the Fragments." In *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, edited by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, 7-25. Third edition. London: Merlin Press, 2013.

Rowbotham, Sheila, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright eds. *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*. Third edition. London: Merlin Press, 2013.

Rowbotham, Shiela. "Jolting memory: Nightcleaners recalled" in *Plan Rosebud: On images, Sites and Politics of Memory*, ed. Maria Ruido (Santiago de Compostela: CGAC, 2008). Accessed October 10, 2022. <https://libcom.org/article/jolting-memory-nightcleaners-recalled-sheila-rowbotham>.

Rowbotham, Shiela. 1986. "Feminism and Democracy." In *New Forms of Democracy*, edited by David Held and Christopher Pollitt, 78-109. London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1986.

Rowbotham, Sheila. *Domestic Labour*. Policy draft. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/B/11.

Russell, Bertie. "Making Power Emerge: Municipalism and the Right to the City." *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 74 (March 2020): 95-111.

Sarnow, Martin and Norma Tiedemann. "Interrupting the Neoliberal Masculine State Machinery? Strategic Selectivities and Municipalist Practice in Barcelona and Zagreb," *Urban Studies* (2022): 1-20.

Segal, Lynne. "Today, Yesterday and Tomorrow: Between Rebellion and Coalition Building." In *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, edited by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, 65-102. Third edition. London: Merlin Press, 2013.

"Lynne Segal," British Library. Accessed October 29, 2022. <https://www.bl.uk/people/lynn-segal>.

Smith, Neil. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. London: Routledge, 1996.

Spencer, Jade. "A Plan for a People's London." *Tribune*. Accessed May 16, 2022. <https://tribunemag.co.uk/2022/05/peoples-plan-royal-docks-london-thatcherism-glc-neoliberalism>.

Stokes, Wendy. "'Not an Encounter Group': Democracy and Women's Committees" PhD diss., London Guildhall University, 1996.

Thompson, Noel. *Left in the Wilderness: The Political Economy of British Democratic Socialism since 1979*. Chesham: Acumen Publishing, 2002.

Vergès, Françoise. *A Decolonial Feminism*. Translated by Ashley J Bohrer with the author. London: Pluto Press, 2021.

Wainwright, Hilary. "Introduction." In *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, edited by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, 108-124. Third edition. London: Merlin Press, 2013 [1979]

Wainwright, Hilary. "The Economics of Labour: Robin Murray, Industrial Strategy and the Popular Planning Unit." *Robin Murray's Living Library*, August, 2020. Accessed August 1, 2022. <https://robinmurray.co.uk/glc-ppu>.

Wainwright, Hilary and Dave Elliott, *The Lucas Plan: A New Trade Unionism in the Making* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1982).

Warnock-Smith, Alex. "A Long-Game of Resistance: Hugo Hinsley and Support Community Design Building Service" In *Spatial Practices: Modes of Action and Engagement with the City*, edited by Mel Dodd, 67-75. London: Routledge, 2019.

Williams, Kathy. 'A Missing Municipalist Legacy: The GLC and the Changing Cultural Politics of Southbank Centre,' *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 74 (2000), 26-39.

Wright, Erik Olin. *How to be an Anticapitalist in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Verso, 2019.

Zechner, Manuela. *Commoning Care & Collective Power: Childcare Commons and the Micropolitics of Municipalism in Barcelona*. Wien: Transversal texts, 2021.

Endnotes

- ¹ Featherstone, David, Jo Littler and Sally Davison, "Re-Empowering the Local: New Municipal Alternatives," *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 74 (2020): 4-9.
- ² Bartolomé, Vera, Ada Regelman, Amelia Martínez-Lobo and Alexandra Spaeth eds. *Feminise Politics Now!* (Madrid: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2020).
- ³ Owen Hatherley, *Red Metropolis: Socialism and the Government of London*. (London, Repeater Books, 2020).
- ⁴ Kathy Williams, "A Missing Municipalist Legacy: The GLC and the Changing Cultural politics of Southbank Centre," *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 74 (2000): 26-39.
- ⁵ Noel Thompson, *Left in the Wilderness: The Political Economy of British Democratic Socialism since 1979* (Chesham: Acumen Publishing, 2002), 70-90.
- ⁶ Thompson, *Left in the Wilderness*.
- ⁷ The women's liberation movement in the UK should, as elsewhere, not be seen as a homogenous and unified entity. As a movement it was composed of multiple and diverse groups and interests, with the groups most known and discussed in relation to the movement tending to center around white middle class women's experience, ignoring Black British feminist organizing. The term women's liberation movement is not without its problems, however we keep and use it here as something of a short-hand, as it was also the name under which a number of those women gathered.
- ⁸ Jo Littler, Mandy Merck, Hilary Wainwright, Nira Yuval-Davis and Deborah Grayson, "Feminism and 'the S-word'," *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 61 (2015): 95-112.
- ⁹ Davina Cooper. "Prefiguring the State," *Antipode* 49, no. 2 (2017): 335.
- ¹⁰ Irene Bruegel and Hilda Kean, "The Moment of Municipal Feminism: Gender and Class in 1980s Local Government," *Critical Social Policy* 15, no. 44-45 (1995): 147-169.
- ¹¹ Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, eds., *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, Third edition (London: Merlin Press, 2013).
- ¹² Archival material consulted includes the papers of Sheila Rowbotham, held at the Women's Library Archives, London School of Economics; the Robin Murray Living Library, digitized and hosted online by the Trellis Foundation; and the Matrix Open Architecture Archive.
- ¹³ *Beyond the Fragments* was first published as a pamphlet then later as a book in the same year.
- ¹⁴ Sheila Rowbotham, "Every Generation has to Make its Own Women's Movement," *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 77 (2021): 37-54.
- ¹⁵ For example, the abolition of local democratic institutions, the undermining of labor unions, the selling of public assets, the privatization of social housing and other social services and the financialization of the UK economy.
- ¹⁶ Sheila Rowbotham, "Jolting memory: Nightcleaners recalled," in *Plan Rosebud: On images, Sites and Politics of Memory*, ed. Maria Ruido (Santiago de Compostela: CGAC, 2008), accessed October 10, 2022, <https://libcom.org/article/jolting-memory-nightcleaners-recalled-sheila-rowbotham>
- ¹⁷ Hilary Wainwright and Dave Elliott, *The Lucas Plan* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1982).
- ¹⁸ "Lynne Segal," British Library, accessed October 29, 2022, <https://www.bl.uk/people/lynne-segal>
- ¹⁹ Lynne Segal, "Today, yesterday and tomorrow: between rebellion and coalition building," in *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, eds. Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, Third edition (London: Merlin Press, 2013), 84.
- ²⁰ Members of the Women's Liberation Workshop, "An Introduction to the Women's Liberation Workshop" (1971/1972). Papers of Sheila Rowbotham. Ref. 7SHR/B/1.
- ²¹ Sheila Rowbotham, "Introduction (2013): Beyond the Fragments," in *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, eds. Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, Third edition (London: Merlin Press, 2013), 9.
- ²² Carl Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," *Radical America* 11, no. 6 (1977): 100, cited by Cooper. "Prefiguring the state," 335.
- ²³ See for instance Jo Freeman, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, vol.17, (1972-73): 151-164 and Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference* (London; New York: Routledge, 1989), 113-120.
- ²⁴ Hilary Wainwright, "Introduction," in *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, eds. Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, Third edition (London: Merlin Press, 2013 [1979]), 117.
- ²⁵ Jean McCrindle et al. *Jean McCrindle, Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, Hilary Wainwright, Kenny Bell, December 3, 1979*. Letter. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/C/1/01.
- ²⁶ *Beyond the Fragments Day Event*. Conference program. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/A/8/02. See also Alex Warnock-Smith, "A Long-Game of Resistance: Hugo Hinsley and Support Community Design Building Service" In *Spatial Practices: Modes of Action and Engagement with the City*, ed. Mel Dodd, 67-75. London: Routledge, 2019.
- ²⁷ *Beyond the Fragments meeting on the GLC, July 23, 1981*. Meeting minutes. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/C/1/01.

-
- ²⁸ Tony Manwaring and John Kelly. *Tony Manwaring, John Kelly, Dept. of Industrial Relations, CSE/BTF Alternative Strategies Conference notes for contributors, June 21, 1981*. Letter. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/C/1/01.
- ²⁹ Kathryn Harriss, "New Alliances: Socialist-Feminism in the Eighties," *Feminist Review* no. 31 (Spring 1989): 40. Citing Shiela Rowbotham, "Feminism and Democracy," in *New Forms of Democracy*, eds. David Held and Christopher Pollitt, (London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1986), 78-109 and Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*.
- ³⁰ Kathryn Harriss, "New Alliances", 40. Citing David Blunkett and Geoff Green, *Building from the Bottom: The Sheffield Experience* (London, Fabian Society, 1983).
- ³¹ Most famously symbolized in the UK by the Miliband–Poulantzas debate in the *New Left Review*.
- ³² This *labor perspective* can be understood as emerging from the influence of the Italian workers movement, which became influential in UK-left wing thought from the 1960s onwards. Mario Tronti argued that it was the working class, their labor and struggle to exert their autonomy that was generative of change, rather than capital or technology, and this extends beyond the factory to the whole of society. While never directly citing the Italian movement, their influence can be seen in the work of *In and Against the State*, where the state is understood as a set of social relations and labor as an oppositional force to capitalism. See Tim Joubert, "Bridging Bureaucracy and Activism: Challenges of Activist State-Work in the 1980s Greater London Council," *Urban Studies* (July 2022): 1-20.
- ³³ London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, *In and Against the State*, 51.
- ³⁴ *In and Against the State* was originally published as a pamphlet in 1979 and then published in an expanded version as a book in 1980.
- ³⁵ Joubert, "Bridging Bureaucracy and Activism."
- ³⁶ Cooper, "Prefiguring the State."
- ³⁷ Cooper, "Prefiguring the State," 337.
- ³⁸ Cooper, "Prefiguring the State," 338.
- ³⁹ GLC Economic Policy Group. *Jobs for a Change*, no. 18. Summer Special Issue, 15. Available from the *Robin Murray Living Library*, accessed August 12, 2022: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:391a3eed-f8ff-4931-8efd-b9b933f3b9e9>
- ⁴⁰ Hilary Wainwright, "The Economics of Labour: Robin Murray, Industrial Strategy and the Popular Planning Unit," *Robin Murray's Living Library*, August, 2020, accessed August 12, 2022. <https://robinmurray.co.uk/glc-ppu>
- ⁴¹ Wainwright, "The Economics of Labour."
- ⁴² Sheila Rowbotham, "Robin, a Lodestone and a Lodestar," *Robin Murray's Living Library*, accessed August 12, 2022. <https://robinmurray.co.uk/tributes/2020/1/20/nufot15tkrpioer02ri03v3osv0a4u>
- ⁴³ Sheila Rowbotham, *Domestic Labour*. Policy draft. From Women's Library Archive, *Papers of Sheila Rowbotham, 1969-1988*. 7SHR/B/11.
- ⁴⁴ Wainwright, "The Economics of Labour."
- ⁴⁵ Greater London Council, *The London Industrial Strategy*, 202.
- ⁴⁶ Greater London Council, *The London Industrial Strategy*, 1985, 195-196.
- ⁴⁷ GLC Economic Policy Group, *Jobs for a Change*, 15.
- ⁴⁸ Hansard, Lords Sitting, *London Docklands Development Corporation (Area and Constitution) Order 1980*. HL Deb 01 July 1981 vol 422 cc194-204
- ⁴⁹ Hansard, *London Docklands Development Corporation (Area and Constitution) Order 1980*.
- ⁵⁰ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 305-6.
- ⁵¹ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 303.
- ⁵² Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*.
- ⁵³ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 310.
- ⁵⁴ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 311.
- ⁵⁵ Sue Brownill, "The People's Plan for the Royal Docks: Some Contradictions in Popular Planning," *Planning Practice and Research* 2, no. 4 (1988), 18.
- ⁵⁶ Jade Spencer, "A Plan for a People's London," *Tribune*, May 16, 2022, accessed August 10, 2022, <https://tribunemag.co.uk/2022/05/peoples-plan-royal-docks-london-thatcherism-glc-neoliberalism/>; Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*.
- ⁵⁷ Spencer, "A Plan for a People's London."
- ⁵⁸ Newham Docklands Forum and the GLC Popular Planning Unit, *The People's Plan for the Royal Docks*.
- ⁵⁹ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 315.
- ⁶⁰ "The People's Plan for the Royal Docks," cSPACE, n.d. accessed August 12, 2022, <https://cspace.org.uk/archive/peoples-plan/>
- ⁶¹ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, "Introduction. Part 1: The Politics of Place," in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (London: Routledge, 1993), 1-21.
- ⁶² Keith and Pile, "Introduction."
- ⁶³ Keith and Pile, "Introduction."
- ⁶⁴ Brownill, "The People's Plan for the Royal Docks"
- ⁶⁵ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 106.

- ⁶⁶ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 106.
- ⁶⁷ In 1982/3 the women's committee had a budget of £200,000 for grants to voluntary groups; two years later its grants supporting childcare organizations, groups and initiatives totalled £5.2 million and by 1986 its budget was around £9 million. See Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 106 and Wendy Stokes, "'Not an Encounter Group': Democracy and Women's Committees" (PhD diss., London Guildhall University, 1996), 36.
- ⁶⁸ By 1987, 43 councils had some form of Committee representing the interests of women, although these were resourced to very different degrees, with some operating with no funding and or no specific staff. Stokes, "Not An Encounter Group", 34.
- ⁶⁹ Members advised the committee on disability, transport, older women's interests, youth service, media and the arts, peace, employment, health, and violence against women, Stokes, "Not an Encounter Group," 34-37.
- ⁷⁰ Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 113.
- ⁷¹ Janice Rosina Morphet and Sule Takmaz Nisancioglu, "Early experiences of women and planning initiatives 1980-1990," *Town Planning Review*, June 15 (2021): 1-22.
- ⁷² GLC Women's Committee, *Changing Places: Positive Action on Women and Planning* (London: GLC, 1986).
- ⁷³ Matrix. *Jagonari Asian Women's Centre*. Photographs, drawings. From *Matrix Open feminist architecture archive (MOfaa)*, accessed August 12, 2022, <http://www.matrixfeministarchitecturearchive.co.uk/jagonari/>
- ⁷⁴ By 1986 the Women's Committee had supported over 200 projects ranging from workplace nurseries and community nurseries to mobile and drop-in creches, playgroups and toy libraries and projects for before and after school childcare. Mackintosh and Wainwright, *A Taste of Power*, 113.
- ⁷⁵ Lucy Brownson, "Radical Objects: The London Women's Handbook," History Workshop, May 5, 2022, accessed August 12, 2022, <https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/radical-objects-london-womens-handbook/>
- ⁷⁶ "The GLC's revenue budget was over £800 million in 1985, with a substantial capital budget on top of that", see Robin Murray, 'Local Government in Britain: the experience of the GLC', paper prepared for the meeting on Local Government, Johannesburg October 7, 1990, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bc8924fb9144917ed082349/t/5ee8ff4e44d1ca04661aa91e/1592328023439/L+OCAL+GOVERNMENT+IN+BRITIAN+THE+EXPERIENCE+OF+GLC.pdf>
- ⁷⁷ Bertie Russell, "Making Power Emerge: Municipalism and the Right to the City," *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture* 74 (2020): 95-111.
- ⁷⁸ Cooper, "Prefiguring the State."
- ⁷⁹ Joubert, "Bridging Bureaucracy and Activism."
- ⁸⁰ See for example, Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval, *The New Way of the World: On Neoliberal Society*. (London: Verso Books, 2017), Erik Olin Wright, *How to be an Anticapitalist in the Twenty-First Century*. (London: Verso, 2019), Jeremy Gilbert, *Twenty-First Century Socialism*. (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2020).
- ⁸¹ Nancy Fraser, Cinzia Arruzza and Tithi Bhattacharya, *Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto* (London: Verso, 2019), Veronica Gago, *Feminist International: How to Change Everything*. (London: Verso, 2020), Lola Olufemi, *Feminism, Interrupted: Disrupting Power* (London: Pluto Press, 2020), Françoise Vergès, *A Decolonial Feminism*, trans. Ashley J. Bohrer (London: Pluto Press, 2021).
- ⁸² See for instance, Dawn Foster, *Lean Out* (London: Repeater Books, 2015) and Vergès, *A Decolonial Feminism*.
- ⁸³ Olufemi, *Feminism, Interrupted*.
- ⁸⁴ Jeremy Gilbert, "What kind of thing is 'neoliberalism'?" *New Formations*, 80 (2013): 10.
- ⁸⁵ Neil Smith. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).
- ⁸⁶ Kerns "Feminist City," 38-39.
- ⁸⁷ Leslie Kern and Gerda R. Wekerle, "Gendered Spaces of Redevelopment: Gendered Politics of City Building," In *Gender in an Urban World*, ed. Judith DeSena (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2008): 233-262.
- ⁸⁸ See for instance Anna Minton, *Big Capital: Who is London for?* (London: Penguin press, 2017).
- ⁸⁹ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford University Press, 2007).
- ⁹⁰ See especially the first chapter of Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. (New York: Zone Books, 2015)
- ⁹¹ Cooper, "Prefiguring the State," 349-350.
- ⁹² Martin Sarnow and Norma Tiedemann "Interrupting the Neoliberal Masculine State Machinery? Strategic Selectivities and Municipalist Practice in Barcelona and Zagreb," *Urban Studies* (2022): 4
- ⁹³ Manuela Zechner, *Commoning Care & Collective Power: Childcare Commons and the Micropolitics of Municipalism in Barcelona* (Wien: Transversal texts, 2021).
- ⁹⁴ Manuela Zechner, *Commoning Care*.
- ⁹⁵ Manuela Zechner, *Commoning Care*.
- ⁹⁶ Valeria Graziano and Kim Trogal, "Handling Replacement: Tending to a Local Library and repair centre," in *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet*, eds. Angelika Fitz and Elke Krasny (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2019), 99-105.
- ⁹⁷ Doreen Massey, *World City* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007). Segal, "Today, Yesterday and Tomorrow," 83.
- ⁹⁸ Stuart Hall, cited in Joubert, "Bridging Bureaucracy and Activism," 14.

⁹⁹ Jos Boys and Julia Dwyer. "Revealing Work. Interrogating Artifacts to (Re)view Histories of Feminist Architectural Practice." *Architecture and Culture* 5, no. 3 (2017): 487-504.

¹⁰⁰ Sheila Rowbotham, "Introduction," 9.