Masculinity, Misogyny and the UK Left: A Case Study of Momentum

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities.

2023

Chris Waugh

School of Social Sciences

Table of contents

Final word count: 77937

List of Acronyms

AWL – Alliance for Workers' Liberty.

CPGB – Communist Party of Great Britain.

IWGB – Independent Workers of Great Britain.

SP – Socialist Party.

SS – Socialist Students.

SWP – Socialist Workers' Party.

SWSS – Socialist Workers' Students' Society.

TWT – The World Transformed.

List of Figures

Abstract

This thesis explores the understudied area of masculinity in radical left-wing social movements. While there is a scattered gendered body of literature on social movements, how men participate and construct masculinities has received less scholarly attention. Specifically, this thesis develops the analytical concept of "inarticulate masculinities" - how men's experiences and expressions of masculinity may not conform to traditional gender norms but struggle to articulate themselves as doing so.

This thesis identifies a gap in the academic study of masculinity in social movements. A theoretical framework is drawn from the works of Raymond Williams and Felix Guattari to propose a novel method for understanding the shaping of identities within cultures, especially radical political cultures.

Drawing on interviews with men involved in Momentum, I explore how left-wing cultures shape and discipline masculine identities. While left-wing men can – and do – perpetuate patriarchal power structures and traditional gender roles under the guise of radical activism, this thesis highlights how alternative and emergent masculine practises manifest.

The significance of this research extends beyond a better understanding of masculinity in social movements. The thesis argues that inarticulate masculinities have broader implications for affect studies and social movement research. Scholars can better understand the affective dimensions of political engagement by exploring men's emotional experiences and expressions in social movements. Through highlighting how gender norms are constructed and contested in social movements, this research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how political practises and cultures shape and sustain identities.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Copyright statement

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the "Copyright") and they have given the University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made. Presentation of Theses Policy.

iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trademarks and other intellectual property (the "Intellectual Property") and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables ("Reproductions"), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=24420), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, the University Library's regulations (see http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/about/regulations/) and in the University's policy on Presentation of Theses.

Acknowledgements

No journey is ever undertaken alone. No academic project is the product of one mind. And no researcher can take sole credit for the fruits of their labour. So, with this in mind, I must present my thanks to the following.

To Gemma Edwards and Kevin Gillian – who guided me with a mixture of gentle encouragement and good humour, through four challenging years.

To Professor Jeff Hearn and Dr Simin Faedee – who – as my external and internal examiners, respectively – challenged, encouraged, and directed me through my viva, and into the world that lies beyond it. The nuance, detail, and humanity in our discussion has left a last effect on me, and I will always be grateful.

To Nick Thoburn – whose research and personal support directed me into the world of Deleuze and Guattari and whose calmness and patience were never unwelcome.

To Paul Simpson – who, apropos of nothing, nurtured and supported both my research and pedagogy with sensitivity, curiosity, and warmth.

To my colleagues: Jaime Garcia Iglesias kept me on my toes with his forensic approach to scholarship and his cutting humour, and he was the best housemate I could ask for until a global pandemic got in the way. Thomas Chadwick provided me companionship as a fellow masculinities researcher, and I will never be able to thank him enough for just ‘getting it’. Ernestina Zhu shared with me the tedious joy of juggling multiple teaching roles with a full-time PhD and someone to complain to when the tedium outweighed the job. Alexandrina Vanke guided me on my journey into the work of Raymond Williams and trusted me to read emergent and compelling research. Ashley Collar never ceased to impress me with her laser-

sharp, student-focused teaching and her steely resolve. Tom Boszak provided friendship, good humour, and a sounding board that always returned the correct answers.

To Evelyn Langford-Smith, whose career I will follow with interest.

Last, but by no means, least – to Anjali Reddy, who never stopped caring.

Chapter One: Introduction

In 2013, the Socialist Workers' Party – for many years a significant force within the British left - collapsed. The controversy that would be the Party's downfall was several years in the making. In January 2013, the blog Socialist Unity published a "near-verbatim transcript" of a meeting of the SWP's Disputes Committee (Binh, 2013, no pagination). It detailed the accusation against a SWP's Central Committee member of rape by a teenage female activist in the Party in 2010. The transcript provoked outrage; the accused Party member, "Comrade Delta," had other complaints about his sexual conduct by women in the Party (Renton, 2016), and claims of a cover-up of severe sexual abuse began to emerge. Owen Hathersley, writing in *The Guardian* (2013, no pagination), notes that the Disputes Committee "consisted of the accused's friends" and that the Party claimed that its manner of dealing with the rape claim was superior to what it branded "bourgeois justice."

As the crisis unfolded, more details emerged from the blogs and tweets of current and former SWP members. On his blog *Lenin's Tomb*, Richard Seymour describes the flailing tactics used by the SWP to ward off accusations of sexism, malpractice, and cover-up: "...the members who raise this issue, many of them students, are yelled at in meetings, denounced for 'creeping feminism' ...Old polemics against 'feminism' from the 1980s, always somewhat dogmatic, are dusted off and used as a stick to beat dissenters with" (Seymour, 2013a, no pagination). The final straw for many SWP members was an article entitled *Is Leninism Finished?* by Alex Callinicos (International Secretary of the SWP) defending the Party. The article does not reference rape and simply dismisses the matter as a "difficult disciplinary case" (Callinicos, 2013, no pagination). In the weeks and months after the scandal broke, the SWP's numbers shrunk dramatically, with the entire Socialist Workers Student Society

(SWSS) disaffiliating from the Party (Muir, 2013) among hundreds if not thousands of members. Former SWP member and comedian Mark Steel estimated in April 2013 that only around 600 members were left in the SWP, down from around 6,000 (Steel, 2013). While the SWP continues to exist as I write these words in 2023, its reputation remains tarnished by the scandal. If one were to stroll through the University of Manchester Campus, one would still find SWP posters slapped onto bus shelters and lampposts. However, they will inevitably be defaced, and – more often than not – graffitied phrases such as "Rape Apologists!" and "Google Comrade Delta!" blot out traces of the party line.

The crisis in the SWP is perhaps the most attention-grabbing example of tensions around sexual politics in the British left, but it is far from the only one. Indeed, we might say that the left in Britain, especially the radical left, has a somewhat chequered history of sexism and misogyny. Long before the name "Comrade Delta" meant anything of significance, the Workers Revolutionary Party imploded after it emerged that a leading member – Gerry Healy – had sexually abused over twenty women in the Party (Clement, 1985). The response of the WRP pre-empted that of the SWP some decades later; Healy was, like Comrade Delta, heroised, while the women who accused him were branded as "liars" and dismissed (Horsnell, 1985; Pirani, 2013). In 2017, the Revolutionary Communist Group faced a similar crisis after suspending and reinstating a member accused of historic sexual violence (FRFI, 2017).

However, outside of the extremes of sexual violence or harassment, it is possible to piece together an image of a troubled left. Whether radical or more moderate, the political left has long been dogged by the suggestion that it is not immune from sexism or sexist attitudes. Writing in 1973, Shelia Rowbotham recounts how reluctant many men on the left were to acknowledge the importance of feminism or the impact of sexism: "Men will often admit that

other women are oppressed, but not you. Well it was true in the past, but not now, well yes they are in Liverpool but not in London or wherever you live…" (Rowbotham, 2015, p.37). Research by the scholar-activist Salvage Collective has highlighted the pervasiveness of sexism in both the radical left and grassroots movements (Downes, 2016; 2017). Indeed, women in left-wing movements and parties often found themselves expected to reproduce patriarchal practises, such as doing domestic or unpaid creative labour for the men in their movements (Lagalisse, 2010; Chen, 2013). It is worth noting that while the examples I have provided above are from radical left groups in Britain, the problem is not limited by nation. There were incidents of sexual violence at Occupy Camps in both Glasgow and Cleveland in 2011 (McKeown, 2011); Qadir (2015) highlights a seemingly superficial interest in 'the woman question' reinforces a public/private distinction in radical politics in Pakistan; Ansari (2020), reflecting on her experience as a Muslim woman involved in India's radical left, points on that "misogyny is not a right-wing trait, it's a male trait," (no pagination). The issue transcends borders. Indeed, the idea that self-proclaimed male feminists can be problematic is not confined to the radical left (Murphy, 2018; Harrington, 2021); what makes it most striking is that these incidents are taking place in movements which consciously claim to oppose patriarchy and misogyny.

Existing scholarship on gender and social movements is – in its current form – sizeable but scattered. Work, especially in the feminist tradition, has critically examined social movements' engagement with gender and how gender and gendered practices shape and sustain social movement dynamics, mobilising frames and identities (Hurwtiz and Crossley, 2019). Scholars such as Whittier (2013) have contended that social movements are gendered, even if those movements do not explicitly engage with gender as a matter of politics. Scholarship has extended this analysis to movements outside of the Anglosphere (Roy, 2016), and how queer activists and queer social movements have contributed towards

broader discussions and conceptualisations of queer identity (Broad, 2002; Miller, Taylor and Rupp, 2016).

Relatedly, masculinities in social movements have gained some critical scrutiny. There is a growing body of literature that examines masculinity within far-right social movements (Kelly, 2017; Sauer, Dietze, and Roth, 2020), as well as how women involved in far-right movements navigate environments where traditional or hegemonic masculinities tend to hold significant cultural and social power (Worth, 2017). These lines of enquiry build on research into the myriad of Men's Rights Movements that began to emerge in the 20th Century (Messner, 1998; Coston and Kimmel, 2013; Kimmel, 2017), as well as the ideological and network links between the Men's Rights Movement and the far right (Träbert, 2017). More recently, this vein of scholarship has tended towards critical examination of the growing – and troubling – eco-system of online activism and social media content that makes up the 'manosphere' (Schmitz and Kazyak, 2016; Ging, 2019; Jones, 2020; Bazzano , 2020). However, the far right and men's rights are not the only categories of social movements to be explored through the lens of masculinity. Pajumets and Hearn (2021) have drawn attention to the reproduction of dominant masculinities in ecological movements in Estonia, often through seemingly rejecting such masculinities; Connell (1990) has done similar work on the Australian eco-movement. Burgin (2012) explores how anti-war movements can become spaces for making and challenging new notions of masculinities and femininities. Tidy (2016) comes to similar conclusions about gendered dissenting subjectivities in such movements. Ally movements – such as men's anti-violence against women movements – are noted as spaces where dominant masculinities can be challenged (Casey, 2010) or reproduced as a form of 'hybrid masculinity' (Sorin, 2022). Indeed, the masculinities of labour and trade union movements have also garnered scrutiny (Creese, 1999; Ho, 2011; Ledwith, 2012; Dean and Roberts, 2020). A prevailing theme in this latter body of research pertains to one of the

concerns of this thesis – that is, the important – though perhaps not novel realisation that progressive or perhaps even radical spaces and movements can reproduce hegemonic masculinities, masculinities often couched in a new rhetoric, but resulting in the same consequences for women, gender non-conforming people, and men with alternative masculinities.

For movements of the left and radical left, especially those in the socialist or Marxist tradition, the literature is somewhat more scattered. A substantial body of literature exists on the British left and radical left, exploring its history and electoral practises (Kelly, 2018), its (relative) resurgence in response to austerity policies (Ward, 2022), and the left and radical left's engagement and interventions in matters of culture (Dean, 2015;2018). Historians of gender have drawn attention to the masculinities and masculinised politics of left and radical left movements of the past (Dudink, Hagermann and Tosh, 2004; McCormack, 2007), and there is a smaller body of literature on contemporary movements and the masculinities within those movements (Sullivan, 2007; Coleman and Bassi, 2011; Craddock, 2019), or offer a more general analysis of the gender and sexual politics of the left. Of these studies, critical attention is paid to movements in Latin America (Coleman and Bassi, 2011), Southern Europe (Sullivan, 2007), and Scandinavia (Christensen, 2011), with only a small number of studies subjecting the British left to a critical examination of matters of gender (Dean and Maiguascha, 2018; Craddock, 2019). This literature is reviewed in more detail in Chapter Three. Again, the general conclusion is much the same as that identified above. However, though this body of literature offered thoughtful and nuanced contributions on the construction of masculinities on the left and how masculinities shape, discipline and sustain social movement dynamics, there remains much we do not know about the gender and sexual politics of the British left, and the role of masculinities within it. While feminists have drawn attention to both the "unhappy marriage" of Marxism and Feminism (Hartmann, 1979) and

the epistemological dissonances between the two ideologies (Bakan, 2012), the problem appears to be broader than just ideological tensions. There are more significant questions here about men in left-wing groups, what they do, and what they *should* do. These moments of crisis and the seemingly un-interruption of patriarchy within radical spaces highlight a kind of absence, a gap in academic knowledge, what March (2013) calls the "gaping lacuna" in social movement studies. This lacuna is around the questions of sexual and gender politics on the left; what are the expectations, rules and behaviours around sex and gender, and is there some dissonance between word and deed, ideology and action? To ask these critical questions is to reject the logic that "by virtue of being progressive, by virtue of fighting for equality and social justice…we are somehow above behind held…accountable" (Penny, 2013, no pagination) and to explore how practices around sex and gender are shaped by movements, by the ideologies of movements, and by the cultures distinct to movements.

Another critical element to this lacuna is what it *means* to be a man on the left. Feminists have pointed out the overt masculinity of the left regarding its iconography, language and aesthetics (Chapman and Rutherford, 1989; Hearn, 1987). Scholarship points us to the important (but not necessarily novel) conclusion that social movements often reproduce the structures and practises of a world that they ostensibly oppose. My point here is not to dismiss those theoretical threads. However, what is missing is a clearer understanding of how left-wing men understand their masculinity in relation to their movements – how does being part of a radical left movement create and sustain certain kinds of masculinity and discipline others? What is the impact of this on the broader culture of the movement? And how do men navigate the complexities of sexual and gender politics, which, as we have seen in the previous paragraphs, can lead movements to collapse?

My understanding of masculinity within this thesis owes much to the now well-established concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005), especially the insight that what is considered masculine is culturally contingent, and thus honoured forms of masculinity will vary between contexts and cultures. However, this thesis adds two additional theoretical concepts to its considerations of masculinity: affect and militancy. I draw from what is often referred to as the "affective turn" in social sciences (Clough, 2007). Affect is a notoriously nebulous concept, but it can be thought of as that which comes before emotions and often before language. It moves us to act, or not act, in ways that we cannot often rationalise or immediately put into words. While affect may seem at first glance to be abstract, affect relates both to embodiment (the body, its interactive process, and the tangible process of perception and cultural acquisition) and emotions (more concrete expressions of feelings which are often culturally coded). As scholars such as Reeser (2019) have pointed out, affect can threaten hegemonic masculinity (as, for our purposes, a means to analyse how resistant and alternative masculinities emerge). However, hegemonic masculinities can also utilise affect to entrench masculine power. Similarly, I argue in Chapter Two that affect is also a lens by which we might understand social movement cultures. Cultures are both about meaning-making and feeling-making, but how affect is received and transmitted can result in a certain amount of disagreement and dissonance, messiness often overlooked by the more dominant 'frame' perspective within social movement theory (Snow et al., 1988).

In comparison, militancy seems to be at odds with affect. Suppose affect is pre-linguistic and hard to grasp. In that case, militancy comes with connotations of rigidity, dogmatism, and an uncompromising approach to the world and the self (though, as I will argue in Chapter Three, militancy is a term used with a certain degree of imprecision in both popular and scholarly literature.) As a sense of selfhood and as a methodology for radical

politics, militancy, or being a militant, has a rich history in the radical left, especially within Marxist and socialist movements – one can be both a militant, practise political militancy and be part of a militant organisation (Althusser, 1970; Blanc, 1972; Guattari, 1984; Nunes, 2013). Scholars have identified how militancy and militant subjectivities are often gendered and culturally coded masculine (Sullivan, 2007; Coleman and Bassi, 2011; Craddock, 2019). However, it's essential to understand that militancy can be affective and that affect can be understood as both masculine *and* militant in specific contexts (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988; Bergman and Montgomery, 2017).

This thesis aims to provide an understanding of the sexual and gender politics of radical left-wing social movements and the intersection between culture, militancy and affect in such movements; to examine and explore how masculinities are created and shaped by participation in radical left social movements; and to reflect on what can be learned from how left-wing activists navigate gender and sexual politics. With these objectives in mind, I present three key research questions:

1. How does the culture of radical left movements create, sustain and discipline certain kinds of masculinity and militancy? What models of resistance to these exist?
2. How have activists critiqued dominant militant masculinities within radical left culture, and what lessons can the left learn from this?
3. What is the role of affect and affective practises in movement culture, and how does this include or exclude gender as a category of analysis?

The relationship between the questions and the themes mentioned above – and explored in the thesis – is demonstrated in figure 1. Research questions 1 and 2 were developed in response to the content and themes explored in the literature review and theoretical framework (Chapters 2 and 3), while research question 3 was developed during and after the fieldwork.

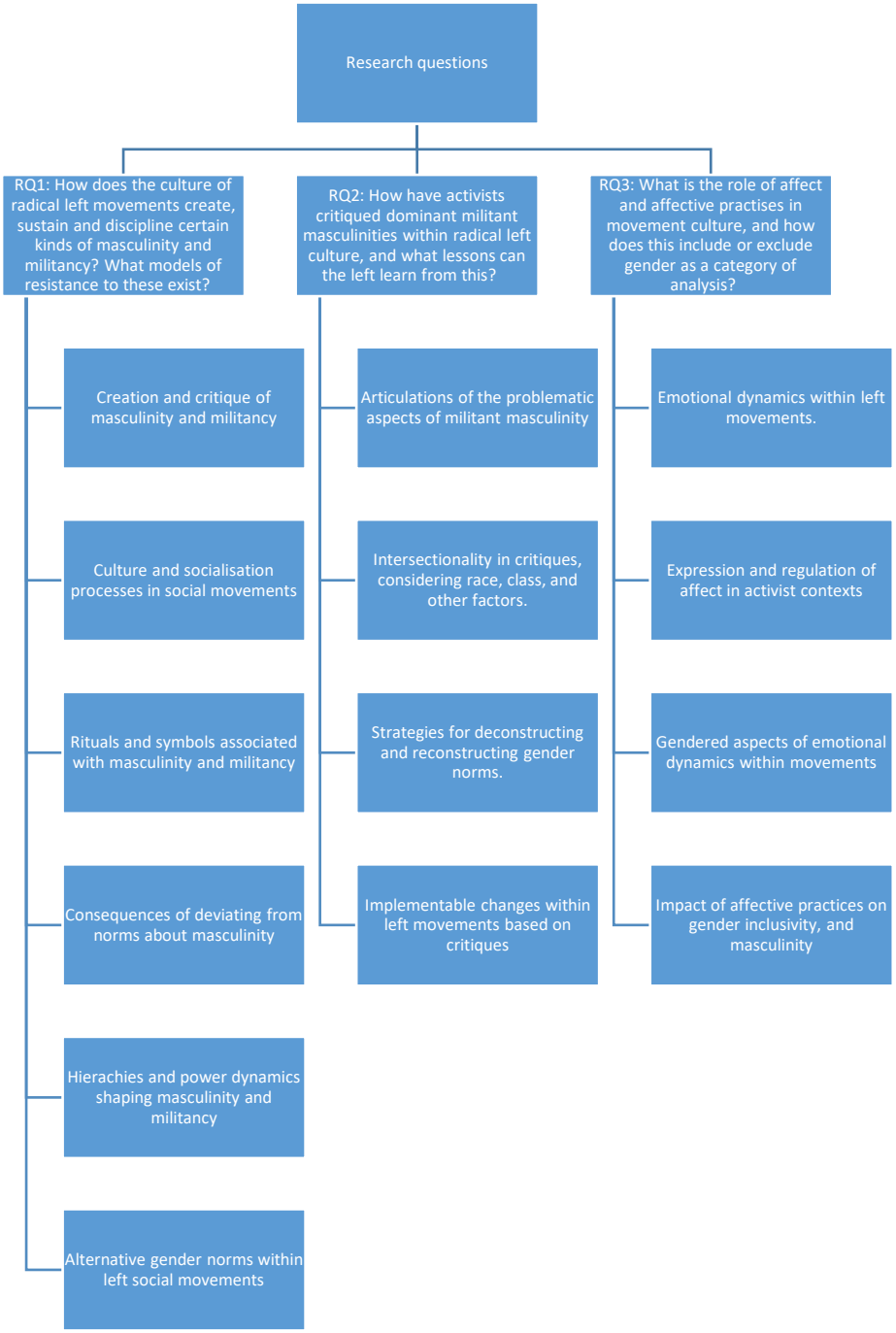

Figure 1: Research questions and themes

To answer these questions, I draw from a variety of different literature. An initial task of the thesis is to examine existing scholarship about left-wing masculinity (what we know) and then to enrich this knowledge with insights from work on the concept of militancy and affect. On militancy, I utilise academic research and accounts from activists involved in radical politics, who reflected critically on both left-wing organisational practises and subjectivities. It's important to acknowledge that many of these activist and scholarly accounts are critical of militancy and being militant, and such criticisms run the gamut from overt dogmatism, self-aggrandisement, and enforced misery. I engage with these critiques as part of constructing a theoretical framework. However, I should hasten to add that I do not believe militancy and militants must be consigned to the rubbish heap of history. Militant practices have a rich history, and as I write this in 2023, I find myself outside of academia engaging with a wave of trade union militancy. My concern is understanding the gendered aspects of militancy, how militancy can inform our understanding of masculinities, and how alternative militancies and practises might emerge within the radical left.

In my approach to affect, I owe a considerable debt to the work of Raymond Williams and his concept of the structures of feeling (Williams, 1977; 2001). The structures of feeling – William's attempt to explore how new and emergent voices manifest in moments of social change and how these voices articulate themselves when they are often experienced in inarticulate ways – have proved to be of use to literary scholars (Hendler, 2001; Arac and Yanacek, 2021), scholars of digital media (Coleman, 2018), television (Dyer, 2015) and pedagogy (Zembylas, 2002). Within social movement studies, William's work is sadly somewhat overlooked, though some emergent research uses structures of feeling in the study of activism (McDuffie and Ames, 2021). This thesis can make two contributions to social movement theory; first, to demonstrate how the structures of feeling allow for a broader understanding of the connections between militancy, affect, and masculinity, and second, to

show that structures of feeling offer appropriate theoretical tools for the more comprehensive study of culture and emotions within social movements.

A case study of Momentum

The chosen field site for the thesis is Momentum. Momentum occupies a curious position within both the British left and radical left. It is simultaneously of the Labour Party, yet independent of it, and its peculiar positionality has only become more complicated after the collapse of the so-called "Corbyn Project" and the ascendency of the right of the Labour Party under Sir Keir Starmer. I chose Momentum as a field site for several reasons: firstly, between 2015 and 2019, Momentum acted as a kind of centre of gravity within the British left; it was in Momentum that left-wing activists and organisations found the most activity and energy during those four years. Momentum has, since its inception, drawn together a membership of activists from more mainstream elements of the political left, but also from the radical left, both in terms of formal radical left-wing organisations that encouraged members to join Momentum and individuals who had drifted through the Marxist or Trotskyist tradition and found a new political home within Momentum. Here, I must emphasise that I am not engaging with the media discourse that sought to portray Momentum as a Trotskyist entryist cult in the brand of the Militant Tendency of the 1980s. Instead, I am reflecting on my experiences of transitioning from more orthodox Trotskyist traditions into Momentum and that I was far from alone in this activist trajectory. My argument here rests in part on the idea that activists take cultural tools and affects with them when they move between movements. Ergo, Momentum's, at times, ambivalence towards some of the more avowed language and imagery of organisations like the CPGB or SWP does not mean that it did not reproduce the cultural practises of some of those movements. Indeed, Momentum's attempts to differentiate from militant groups (which I detail in Chapter Five) set up a more

challenging test of my theoretical framework by looking at a group which is perhaps more institutionally embedded rather than an ostensibly militant organisation. I chose this field site on the assumption that militancy (both as practice and as subjectivity) is a distinctive product of radical left-wing culture. Finally, Momentum's culture fully embraced the possibilities of affective interactions in ways that did depart from more orthodox movement cultures – yet this did not mean a certain degree of social reproduction did not occur.

Structure of the thesis

In Chapter Two, I review existing literature on the role of culture, affect and gender in social movements. I focus on how movements develop their cultural practice and the interplay between these cultural practices and those of broader mainstream cultures. Departing from the established 'framing' perspective, I suggest that movement cultures are best understood as spaces of affective interaction, where meaning-making and feeling-making occur and often clash between those two processes. I examine how movement cultures shape, sustain, and, at times, discipline the identities of movement participants. Drawing from Stuart Hall's work on countercultures and Nancy Fraser's work on counterpublics, I present a framework for understanding how seemingly radical movements can often reproduce structures of oppression and discrimination in what are supposed to be emancipatory spaces.

In Chapter Three, I offer a theoretical framework for thinking about left-wing masculinities. I draw from two strands of scholarship: Felix Guattari's work on militancy and what he calls the militant diagram and Raymond Williams' contribution towards the study of affect, specifically his work around the structures of feeling. From the former, I highlight how the militant diagram can be used to understand rigid and dogmatic masculinity, one which is hostile to vulnerability and dissent, masculinity built around hard slogans,

militaristic rhetoric and intellectual power; furthermore, I suggest some ways in which militancy as a concept could be understood as implicitly male coded. From the latter, I explore how left movements create spaces for a more ambiguous and affective form of masculinity; left-wing masculinities can be constituted by non-discursive moments that trouble the boundaries of traditional masculinities.

In Chapter Four, I describe my methodological framework and reflect on some of the barriers I faced to conducting ethnography under lockdown. I present my epistemological approach to the fieldwork, informed by ideas of scholar-activism and militant research, and consider my positionality as a researcher conducting fieldwork in a movement where I am an active participant. I discuss my sampling method and research design and introduce my participants herein. I also reflect on some of the barriers I faced during fieldwork due to lockdown restrictions in the UK between 2020 and 2021 and argue for reconfiguring our understanding of the relationship between qualitative interviewing and online ethnography.

In Chapter Five, I introduce and contextualise Momentum as a field site. Momentum's brief but eventful history is outlined, and I review the emerging scholarship around the movements, specifically the attempts to categorise Momentum as a political party, a social movement, or some hybrid entity. This chapter contains some brief empirical analysis, wherein data from my fieldwork is used to illustrate my argument. I contend that Momentum is in an ambiguous place politically in the "Post Corbyn" era of British politics but that the organisation has always embraced a degree of ambiguity and hybridity, allowing it to engage with Westminster politics and with extra-parliamentary social movements of the left, without being too closely associated with either camp.

In Chapter Six, I draw on my empirical data to explore the sexual politics of Momentum. Having introduced Momentum as a deliberately hybrid and ambiguous

movement, I illustrate how, in the space of a few years, Momentum was able to build up a culture which blurred the boundaries between formal political actions and cultural celebrations: music, dancing, comedy, and the creation and sharing of humorous online content allowed Momentum to distinguish itself from other left-wing movements, but also functioned to shape the identities and practises of participants within the organisation. However, on the issue of sexual politics, despite making some efforts, my participants attested to the reproduction and sustaining of patriarchal power dynamics. If we can say that Momentum is a hybrid, ambiguous organisation, it is not surprising that its sexual politics are equally ambiguous.

In Chapter Seven, I explore how men, women and non-binary participants navigate sexual politics in Momentum's culture. I recount how some of my female and non-binary participants experienced gaslighting, bullying and abuse within the organisation from male militants. However, many of the men I spoke to tried to engage in alternative approaches to their masculinity. Among these men, I suggest that left-wing men experience what I call a "moment of inarticulation" around sexual politics; in the new and novel context of the movement, they were aware of the problematic aspects and complexities of militancy and masculinity but became inarticulate (verbally and non-verbally) in their attempts to navigate these complexities and understand themselves. I propose the existence of an "ethics of gender," that is, a pre-linguistic field of meaning that establishes which practices, stances and values one needs to navigate privilege, sexual politics and one's gender. There exists a sense that there is a 'correctness' to how men are meant to negotiate their way through this ethic, but the ambiguity of how to do so leads to moments of inarticulation.

In Chapter Eight, I reflect on the militant diagram as a tool for understanding left-wing masculinities and discuss how the masculinities and sexual politics I observed in my

fieldwork diverged or converged from the diagram. I identify specific topics and sites of contention within the sexual politics of Momentum and the masculinities I observed there that were sporadic, seemingly incomplete, yet still worthy of scholarship and further critical enquiry. In particular, questions around age, sexual practices, and knowledge are explored. I also use this chapter to reflect on some unexpected hostilities I experienced during fieldwork and try to understand them as unexpected expressions of militancy.

In Chapter Nine, I provide some concluding reflections and remarks. Herein, I restate my key findings, and identify some areas for further research and scholarship. I reiterate the need for both further and more in-depth research into the gender and sexual politics of the left and also repeat my case for utilising both affect and the structures of feeling as a way of breathing new life into the study of emotions and identities within movements. I also argue that the concept of inarticulate masculinities offers tools and conceptual possibilities to scholars of gender outside of the realm of social movement studies. In addition, I reflect on what leftist groups might be able to take from this research and consider the future of the British left in light of the contentions and debates that this research has both contributed to and uncovered.

Chapter Two: Culture, Emotion, and Identity in social movements.

Introduction

This chapter concerns culture, affect and their relationship to the construction of gender roles. Scholarship has firmly established that social movements are socially, politically, and culturally situated. The 'turn to culture' in social movement studies has provided many rich and thought-provoking approaches to social movements. Within this chapter, I review this literature and argue that whilst existing work offers some insights into culture and identities in social movements (especially Melucci (1989; 1996)), there remains scope for further analysis into culture, emotions, and male identities. This chapter is my attempt to do this, drawing on a broader range of theoretical concepts than previous attempts. At the same time, further consideration is needed to adequately explain the persistence of the problems of misogyny and sexism in radical left-wing cultures, which I outlined in the introduction to this thesis.

This thesis is, in part, my contribution to these discussions about emotions, identities, movements and cultures. Our identities tie closely to both cultural practices and emotional connections with others. Culture is not just about meaning-making; it is about *feeling*-making, and thus, affect provides a means by which we can approach questions about culture and cultural practices. Central to my thinking is the idea that affect cannot exist in a vacuum, and it is through cultural practises that we begin to put meanings onto affects. In other words, culture is the social domain of affect and emotions, and it is affective as much as it is about understanding affect. In addition, I argue that we can form a clearer picture of identity formation within movements through an affective analysis of movement culture. Identity

formation is an emotional process in which our connections to others help to develop our identities: this is an acknowledged factor in the formation of collective identities in social movements (Goodwin and Jasper, 2006; Flam and King, 2007), but I focus on the tensions and conflicts between the "I" and the "we"; cultural practice might be a means for interpreting affect and emotion, but it would be wrong to presume every individual in a culture will have a coherent interpretation. There are often contentious, disputed interpretations of affect, which might account for the prevalence of contradictory practices in radical groups. Feelings of unity for some are experienced as feelings of division for others.

This chapter opens with a consideration of the concepts of "radicalism" and "the radical left." Whilst this terminology is common in scholarly and popular literature, a precise definition is hard to come by. I argue for conceptualising "the radical left" with a certain degree of fluidity – terms like "radical left" and "radicalism" are temporal and relational: what amounts to being radical will vary from context to context and across periods of history. Such slipperiness should not be off-putting, however, as the emergent and shifting nature of the radical left is mirrored in its culture.

After this, I reviewed past scholarship into social movement cultures and established my theoretical framework. I depart from the long-standing "framing" perspective as I argue that it fails to give enough critical scrutiny to the fact that culture is a process subject to variability. Social movement cultures intervene in dominant cultures and vice versa, and framing has yet to provide sufficient answers for the kinds of identities that emerge from this often messy process. Instead, I turn to affect studies. In the concept of affect – that is, that which comes before emotion and can augment or limit the body's capacity to act – we find a more meaningful framework. My argument contains several prongs: firstly, that cultural practises are often affective experiences; secondly, that movement cultures are especially affective as the act of protest and resistance is an affective phenomenon; thirdly, that affect

plays a vital role in the formation of identities, both for groups and for individuals. Fourthly, the affects within a culture are not all experienced equally, and what can be positive for some can be negative for others. As a result, movement cultures may find themselves as sites where individual or group identities clash with the movement's ideology.

Additionally, the process of cultural meaning-making/feeling-making is complicated further by the fact that movement cultures are not isolated from dominant cultures. Drawing on Marc Steinberg (2002), Stuart Hall (1993) and Nancy Fraser (1990), I argue that dominant and activist cultures often have a dialogic relationship. While activist practises can sometimes have considerable cultural weight in the "public sphere," activist cultures themselves are not hermetically sealed off from dominant cultures – and, therefore, there are as susceptible to problematic social reproduction as they are to a process of renewal. I argue that the problematics of gender and sex in the radical left can be understood as problems of cultures and how movement cultures interact with dominant cultures.

Finally, I suggest that despite the variety within radical left cultures, one consistent feature of these cultures is the militant figure. The militant and militancy are an identity and a set of ethics and practices closely tied to radical left ideologies, and tend to heroise within left-wing cultures (even if militancy is less embedded in some movements than in others). As I argue in Chapter Three, militants and militancy provide a sound theoretical tool for understanding identities within radical left social movement cultures as militancy has close links with affect and because militants very often reproduce the same characteristics of a dominant culture they seek to destroy.

Defining the radical left

Defining what is meant by radicalism or "the radical left" is trickier than it might seem, and the offered definitions are restrictive. Visser et al. (2014) define "radical left" as "to

the left of social democracy" and "strongly oppose[d] to political and economic elites" (p.532). While nothing is wrong with this definition, it doesn't provide much basis for further analysis. Fagerholm (2018) goes as far as to suggest that "radical left" is simply a "generic term" without the need for further investigation. Indeed, "radical left" is used more colloquially - especially in popular and media discourse - as a synonym for "far left" or "hard left" - though the latter two terms carry more negative connotations (Fagerholm, ibid; March 2013). However, for the present study, it is essential to try and establish a coherent meaning of radical left, and radicalism more broadly.

March and Mudde (2005) try a more concrete definition of the phrase "radical left." For them, "radicalism" refers to a broad "ideological and practical orientation towards 'root and branch' systemic change in the political system occupied by the radical actor" (ibid, p.24). According to this, Radicals are not "anti-democratic" but "anti-liberal democratic" - that is to say, broadly hostile to the structures and apparatus of liberal democratic states. March and Mudde contrast this with "extremist" groups, who offer "opposition to the values and practises of democracy, either as it exists in a particular system, or *as* a system, which may but does not necessarily, involve a propensity to violence," (ibid, italics in original).

While March and Mudde's definition is helpful, it is not foolproof. Linking "radical left" to opposition to the structures of liberal democracy would imply a refusal to engage in the parliamentary process, instead preferring to engage in direct action and extra-parliamentary politics. While it is true that many radical left groups do organise strikes, demonstrations and occupations, they do not entirely refuse to engage in electoral politics. The openly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, for example, was an active member of the Socialist Alliance, a coalition of radical left parties which stood in general elections between 1992 and 2005 (Day, 2004). As Kelly (2018) points out, Trotskyist parties have contested every general election in the United Kingdom since 1974, with eight distinct Trotskyist

groups fielding candidates in the 2010 general election (p.8). While Trotskyist parties, in general, voice a substantial degree of antipathy towards parliament, claiming that "power does not lie in parliament [but with]...unelected bosses and bankers" (Choonara & Kimber, 2011, p.39), these very same parties admit to the importance of electoral votes "elections are cruel...if you get a really bad vote, it's very crushing," (Kimber, in Kelly, 2018, p.31).

Furthermore, by their definition of "extremist" groups, March and Mudde suggest that "extremists" are more likely to engage in illegal activity; this overlooks the fact that what is and is not legal is often very contingent on the whims of the state. As I began this thesis, the environmentalist group Extinction Rebellion has been subject to a ban on its protest activities in London, which had been legal in the previous days (Baynes, 2019). Extinction Rebellion has refused to observe the ban, so by March and Mudde's definition, have they become an extremist group? Similarly, what may be considered legal action in a movement's repertoire of contention (Tarrow, 2011) in one country may be illegal in another, either in general or at a specific time (as per the example of Extinction Rebellion). A gay rights march in the United Kingdom would likely face little state opposition. Yet, the same action in Russia can - and has - resulted in legal penalties and state violence against activists (Osbourne, 2019).

Furthermore, there is a question of whether it is possible to be radical within the structures of a liberal democratic framework. Momentum - the socialist grassroots movement within the Labour Party - offers an interesting illustration of this question. Momentum utilised its considerable influence within the Labour Party to push through a series of policy ideas at the Party's 2019 conference, including demands for a Green New Deal, a Four Day Working Week, and an end to the charitable status of (and tax relief for) private schools (Savage, 2019). Describing their policy aims, Momentum spokeswoman Becky Boumelha stated that "radical and transformational policy can't come only from the halls of Westminster. It must come from and draw upon the collective wisdom of Labour's half a million members,

who live and work in every community across the country" (Stewart, 2019). In this sense, radicalism appears to refer to an idea of a reframing of the democratic process, expanding the stakeholders in the process of policymaking into a bottom-up, member-led dynamic. But would this be radicalism if we used March and Mudde's logic? It would seem unlikely.

To move beyond the ambiguities left by the abovementioned definitions, I would suggest that "Radical" is not simply a positional term but a relational and temporal term. Chiocchetti (2016) indicates that radical "must be understood not as a substantive but as a predominantly relational qualifier" (p.10) - that is to say, that what is radical tends to differ between cultures and contexts. Charalambous and Ioannou (2019) added to this, noting that what is considered radical changes over time, while much of the literature offers an (admittedly vague) consensus that radical leftism sits to the left of social democracy (and thus earns the pejorative term 'far-left') when in previous eras of history, social democracy itself would have been firmly positioned at the far left of the political spectrum (ibid, p.6).

Equally, the radical left can find itself locked into internal contestation when understanding its *own* radicalism. A comparatively recent example has been the move by several notable Leftist intellectuals to reorient the radical left back towards the "idea of Communism" (Douzinas & Zizek, 2010), that is, to conceive as Communism, not as the brutality of Stalinist state socialism, but instead, the movement that abolishes the existing state of things, and connected inequalities (Marx & Engels, 1965; Zizek, ibid). Briefly, this move comes as a response to a feeling of pervading "gloom, despair and melancholia" which has dominated the Anglo-American left since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the apparent resilience of neo-liberal capitalism (Brown, 1999) (and arguably not helped by the ascendancy of far-right, nativist, Clerico-fascist and white supremacist groups in Europe and the USA in more recent times (Charalambous and Ioannou, 2019)). This has positioned the radical left into what Walter Benjamin called "left-wing melancholy" (Benjamin, 1974) - a

sense of gloom, defeatism, despair, and an eventual loss of radicalism. Left-wing melancholy itself is something of a disputed term, with Brown (1999) arguing that the left-wing melancholic is "attached...to a particular political analysis or ideal - even to the failure of that ideal - than to seeing possibilities for radical change in the present," (p.20) and by Guattari (1984, p.38) as a "collective phantasy of omnipotence...which became trapped in the past." For Guattari and Brown, the radical left lost an element of its radicalism because it failed to adapt to new struggles and epistemologies of resistance around race, gender, sexuality, disability and so on and instead retreated to a conservative "lost ideal of traditional left theory and politics," (Dean, 2015, p.4).

Conversely, the "New Communists" (Dean, 2015) camp takes the opposite view. Jodi Dean, for example, locates left-wing melancholy in leftists being enamoured of "issue politics, identity politics, and their own fragmentation into a multitude of singularities" (Dean, 2012, p.53). Zizek takes this even further by arguing that the radical left has been guilty of "abandoning so-called' class struggle essentialism' in favour of anti-racist, feminist, queer and other struggles, rather than accepting the (extremely orthodox Marxist perspective) that "capitalism...is re-emerging as the name of the problem," (Zizek, 2012, p.77). In other words, the left *lost* its radicalism *because* it embraced struggles of "identity politics, issue politics and multiculturalism," leading to the loss of "radicalism and authenticity," (Dean, 2015, p.10).

It is worth bearing in mind that the debates around the radical left and its relationship to other resistance movements is a conversation spearheaded in considerable measure by the Academic Left and can be understood as a form of "communism from above" (Dean, ibid, p.14). However, I've included the debate here for a few reasons. Firstly, I believe it illustrates the relational nature of radical leftism. The reason for the radical left's persistent melancholia is defined *in relation to* anti-racism, feminism, LGBT rights, etc., with the closeness or

distance of those relations dictating how radical (or how conservative) the left is or has become. Secondly, the debate reflects the temporal nature of the term "radical left." The Orthodox Communist movement was seen as conservative for its failure to embrace new strategies and epistemologies of resistance that emerged in the 1960s; Zizek and Dean, however, might argue that the iteration of the "Old Left" was more radical than the New Left that came after it - in other words, to look back to the past, and resignify it, is the only way to find a path into the future. Brown and Guattari would suggest that a return to the ways of the past would threaten the left's radicalism.

Thirdly, the debate links to an ongoing "epistemological dissonance" between Marxism and feminism (Bakan, 2012), which in many ways addresses some of the central concerns of this thesis. The debates around the Idea of Communism may have originated within the Academic Left, but I, along with others (Dean, 2015; Bakan, 2012; Coleman & Bassi, 2011), would contest that it mirrors disputes, tensions and conflicts in movements around masculinities, misogynies, and hierarchies of disciplinary power. Fourthly, and finally, I would suggest that the debates are helpful evidence of how movements produce their own theoretical analysis independent of work produced by the academy (Bevington and Dixon, 2005), resulting in social movements being "uniquely reflexive" fields of study (Gillan and Pickerall, 2012). While the Idea of Communism debates originated in academia, activists also engaged in the questions raised (Dean, 2015).

What we can draw from the above is the following: that radical leftism is best thought of as a relational and temporally contingent term; that radical left parties and groups can go through periods of de-radicalisation and re-radicalisation; that the radical left engages in its own reflexive auto-critique about the nature of its radicalism (often without coming to any unifying conclusions); and lastly, that the radical left is deeply heterogeneous in terms of the dynamics of movement actions. Today's radical left is a broad church, combining "Marxists

and non-Marxists, reformists, and revolutionaries, moderates and radical, statists and anti-statists, workerists and left libertarians" (Chiocchetti, 2016, p.11) and, as a result, demonstrates diversified mobilisation tactics and political stakes. Where, then, does this leave the question of the culture of the radical left? We can accept the heterogeneous nature of the radical left while also accepting that there is a degree of shared history, shared political aims, and shared ideological views. Despite contentions, it is possible to see shared characteristics between an ostensibly militant socialist party, such as the Socialist Workers Party, and an institutionally embedded socialist movement, such as Momentum (the field site for this thesis). Members of the SWP and Momentum might not think themselves alike. However, they might find themselves reading the same books, campaigning on the same issues, and engaging in similar processes of meaning and feeling-making.

Defining culture in social movements

The relationship between social movements and culture presents some theoretical complexity and thus needs to be carefully unpacked. Social movements are not entities that have a culture done unto them; quite the opposite as movements "are not just shaped by culture; they shape and reshape it" (Johnston and Klandesmans, 1995, p.9). Movements display some strategic thinking with their interactions with culture, as "Symbols, values, meanings, icons, and beliefs are adapted and moulded to suit the movement's aims and frequently are injected into the broader culture via institutionalisation and routinisation" (ibid). Indeed, there are notable historical examples of how phraseology and values developed within movements become commonplace outside of those movements; Nancy Fraser gives an example of how terms like "the double shift" and "sexual harassment" were coined in "US feminist subaltern counterpublics" (that is, the spaces created by feminist social movements) and later went on to become commonplace within a mainstream culture

(Fraser, 1990, p 67; Waugh, 2019). Similarly, a common feature of anti-fascist movements is the dissemination of their visual imagery to the general public through posters, flyers, stickers, and the work of "graffiti artists affiliated with the movement [who] produce pieces that mark territory, honor prisoners and martyrs, or cover fascist graffiti," (Vysotsky, 2020, p.106). Yet, to suggest that there is a reciprocal flow of culture between movements and those outside the movement (where the former space adapts and reshapes the values and symbols of the latter, which then become adopted as the norm) would be to simplify the matter. As Swidler argues, "sometimes even fully articulated ideologies do not predict how people will act (as the many examples of co-optation, of movements that sell out their principles, or of leaders who betray revolutions attest.)," (Swidler, in Johnston and Klandersmans, 1995, p35). One cannot afford to make assumptions around the nature of morals and values when considering political cultures - and, notably, "...we must entertain the possibility that culture's power is independent of whether or not people believe it," (Swidler, ibid, p39).

At this stage, providing some sense of what "culture" actually *is* would be useful. There is a prevailing consensus within social movement research and broader sociological thinking that culture relates closely to a process of meaning-making. "Questions about meaning construction relate to the processes by which culture is adapted, framed, and reframed" (Johnston & Klandermans, 1995, p.5); culture is the practice of creating "the 'maps of meaning' which makes things intelligible to its members," (Hall, 1993, p.10). By its relationship to meaning-making, culture has some impetus concerning driving human action; as Avruch (1998) puts it, "Culture is socially distributed within a population...The more deeply internalised and affectively loaded, the more certain images or schemas are able to motivate action," (p.18). This relationship between culture, meaning-making and action has found its place within social movement theory through conceptualising "framing", also

known as collective action framing (Gamson et al., 1982). Briefly, "framing" is "an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction" (Benford and Snow, 2000, p.614). Frames function not only by "simplifying and condensing" the wider world (ibid), but also because they are "intended to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilise antagonists" (Snow and Benford, 1988, p.198) Put another way, frames refer to how social movements explain and interpret the world around them. These frames can be aimed at participants of the movement and those outside of the movement, such as media sources and potential movement recruits. This line of thinking owes much to the work of Goffman's theorising about social behaviour (Goffman, 1974). Certain proponents of the framing process link it to psychology, seeing frames as a form of "cognitive schemata" - that is, as a pattern of thoughts and behaviour and the organisation of information on the individual level (Johnston, 1995). Avruch (1998) argues that giving insufficient weight to psychological approaches is to overlook the fact that "Culture is psychologically distributed with a population" (p.19). For Avruch, the psychological resonance of culture is fundamental when considering how culture impels individuals to action; "Of two revolutionaries, each sharing the same socio-economic background and program, the same political ideology... only one is motivated (by rage? by hatred? by childhood trauma? by what?) to throw the bomb." (ibid). Others, however, are critical of the more psychological approach, suggesting that "Collective action frames are not merely aggregations of individual attitudes and perceptions, but also the outcome of negotiating shared meaning," (Gamson, 1991, p.111).

One notable criticism of the framing process approach is the tendency to see frames as "things" instead of genuinely dynamic processes (Benford, 1997, p.415). In other words, frame analysis can sometimes overlook that frames are variable and, at times, contingent on meanings outside of themselves. If frames are to be successful, such frames resonate with

everyday meanings and have "narrative fidelity" or "cultural resonance" (Snow & Benford, 1988; Polletta, 2016). Frame theorists see frames as clear, coherent and consistent. Most individuals' perspectives are not so neat - they can be vague and often internally inconsistent. Within frames, numerous narratives are situated within the particular context of the movement consisting of "various social relations, cultures, and other texts, narrative as well as non-narrative" (Wahlstrom, 2011, p.371). Thus, we can see evidence of the often incoherent nature of culture mentioned earlier; the framing process, which imagines clear and consistent frames, does not account for the co-existence of platitudes and clichés as well as deeply held beliefs; cynicism and disillusionment can coexist with earnest adherence; and muddle meanings operate alongside coherent ones," (Swidler, 2013, p.44). As Swidler compellingly argues, analysis of the use of culture, whether on the level of the individual or of the group, bears a complex relationship to wider cultural meanings. In her analysis of the culture around love and relationships, she relates how one interviewee drew from a complex repertoire of fictional, political and religious values, which he presented as his own, "...using terms provided by the larger culture to name his own experience, but the culture has disappeared into the experience it names," (Swidler, ibid).

Additionally, framing analysis can envisage frames as "discrete, internally cohesive packages of meaning readily passed between actors" (Steinberg, 2002, p.209). This approach would suggest a kind of level playing field of meaning-making; however, from a phenomenological perspective, this is not an accurate representation of social reality. As Sara Ahmed has argued, we exist in a world where orientations of social meaning pre-exist us and tie closely to hierarchies around gender, sexuality and race (Ahmed, 2006). She echoes Marx's statement, "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; ...but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." (Marx (1852), 2008, p.57-58). Moreover, we need to accept that meaning-making occurs within a

regime of power/knowledge; frames are important, but there needs to be a consideration for what those frames *don't* include. As Medina puts it, "The ability to identify omissions, to listen to silences, to play with discursive gaps and textual interstices is a crucial part of our critical agency for resisting power/knowledge frameworks." (Medina, 2011, p.16).

My critical stance on framing is that it does not subject the relationship between cultures within movements and dominant cultures to sufficient critical scrutiny. According to Raymond Williams, culture is a process subject to variability. For Williams, the word "culture" has "two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested…it [culture] is always both traditional and creative," (Williams, 2011, p.93). This tension between the traditional and the creative, between the known and the new, is something which Steinberg (2002) also acknowledges. Steinberg argues that "cultures of contention" are only partially constructed through deliberate and calculated action. Rather than seeing social movement culture and mainstream culture as "discrete dominant and dissident spheres," it needs to be acknowledged that a complex process of give and take plays out between the two; the boundaries between social movement culture and mainstream culture are porous and the interactions between cultures intricate; indeed, dissident cultures (such as those in social movements) can often "create oppositional discourses by borrowing from the discourses of those they oppose; in protracted conflicts, both dominant and challenging discourses can mix together," (Steinberg, 2002, p.208). Culture is not, in a sense, a settled, established thing, but a "tool kit" or repertoire...from which actors select differing pieces for constructing lines of action" (Swidler, 1986, p.277); individuals and groups can build up repertoires of cultures, which are deployed strategically at a later stage (though not always coherently) for "People may have in readiness cultural capacities they rarely employ, and all people know more culture than they use," (Ibid). This framework goes some way towards capturing the

complexities and often apparent incoherences of activist culture, but also to explain how radical left cultures interact with other subcultures. Radical political groups will constantly vie for control in existing subcultures, as such cultures are especially appealing to both radical left and radical right as they can be "developed as sites of resistance, even if it is largely symbolic, against normative society and existing structures of power," (Vysotsky, 2020, p.111). For example, in response to the growth of white supremacy and neo-Nazism in the black metal genre of music (Buesnel, 2020), anti-fascists have formed black metal bands that utilise the same stylistics – Satanism, anti-Christianity, dark and forbidding aesthetics – but proactively reject the fascist elements of the genre, and conceptualise their 'take' as a form of resistance to fascist culture (Clough, 2021).

A dispute between metal bands might not seem important, but it highlights an important point about radical cultures: the centrality of authenticity. Below, I argue that radical political ideology plays a fundamental (and under-interrogated) role in shaping what is and is not authentic, but 'activist authenticity' goes beyond systems of belief into comportment, stylistics, embodied performances, and structures of feeling. As I have argued elsewhere, where some common ground can be found between concepts of authenticity in both the radical left and radical right is through the wholesale rejection of the idea of liberal capitalist authenticity, the authenticity of the consumer and the bourgeoise; such a rejection isn't just about the formation of an alternative system of beliefs, but of a transformation of the self and the practises of the self, including those around culture (Waugh, 2022). In the above example of black metal, anti-fascist bands problematise the supposed 'authenticity' of fascist performers by divorcing the aesthetics (and, to an extent, the belief structures) of Satanism from white supremacy and aligning it with resistance to dominant power – in other words, claiming their cultural expression as more authentic, not just for other radicals, but also for broader demographics who might enjoy the music. Vysotksy (2020) discusses how anti-

fascists use dress, social events, and personal life approaches to express authenticity and sign that authenticity to other groups. The importance of authenticity to both culture and subculture is something acknowledged by Hall (1993) and by Haenfler et al. (2012), who contend that movement participants: "advocate lifestyle changes as a primary means to social change, politicising daily life while pursuing morally coherent 'authentic' identities," (p.14). In other words, cultures provide a forum where belief systems intersect with lifestyle choices. These grant activists a certain degree of cultural capital on a journey towards a more authentic life. Here, it is possible to see some intersections with the militant diagram – specifically, expected practises that militant activists are expected to engage in – ranging from intensive education in political theory to relocating their homes at the whim of the movement – which I discuss in the subsequent chapter. While some scholarship has touched on the everyday life of radical left activists, mainly those in the 'antifa' movements, less has been said about socialist movements, especially those in the Western world, in states with no experience of 'actually existing socialism' as opposed to those where the state shaped social practises in the name of socialism (Brown and Johnson, 2015; Luthar and Pušnik, 2010). However, to fully grasp the nature of radical culture, it is necessary to understand the affective and embodied experiences of activists as much as it is to understand their systems of beliefs.

Am I what I feel? Cultural practise, identity and affect.

These existing frameworks offer useful theoretical tools, but they do not quite yet pin down how movement cultures shape participants' identities or the emotional aspects of this process. This is not to say that social movement theorists have not grappled with this question. In his classic study of fascist movements, Fromm (1941) maintained that membership in movements allowed individuals to rid themselves of anxiety-inducing and

unwanted freedoms by subsuming their identities beneath the Fuhrer. In contrast, for Gamson (1991), movements must create collective identities - which do not quash agency and individual identity but enhance it –to succeed. Melucci (1995;1996) contributes further to the relationship between identities, emotions and culture in movements. Melucci argues that social movements are a site of symbolic struggle, where actors contest dominant cultural codes and create new meanings and symbols. Importantly, Melucci understands this as a process involving emotions, the contentions of cultural codes, and the considerable commitment activists need to make to such contestations, for "a certain degree of emotional investment is required in the definition of a collective identity, which enables individuals to feel themselves part of a common unity". As such," "There is no cognition without feeling and no meaning without emotion" (Melucci, 1996, p.71). Polletta (2009) has highlighted the importance of narratives in shaping collective identities in movements; narratives help shape identities in movements due to "emplotment rather than explanation," (p. 139), that is, their ambiguity which creates a kind of narrative hold on activists.

Similar to Polletta, I wish to focus on ambiguity's role in shaping identity. However, where Polletta examines narratives and stories, I focus on two convergent elements: the role of affect and emotion in shaping identities and practises, the interactions between dissident and dominant cultures and the ambiguity that emerges from these interactions. In other words, cultures must be understood as both meaning-making and feeling-making, and both meanings and feelings.

Affect is a notoriously tricky concept to define. Following the so-called "affective turn" (Clough, 2007) in social sciences, the relationship between affect and emotions has opened up new possibilities for studying society, including movements. Affect is that which comes before emotions; it is what Fine (2014) calls the "physiological experience of emotion," while ‘feeling’ is the "interpretation of those physiological experiences" (p.9). As

Massumi puts it in his introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus* (a text that grapples with affect in some detail), affect:

> …is an ability to affect and be affected. It is pre-personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying and augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act.
>
> (Massumi, 1988, in Delueze & Guattari, 1988, p.17)

In other words, affect can be unpredictable and also embodied. It can modify the actions of the body, limit them, and cause changes in us as individuals and those around us, often before interpretation. We all experience affect to a greater or lesser extent, and it is during cultural events, gatherings and practises that affect is transmitted to us. One thinks here of the feeling of palpable excitement one might feel at a music concert shortly because the main act takes to the stage or a sense of unease spreading through a crowd; this is what Brennan (2004) refers to as the "transmission of affect," whereby "the 'atmosphere' or the environment literally gets into the individual," (p.1). In other words, affect allows us to understand how social and cultural practices can impact the individual on a biological and physiological level. The transmission of affect can be positive – the excitement of a gig – or negative – the fear of a panicked crowd. Indeed, affect can make us feel closer to those around us or detached from them, and we can find some evidence of the transmission of affect in the act of protest. Antonio Negri describes a feeling of elation and connection in his experiences of direct action: "…immediately, I feel the warmth of the workers and proletarian community, every time I wear a balaclava….every action of destruction and sabotage reflects upon me as a sign of connection to the working class," (Negri, 1978, p.42-43).

Negri's quote is interesting here for a few reasons; firstly, he demonstrates the connection between collective and individual identities; his thrill and delight at the "warmth

of the workers" sits alongside his "sign of connections" to that community. Secondly, he shows the importance of cultural symbols and affect in constructing identity (wearing a balaclava is an important affective symbol) and what presumably marks Negri as part of the 'proletarian community." Indeed, what we can draw from Negri here is how identity formation is a product of social and personal interactions. The literary critic Kenneth Burke (1984) argues that identity reflects our fundamental social, political and historical circumstances, with the "so-called 'I'…merely a unique combination of partially conflicting 'corporate we's" (p.264). Identities are formed partly through social and cultural practises when individuals realise that their "interests are joined" with other group members (Burke, 1969). We might frame this phenomenon by thinking about the way we introduce ourselves to others: I, for example, might say, "I'm a Sociologist," or "I'm a socialist," or "I'm an atheist," when introducing myself, and in doing so, I am presenting both an 'I' and a 'we'; my identity is presented as a series of collective identities, and by presenting those collective identities, I am saying something about who I am as an individual. Carter (2019) helpfully suggests that affects can be understood as "an adhesive that creates...things by binding subjects to objects and places" (p.201). Ahmed concurs, writing that "affect is what sticks, or what sustains and preserves the connection between ideas, values and objects" (2010, p.29). Building on Burke's ideas, Fine explores affect and identity in the Occupy movement and argues that "if we are to understand how groups come to think the same way, we must first understand how they come to feel the same way" (Fine, 2014, p.4). As Jasper (1998) argues, affect and emotions are the ‘glue’ that holds social movements together.

Herein lies the critical point: while affect might move us and impact how we form our identities, it does so in a space of ambiguity. Affect must not be taken as a surrogate for framing, implying a more rigid method for making sense of the world around us and others. Affect's utility comes from accepting that the same affects might produce different results.

Let's return briefly to Negri's example: he might experience thrill and delight at the site of a confrontational expression of politics, but we cannot ignore the fact that the comrade next to him on the barricade might be scared witless – and this does not make that hypothetical individual any less of a radical then Negri. In other words, "affect is not received or registered in a vacuum" (Brennan, 2004, p.5). While the cultural norms of a group might aim to create some shared feeling and meaning-making, this may not be experienced in the same way by every participant. What might strengthen one's sense of identity and connection for one person might cause another to feel confused, destabilised, and perhaps even disconnected: affects, as Seigworth and Gregg (2010) remind us, "mark a body's *belonging* to a world of encounters…but also *non-belonging*," (p.2).

My argument, therefore, is that being involved in the same culture as others does not mean that affect is interpreted in the same way. I'm departing from the idea of unity in "group affect" (Barsade and Knight, 2015). Instead, within cultures, there is room for dispute and disagreement as to the best way to interpret affects – and this is especially the case in cultures where ideological beliefs and the authenticity of those beliefs are often paramount. I elaborate further on this concept below. However, while it is essential to understand that meaning and feeling-making are not always coherent within culture, it's equally important to understand that cultures themselves (especially, I argue, social movement cultures) are not hermetically sealed off from dominant or mainstream cultures. A certain amount of cultural diffusion does occur, which can result in the reproduction of cultural practises within a movement that might ostensibly conflict with the movement's ideology.

Dissident and dominant cultures – how movements resist and reproduce culture.

It is simultaneously surprising and unsurprising that the cultures within social movements are not hermetically sealed against broader culture. For a social movement participant, it can seem as if one is leaving behind the vestiges of a dominant culture and entering into a distinctive milieu of dissident activity. The norms, expectations, values, and practices that one might encounter within that dissident culture might be at first alien, but they are often loaded with significance and perhaps even refreshing to those who take issue with dominant cultural practices. This was my experience of engaging with radical left-wing movements for the first time as a student at 6th Form College as someone who had developed a nascent anti-capitalist sensibility and who spent significant amounts of my free time reading the works of Marx, Lenin, Angela Davis, and Che Guevara, my first socialist meetings were both thrilling and overwhelming. To find myself in spaces where, for example, criticising the then governing Labour Party was done not from the conservative, Little Englander perspective I had become accustomed to at the family dinner table but from the standpoint that Labour *was not a real left-wing party,* granted me a validation that I had until that point not realised that I needed. I recall (perhaps absurdly, in hindsight) the exhilaration I felt when I was addressed as "Comrade" for the first time and heard others referred to by that same moniker. It feels foolish (twelve years after the fact) to convey the electrifying sense that two syllables had upon me, but I recall feeling that this was it. I was now, properly, a socialist and recognised as one, not with an eye roll and the knowing pronouncement that I would "grow up one day" but authentically recognised, seen for what I was, for what that word made me become. The practices of the movement – selling *Socialist Worker* outside of Manchester Piccadilly station, chipping in a few pounds from the meagre part-time work I had at the time to the "Fighting Fund,", adopting the iconography of the white raised fist in its provocative

red circle – become so intermeshed with my sense of self at the age of seventeen, that my eventual wake-up call to the questionable nature of the Trotskyist groupuscule hit as even more of a gut punch. The event in question – a seemingly mundane meeting in which I witnessed a female comrade subjected to appalling misogynistic abuse when she questioned the party line on the Israel-Palestine question – remains etched in my memory, scratched so profoundly into the matter of my brain that it ignited the spark that fizzled away for over a decade to become the document before you.

I am trying to convey the inherent contradiction of movement cultures: the fact that emancipatory cultures reproduce elements of dominant cultures, especially (it would seem) around issues of gender. This degree of cultural incoherence relates to one of the questions which concern the current thesis. Upon superficial consideration, the idea of misogyny being prevalent in left-wing social movements seems ludicrous - these are, surely, movements which pride themselves on principles of feminism, equality, social justice, and the desire to overthrow oppression in all its forms. Indeed, it would be considered the ultimate taboo within these movements' cultural and moral frameworks to sustain and even valorise misogynistic or sexually violent behaviour. Yet it was not the extreme right who said of Gerry Healy, "if this is the work of a rapist, let's recruit more rapists!" (Pirani, 2013) but a prominent self-defined socialist. These ugly contradictions in ethics and values only begin to make sense when we consider a) the incoherence within a culture, b) how cultural meaning and values can be subject to a degree of picking and choosing and c) that there is an extent to which problematic behaviours are produced and reinforced from cultural practises.

Long before I became alienated from the SWP, Rutherford and Chapman had astutely identified the problem:

> …[the left is] a project underpinned by particular heterosexual masculinity…[which] can barely cope with the politics of feminism and sexuality. That old image of the left is almost exclusively male, its language, practices and institutions defined by a masculine perception of the world, and fashioned in man's interests. The male socialist, once heroic and Socialist Man, is no longer the embodiment of what is good and progressive...he is a conservative, locked in old battles and identities.
>
> (Chapman, R & Rutherford, J, ed, 1988, p.13)

There are several elements of Chapman and Rutherford's description here that merit further discussion. Regardless of a desire to construct a "once heroic and Socialist Man," Left masculinities are subsumed to patriarchal attitudes from the dominant culture, those "languages, practises and institutions defined by a masculine perception of the world." That "the male socialist" has managed to mirror the hierarchies of discrimination that Left movements ostensibly oppose, repeating the "old battles and identities," and as a result, can "barely cope with the politics of feminism and sexuality," suggesting an epistemological friction between a masculinised conception of socialism and other theories of resistance.

To explain this tension, I turn to Fraser (1990) and Hall (1993). From Fraser, I draw the concept of the "subaltern counterpublic." Suppose social movement cultures are involved in a complicated dialogic relationship with mainstream cultures. In that case, social movement cultures represent a parallel discursive space where "groups [can] recuperate, reconvene, and create new strategies and vocabularies for resistance" and "makes visible collective and individual traumas" (Waugh, 2019, p.145). As such, social movement cultures fit with Hall and Jefferson's idea of resistant spaces: spaces where objects and values are taken out of their 'normal' cultural meaning and then integrated and imbued with new subversive and resistant meanings. Notably, both subaltern counterpublics and subcultures follow Steinberg's argument of a complex process of exchange discourse between dominant and dissident cultures.

Fraser's conceptualisation of "subaltern counterpublics" is a critique of the Habermasian view on the "Public sphere" (Habermas, 1991). While there is a 'public sphere', each individual and group forms their own 'counterpublics' where the rest of the actors in the public sphere are not necessarily welcome—your home, for example, is a counterpublic in this sense. Fraser argues that social movements, feminist organisations and the like function as counterpublics for people with some shared political aim or experience of discrimination. These counterpublics, however, are not separatist organisations but spaces for recuperation, a place where individuals and groups can think about how best to face the issues in the public sphere; by Habermas's definition, the public sphere is an exclusive space, where certain voices dominate, while counterpublics allow for inclusivity (Waugh, 2019, p.155). Fraser links the subaltern counterpublic explicitly to the second wave of feminist movements in the USA (Fraser, 1990, p.67); others have used her work to explore the relationship between social movements and the public sphere. Bourne (2017) draws on Fraser's analysis of the interplay between the Occupy Movement and Greek anti-austerity movements and the transformation of political communication in the public sphere. Expanding on Fraser's research of subaltern counterpublics, Bourne considers how social movements want to "disseminate their discourses to wider arenas and, as such, are simultaneously actors within civil society" (Bourne, 2017, p.224). Social movement actors attempt to provide what Bourne calls "discursive checks" on the state through interventions in the public sphere. These discursive checks are created and configured within the subaltern counterpublic of the movement. Thus "the dissemination and advocacy of social movement identities and new conceptions underpinning democratic practices may also give social movements a role in the transformation of public spheres" (Ibid, p.225).

While Fraser and Bourne do offer some useful theoretical tools for examining social movement culture, I contend that this theorising does not fully take into account how (to

borrow from Bourne's terminology) mainstream culture (or the public sphere) creates "discursive checks" on social movement culture. This, to my mind, is one of the dialogical interplays between the dominant and dissident cultures that can help to account for discriminatory practises in emancipatory spaces - something I argue in the next chapter is useful in understanding the pervasiveness of sexism and misogyny in the left, and also the creation and sustaining of certain forms of masculinity.

I turn to Stuart Hall's work on subcultures to further expand on the relationship between dominant and dissident cultures (1993). For Hall, any dissident culture cannot be considered except in a dialectical relationship with its dominant culture, while the dissident culture may try to reconfigure and resignify aspects of the dominant culture (often as a form of resistance to it) "when one culture gains ascendancy over the other... the subordinate cultures *experiences* itself in terms prescribed by the dominant culture," (Hall, 1993, p.12). Membership of a subculture involves some process of meaning-making, but those meanings may well be subsumed by other "determining matrix[es] of experience and conditions," primarily, for Hall, those related to class. In this sense, dissident subcultures are always "subordinate and subordinated" to the dominant culture (Ibid, p.15). In other words, subcultures can see the resignification of cultural values - or their repetition in line with existing regimes of power. Hall sees this as key concerning class and subculture; I suggest that the same argument could be made concerning gender - especially masculinities. Even in radical cultures, cultures where dominant practises are broadly rejected, traits of masculinity can be resignified and still repeat existing regimes of power. Socialist man is not necessarily virtuous because of the virtue of his ideas but instead may continue patriarchal domination over women using the language of revolution.

In short, movement cultures must be understood as spaces in a complex dialogic relationship with wider cultures. They can be spaces of renewal, spaces where activists can

reconceptualise ideas about the world and the self, but they can also be sights of social reproduction of discrimination. Note that the key phrase here is 'can be' – it is not my claim that radical left-wing cultures will *always* reproduce existing power structures or produce them similarly. Problematic masculinities in left-wing movements may not wear the same veneer as masculinities in wider society, but the beats are essentially the same. In the next chapter, I explore such expressions of masculinity – and some alternatives.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has offered a working definition of the radical left and reviewed appropriate literature on social movement cultures and specific cultures of radical left-wing movements. Radicalism is a relational and temporal term – it cannot be pinned down to a set series of characteristics. Still, it can adapt, shift, and sometimes even regress in response to broader developments in the political world.

In addition, I have offered a critical review of approaches to cultures within social movement theory. While there is utility in framing, I argue that such approaches often are not satisfactory for the questions that occupy this thesis. However, I take this argument further by highlighting that not everyone participating in a culture may understand the nature of the tools or what they are 'meant' to do. By turning to affect, we can gain an insight into the complex interaction of cultural practices and the formation of identities – and, importantly, understand how such processes can include as much as they exclude. Affective practises interplay with disputed understandings of authenticity. This means that social movement cultures will often be sites of contention and dispute as much as they are places of unity.

A further nuance must be added to this theoretical framework for culture: cultures– whether subcultures or social movement cultures – are not hermetically sealed from dominant cultural practices. Rather than coherent frames, we see a messy and complex dialogic

interaction between dominant and dissident cultures that can reproduce discriminatory practices or undermine them. Following Fraser, we might understand radical cultures as spaces separate but not separatist, where activists can recuperate and reconfigure, but in creating 'discursive checks' on wider society, a certain amount of discriminatory practice might be reproduced.

How, then, can we begin to understand the kinds of identities that emerge in cultures that are at times discordant and affect – a predominantly *pre*-linguistic phenomenon – holds sway? The militant's identity is most often heroised and lauded within radical left-wing movement cultures. I propose that a critical characterisation of radical left-wing culture is the militant's identity and the practice of political militancy. I acknowledge that the radical right also produces its own brand of militant and militancy, and I will reflect on this briefly in the subsequent chapter. However, the fact remains. Some radical left social movements and parties openly label themselves as militant groups and engage in militant practices; for others, militancy is perhaps less institutionally embedded. Militants and militancy are the products of movement cultures and also help to reproduce those cultures. As Rolnik (2006) observes, "what feeds them in their militant culture…is to imagine themselves bloody chested in the trenches flagged by the revolutionary struggle, succeeding in putting an end to this reality they consider to be cursed" (p.133). The militant is both an identity and a set of practices. In the next chapter, I argue that it is one potential model for understanding both subjectivities and masculinities within the radical left.

Chapter Three: Militancy, masculinity and structures of feeling: a framework for left-wing masculinities

Introduction

This chapter aims to offer a theoretical framework for left-wing masculinities. While there is a nascent body of literature on masculinities in left-wing social movements (Dudnik et al., 2004; McCormack, 2007; Coleman and Bassi, 2011; Craddock, 2019), overall, the gender and sexual politics of the radical left are under-interrogated by scholars (though there exists significantly more work produced by activists).

This chapter opens with a review of academic work that explores masculinities in left-wing social movements. Here, I draw from both empirical social research into the anti-globalisation movements of the 2000s (Sullivan, 2007) and draw on work from gender historians that offers us insights into the kinds of masculine persona and performances we might encounter with the radical left (Dudnik et al., 2004). While the academic literature remains thin on the ground, activist-produced knowledge has outstripped the academy, offering us a clearer picture of left-wing masculinity and some contentions and disputes around sexual and gender politics in left-wing organisations.

Subsequently, I consider the concept of militancy, which I argued in the previous chapter, to be a product of the complex and affective culture of radical left social movements. A somewhat amorphous term - militancy - and being a militant offers some theoretical tools for unpacking the nature of left-wing masculinity. I suggest that militancy can be understood

as something one *does*, as much as one *is*, and that many radical left organisations produce, discipline, and sustain their members into becoming militants. I draw from the work of Felix Guattari (1984) and his concept of militancy to understand a specific kind of left-wing subjectivity and – I would argue – left-wing masculinity. Guattari proposes what he refers to at various points in his work as a "Leninist machine", "militant machine", or "militant diagram" (I use the latter term in this thesis as it appears to be the consistently preferred term of scholars of Guattari). The militant diagram is a "technology of the self, an expression of working on the self in the service of revolutionary change" (Thoburn, 2010, p.99). It is a subjectivity –ultimately contradictory – but also a collective assemblage of enunciation which links together social practices, affects, and tactical choices in a political context. The militant diagram produces, shapes and circulates meanings and identities, including those around sex and gender, and can draw out masculine-coded practices and affects within movements.

Finally, I consider some alternative tools that shape my overall framework, specifically Raymond Williams' (1977; 2001) work on the structures of feeling. As I stated in the previous chapter, seemingly in contrast to the rigid and dogmatic subjectivity of the militant diagram, I contend that such subjectivities engage in the work of affect, affective relations, and function as much on a pre-linguistic level as they do on a linguistic level. Therefore, Williams's contributions and his conceptualisation of how we are shaped by that which comes before feeling have utility as a means of studying masculinity.

Reviewing left-wing masculinities

Masculinities studies owe much to the work of R. W. Connell and her concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is defined broadly as social and political practices guaranteeing men's domination over women (Connell &

Messerschmidt, 2005). Connell & Messerschmidt write that hegemonic masculinity is "things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity," hegemonic masculinities do not violently reproduce themselves but are "ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions and persuasion," and importantly, there is a difference between 'ideal' and 'hegemonic' masculinity - hegemonic masculinity "can be constructed… [in ways] that do not correspond closely to the lives of actual men," (p.838) What constitutes hegemonic masculinity may not necessarily be the same as a popular conception of the ideal man - the rugged action hero, say, idealised by cinema - but is contextually contingent; different kinds of masculinities can be hegemonic in other contexts. Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) give the example of a successful businessman who might not have a penchant for physical strength and violence but still maintains hegemony in certain situations. They write:

> Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men.
>
> (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005 p.832)

Hegemonic masculinity embodies a standard of behaviour and conduct that men are expected to orient themselves towards. But by its nature, it is intrinsically exclusionary and antagonistic. Masculinity is not innately violent but often utilises different forms of violence to assert its authority toward women and men with alternative masculinities (Connell, 2002, in Whitehead & Barret, 2001). Connell identifies three methods by which hegemonic masculinity establishes itself: through power relations, which ensure the overall domination of men and the subjugation of women through patriarchy; through production relations, otherwise known as the gendered division of labour, which is a gendered process of wealth accumulation, divided between the "male" productive arena, and the "female" reproductive

arena; and cathexis or the privileging of male heterosexuality - sexual desire is often perceived as natural and innate, but when considered in Freudian terms, as emotional energy being attached to an object of desire, it becomes gendered (ibid). The so-called “crisis” of masculinity plays out over challenges by women, men with alternative masculinities and queer-identifying individuals, which provokes a violent response from hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is contingent, relational, and prone to responding aggressively to challenges to the authority it claims.

Existing work on the nature of left-wing masculinities remains in its infancy; however, a brief review of scholarship offers some insights – much of it owing to Connell - and highlights the complex relationship between left-wing masculinities and left-wing cultures (something I explore in more detail in the previous chapter). The discourses and systems of values of both interweave in the creation, sustaining and disciplining of masculinised personas. These forms of masculinity were ultimately contentious against dominant cultures and other forms of masculinity, yet the influence of those dominant cultures remained. Initial evidence of this can be found in the work of gender historians: Tosh (in Dudnik et al., 2004) and others have suggested that the masculinities seen in historical Leftist organisations are hegemonic within their context but within the context of a broader political world, seek to supplant dominant masculinities. On the Social Democratic Party of pre-war Germany, Tosh writes:

> ...manliness was equated with standing up for one's principles, refusing to compromise, driving one adversaries from the floor...the debates were critical to working class masculinity less because of their discursive content than because of the activity of debate - the competitiveness, the aggression designed to secure a total rout, and the pronounced misogyny.
>
> (Tosh, 2004, p.53)

What Tosh is suggesting here is a conflict between differing masculinities. One of these is a peer-based, comradely and "principled" gender personae of the SDP party member; this model was established by the party to oppose "the bourgeois model of a liberalism of notables" (Welskopp, 2004, p.259). Certain qualities become essential for SDP party members; "the brilliant public orator, the charismatic leader of peers, the courageous defender of steadfast political principles" emerged as the epitome of manliness (Ibid). McCormack (2007) writes that masculinity is prominent in public politics. The political suitability of men is couched in "terms of their personal qualities and habits…a man's political persona was impossible to separate from the personal and vice versa" (Ibid, p.4).

Furthermore, the lesson of 20th Century politics for gender historians was that: "all men are male, but not all men are 'masculine' in the same way. This serves to remind us that men are not a monolithic group but are highly differentiated," (Ibid, p.5). Indeed, the innately male nature of the public and political sphere led to the rise of heroic masculinities. Masculinities within politics are in constant conflict, with various political men seeking the traditional form of masculinity to be the heroic figure. As part of this, political men tend to define their masculinity in relation to women, children, and other dependents (ibid). Here, we can see evidence of misogynistic ideas which appeared, on an epistemological level, to be contradictory to the socialist framework. In the case of the SDP, the character of their masculinity was based on the exclusion of women from political activity: "The exclusion of women was a prerequisite for male Social Democrats to express themselves as political citizens and revolutionary subjects" (Welskopp, ibid p.258). This sentiment echoes Connell's (2005) arguments that hegemonic masculinity bases itself on the subordination of women.

If the SDP had a heroic figure to model their masculinity upon, it was based on an idealisation of the worker. Workerism, for the SDP, was based on several critical gendered identity criteria, as ideology in the Althusserian sense; the worker "...lived off the labour of [his] own hands, rather than from the exploitation of others" (ibid, p.261), it needed to have "a basis in social practice and experience...politically charged sociability in this context became the bedrock for a specific model of 'strong' masculinity...the very term 'worker' in this sense stood for an alternative vision of what a man could and should be," (p.262). The heroic worker embodied a masculinity which established hegemony in the SDP; part of its ability to do so was its relation to the broader political world, where it was just one kind of masculinity. Welskopp sees it as not a hegemonic masculinity in the traditional sense but a 'contentious masculinity', which derived its manliness from its oppositionality towards bourgeois masculinity. Mosse (1996) situates socialist masculinity as a rebellious form of manhood which would "challenge...the wartime image of masculinity and the bourgeois masculine ideal" (p.119). This new masculinity arose from the socialist project "of a 'new man' that provided a counterpoint to many of the qualities of normative manhood (ibid). The heroic force of this masculine ideal, particularly in the post-WWI climate, was in its position as the driving force towards the betterment of the human society; socialist men "cast their hopes for the future in the metaphor of rising from darkness to sunlight," (p.123). Yet this new masculinity retained the traditional gender ethics of bourgeois masculinity. Socialist masculinity in post-war Germany continued to uphold the nuclear family and deplored sexual permissiveness (Mosse, ibid, p.126). While the SDP publicly called for women's equality "among the majority of the working class, and many party members, patriarchy was only slightly dented" (ibid.)

Contemporary work about left-wing masculinities largely echoes the insights of historical scholarship but highlights some additional aspects of various masculine personas. Coleman & Bassi (2011) explore how "privileged masculine performances" exist within "(anti-)globalization movements" and the extent to which these performances, and related praxis "bolster, as much as contest, the order that these movements seek to subvert or over throw,"(Coleman & Bassi, 2011, p.204). It is telling that the masculine personas they witnessed and engaged in their research relied on the citation and re-inscription of cultural scripts outside of movement culture. These machismo performances were the "re-iterating [of] cultural scripts through which capitalism and the many violences attendant on it are reproduced," and that "the enactment of 'resistance' politics...may shore up the status quo even as it undermines it," (ibid, p.205). An activist's politics may be revolutionary, but their gender performance often utilised cultural aspects of sexual hierarchies that would appear antithetical to a revolutionary framework. Coleman and Bassi deploy a Foucauldian analysis of power relations to identify two categories of "privileged male performance."

On the one hand, there is the "Man with Analysis", a kind of elder statesman of Leftism, who "dominated with his analysis and control of information" and "begins meetings by giving his analysis of the current political situation...His account is uncontested," (ibid, p.211). His gender performance is to locate himself within the group as "a privileged voice and status in the interpretation of events and the writing of strategy," and when confronted about his conduct, he "explicitly positioned himself as a teacher' who should 'do the analysis on behalf of [the organization]'," (ibid, p.212). On the other hand, there is the "Anarchist Action Man," who is concerned foremost with "direct action…[he is] very physical and confrontational," advocating political gestures "based on the destruction of a small, symbolic aspect of the existing order," (ibid, p.216). Coleman & Bassi link him directly to a gendered

dichotomy in political praxis, with political actions being "divided into 'arrestable' or 'not arrestable - that is, 'primary' and 'secondary' - activities." The former praxis is tied to the masculine ideal of "the epic hero, single-handedly fighting against enemy forces for the triumph of good over evil." It excludes, directly or indirectly, full female participation (ibid, p.216-7). It's notable that the values that these male personas seek to embody - academic knowledge, efficiency, urgency, the will to action – are not values unique to the left; they are, in fact, things which would be considered essential aspects of subjectivity in dominant, neoliberal culture (Turken et al., 2016).

The fact that male power finds its basis around dominant societal values - even in spaces supposedly separate, or at least somewhat withdrawn from that dominant public - fits with the findings of other scholars of masculinities: in his analysis of male power in a U.S. University Fraternity, Kiesling (1997) found that men are "pushed (and push themselves) towards identities which do not challenge...the fraternity or of dominant U.S. Society, (p.113). The conclusions that Coleman & Bassi draw from their study is that these masculine performances undermine the politics of revolutionary groups not simply by reinforcing power relations found in a capitalist society but by excluding voices and bodies which do not conform to the hegemonic masculine display, including women, genderqueers and men with alternative masculinities (Coleman & Bassi, p.213).

Further research starts to suggest a link between masculinities and militancy. Sullivan (2007) reflects on the bio-political violence she witnessed during the anti-globalisation uprisings in Greece in 2003; in the violent rhetoric and tactics of the anti-authoritarian activists, she identified an "Oedipal anger towards 'papa-state' and other patriarchal institutions," became a "conceptualising and performing of struggle," for the militants

involved (p.226). This struggle facilitated a "nihilistic machismo" among protestors, which "did little to contest patriarchal assumptions and strategies" and merely became a combatant for the "male-dominated and excessively macho riot police" (p.229). Such a machismo, she argues, mimics the desirable traits in bourgeois masculinity, a masculinity "which is bounded, restrained, unconcerned with the openness and softness of relationships, and built on the disciplined repression of physical needs and desires" (ibid). This form of masculinity was not simply present in the (to borrow Coleman and Bassi's terminology) 'anarchist action men' Sullivan met but also in the "particular masculinities of a conventional, humourless and Leninist Left perspective that emphasizes the violent necessity of proletarian revolution," (ibid). While Sullivan acknowledges that men and women can embody nihilistic machismo and militancy, she highlights how it shaped the habitus of the movement in exclusionary ways and perpetuated structural and patriarchal violence against women; it was not the state behind the "numerous reports of sexual harassment at the anti-authoritarian encampment at Thessaloniki's Aristotle University," but the "'Alpha males' – the authoritarian, anti-authoritarians," (p.230).

More recently, Craddock (2019) examines the gendered dimension of the 'ideal activist' identity and the potential negative consequences that accompany it. The ideal activist is understood as an "extraordinary activist character" who is "protesting around the clock" – a social identity, she notes, which becomes inaccessible to women due to the 'retraditionalisation' of women's domestic labour, especially caring labour, as a result of austerity measures in the U.K., and their devastating impact on social care in communities (2019, p.138-139). Ironically, it was in the U.K. anti-austerity movement that Craddock identified the implicitly gendered aspects of the ideal activist, gendered in the sense that not only that 'round the clock' activism becomes inaccessible to those with caring

responsibilities, but because of its emphasis on direct action and confrontation with the authorities as being the 'right' form of activism, at the denigration of online activism. Craddock notes – importantly – that direct action is not masculine per se (lest we forget, the Suffragettes were renowned for their use of direct action tactics, and such tactics often resulted in their very femininity being questioned) but that by prioritising direct action over more flexible political praxis, left-wing activism became "implicitly gendered, which has negative gendered consequences," (2019, p.149).

What emerges from these accounts is a sketch of a set of masculinities which become hegemonic within left-wing movements. These masculinities reproduce aspects of hegemonic masculinities in non-movement contexts – the emphasis on intellectual power, physical confrontation, rationality, rejecting vulnerability, and limiting the possibilities of acceptable actions – while positioning themselves in contestation to the values of a dominant culture. Importantly, this social reproduction of dominant masculinities involves resignifying masculine traits, actions and values to fit within a leftist, anti-capitalist, or anti-imperialist worldview. It is worth noting that, while helpful, this sketch of masculinities remains patchy. Much of the scholarship is drawn from analysis of the anti-globalisation movements of the early 2000s or the Occupy movement. Less has been written about masculinities in contemporary socialist and Marxist groups; this is a striking gap within scholarship; as March (2013) puts it, there is a "gaping lacuna" in knowledge about left-wing sexual politics, primarily left-wing masculinities. The urgency for a fuller picture is evident. As I detailed in the introduction, the British radical left has been dogged by numerous shocking cases of sexual violence, harassment and the abuse of women by men. While we cannot reduce the complexities of sexual violence purely down to masculinities, it is a driving motivation of the present research that by deepening our understanding of masculinities and sexual politics of

radical left movements, we can develop new processes of accountability and social justice to deal with incidents of sexism and misogyny.

Despite sporadic academic knowledge, activists in left-wing politics have long acknowledged the problematic aspects of left-wing masculinity, and indeed, it was left-wing men who sought to reconfigure it. The anti-sexist men's magazine *Achilles Heel* was founded in 1978 to provide a forum for men to reflect on masculinity and consider their role in the struggle against sexual oppression (Seidler, 1992). For the Achilles Heel collective, trying to critique socialist masculinity involved an epistemological critique of both bourgeois masculinity and socialist theory; men, "especially middle-class men," would be socialised to "intellectualise our emotions and feelings" (Ibid, p.10), and giving men "… space to find a voice that was not the impersonal and universalised voice of reasons," (Seidler, 1992, p.207) A move towards a more communicative, self-critical masculinity - a masculinity which accepted, rather than rejected, vulnerability -, needed socialist theory to "come to terms with individual differences, and...acknowledge that people had different experiences," (ibid, p.12). This, for the collective, was not the "regression into bourgeois theory" that left-wing groups needed to brand it as, but was vital to the evolution of the socialist imaginary as "a critique of the naive assumptions about 'sameness' of people that had so long crippled the advances of socialist theory," (Ibid). During its print run, between 1979 and 1991, Achilles Heel published articles on men and work, men's sexuality, men and parenthood, and more theoretical pieces exploring men's relationship to feminism and patriarchy. The magazine also offered more direct critiques of left history and masculinities, including several works by Dave Widgery, which critiqued the male personas of the "heroic, gunslinging, ghetto revolutionary (or pen-toting Marxist man-of-ideas)" militant (Widgery, in Seidler, 1991, p.184-195).

Achilles Heel, along with similar (if smaller) journals, *Big Flame* and *Brothers Against Sexism,* were spaces where left-wing men grappled with the problems of left-wing masculinity, specifically the issue of how left-wing men navigated their privilege and worked in concurrence with feminism. These journals seemed to be acutely aware of the problematic nature of being a "male feminist", especially the kind of male feminist who does not – to put it colloquially – practise what they preach. Hence, there was a need for men to "choose anti-sexism as a priority for their political work…feminism *is* and must be at the centre of our politics" (Dave, 1982, no pagination, italics in original). Equally, there was an awareness of the problem of militancy and militant men, as well as the hidden vulnerabilities of the militant (something I discuss later in this chapter) thus socialist men's politics "is about recognising that 'militants' are also people with personal anxieties, fears, hopes…because of the isolation that can come from being a socialist/feminist militant, they may well need a lot of support," (Wilson, 1981, no pagination). At the same time, in the pages of these journals, it is impossible to escape a sense of frustration, of a double bind, of a struggle to figure a way out of hegemonic masculinity: for every acknowledgement that "men are too keen on doing political work which is seen as being 'up front', activities where women can actually see us doing a fine job," (Dave, ibid), there were accounts of men who felt that they reproduced dominant masculinities even when they tried to engage in solidarity work with feminist activists, resulting in feelings of shame and sense in which they "didn't want to be known as 'men'" (South London Men Against Sexism, 1974, p.16). These frustrations, impasses and failed attempts at a new form of masculinity are, according to Segal, what scuppered the anti-sexist men's movement before it got off the ground; the fear of merely creating an "acceptable…face of dominant masculinity, in which the 'new man' – a softer, more

emotional, self-conscious sex object himself – may still retain…his hegemony over women, and over other subordinated groups of men," (Segal, 2006, p.261).

Achilles Heel ceased publication in the late 1990s. The Men's Consciousness Raising Groups, which the Achilles Heel Collective propagated (Seidler, 2009), began to fade away around this time. The tradition of such men's movements is not completely gone; transnational organisations such as MenEngage Alliance have sought to involve men and boys in issues of gender justice and navigate notions of accountability and challenge (MenEngage Alliance, 2016). Other organisations, such as Sweden's MÄN (Ruxton, 2020) and MenCare (Heilman et al. 2016), have tried to mobilise men and boys around the issues of gender violence prevention and fatherhood, respectively. As of 2023, there appears to be no space explicitly within the socialist tradition to explore and critique masculinity. The reasons for the decline of a socialists anti-sexist men's movement are hotly debated. Even in its infancy, feminists expressed concern about men organising autonomously, assuming it would reaffirm male power in the face of the Women's Liberation Movement (Seidler, 1991, p.x). Feminists often responded with hostility towards men's groups, which affected the morale of men involved in organising roles (Jay and Rook, 1977, in Rowan, 2005). However, the men also had concerns about men organising together (Segal, 2006).

In addition, the sketches of masculinities above are a step in the right direction. However, the intention of this thesis, particularly this chapter, is to sharpen the theoretical framework within which left-wing masculinities can be better understood. Specifically, we can see a particular tension around left-wing masculinities. On the one hand, we can see a form of masculinity that adopts the veneer, lexicon and seeming practises of emancipatory politics but leaves hegemonic masculinity, patriarchy and masculine social hierarchies intact.

On the other, we see a troubled, hesitant, emergent masculinity. This masculinity is (perhaps desperately) trying to make sense of and respond to the complex and evocative questions raised by feminism, women's activism, and sexual practises that make 'being a man' so contentious. How, then, can we encapsulate the subjectivities of the (intentional or otherwise) misogynist and the – and I appreciate the complexities of the language here and discuss them at length later in the thesis – 'male feminist'? To build such a framework, I suggest that our attention needs to turn to two seemingly different but, in fact, deeply interwoven theoretical concepts: militancy and affect.

Militants and militancy

"Militancy" or "Militant" is a signifier with multiple meanings. Originally, "Militant" comes from the Latin "militare", meaning "engaged in warfare" and "combative, insistent, strongly espousing a cause" (Oxford English Dictionary, N.D). Before its use in political and sociological contexts, the word Militant had theological usage. Within the ecclesiology of the Catholic Church, the "Church Militant" (*Ecclesia militans*) referred to living Christians who struggled as soldiers of Christ in a holy war against Satan and the forces of darkness and sin. The Church Militant saw its purpose as a lifelong struggle against Godlessness, which, upon the occasion of inevitable death, would result in individual militant Christians being able to join the "Church Triumphant" in Heaven (Whately, 1863).

In more modern usage, "Militant" retains a level of versatility. It can be used as an adjective (i.e. "The militant RMT Trade Union," (Darlington, 2009)) or as a way of referring to a willingness to engage in combative protest tactics, such as strikes, pickets, and occupations (Beale, 2003). The term has seen a degree of public exposure as a pejorative during the summer of 2022, as a wave of public sector strikes and trade union resistance were

branded by the right-leaning press and the Tory government as the actions of "militant trade union" or "trade union militants" who sought to "paralyse" the country (Soteriou, 2022). "Militant" also functions as a noun. Within the academic left, Militant is often used to describe certain political theorists and philosophers, such as Michel Foucault, Alain Badiou (who notably authored a recent volume on "Philosophy for Militants" (Badiou, 2015), and Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, all of whom engaged with versions of post-Marxism, anarchism, and radical political psychiatry (or anti-psychiatry) (Didier, 1991; Karlsen, 2015). Bosteels suggests that such "intellectual militants" own a debt to Vladimir Lenin and offer academic resources and tools in response to the urgent question of "what is to be done?" (Bosteels, in Badiou, 2015; Lenin, 1973). That said, the only similarities between these two uses of the word "Militant" appear to be connotations of confrontationalism, urgency, and combativeness, but little else beyond this.

Within social movement research, "militants" and "militancy" make more sporadic appearances, usually concerning the tactics and organisational methods used by specific movements, such as the militant activism of ACT UP (Gould, 2013) or anti-fascist resistance movements in the USA (Vysotsky, 2020). The militancy is also explored in relation to the positionality, methodology and ethical frameworks of social movement research itself, in what is sometimes referred to as "militant research" or "militant ethnography" (Bookchin et al., 2013; Russell, 2015; Graeber and Shukaitis, 2007). Within European research, the concept of militancy and the figure of militant individuals is commonly mentioned in relation to the Italian *Autonomia Operaia* (Worker's Autonomy) and the writings of Antonio Negri (Wright, 2021; Murphy, 2020; Nunes, 2013). Notably, the concept of militancy has undergone more significant critical interrogation and unpacking in scholarship outside of the Anglosphere. Research by Sales et al. (2018) on Brazillian grassroots activism acknowledges

the militancy of tactics and organisational structure but hones in on the sense in which militancy is subjectivity, what it means to be a "militant," and the consequences of that militancy: "…lack of time for personal activities, damages to professional life, interference in the continuity of formal education and the challenge to reconcile the militant activities with the demands of the family nucleus," (ibid, p.582).

What we can draw from this is the idea that militancy can be understood as both something one does (tactics), a habitus or culture one inhabits (organisational procedures) and a subjectivity (something one is or seeks to become). As I argue below, a broader and more focused definition of militancy provides a useful theoretical tool for understanding left-wing masculinities. In doing this, I will build upon the work of Felix Guattari (1984), who identifies a "militant diagram", a series of discursive and non-discursive formations that help constitute subjectivity. Where Guattari focuses on militant selfhood, I will expand on this to consider how tactics and organisations' militancy contribute to constructing the militant persona. My research confirms the argument by Thoburn (2008) that: "One can think of militancy as a technology of the self, as an expression of the working on the self in the services of revolutionary change" (p.99).

It's worth also making clear at this point that while I'll be engaging in a critique of militancy, I will shy away from taking the standpoint of "Bourgeoise ideologues [who] treat militants as dangerous hooligans or manipulative ideologues" (Blanc, 1972, no pagination). Instead, I'll be advancing my critique from the perspective of being a leftist activist who is involved, or has been involved in many of these movements and is engaged in aspects of militant politics myself, following the approach laid down by activists (Andrew, 1999; Blanc, 1972) and especially the work of Felix Guattari (1984; 2008).

Making Sense of Militancy – Tactics and Organisation

As noted above, militancy can be understood as a particular repertoire of tactics, a set of organisational principles, and a sense of subjectivity. This thesis will primarily focus on militant organising and militancy of the self. This is not to say that militant tactics are not important, nor that they are divorced from the construction of gender roles within the radical left. Militant tactics are often "performative" and "communicative" actions, protest actions that are assertive and dominant, and convey an uncompromising rejection of authority to state actors and to the broader public (for discussion of this, see Juris, 2005). Such tactics can shape what Polletta and Jasper (2001) call "mobilising identities" - that is, identities such as "worker", "citizen", and "homosexual" - which may pre-exist a movement but are "reimagined by movement activists...integrated with a movement identity, i.e. a collective identity based around shared membership in a movement," (Ibid, p.289, italics in original). These identities often play with social constructions of gender (both Mayhall (2000) and Edwards (2014) highlight how Suffragette militancy both acted as a mobilising tool and flouted gendered ideas of risk-taking and martyrdom). Indeed, both Juris (2005) and Sullivan (2007) draw attention to the machismo (and perhaps nihilistic) masculinity of 'Black Bloc' tactics and those tactics' role in affirming masculinity. I choose to focus more on organisation and subjectivity than tactics, not because I do not think that they are relevant to the gender and sexual politics of the radical left, but because the particular cultural iteration of the left I focus on (Momentum) tends not to openly engage in these kinds of tactics in the traditional sense (I elaborate on this, and where Momentum situates itself within the radical left, in Chapters Five).

Trying to pin down the meaning of militancy of organisation in radical left groups might, at first glance, appear to require some significant analytical overstretching. After all,

what organisational similarities can be made between a democratic centralist Marxist party and an apparently "leaderless" anarchist movement? However, upon deeper analysis, militancy of organisation reveals some key trends. These are a) that militancy of organisation pivots on the rigidity of dogma, adherence to internal forms of democracy which retain hierarchies of power, an affinity to recreate the (often idealised) dynamics of past struggles and contentions and b) that these organisational practises contributing towards the interpellation of the militant as subject, and the militant's task as something akin to (but not the same as) 'work', as opposed to 'activism'. Having some understanding of the militancy of organising is relevant to the next section, which will explore the idea of militancy of the self because, as Blanc (1972) puts it, "the critique of militancy cannot be separated from the construction of revolutionary organisations," (no pagination)

Critical scholarship has drawn links between Leninism and the organisational forms of militant groups (Kelly, 2018; Nunes, 2013). Specifically, the idea of Vanguardism – the idea that revolutionaries who had achieved a high level of class consciousness could both radicalise the rest of the proletariat and represent their interests – appears to be influential on militant groups. Indeed, in some accounts, Vanguardism is often so interwoven with militancy that the terms are used interchangeably (Badiou, 2003; 2012; Nunes, 2013). Thus, a brief reflection on these concepts is necessary to achieve a complete analysis of militancy.

"Vanguardism" refers to what Marx and Engels called "the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others" (1967, p.22). In other words, the vanguard is the revolutionaries who - having achieved a high level of class consciousness - form together in organisations to attempt to both radicalise the remainder of the proletariat and represent its class interests. Marx and Engels saw the vanguard as being Communists in general; Lenin amended it to

suggest that only *some* communists could form the vanguard. After all, the task of the vanguard was "not to champion the degrading of the revolutionary to the level of an amateur, but to *raise the amateurs to the level of revolutionaries"* (Lenin, 1973, p.57, italics in original.) Put differently, only the most 'professional' revolutionaries could hope to form the vanguard and become both the educator and representative of the workers. There is an obvious hierarchy here, as the vanguardist militant is "in search of a role that places him above the masses" (Blanc, 1972, no pagination) with a demarcation between the enlightened vanguard militant - a secular version of the 'elect' - and the proletariat worker, who, for whatever reason, has yet to achieve sufficient class consciousness. Comrades they may be, but equals, they are not. The job of the former is to educate the latter, protect Marxism from deviational thinking, and advance it as a 'science' (Lenin, 1973). Thus, a certain amount of secrecy and gatekeeping of knowledge is required. While Vanguardism is a concept rooted in Leninism and, as an organisational form, is heavily criticised by anarchists (Graeber, 2007; Afaq, 2008; Schmidt et al., 2009), there's certainly evidence of a vanguardist mindset existing in movements outside of the Marxist framework.

The anarchist Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) of Sweden advocates for a Manichean view of its comrades and enemies. The militancy of the AFA is, according to its members, "a necessary guiding force for the wider anti-racist movement which can at best 'put them on the right track' in their struggle" (Peterson, 2018, p.113). In the world view of AFA, the group functions as the "unyielding heroic protagonists" opposed to both "right-wing extremist villains, and the racist politics of the 'ruling forces'" and also the "impotent, ineffectual and lax" mainstream anti-racist movements (Ibid). Vanguardism is here in spirit, if not in name. From this, we can conclude that vanguardist forms of militancy can be found outside of the orthodox Leninist cluster of radical left groups.

In addition, the vanguardist model of political organising can lead to a separation of the militant group from the masses they claim to represent. The will and consciousness of the workers could be ignored if they did not fit with the views of the vanguard militants and the militant party. In a way, this serves to distort the nature of revolutionary desire on the part of the masses; the militant recognises the desire of the workers for emancipation by "imposes meditations" on that desire, specifically the "practical representations of the party" as the only expression of revolutionary will and Marxism. Thus, the masses become homogenised; differences and alternative epistemologies of resistance become "massified" and simplified into "standardised formulations," which justify the importance of discipline and "party unity" (Guattari, 1977, p.157). The practice of militant organising builds up alternative hierarchies, trapping the militant into contradictory stances. The militant "within their organisations...accept[s] the hierarchy and petty leaders they claim to want to rid the world of" (Blanc, 1972, no pagination), or as Guattari puts it, creates a dualism between "the case who holds the passwords, and the masses, who are heard alphabetising and catechising like good children," (Guattari, ibid).

Herein, we see the importance of secrecy, or at the very least, of gatekeeping the nature of truth. As Peterson puts it, militant groups contain "a curious mixture of both secrecy and publicity and most [militant groups] actively manipulate the media to gain a degree of exposure" (2018, p.115). The vanguardist militant functions as part of a secretive group, identified collectively by party name or slogan but also known (or at least believed to be known by other members) as a driving force of revolutionary politics. Such secrecy arouses curiosity, which may be "an avenue of recruitment" for the militant group (Ibid). In practical terms, militant groups may organise under a veneer of secrecy by being the driving force

behind initiatives with broader political appeal than simply to other militants. An excellent example of this is the SWP, from 1974 onwards, have launched several single-issue campaigns, such as the Right to Work campaign (1975), the Anti-Nazi League (1977), the Stop the War coalition (2011) and more recently, Stand Up to Racism (2011), (Kelly, 2018, p86). These broad campaigns have also presented fertile ground for recruitment into the SWP, and the “secrecy” of the role the party plays has varied over the years, from SWP founder Tony Cliff declaring, "The leadership of the ANL [Anti-Nazi League] is the SWP and we don't give a damn," (Birchall, 2011, p.20), while the party played down its role in Stand Up to Racism following the Comrade Delta scandal (Platt, 2014).

Reproducing the Militant: militant organisation and social reproduction

As well as Vanguardism, secrecy or gatekeeping of the truth, militant groups tend to have both a strong sense of historical struggle and a desire to replicate struggles, both those of the past and those in current efforts in other countries. For instance, the militant group Weatherman Underground campaigned under the slogan (first uttered by Ernesto “Che” Guevara) that Western militants should make “two, three or many Vietnams flourish throughout the world” as a means of resisting U.S. imperialist hegemony (Guevara, 1968; Varon, 2004). Similarly, the SWP rallied around the slogan “Make Trafalgar Square into Tahrir Square!” in 2011, referencing the then-ongoing protests by Egyptian activists against the government of Hosni Mubarak (Robinson, 2011). 2017 saw the centenary of the Bolshevik October Revolution, and various militant groups expressed the need to recreate the circumstances of the overthrow of Tsarism (Workers Revolutionary Party, 2017). The process of drawing an equivalence between the foreign struggles and the struggles of past generations could be viewed as part of a process of solidarity forming; indeed, as Duyvendak (2011)

points out, nostalgia and looking backwards are prevalent in all forms of politics, not simple on the radical fringes. A less charitable analysis would suggest that militant groups are trapped in the past. In this section, I'll offer some ways in which nostalgia and canonicity contribute towards disciplining the militant identity as part of a process of militant organising. My argument is that through a process of training, expectations, and internal practises, militant groups try to mould ideal militant subjectivities, subjectivities which can be divisive and exclusionary - to put it more colloquially, it is not simply about creating "two, three or many Vietnams," but two, three or many Che Guevaras. The creation and recreation of an ideal militant subjectivity involve a separation from society, achieved through often gruelling and hermetically sealed education programmes and monopolising the militant's time. This is necessary for a militant organisation to function because to engage in militancy is to (ironically) engage in something akin to work.

Being a member of a militant group is not easy. For example, the Alliance for Workers' Liberty sets out the expectations of membership as being to defend the aims of the party in 'word and deed', to conduct activities under the 'discipline of the organization,' join trade unions, pay regular monthly contributions to the party coffers, to 'keep links with other political groups under the supervision of appropriate AWL committees', and to 'educate themselves politically and attend structured education classes of the AWL.' While party members do have the right to 'express dissenting opinions', they do not have the right to organize around those opinions or take internal disputes outside of the Party (The Alliance for Workers Liberty, 2017).

The AWL's expectations of members are mirrored in other Trotskyist groups (Kelly, 2018, p.96). The boundaries between public political life and private personal life outside of the political group become blurred. The idea of the personal having a political aspect is

hardly a new addition to radical politics; my contention here is that radical groups expect individual activists to maintain their political work (and, by extension, their pursuit of authenticity) at all times. To maintain one's position within a radical left organization, one must commit one's time and separate from society because the political group and its priorities come before any other commitment. Indeed, there are examples of activists being required to uproot their entire lives for the sake of the organization. Numerous radical left groups would 'redeploy' activists around the country - the International Marxist Group sent eight members from London to Liverpool to start a new branch in 1972, while the Workers Revolutionary Party sent several members from London up to Scotland for fear it was losing influence in Scottish politics (Kelly, 2018, p.97). Even when activists were not expected to uproot and relocate to new cities for the sake of the radical left group, even a temporary withdrawal from politics had to pass through the group. Corin Redgrave, a notable member of the WRP, had to formally write to the leadership of the party for permission to perform in a play; similarly, the AWL took the view that 'you can ask for a leave of absence, but you can't declare it unilaterally' (Ibid). Any personal desires that an individual militant may have about needing to rest or not wishing to leave their home are ultimately secondary to the desires of the militant group. Not only is the militant "separated from the masses and their possibilities for revolt," but they are "separated from his own desires" (Blanc, 1972, no pagination).

Indeed, it is possible to see a peculiar similarity between the militant and the way Marx perceives the worker under capitalism. For Marx, part of the worker's alienation comes from a sense of detachment between his labour and the production process; thus, "labour is external to the worker" (Marx, 1982. p.189). This experience mirrors that of the militant - in his belief that he is above the masses as their educator, and in his participation in a militant group that monopolises his time and limits his learning, the militant becomes akin to the

worker: “just as the worker does not work for himself, the militant is not militant on his own behalf,” (Blanc, ibid, no pagination).

It’s worth noting that my claim is not that militancy is work (at least in the Marxist conception of work). While the worker feels alienated, he can still find solace outside work in his free time. In theory, there is *no* outside of militancy. Within the framework of capitalism, the effectiveness of work is not measured by the relative pleasure that the worker gains from it but by its economic value. As Marx put it, value arises from the number of hours of labour put into the production of a commodity, which then dictates that commodity’s value (Marx, 2018). The activist's task is less easily quantifiable; as Blanc puts it, ‘‘the advancement of the revolution’ still hasn’t found its measuring instruments’ (Blanc, 1972, no pagination). Without any measurable sense of impending revolution, the activist starts to imitate the productive process of capitalism in terms of a reductionist emphasis on ‘the number of hours spent, the number of leaflets distributed’ (ibid, no pagination). This mimicry of capital relations conflicts with what activist surely should be at its core –what, following Marx’s labour theory of value, should be unalienated labour, ‘human interaction with nature’ rather than the valorisation of value (Marx, 1992) – something that does not perpetuate capitalism, but disrupts it. The emulation of capitalist work discipline can be seen as a symptom of the technologies of control to the broader power structures of the world. Thus, the activist experiences their form of alienation, for ‘militancy is rooted in the alienation of each of us’ (Blanc, 1972, no pagination).

Ultimately, the militancy of organisation results in a reproduction of the idealised militant subjectivity. As Thoburn states: “...the revolutionary organisation functions as a cut with the social and as a means to consolidate- and intensify its particular mode of activity, an activity that in turn secures the individual’s subjective investment in, and formation through

the organisation," (2008, p.101). Part of the need for such reproducibility is for reasons of recruitment; as Peterson (2018) notes, one of the main ways into a militant group is through personal connections or having an existing militant act as a "sponsor" (p.111). Thus, militants reproduce more militants in a literal sense. However, an organisation's militancy reproduces militant subjectivity to maximise the effectiveness of often limited resources and personnel within a small organisation. Through occupation of time and strict requirements in terms of knowledge, the militant becomes what Foucault calls a "docile body" (Foucault, 2012). The militant is not a brutalised and brainwashed subject but a figure in control of their faculties, though those faculties exist within the framework of established social norms and expectations for the militant group (Mills et al., 2010). This is not to say that militants do not face bullying, harassment, or even violence from other militants, as there is considerable evidence that they do (Kelly, 2018; Callaghan, 1987; Seymour 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d; Lemon, 2016; Nat, 2011; BC, 2012).

The Militant Diagram

As established in the prior sections, the militant is a contradictory figure: devoted to the masses but above them, looking to the future but repeating past habits. This conflicting nature has not gone unnoticed by militants. Indeed, one of the most notable militants of the 20th Century offered a potential solution to this contradiction:

> At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality. Perhaps it is one of the great dramas of the leader that he or she must combine a passionate spirit with a cold intelligence and make painful decisions without flinching. Our vanguard revolutionaries must idealize this love of the people, of the most sacred causes, and make it one and indivisible. They cannot descend, with small doses of daily affection, to the level where ordinary people put their love into practice.
>
> (Guevara, 1967, p.65)

Guevara's description of a "New Man" is of a quasi-messianic figure who resolves the contradiction between a "passionate spirit" and "cold intelligence" through feelings of "love." Love for the people becomes a means to reconcile emotional spontaneity and detached reasoning between the creative side of the militant who wants to bring about a new utopia and the destructive side of the militant, willing to sacrifice lives (even their own). For our analysis, two aspects of Guevara's claim stand out. Firstly, the militant is aligned with masculinity; the militant is the "new man". Here, Guevara echoes Trotsky's sentiments that socialism would transform men into idealised, intelligent, muscular, and disciplined masculinity (Trotsky, 2005). As I shall discuss later, militancy and particular forms of masculinity tend to link together in often harmful ways. Secondly, Guevara suggests something about the militant and desire by linking love to militancy. In Guevara's line of thinking, the militant is torn by contradicting desires to create and destroy. These desires are reconciled through the desire to love the people, "the most sacred cause," - ergo, the militant has some deep sense of their inner feelings and desires. Here, the critics of militancy would raise objects; Blanc, for example, would suggest the militant is a far less loving figure and is, in fact, unable to relate to their desires, for a militant "can only be happy later on by sacrificing oneself now," through the arduous side of militancy imitating work (1972, no pagination).

Similarly, Guattari would take issue with the militant having such a nuanced relationship with desire. Militancy (especially in the Marxist framework) tends to overlook the "micropolitics of desire" (Guattari, 1977, p.158), and this presents itself as an oversight, for "the analysis of desire, is immediately practical and political ... for politics precedes being," (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.203). Instead of a figure at ease with desire, Guattari identifies the militant diagram.

In the militant, Guattari saw a rigidity of language, a demarcation between revolutionary and reactionary language that was ultimately arbitrary and exclusionary. Revolutionary organisations that embraced militancy undermined their political aims by becoming "separated from the signifier of the working class's discourse" and "become closed in upon itself" and antagonistic to any form of subjectivity that did not fit its worldview (1984, p.33).

The militant has a historical aspect; the modern militant is a product of what Guattari called the "Leninist Breakthrough." This was a signifying breakthrough which defined Bolshevik politics but ultimately became incapable of conducting its auto-critique. Guattari pinpoints the moment of the Leninist Breakthrough to the 1903 RSDLP Congress, which created the split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. The vicious debate was a pivotal moment for the Left, in which Lenin's victory arguably contributed to the success of the Bolshevik revolution. Still, it also created an uncompromising and unchanging militant subjectivity: "What happened at that congress was repeated ad infinitum elsewhere. Statements were hardened into dogma, and taken completely out of the context in which they had been made...a whole professional Bolshevik style and attitude, a perverted fondness for creating splits on matters of principle...entered into the sphere of militant subjectivity" (Ibid, p.192).

This new militant subjectivity amounted to a collective phantasy of omnipotence within the party. Being a militant was a messianic vocation, the role of philosopher warrior, a figure destined by history to judge right from wrong, good from evil. Due to this, the militant becomes a paradoxical figure, devoted to the masses and positioned above them as a leader. As Blanc puts it, "the militant who claims to place himself at the service of the

proletariat...*only places himself at the service of the idea that he has of the proletariat's interests*" (Blanc, 1972, no pagination, italics mine). In this sense, the militant sees himself as the arbitrator of the proletariat's interests, the gatekeeper of what is and is not best for the working class. Because of this self-aggrandising persona, the party as an institution became incapable of responding to new theories, new sets of circumstances, or new epistemologies of resistance. What should have been - according to Guattari - a "transitional phantasy" becomes the norm, the only acceptable response to all situations. The militant group becomes a site of inertia, uncritically accepting slogans, belittling desires that do not fit with the militant model and taking no notice of unexpected realignments of power.

Contra Guevara, Guattari does not see the militant as capable of reconciling conflicting desires with a desire to love; quite the opposite in fact, for the militant in fact, would:

> ...belittle the function of desires - first for themselves, in the process of their own....then for the masses, towards whom the develop a domineering and contemptuous attitude, that hateful 'love' of the militant who knows everything a priori and systematically refuses to listen to anything other than the Party line. The opium of the militant, a sado-masochistic enticement!
>
> Guattari, 1984, p.189-190.

Suppose there is any love to be found in the militant. In that case, it is not the warm love described by Guevara but a contemptuous tyrannical love of Milton's God, condemning the masses as ingrates while also proclaiming to know their best interests (Milton, 2005). Indeed, militants are peculiarly self-destructive; earlier in the chapter, Rolnik (2006) conceived of the militant as "bringing an end" to reality itself; Milanesi (in Wright, 2021) argues similarly that for the militant subjectivity: "practical work stops at the point where power begins…there is no longer a place for [the militant] in a party that has become the state," (p.14); while Nunes (2013) suggests that any militant is trapped in an ultimately

paradoxical position, "existing in order to abolish himself or herself: a mediator whose aim is to end mediation," (p.166). Is there perhaps an extent to which a militant subjectivity is ultimately doomed to only – to borrow from Lacan – "*fail better*" than leaders in bourgeoisie society (Zizek, 2009)? At the same time, we might also see something (perhaps perplexingly) *fragile* about the militant. Guattari notes in his reflections on his work with Giles Deleuze that militants are akin to the "obsessive who loses his sense of security if one shifts the position of a single, familiar object" (Guattari, 2008, p.40). Indeed, Guattari suggests that it is questions of desire that pose the greatest threat to militant subjectivity because questions of desire leave them in a position where they are unable to express themselves "when militants…are asked what their real attitude is in regard to children, homosexuals…what their bureaucrats get off on, or what depresses and maddens their comrades…no answer," (ibid, p.148). Thoburn (2010) draws on Guattari and links the left militant to the philosophy of Nechayev (1869 (1971)). Nechayev envisions the ideal revolutionary group as a closed cell, driven by singular, all-encompassing passion, and requires the dismantling of all relations to self and society, which do not meet the end goal of furthering revolution. Nechayev's especially misanthropic version of militancy was greatly admired by Lenin and other advocates of Bolshevik vanguardism and was long considered part of the revolutionary anarchist canon (Thoburn, Ibid). Nechayev conceptualises the militant as a rather brutal figure who leaves no room for vulnerability or reflection. Thus, the militant subjectivity engages in an "imitation" of the segregations of bourgeoise society in revolutionary movements, specifically the "refusal to look at closely at the concrete alienation of women and children, the possessive and dominating attitudes, at respect for the bourgeois separations of private live and public activity," (Guattari, 2008, p.226)

At this point, a reader might see a similarity in the militant diagram and the critical discussions of left-wing masculinities I discussed earlier in this chapter. In both cases, we see a peculiar and seemingly contradictory figure, one obsessed with war (physical or intellectual) and reproducing oppression in the name of liberation. Indeed, this is true; however, the theoretical contention of this chapter – that the militant diagram can be a tool for understanding and analysing left-wing masculinities – goes beyond mere comparisons and analogous effects. I argue that the militant diagram can explain left-wing masculinities because it draws out the gendered practises, attitudes and stance-taking we might witness, which are a product of what we might broadly call "activist culture," and specifically the kind of activist cultures we find in radical left-wing organisations.

Masculinities and Militancy

Is the militant diagram – and militancy more broadly – gendered? Guattari never explicitly states it, but his conceptualisation of the militant is broadly male, at least by implication. The militant exists separately to women and children (whose desires, we have established, they cannot understand); as discussed earlier in the chapter, researchers such as Sullivan (2005) had linked militancy to a masculinely coded nihilistic machismo, something that Thoburn (2010) also acknowledges similar connections between militancy and nihilism (especially the work of Sergey Nechayev). That said, most of the existing work on the gender politics of the radical left has focussed on hypermasculinity rather than militancy (Coleman & Bassi, 2011; Bakan, 2012; Dean, 2015; Maiguashca, Dean & Keith, 2016). This does not simply appear to be an issue for militant groups in the Trotskyist tradition, as research conducted by the Salvage Collective has demonstrated (Downes et al., 2016; Downes, 2017). If militant groups are home to a hypermasculine militant persona, then it is hardly surprising

that sexual violence takes place. As Shafer et al. (2018) argue, hypermasculinity can prioritise the sexual conquest of women by men. However, it also "endorses traditional ideas about the need for men to be highly respected and to gain that respect by being aggressive and unfeminine" (p.545).

A striking example of militant hypermasculinity is the memoir of Derek Hatton, the deputy leader of Liverpool City Council between 1983 and 1986. Hatton was a member of the Labour Party and the Trotskyist entryist group Militant Tendency. Hatton's memoir is a peculiarly egotistical and self-aggrandising text which situates his life and political career in a context of profoundly aggressive masculinity. As a young man, Hatton is anti-intellectual (Hatton 1988, p.2), and his contempt for learning is applied to those on the Left who, unlike him, are "armchair socialists." His childhood is portrayed as a profoundly masculine, homosocial world. While working as a firefighter, Hatton recounts how he "fell asleep on another fireman's shoulder" after a long day. The response to this is mockery, "they didn't stop ribbing me about it for weeks - and neither did Dad!" (Ibid, p.13) The tone here, with its knowing exclamation mark, is suggestive of the pervasiveness of Hatton's masculinity - the imagined reader is presumed male, able to laugh at the possible infraction of masculine conduct - a brief moment of vulnerability in the form of tiredness - which Hatton inadvertently committed, and able to acknowledge the affirmation of his masculinity in the subsequent text.

Hatton's profoundly anti-intellectual thinking is evident in his attraction to the Militant brand of Marxism. He never offers any conscious interrogation of Marxism, nor why he held contempt for the theoretical grounding of the Communist Party or Socialist Workers Party: "...I had never read the paper, never read books. I was an activist. I just wanted to get on with it," (ibid, p.29). Militant has "political muscle", while other factions are "trendies",

implicitly unmasculine. Marxism is a process of constant momentum, with no time for critical self-reflection, doubt, or space to consider new ideas or strategies of resistance. Hatton is deeply contemptuous of what he describes as the "London boroughs with their obsessions about anti-racist and anti-sexist issues," which, to him, sit at odds with "Merseyside which had strong-working class traditions" (ibid, p.89). Hatton himself boasts of utilising homophobic and misogynistic slurs against political opponents: "'If you don't like the heat you should get out of the kitchen,'" he addresses a female Labour MP and recounts what he said to a homosexual Labour councillor, concerned about lack of female representation on the council, "' Hey John, if you put a skirt on that should solve the problem!" (Ibid, p.91).

Segal identifies in Hatton's memoir masculinity as power, where "the 'burdens' of masculinity may be real, but they do not necessarily bear too heavily upon the man who can remain in a position from which to exhort control over others" (Segal, 2006, p.127). Manliness is intrinsically linked to power, and in many ways, Hatton's self-realisation illustrates Bakan's description of the epistemological dissonance between Marxism and Feminism. Hatton's Marxist masculinity has its intersectionality; he is man, Northern, working class, and physically active - his male identity is determined by his locality, class, and physical prowess. The militant diagram - while hostile to other theories of resistance than that accepted as orthodoxy by the group (be that Marxism, Anarchism, Maoism, etc.) - can utilise elements of these different theories for its ends. For example, Weatherman Underground was ideologically committed to militant Maoist third-worldism. It also encouraged its members to engage in non-monogamy, kink, group sex, and other sexual lifestyles borrowed from queer activist communities (Thorburn, 2010). All of this came back

to the ultimate construction of the militant agent. The militant diagram “articulates feminist and other political and cultural in a manner which tends to further its own imperatives”(ibid).

The point being made here is not that militancy is the sole predominance of men. Many scholarly and grassroots provide accounts of women’s militancy (Sen, 2006; Roy, 2012; Rosen, 2013; Nieto-Valdivieso, 2017). Indeed, models of militancy that diverge from the militant diagram exist; Sparks (1997) identifies what she calls “dissident citizenship”, which encompasses “the often creative oppositional practises of citizens who either by choice, or (more commonly) by forced exclusion from institutionalised means of opposition, contest current arrangements of power from the margins of polity,” (Sparks, 1997 p.75). Sparks argues that women’s contribution to activism and dissident citizenship has been erased from history on gendered grounds. Activism requires courage, and this is commonly “constructed as a quintessentially masculine trait, tied intimately to conceptions of manhood and to the performance of violence,” (Ibid, p.76). A courageous act, however, need not be violent; Sparks cites the action of Rosa Parks and the women of the Women’s Political Council who swung into action before Martin Luther King and George Abernathy responded to Park’s arrest (ibid, p.92). What amounts to courage is contingent on social and cultural factors - for men, this might be engaging in violence or risky direct action (Brown, 1988 p.206-7), but for some groups, such as women of colour, “...true speaking is not solely an expression of creative power; it is an act of resistance...it is a courageous act - as such, it represents a threat (hooks, 1989, p.8).

In summary, I have drawn attention to the militant diagram, an ultimately contradictory subjectivity that produces, shapes and circulates meanings and identities in political contexts. I argue that the militant diagram offers valuable tools for understanding subjectivities in the radical left, particularly in providing insight into masculinities. I will

briefly touch on the concept's utility for understanding femininities in my empirical chapters, but it would require analysis beyond this thesis's scope. However, I would argue that despite the usefulness of Guattari's work, we need to nuance our theoretical framework. Hatton and men like him seem to embody militancy in their exclusionary practises and politics, in their reproduction of problematic social hierarchies – but we cannot tar all left-wing men with the same brush. Indeed, despite his fetishism for control, even a militant might find that he is not entirely in control of his emotions, feelings, and the affective aspects of politics that offer lines of flight out of the militant diagram. Therefore, further consideration of affect and its relationship to masculinity *and* militancy is necessary before considering our theoretical framework set in stone.

The structures of feeling and affective masculinities.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the affective turn in social sciences and examined how affect studies can enrich our understanding of social movement cultures. Those same theoretical tools also offer new possibilities for masculinities studies and, as I argue in this section, the analysis of militancy. While there is already a reasonable body of literature on masculinity and emotions, affect and emotions are related but distinct concepts, as Reeser puts it, "in dialogue" with one another (Reeser, 2019, p.103). Masculinities can be constructed through men's relationship to their emotions (for example, knowing which emotions to express and when to avoid being coded as feminine), but affect is "pre-personal [while] emotion is primarily culturally coded" (ibid). Affect challenges dominant masculinities because it "reveals the ways that a male body is not in control" (Reeser, 2019, p.104), yet affect *affects* everyone. Affect can have a potentially transformative power for men since men's gendered subjectivity can be affected by forces outside of their control, something which Hardt (1999) sees as containing possibilities for "liberation" from the

"patriarchal order" (p.100) and open up "the recognition of new forms of relating," (Reeser, ibid, p.109).

At the same time, however, affect has some gendered dimensions and can be understood through the lens of masculinity; for Deleuze and Guattari, affect is "the active discharged of emotions, the counter-attack…affects are projectiles just like weapons…weapons are affects and affects weapons" (1988, p.400). Here, we might see a connection between affect, masculinity, and militancy. While militant subjectivity might be hostile towards emotions that do not fit its aims, that does not mean that militancy and militant masculinity are not an affective experience. Militants can feel moved, even a sense of connection with others (no matter how superficial) through their militancy. In the previous chapter, I reflected on Negri's feelings of elation and connection to his fellow militants when he participated in a protest activity. However, those affective elements are not limited to male militants. In her analysis of militant women in Colombia, Nieto-Valdivieso (2017) highlights the importance of affect, feelings of joy and comradeship in the revolutionary struggle. It's important to acknowledge that affect can be a tool for the militant as much as it can be a burden. Militants experience "affective imperatives" such as the following:

> …pleasure of feeling more radical than others and the worry about not being radical enough; the sad comfort of sorting unfolding events into dead categories; the vigilant perception of errors and complicities and others; the anxious posturing on social media and the highs of being liked and the lows of being ignored; the suspicion and resentment felt in the presences of something new; the way curiosity feels naïve and condescension feels right.
>
> Bergmand and Montgomery, 2017, p.9

The allusions to experiences of joy might seem antithetical to the militant subjectivity I have sketched out thus far – that figure seems to be rather miserable, to put it mildly – but joy is best understood in this sense in the Spinozan sense in that it is "not an emotional at all,

but an increase in one's power to affect and be affected," (ibid, p.13). However, what we can draw from this is that militancy shares with masculinity a kind of ambivalent relationship with affect; affect can trouble the boundaries of dominant masculinity and militancy, but it can be "evoked in order to be contained" (Reeser, 2019, p.109).

How can we understand the work of affect in relation to masculinity and militancy? It might seem as if affect can offer a line of flight out of the rigidity of rigid subjectivities, but its emergent nature seems fragile and as prone to re-entrenchment as it is renewal. While some theorists talk of the "autonomy" of affect (Massumi, 2001), scholars such as Allan (2016) have pointed out that this can be problematic as it suggests that affect is outside of culture and language entirely and can be treated as some essential truth. Affect may be experienced pre-language, but it can be used tactically, and one can affect and be affected. Thus, to conceptualise it, I turn to the idea of what Raymond Williams (1977) calls the "structures of feeling."

The structures of feeling are one of the more nebulous and (some might say) difficult-to-define concepts in cultural studies. Williams himself intended the "structures of feeling" to provide a new approach to thinking about culture and cultural meaning, which diverged from the traditional Marxist base-superstructure model. For Williams, the general conclusions of Marxist structuralism – that the economic base of society determined everything in the superstructure, including culture, and thus culture was an object for analysis by which we could better understand economic logic – feel short of capturing the nuances of the relationship between cultural and social practice, and individuals. Williams defined the structures of feeling as "characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, tone, specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationship, not feelings against thought, but thought as felt, and feeling as thought" (Williams, 1977, p.132). In short, Williams is

concerned with how new and emergent voices manifest in moments of social change and how these voices articulate themselves when they are often experienced "at the edge of semantic availability" (Ibid, p.x). The idea that feelings are somehow separate from a static social world is incorrect, as are feelings and experiences (be they collective or personal). However, that structure limits the experiences and actions available to an individual (ibid, p.132). Social experiences, more often than not, contain a "frequent tension between the received interpretation and practical experience" (ibid, p.x). The tension results in difficulties articulating an action and potentially understanding the structures under which one might be limited. Williams noted that his very terminology seemed contradictory, writing as "firm and definite as 'structure' suggests, yet it operates in the most delicate and least tangible parts of our activity" (Williams, 2001, p.64).

The structures of feeling have some utility within the field of masculinities studies, mainly about masculinities in film (Dyers, 2015) and literature (Hendler, 2001; Crowley, 2014) – hardly surprising since the concept evolved out of Williams' literary criticism. Within social movement studies, the structures of feeling have had limited application, notably in McDuffie et al.'s study on the Women's Marches of 2017 (2017). However, at the time of writing, the usefulness of the structures of feeling for understanding the relationship between masculinity, culture, and movements remains largely untapped. This thesis seeks to bring together the concepts of affect and militancy as a means by which we might understand how movement cultures produced identities and address how those processes are often unpredictable, contentious, and as much subject to inarticulacy and emergence as they are to dogma and rigidity.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have honed in on two theoretical concepts: the militant diagram and the structures of feelings. The militant diagram is a subjectivity that shapes and circulates meanings and identities within radical politics. I have argued that it draws out masculine-coded practices and affects within social movements. The structures of feeling refer to how new and emergent voices and identities manifest in times of social change and how collective and individual experiences link together affects, sensual experiences and imaginaries. At first, linking the structures of feeling to the militant diagram would seem contradictory. One is a rigid and dogmatic subjectivity, and the other refers to tentative and emergent expressions of identities not yet fully come into being – though, as we have established, both engage with experiences of affect. Militancy, I contend, can be understood as a distinct, gendered and exclusionary form of affect. At the same time, the structures of feelings capture some of the ambivalence and ambiguity surrounding left-wing masculinity. Above, I have outlined how some left-wing men responded to feminism, the somewhat effervescent notion of 'identity politics' in their movements, and women's activism with contempt, dismissal, and the reinforcement of exclusionary militancy and misogyny. However, alternative responses exist – the men of *Big Flame* and *Achilles Heel* are one example of an attempt to reconfigure left-wing masculinity. Still, we could assume that for every Hatton, there are men who sincerely want to create and sustain alternative forms of masculinity which undermine rather than support patriarchy. In the next chapter, I outline my methodological approach towards studying such personas and the project as a whole.

Chapter Four: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I offer justifications for the choice of field sites and outline my sampling methods. I introduce my participants and provide relevant demographic information about them as activists and the scope of my sample. Like many social researchers in the early 2020s, I faced methodological challenges from the restrictions of lockdown regulations that restricted my ability to engage in an embedded ethnography. I reflect on how I navigated the ethical and epistemological challenges of this period of history. My methodological approach was a series of semi-structured interviews interspersed with ethnographic moments, both offline and online. I review the utilisation of online research with activists, especially online interviewing. Working with a participant pool that shared with me both an overlapping positionality and a discursive closeness, I contend that it is possible to approach a mutualist process of meaning-making and shared reflections, even via Zoom interviews. As a situated researcher working with participants in my own movement, I contend that I do not necessarily have the priority of interpretation based on theoretical competence, any more so than my participants. Equally, as I discuss below, I pose questions to my participants (especially my male ones) that I struggle with. Towards the end of the chapter, I reflect on potential barriers to researching militant masculinity – namely, the potential to reproduce militancy.

Research Aims and Context

Three central research questions guided the research:

1. How does the culture of radical left movements create, sustain and discipline certain kinds of masculinity and militancy? What models of resistance to these exist?
2. How have activists critiqued dominant militant masculinities within radical left culture, and what lessons can the left learn from this?
3. What is the role of affect and affective practises in movement culture, and how does this include or exclude gender as a category of analysis?

To investigate these questions, I employed a case study approach, which allowed for an in-depth qualitative exploration of militant masculinities within one left-wing organisation and cultural context. The chosen field site for this thesis is Momentum, a left-wing grassroots organisation supportive of the Labour Party. I provide contextual and historical notes on Momentum in the subsequent chapter. However, I offer some brief justifications for the field site here.

I chose Momentum as a field site for two reasons: firstly, Momentum is significant as for a period between 2015 and 2019, it became 'a centre of gravity' for the British left. Skogan (2020) notes that Momentum brought together significant tendencies within the British left, ranging from existing Labour left groups such as the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) to the trade union left to extra-parliamentary social movements and activist networks such as Stop the War Coalition (for further discussion of these tendencies, see Klug, Rees & Schneider, 2016). Various left of Labour organisations such as the Socialist Party (SP), Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Left Unity (LU) encouraged – or instructed – their members to join Momentum (successfully or otherwise) (Thomas, 2015; Wintour, 2015). Momentum was a space to find the most political activity during those years, the most people and cultures. From a cultural perspective, Momentum's 'new kind of politics' was an attempt to synthesise the cultural practises and

processes of meaning and feeling making of established trade unions, militant left-wing parties, left bureaucratic groups of MPs, and what several scholars have referred to as the 'Youthquake' in British politics that characterised 'Corbynism' (Sloam & Henn, 2019).

In short, Momentum represents a cultural melting pot within the British left, a space where diverse processes of feeling and meaning-making might well interact, clash and meld. This has been a cause of some tension within Momentum, between its own self-described 'kinder, gentler politics' and the rigid dogmatism of the 'old left'; I detail some of these contentions in the next chapter. Such cultural interactions can be spaces for new and emergent cultural practises to emerge – including new identities and affective relationships – but as Williams reminds us, "it is exceptionally difficult to distinguish between those [new cultural practises] which are really elements of some new phase of the dominant culture…and those which are substantially alternative or oppositional to it: emergent in the strict sense, rather than merely novel," (Williams, 1977, p.123). In Chapter Three, I argued that militancy is so crucial for left-wing cultures (especially for left-wing men) that it becomes a model that all participants in such a culture must orient themselves. In choosing Momentum as my field site, I am studying an organisation where militancy might not be so institutionally embedded. Still, my starting premise is that militancy remains culturally embedded, a dominant, rather than emergent, practice.

My second justification for choosing Momentum is my engagement with the organisation. I drew on pre-existing networks within Momentum, centring around two branches in the organisation, Leeds and Manchester. These locations were important starting sites as I had networked with activists in those branches, and both branches offered a demographic insight into the broader makeup of Momentum. While (as I have mentioned) Momentum is often characterised as being a youthful organisation, my comrades in both Leeds and Manchester did not always fit this mould. Indeed, a notable amount of branch

members were under the age of thirty-five (unsurprising as both Leeds and Manchester are home to three and five Universities, and there tends to be an overlap between university education and participation in left-wing social movements (Lange et al., 1990)), but I also encountered older 'veterans' of the Labour left, trade unionists and current or former members of more militant organisations who now called Momentum their political home – in short. The branches tended to be predominantly white, though there was a small but significant group of BME activists in both. In my broader engagement with Momentum – attending events such as the World Transformed or campaigning with Momentum in the 2017 and 2019 General Elections – these demographics mirror what I observed in the organisation more broadly. During my fieldwork, I continued to engage with Momentum activity as an activist in a wide variety of settings – attending educationals, participating in Manchester Momentum's "Trade Union Organising School" (as I was a trade union rep for the University of Manchester Students' Union during the period of my fieldwork), engage in campaigning – all activities that took place virtually during lockdowns in 2020-21, and then in person again after the easing of restrictions. I have engaged for the most part continuously with Momentum for nearly seven years, and in that witnessed (and in some cases, played a role in) Corbyn's election in 2015, his subsequent re-election in 2016, the hung parliament of 2017, the catastrophe of 2019 and the following period of mutation and crisis that Momentum continues to experience; in short, I am embedded scholar-activist, though during my fieldwork I found myself leaning more towards being a scholar than an activist. This positionality assisted with my sampling and gaining the trust of critical actors and gatekeepers.

In summary, choosing Momentum as a field site is motivated by the organisation's particular cultural and historical circumstances. Such circumstances fit well with this thesis's theoretical lens, and my position as a Momentum activist allowed me greater access to and

innate insight into the organisation. However, the findings have broader applicability to both the British radical left and the ‘Labour left’. Momentum drew its membership from various sources – trade unionists rubbed shoulders with Trotskyists, newly radicalised members of ‘Gen Z, anti-war activists, and ecological radicals. Such individuals came from their own cultural and affective fields, which would have played some role in shaping meaning-making and feeling-making within Momentum. This was evident in my interviews in how my participants compared and contrasted practices and norms between Momentum and organisations they had previously been active in. Whilst Momentum is perhaps no longer the ‘centre of gravity’ for socialist and socialist-inclined British activists, such activists will have been shaped by the cultural and affective practises within the organisation. Such practises – including practices around sexual and gender politics – will feasibly be taken by activists who left Momentum back to their original organisations. In short, insights into Momentum have broader ramifications for understanding the nature of masculinities in the British left, opening a rich new vein of scholarship into the study of left-wing masculinities.

Sampling

Sampling was conducted by snowballing. Snowballing tactics are utilised to obtain access to "hidden populations" and to groups that suffer from stigmatisation and marginalisation (Noy, 2008, p.330), as well as being a typical sampling method in qualitative research and ethnography, including social movements and gender studies (Klandermans, 2002). By allowing the participants to pass on contact information to the researcher, snowballing situates sampling in the social power structures of the ethnographic field site and relies on the participants' social capital. Furthermore, Noy notes the suitability of snowballing to feminist methods, citing research suggesting that women tend to maintain and expand

social ties and networks (Noy, ibid, p.335). As research activity became confined to online only, snowballing retained a level of utility; snowballing via social media allows researchers to access additional analytical data and track engagement with different demographics, depending on the site used (Leighton et al., 2021).

I contacted Momentum activists in my networks in Leeds and Manchester. I recruited former Momentum members who remained in touch with current activists but no longer attended branch meetings/activities. In addition, Momentum Leeds and Momentum Manchester advertised my call for participants via their mailing lists and social media accounts, resulting in responses from current and former members. Equally, I promoted my research via social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter and left-wing subreddits such as r/Labour, r/GreenandPleasent, and r/alltheleft. My call for participants was also shared on social media by Red Labour (an online left Labour group not affiliated with Momentum but shares an overlap in membership) after I spoke at an event they organised in 2021. Based on these networks, I could interview current and former Momentum members from seven cities in England (Manchester, Leeds, London, Oxford, Brighton, Sheffield, York) and one in Northern Ireland (Belfast).

The participants in this study

The table below summarises the participants in this study. I have given an overview of selected demographic information that is either pertinent to the research questions or provides valuable insights for the reader: this includes the participant's pseudonyms, their Momentum membership status at the time I spoke to them (along with any relevant members of other left-wing organisations or trade unions that they mentioned); their age; how they defined their gender; and any other relevant contextual information they shared with me, such as educational level, profession, current location and roles within either Labour or Momentum. I

have included additional relevant demographic and biographical information for each participant.

Pseudonym	**Membership (Party/Trade Union)**	**Location**	**Age**	**Gender**	**Notes**
Jacob	Momentum (Former) Labour Party (Former)	Leeds	24	Transgender man	Postgraduate student
Ben	Momentum (Former) Labour Party (Former) Acorn Tenants Union (current)	Manchester	23	Cisgender man	Postgraduate student
Claire	Momentum (current) Labour Party (current)	Sheffield	28	Cisgender woman	Teacher
Tariq	Momentum (current) Socialist Party of England and Wales (Former)	Manchester	25	Cisgender man	Trade union organiser
Reuben	Momentum (Current) Labour Party (Current) GMB (Current)	Manchester	23	Cisgender man	Postgraduate student
Richard	Momentum (former) Labour Party (former)	Leeds	27	Cisgender man	Teacher
Tim	Momentum (current) Labour Party (current) UCU (current)	London	46	Cisgender man	FE lecturer
Theresa	Momentum (former) Labour Party (former) Unite the Union (current)	Brighton	53	Cisgender woman	Former PPC
Leila	Momentum (former) Labour Party (former) International Workers of the World (Current)	Oxford	47	Cisgender woman	Therapist
Marcus	Momentum (current) Labour Party (current) Socialist Students/ Socialist Party (former)	York	19	Transgender woman	Undergraduate student
Sara	Momentum (former) National Union of Students (former)	Manchester	22	Non-binary	Trade union official
Lewis	Momentum (current) Labour Party (current) UCU (current)	Belfast	29	Cisgender man	PhD candidate
Thomas	Momentum (current) Labour Party (current)	Leeds	30	Cisgender man	

	Socialist Workers Party (former)				
Samira	Momentum (former) Labour Party (Former)	Manchester	26	Cisgender woman	Support worker
Stephen	Momentum (current) Labour Party (former) UCU	Leeds	48	Cisgender man	Civil servant
Brendan	Momentum (current) Unite the Union (current)	Leeds	51	Cisgender Man	Therapist
Leon	Momentum (former) Communist Party of Great Britain (former)	Manchester	22	Transgender man	Postgraduate student
Serena	Momentum (current) Labour Party (current) Socialist Workers Party (former)	Leeds	26	Cisgender woman	Practising ISVA
Luke	Momentum (former) Labour (Former) SolFed (current)	Brighton	29	Non-binary	Postgraduate researcher
Holly	Momentum (current) Labour (former)	Manchester	28	Cisgender woman	Mental health practitioner
Craig	Momentum (former) Labour Party (former) UCU (current)	York	29	Cisgender man	Sexual health practitioner.
Amelia	Momentum (current)	Manchester	21	Non-binary	

Figure 2 List of participants

I deliberately set out to speak to self-defining men about their senses of their masculinity and militancy, as well as the role of affect and culture in shaping, sustaining and disciplining those identities. I also decided to interview self-defining women and gender non-conforming participants to gain broader insights into affect and culture within Momentum but also to understand the consequences of left-wing masculinities from those demographics that are generally subordinated by masculinity; therefore, I treated these participant interactions as 'expert interviews' due to their direct experiences of sexism and misogyny. I also sought to recruit participants from different categories of membership. Interviews varied between current and former members of the organisation, and those who remained in Momentum

further varied between grassroots activists and members of local branch leadership (such as branch chairs or committee members). There was a significant overlap between Momentum membership and membership of a trade union (perhaps unsurprisingly), with my participants being involved in organisations such as Unite the Union, University and College Union, and the International Workers of the World. Membership of the Labour Party was a much more contentious issue, with a roughly fifty-fifty split between participants who remained in Labour and those who were not (some through being expelled as part of Keir Starmer's purge of the Labour left, and others leaving in despair after the apparent crushing of Corbynism).

It is worth briefly noting that there was a certain degree of homogeneity among my participants. Out of twenty-two interviewees, only three were with BME people. Twenty participants had some experience in higher education, some at the postgraduate level, and many were employed in professional roles, such as therapists, social workers, and civil servants. Sixteen participants were under the age of thirty. However, the average age of this cohort was twenty-seven, putting them near the older side of being Millennial and a similar age to myself (I commenced fieldwork at the age of twenty-nine). Consequently, I did share some rapport with these section of participants as we were all part of a similar political generation – millennials whose early politics were shaped by opposition to the Iraq war, had those politics hardened in the student movement of 2010-12, and then found our way to Momentum and 'Corbynism' via either orthodox militant groups such as the SWP, or grassroots anti-austerity movements such as UK Uncut and #Occupy (MacAskill, 2016). Four of my participants were in their forties and fifties during my interviews.

While this sampling was perhaps not representative of the wider British population – nor, I would say, of the grassroots left – it did seem representative of Momentum. While Sloam and Henn (2019) note that Labour gained the support of around 73% of Black and Minority Ethnic voters in the 2017 General Election, there is (to my knowledge) no academic

data on the ethnicity of Momentum participants. This presents the possibilities for further research into the ethnic politics of the radical left, but for now, those questions are beyond the scope of the thesis.

Interviews

Throughout my fieldwork, I conducted 24 semi-structured interviews. Due to lockdown restrictions, I conducted interviews over Zoom. The interviews lasted between one and a half to two hours. All interviewees remained anonymous; thus, the names presented in this thesis are pseudonyms. The primary purpose of these interviews was to gather greater detail about Momentum's specific sexual and gender politics. Broadly, I drew on Wengraf's (2001) biographical/narrative interview framework. Wengraf distinguishes theoretical questions and interview questions (or prompts). The thesis's central theoretical or research questions inform the prompts the researcher uses. However, the interviewer will need to have a certain degree of flexibility in the structure of each interview session (Wengraf, 2001, p.63). The interview must, therefore, navigate complex power dynamics in handing over directional control of the interview - to a certain degree - to the participants while also gathering data relevant to the research questions. However, this can provide valuable insights into "embedded and tacit assumptions, meanings, reasonings and patterns of action and inaction" (Wengraf, ibid) and insights into the culture, milieu and nature of the participant's world.

Under the semi-structured interview format, there was some overlap in the questions I asked my participants: themes such as how they became involved in Momentum and their understanding of the practices around sexual politics in the movement's spaces were common. However, I tried to tailor my interviews to capture divergence in activist life stories, especially deviations resulting from positionalities of gender and the performance of gender. Thus, I prepared several open-ended questions that I asked male participants, which differed

slightly from those I posed to female and non-conforming participants. With men, I focussed on how their membership of the organisation had shaped or changed their understanding of their masculinity (if at all) and how they confronted sexism and sexist practise (both their own and others). With women and non-conforming participants, my questions prompted them to share their experiences of both positive and negative sexual politics and gave them a space to share with me their ideas for how activist spaces and practises could be transformed. Oral and written consent was obtained from each interviewee, and interviewees were allowed to withdraw from the study if they wished. Two of my cohorts chose this option, leaving me with twenty-two interviewees overall.

Ethnographic moments in a time of lockdown.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the accompanying lockdown measures adopted worldwide caused significant disruption to a wide range of research activities, including those of social movement researchers. It was a time of great anxiety and pessimism for qualitative researchers. Reflecting on his experience of researching social movements at the height of Italy's first lockdown, Venturini (2020) captures the mood like this:

> "This is not a happy story of actions and results, but a narration of frustration and feelings of impotence…as a teacher and researcher, I had to switch to smart working and I started spending all my days in front of the computer (even more than before)…I started to feel miserable, only concentrating on teaching or tedious online research work…despite the severity of the crisis, I could not organise anything to effective to help people, a very disempowering feeling,"
>
> (p.x)

Here, Venturini captures the confused claustrophobia of the early period of lockdown, where it felt like one spent more time "in front of the computer" than there was any real call for; life had become "digitally mediated" with the vast majority of social interaction, let alone social *movement* interactions. Furthermore, given that, in part, my research would explore sexual politics – the resonance and significance of interactions which often took place in

pubs, after meetings and in spaces of sociality – the legal prohibition on anything more social than a chance meeting in the park presented itself as a barrier to any participant observation. It is not hyperbolic to say I felt a sense of grief when I realised that the research design I had had in my head – an immersed, militant ethnography of Momentum - was simply no longer possible in this new context where "any movement or action is forbidden, and there is almost zero possibility to doing anything," (Venturini, ibid, p.44). My grief here stemmed not just from personal disappointment but also arising from an ethical framework, wherein I feared the loss of the activist relevance of my research and that both the restrictions of lockdown and the restrictions imposed on me by risk-averse university management would mean that I would be crowbarred into the role of the masculinist, positivist researcher, an expert 'mining' social movements for data, detached from them by lockdown's "segregation between the academy and its public," (Hooker, 2020, no pagination).

I do not blame Hooker or Venturini for their pessimism. However, I tried to approach the dilemmas of lockdown from a different angle and tried to rethink what it meant to conduct an ethnography under those conditions. On an epistemological level, COVID-19 offered a chance to reconceptualise the role of the qualitative interview; namely, that qualitative interviewing is only one possible interaction between researcher and participant and that within qualitative interviewing, one can (and often does) discern ethnographic moments. Pinsky (2015) argues that qualitative interviews are only ever one part of "a communicative web between researcher and interview participant" (p.283). While interviews are often conceived of as part of ethnography, the reverse is rarely conceptualised; this is although most interviewers a) will gain some observational data from interviewing (for example, if the interview is in a participant's home, gaining a sense of their personal tastes) and b) the interactions that take place before, and after, an interview, can be sources of data. Berg (2017) argues for the importance of establishing a "comfortable rapport" with

participants before the recorder is switched on, yet such a comfortable rapport building, while not intended as data collection, can provide data nonetheless (Pinsky, ibid, p.285). Equally, once the tape is off, the act of what some researchers call the "leave-taking rituals" (Warren et al., 2003, Warren, 2012) can provide additional data, albeit that which is 'off the record'. This latter point was prescient to me, reflecting on my MPhil research with former members of the SWP in the aftermath of the 'Comrade Delta' scandal. In my field notes, I recorded that after the tape was off, interview participants would ask questions such as "Can I read this when it's done?" and "Will you share any findings on a blog or Twitter?"; in other words, my participants then seemed invested in what my research *could* do outside of academia and (I imagine) whether it played a role in the contentions around rape culture that erupted within the UK left as a result of that particular affair. This attitude had not been explicit in the actual interviews. Such seemingly tangential interactions, along with detailed fieldnotes, observations around space, and the pre-existing relationship between interviewer and participant (and its concurrent impact on the conversation), can function as "incidental ethnographic encounters" (Pinsky, ibid, p. 290).

I argue that drawing ethnographic insights from the qualitative research interview is even more likely during social distancing, especially when such interviews take place over Zoom. As Howlett (2021) argues, the pandemic forced researchers to reconceptualise what it means to be in 'the field' with online communications platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Facebook becoming a lens through which to view the field. Indeed, researchers acknowledge the almost inevitability of "micro-ethnographic moments" in online video interviews (Lyon and Tunåker, 2021). I would take this a step further – arguably, the field for almost everyone became the Zoom call or the Whatsapp video chat. To borrow Beaulieu's (2010) terminology, locked-down populations (not just researchers) found that their previous experiences of co-location became ones of *co-presence*. If 'the field' is the "day-to-day social

world" (Ritzer and Stepnisky, 2017) from which we draw ethnographic insight, then how can we say that online interactions are not a significant part of that field and that any ethnographic insights we draw from being co-present over Zoom are any less valid than if we were in the room with them?

An additional ethnographic insight came from my position as a situated researcher. I have been embedded in Momentum's documentary and the online world since its foundation; in short, I had some degree of personal insight into the feeling and meaning-making processes of the organisation. Equally, online interactions allowed me access to ethnographic experiences. Via my participants, I was fortunate enough to be put in contact with the organisers of Red Labour, a social media project set up in 2011 to "raise the profile of socialist ideas within the Labour Party" (Jones, 2017, no pagination), led by an organising team involving both members of Momentum and Labour. Red Labour has a significant social media presence, with (at the time of writing) one hundred and forty-one thousand likes on Facebook, eleven thousand followers on Twitter, and just shy of a thousand followers on its recently established YouTube channel. In discussion with Red Labour organisers, I helped to organise the first in a series of online seminars around misogyny within the Labour movement. The first event occurred on 14 November 2021, and I spoke on the panel with Apsana Begum MP, former Liverpool Mayor Anna Rothery, MSP Katy Clark, and Labour Councillor Pam Fitzpatrick. The event was watched by over 8000 people on Facebook Live, with nearly 200 people joining the Zoom call to engage in a Q&A session with the panel. The Red Labour events were not simply a means by which to engage in a kind of public sociology. Sharing a forum at the first event with prominent women in the Labour movement who had had direct experience of misogynistic treatment confronted me with tensions around my positionality as a male researcher researching a form of discrimination which is often perpetuated by men (something I reflect on elsewhere in the chapter). Equally, this was also

an occasion where I had to confront some unexpected hostilities towards me as a researcher, which I discuss in Chapter Eight.

With the easing of lockdown restrictions in 2021, I could attend in-person Momentum events again; as the fieldwork stage of the project entered its final phases, I marched with the Momentum bloc in October 2021 as part of a protest against the Tory Party Conference. I began to attend Momentum's monthly Trade Union Organising School again. While these interactions were things I did as an activist rather than as a scholar, there was an extent to which I was going into the field every third Tuesday of the month simply because that is what I had done since moving to Manchester. I did not do this to seek data, but I kept field notes out of habit, notes from which I was able to glean further ethnographic insights. In total, I was left with nineteen pages of notes taken over the course of my fieldwork.

Coding and data analysis

Interview data were coded in NVivo according to an iterative process. I developed an initial coding framework based on the theoretical concepts from the literature review and theoretical framework chapters, specifically around masculinity, militancy and meaning/feeling-making processes. From this, I created some initial codes to fit with the research questions. However, after the initial coding process, I returned and added codes in response to prevalent themes and ideas that emerged from the interviews (these are in italics):

RQ1: How does the culture of radical left movements create, sustain and discipline certain kinds of masculinity and militancy? What models of resistance to these exist?	RQ2: How have activists critiqued dominant militant masculinities within radical left culture, and what lessons can the left learn from this?	RQ 3: What is the role of affect and affective practises in movement culture, and how does this include or exclude gender as a category of analysis?
Acting & behaviour as a man *Perception of own masculinity* Divisions of Labour in organisation Ideas of manhood in Momentum Ideas of Manhood in other LW organisations. Male attitudes to sex & gender Momentum *Masculinity and women* Militancy of the self *Responses to accountability processes* *Open and insular cultures* Disciplinary procedures and safeguarding Relationship between branch and national	Anti-sexism in practises *Organisation practises in Momentum* Accountability Men confronting men Rejecting masculinity Silences *Silence to give space to others* Changing men's behaviour *Education and learning*.	Gender and personal worldview Gender and organisational worldview *Grassroots vs Parliamentary politics* Feelings towards feminism Involvement in left-wing politics Involvement in Momentum *Cultural practises in Momentum* Involvement in other LW organisations *Cultural practises in other LW organisations* *Older men and younger men* *Inarticulation* *Feelings of authenticity* *Feelings of inauthenticity*

Figure 3 Interview codes and research questions

Reflexivity and positionality

In any situation where a researcher is embedded or situated, they must reflect on the overlapping positionality they share with their participants. This seems to be especially prescient with social movement researchers (often activists themselves of some measure) and men who research masculinities. In my case, I found myself having to navigate my similarities with my male participants while also coming to terms with a sense that my

participants and I were grappling with the inability to articulate our understandings of ourselves as profeminist or anti-sexist men.

I shared with the men I interviewed membership of the same political organisation (either currently or formerly); all the men I spoke with were university-educated. As a result, the men I interviewed were, for the most part, theoretically articulate. Participants would often refer to theoretical ideas and concepts which held symbolic value within a particular intellectual trend of socialism (Marx and Lenin were mentioned numerous times – the latter not always positively – as was Rosa Luxembourg); but in addition, participants demonstrated an understanding of texts from a feminist canon – one participant told me excitedly how bell hooks' *Feminism is for Everybody* was his "gateway" into thinking critically about gender politics; the concept of gender performativity, or of reflecting on how the self, and others, 'performed' their gender was another comment refrain. Equally, some of my male participants seemed to draw on more pop culture theory, such as the work of Contrapoints (aka Natalie Wynn), a political YouTuber whose work has been praised for both its academic clarity and its vernacular and absurd sense of humour (Maddox and Creech, 2021). Rather, like Holmgren (2011), I felt as if the men I interviewed were using theory not just to comment or criticise but to "tell me about themselves" (p.368). Holmgren draws her insight from her work on educated profeminist men; in my case, identity through theory paradigm put me in mind the academic education either encouraged or required by militant groups. As a result, I had with my interviewees both "overlapping positions and discursive closeness" (ibid, p.366). Arguably, I shared a closeness of history with many of my participants – all of us, to a greater or lesser degree, were embedded in "Corbynism" by being in Momentum. However, some were more embedded than others. With some participants, I shared a history of being an anti-austerity and anti-tuition fees activist in the early 2010s. When asked about their political

history, the answers could easily have been my own. Sharing a history also opened up a shared field of meaning with my participants, presenting challenges and opportunities.

While a significant amount of literature has explored how men respond to a female interviewer and the connected challenges (Arendell, 1997; Lee, 1997; Schwalbe and Wolkomir, 2003), particular challenges are faced by men interviewing men. The interactions between a male researcher and participant are strongly influenced by the social constriction of masculinity (Robertson, 2006), and the qualitative research interview can be a space for traditional or hegemonic conceptions of masculinity to be sustained, reconfigured or resisted (Smith and Braunack-Mayer, 2014). On the idea that it should be resisted, Flood (2013) reminds us that men should engage in "critical reflection on our social locations" as part of a privileged social category; for the researcher, the "critical autobiography," or the inclusion of one's self in the frame of analysis, and a reflection on one's role in knowledge production, become essential methodological tools, but also ethical tools if one's research seeks to engender resistance or social change (Ibid, p.65).

The idea of resisting masculinity within the interview setting is something that one might expect when interviewing men who may identify as feminist or profeminist. One must bear in mind men's gender-conscious positioning – which, as Hearn and Holmgreen remind us, can be anti-feminist as much as profeminist positioning (Holmgren and Hearn, 2009) – to be recognised and considered feminists in certain situations. However, the positioning of men as feminists are in itself a subject of contention; recent history has told us that many men who claim a feminist stance engage in treating feminism as “something I *can* simply position myself in relation to, like some academic study” (Heath, 2003, p.271); other feminist writers have referred to the problem of "Enlighted sexism", where men have the language and ability to critique problematic behaviour but still perpetuate it (Linder and Johnson, 2015); Thompson (1995) makes the point that men’s anti-sexism fails when it consists of “leav[ing]

the struggle against patriarchy to women…simply wishing women well in their battle against gender-based oppression is not an adequate strategy for promoting anti-sexism," (p.429). Lamont (2015) articulates the risk of inauthentic anti-sexist masculinity, calling it a "mask, allowing men to claim a particular identity without fully challenging the privileges they claim" (p.272); in her research, men who provided "narratives of a progressive, egalitarian masculinity" did not actively challenge sexism and gender inequality, and thus allowed it to "function in hard to recognise yet pernicious, ways," (p.289). For Holmgren, men who claimed to be profeminist adopt "rebellious positions" whereby they try to come across to the interviewer as "more 'for real', radical and serious compared to…men in general" (2011, p.365). Such men often engage in "strategies of passing as a good enough (pro)feminist" in interview settings (ibid). The language used here is interesting – the connotations of "mask" and "passing" imply a sense of being regarded as something one is not, of "communicat[ing] false identity attributes" (Allen, 2017, p.1191).

Concluding remarks

This chapter summarises my methodology and the challenges I had navigating in the field. I have traced the main methods of data gathering: semi-structured virtual interviews, ethnographic moments obtained through my history in Momentum and my engagements in the organisation as an activist. This chapter has introduced the research participants and sought to highlight key demographic details about my sample – a group of activists with biographies and detailed stories to tell, but also a shared set of histories and organisational cultures. This chapter outlined how I gathered and analysed the data and navigated the restrictions placed upon me conducting research under lockdown. I have also outlined how I approached the project reflexively, both as a man researching men and an activist studying their own movement. In addition, I have argued that engaged researcher requires complex and

careful reflection on researcher positionality and a balancing act between the role of researcher and the role of activist.

Chapter Five: Contextualising Momentum

Introduction

This chapter provides context and a brief historical account of the chosen field site for this thesis: Momentum. In what follows, I also address some of the small (but growing) literature on Momentum's categorisation (as a party, a movement, a hybrid or something else entirely). I bring in some brief excerpts from my empirical data to support or accentuate some of the main points and arguments in this chapter, though the bulk of such data, and the discussion thereof, is found in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

My argument in this chapter is that Momentum as an organisation blurred the boundaries between formal political practises and cultural celebrations. Similarly, the boundaries between online and offline activities were also blurred. Momentum's 'hybridity' makes it a distinctive and novel fieldsite in comparison to more orthodox militant organisations. During the period 2015-2019, Momentum acted as a centre of gravity for the British left, and the culture of the movement foregrounded emotional and affective practises. Despite this, and despite its own self-professed efforts to distance itself from the 'Old Left', Momentum was not immune from sexism, misogyny, and militant masculinity.

Though Momentum has had a brief life, compared to other UK left groups, it has significantly impacted British political discourse. Initially established in 2015 to support the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn, the group's aim and objectives expanded into a broader project of reshaping the internal democracy of the Labour Party, in addition to attempts to reconfigure the distinctions between political party and social movement as well as trying to embrace and foreground culture, and cultural production, within grassroots activism. Yet, in the post-Corbyn Labour Party, where (seemingly) the Labour left is disempowered. The right

is ascendant (if, it must be said, seemingly unable to resonate with the public); Momentum now finds itself in an ambiguous place, at a stage of its life which many of my interview participants described as "malaise," or "existential crisis."

Momentum's early period: 2015-2018

After the resignation of Ed Miliband MP as Labour Leader in late 2015, backbench MP Jeremy Corbyn agreed to stand for the party's leadership on a leftist, anti-austerity plate. The Labour Left has consistently contested Leadership elections, with the former Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell contesting for the position in 2007 (BBC News, 2007) and Dianne Abbot MP contesting the 2010 leadership election (Stratton, 2010). Beginning as an outsider, Corbyn quickly became the frontrunner for the leadership, with the Guardian citing his "coherent, inspiring and, crucially, a hopeful vision" as the reason for his support (Jones, 2015). Corbyn won the leadership with 59.5% of the vote from eligible party members and registered supporters (Mason, 2015). Four weeks after his election, the grassroots and predominantly social media-based "Jeremy for Labour" campaign rebranded itself as "Momentum." Jon Lansman, a leading figure in Momentum, described its remit as "to develop the promise of new politics made by Jeremy in his campaign by linking up to people outside the Labour Party as well as inside. We are associated with the Labour party, and incredibly supportive of it, but not under its control" (Wintour, 2015a). Momentum as a movement exists both inside and outside of the Labour Party, but with the overall goal of "strengthen[ing] the Labour Party by increasing participation and engagement at local, regional and national levels.

Furthermore, Momentum is committed to supporting the Labour Party winning elections and entering government" (Momentum, 2021a). However, concerns have been

raised by members of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) about the infiltration of Momentum by "hard left activists." In 2015, four former members of the Trotskyist Alliance for Workers Liberty (AWL) were expelled from the Labour Party, despite the AWL having deregistered with the electoral commission after Corbyn's victory and all four being pre-existing members of Labour (Wintour, 2015b). Momentum has stated that it would not accept SWP members into its membership (Eaton, 2015). Critics of Momentum have argued that it is a "party within a party" with Owen Smith MP, who challenged Corbyn unsuccessfully for the Labour Leadership in 2016, claiming that Momentum uses "the same tactics" as the Trotskyist group Militant (Edwards, 2016). This echoes criticism from former Deputy Labour Leader Tom Watson MP, who sent Corbyn's office a dossier of evidence to show Trotskyist infiltration of the party (Smith, 2016). However, evidence suggests that the documents Watson cited may have been fabricated (Sivier, 2016). Indeed, there has been considerable criticism of comparisons between Militant and Momentum (Mason, 2016). Furthermore, according to documents obtained by blogger Guido Fawkes, moderates within the Labour Party infiltrated Momentum meetings and online organising groups to find material to leak to the media (Staines, 2016). A Channel 4 documentary in which reporters covertly filmed Momentum meetings (Young, 2016) was roundly condemned for trying to sensationalise the movement and portray it as a communist sect despite very little evidence supporting this (Jones, 2016; Goodfellow, 2016).

Momentum proved itself to be an effective mobilising force in the early challenges of the Corbyn era of Labour, deploying activists in support of Labour in the 2017 Stoke-on-Trent by-election to support the Labour candidate (Bean, 2017) and coordinating both Momentum and Labour activists to target marginal seats in the lead up to the 2017 general election, while offering training sessions for activists on campaigning and political pedagogy created with the organises of the 2016 Bernie Sanders campaign (Khomami, 2017). In

particular, Momentum quickly developed and deployed viral social media content critical of the Conservative Party and supportive of Labour, with its Facebook content being viewed by 12.7 million Facebook users at the peak of the 2017 General Election, more than a third of the UK's Facebook users at the time (Eaton, 2019). Momentum also established a significant hold on power within the Labour Party early on in its life, with Momentum candidates winning six out of six places in the 2016 election to the Labour Party's National Executive Committee (NEC), which exercises governance over the wider party (Smith, 2016). Concurrent to its interventions in electoral and internal politics, Momentum took a lead role in organising the annual The World Transformed (TWT) festival beginning in September 2016; TWT, inspired by the Dialectics of Liberation Congress of the 1960s (Koshy, 2017), while independent of Momentum, was shaped by Momentum's political vision, and combined cultural expression, radical art, skill sharing, political education, and revitalised ideas about devolved municipal socialism, which commentators noted as having been marginalised within English socialism (Eaton, 2019). In short, TWT marked an annual forum for grassroots politics to intersect with grassroots culture, offering a political, cultural and intellectual commons to Momentum's activist base and the wider British public.

While Labour lost five seats to the Conservatives in 2017, the party did gain twenty-eight seats from the government, including almost every constituency targeted by Momentum, resulting in a hung parliament as opposed to the Conservative landslide predicted by many of the polls. Subsequently, Momentum focused on supporting Labour in local politics, with Momentum-backed Labour candidates winning key local positions, such as the Mayoralty of Newham (Elgot, 2018) and the Trafford Council from the Conservatives (Mortimer, 2018). However, this period of success and burgeoning political action did not, sadly, prove to be effective in the 2019 General Election.

Defeat and Crisis – 2019-2020

After the announcement of a December 2019 snap General Election, Momentum began a major mobilisation project, focussing on the student vote (which had successfully helped Labour win numerous University constituencies in 2017 (Lo, 2019)) and once again on targeting marginal seats. In addition, Momentum targeted demographics overlooked mainly by the Labour Party, such as overseas British citizens, encouraging them to register to vote abroad and contribute to phone and social media activism (Proctor, 2019). Once again, Momentum produced viral social media content, including adverts that targeted British citizens for whom English was not a first language and more tongue-in-cheek content that lampooned the mannerisms of Prime Minister Boris Johnson, with commentators at the time perceiving the political social media battle between Momentum and the Conservatives, rather than between Labour and Conservatives (Volpicelli, 2019). Despite this, and considerable efforts on the doorstep by thousands of Momentum activists (the author included), 2019 proved to be a crushing defeat for Labour, resulting in a Conservative victory (and the prospect of a Hard Brexit) and the resignation of Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour Party.

Corbyn's resignation represented not simply an electoral setback for Momentum but the start of a period of existential crisis that arguably continues today. As Sam Bright, political reporter for Byline Times, wrote in June of 2020, Momentum faced several pressing questions: "How to maintain relevance in a party it no longer controls; how to fill the leadership vacuum left by Jeremy Corbyn; how to engage with increasingly confident rival groups; and how to deal with concerns it has not lived up to ideals," (Bright, 2020, no pagination). In the aftermath, Momentum moved quickly to try and secure the legacy of Corbynism within the party. In January 2020, Momentum ran an online consultation of

members endorsing Rebecca Long-Bailey MP and Angela Rayner MP for leader and deputy leader, respectively (Mason and Pidd, 2019). However, the process was criticised by Momentum members for asking members to confirm Momentum's National Coordinating Group's selection of Long-Bailey and Rayner and not mentioning other candidates in the 2020 leadership election (Cowburn, 2020). Though Rayner was elected to the deputy leadership, Long-Bailey came second to Sir Keir Starmer MP, who became the opposition's leader. Notably, Momentum also failed to win any of the NEC seats in the by-election of the same year. Momentum swiftly attempted to position itself as a supportive but critical force within the party, willing to work with the new leadership while defending the 'transformational policies' of the Corbyn era (Schofield, 2020). However, as Starmer's tenure went on, it became clear that relations between the new Labour leadership and the party's left (including Momentum) were far from cordial; Starmer's office ousted Labour general secretary Jennie Formby, changed the rules for NEC elections to Single Transferrable Vote (thereby making it harder for factions to win elections), and removing left-winger Richard Leonard as Scottish Labour Leader; similarly, Starmer's "Ten Pledges" which formed a crucial part of his leadership pitch (and was perhaps best summarised to me by one of my research participants as "Corbyn's ideas, but they sound good on Radio 4,") were largely abandoned in his eventual policy agenda (Finn, 2021). As Tom Kibasi, former director of the Institute for Public Policy Research (and also former Keir Starmer supporter) wrote on the anniversary of Starmer's election that, apparently, flaccidity of the Opposition was in part a result of a provoking "a completely unnecessary war with the party's left," (Kibasi, 2021. No pagination).

Momentum's malaise or mutation? Momentum under Covid-19 to present.

In 2020, Momentum marked its 5th birthday as an organisation in a very different space from where it had begun. Jeremy Corbyn was no longer the party leader, and many of his supporters from the shadow cabinet were now on the backbench. In a move which remains controversial and divisive among party members, Corbyn would later be suspended from the Labour Party by Keir Starmer. Jon Lansman, the organisation's founder, had stood down (BBC, 2020). As of late March 2020, the United Kingdom entered the first of a series of lockdowns prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, profoundly changing the options and actions available to social movements due to legal restrictions.

It would, however, be wrong to suggest that Momentum vanished into the ether due to the pandemic or the setbacks of the loss of 2019. While mainstream political discussion revolved around the virus and governmental responses to it, social movements organisations and participants around the world adapted to the unexpected and unprecedented circumstances to remain active, stake claims, and establish frames around the new challenges highlighted by COVID-19 (for an overview of various SMO responses to the pandemic, see Pleyers, 2020; Pressman and Choi-Fitzpatrick, 2020; Zajak et al., 2021)

In Momentum's case, the group turned its attention towards community-based activism. In September 2020, Momentum launched an Eviction Resistance campaign jointly organised with the London Renter's Union and Acorn. As Momentum co-chair Andrew Scattergood wrote at the time, the campaign aimed to "help at-risk tenants in their communities by mobilising to peacefully resist bailiffs and stop…evictions from taking place" (Scattergood, in Fisher, 2020, no pagination). Momentum launched a new "eviction

resistance hub," where technologies and platforms utilised in their election work were reconfigured to help tenants seek aid, and activists find local groups to participate in or set up new groups where none existed. The page also contained sample motions to take to Constituency Labour Parties, advocating for a "socialist solution to the housing crisis" (Momentum, 2021b). In March 2021, Momentum published a report entitled "Socialist Organising in a New Era," which mapped out the organisation's goals for 2021-2024. The report listed the three main aims of Momentum going forward as "build left power in the Labour Party and elect socialists; campaign in communities and support working class struggle; popularise socialist ideas and politically educate" (Momentum, 2021f). While the above might not sound too distinct from Momentum's previous goals, there are a few notable developments of political vision within the report, notably the development of a Momentum trade unionists network (with the concurrent aim of "[ensuring] all Momentum members are active members of a trade union," (ibid, p.13)) and a significant expansion in the scope of the organisation's political education programme, with the aim of "[empowering] Momentum local groups to become engines of political education," in their communities (ibid, p.15). In the summer of 2021, Momentum launched a localised drive to encourage Momentum members to run as local councillors (Momentum, 2021g) as well as a new leadership programme, open to all members, which offered a blend of political, organisational and strategic educational sessions (Momentum, 2021c). As these various initiatives were launched, Momentum also embarked on "a participatory process to put power in the hands of members, and to radically redesign our constitutions and rebuild Momentum" (Momentum, 2021e).

In a sense, Momentum has shown a remarkable level of proactivity during the COVID-19 pandemic via interventions in specific political issues highlighted by the pandemic and in terms of reflective activities about its status and positionality. However,

whether this outburst of activity was matched with a feeling of determination and drive for renewal among the members is less clear. In the initial stages of my fieldwork, conducted in the Spring of 2021, my research participants described feelings of "malaise", "existential crisis," and "fumbling around" in their branches. Indeed, as I wrote this chapter in 2022, Momentum appeared to have retreated somewhat from some of its pandemic projects; the last mention of the Eviction Resistance campaign from Momentum National is a Tweet from June of 2021 (Momentum, 2021d); indeed, a search of Momentum's website at the time of writing reveals that only one Eviction Resistance group is listed as active in North Western England, in Huddersfield (Momentum, 2022); as of summer 2022, internal discourse within Momentum focuses on a disagreement between two factions formed around the groups refounding, one advocating for closer work with Labour and the Socialist Campaign Group of MPs, while the other camp proposed a "one foot in, one foot out," approach which advocated trade union and community campaigning (Neame, 2022). In other words, Momentum's future – and perhaps even its present – remains ambiguous and a source of tension. The loss of 2019 and the subsequent pandemic had impacted the morale and determination of Momentum activists. However, it is worth considering the distinction between the attitudes of Momentum's leadership and those working at grassroots level.

Contextualising the fieldsite: Party, movement, or something else?

Momentum is – and, as I'll discuss later, perhaps always had been – a site of tension. I would argue that such tensions are partly a feature of its organisational form but also constitutive. Whether or not its leaders are willing to admit it, Momentum's ambiguity is exacerbated by the absence of Corbyn as a figure of leadership, the lack of a straightforward programme for social change, and the opportunity for such change.

Those tensions were evident in the mood of my interviewees. During each interview, I encountered almost nihilistic feelings of malaise, a loss bordering on grief in some cases, and a sense of resignation at other times. The lurch from defeat into the abrupt, at times surreal, and anxiety-inducing circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, strict lockdown in the United Kingdom, and an (initial) boost in popularity for Johnson's premiership (Jennings, 2020) left many activists who had invested time and energy into Momentum and the 'Corbyn project' reeling. As Reuben, a participant from the Momentum branch in Leeds, put it:

> *We lost, and we feel lost. I feel lost. I don't really know what to do. Do I – do we have it in ourselves to have to do it all over again? It's just like Blair and Miliband again, we're going to spend the next four years arguing about whether we even need Labour, and Tories will be laughing all the way back to number ten [laughs] that's if we don't all die from it [Covid 19].*

Rueben's weary and perhaps cynical sense of the state of British leftism struck a note with me both as an activist embedded in that political moment and as a researcher trying to make sense of sexual politics within that moment. The activist in me shared a sense of loss, confusion, and the dual apprehensiveness of whether the left had a future and, more broadly, what the future of lockdown held for me, my politics, and my loved ones. The researcher in me - conscious that my project had been conceived of in the giddy aftermath of the 2017 General Election (where a hung parliament felt as if it were a monumental victory) – feared that in the somewhat bleaker circumstances of 2020, the sexual politics of Momentum would be the last thing on anyone's mind. Yet, the period of reflection that Momentum as an organisation was undergoing when I began my fieldwork was reflected to a degree in the thoughts of the participants who agreed to speak with me. Those reflections provided me with my first insights.

A question which must be addressed when engaging in a critical analysis of Momentum is seemingly simple: what exactly is Momentum? Is it a "party within a party"

(Dennis, 2020), a grassroots and community movement (Fisher, 2020), a coordinating platform of a new kind of digital activism (Lobera and Portos, 2020), or a hybrid of all of the above? As discussed in the literature review, Momentum does not neatly fit with the models of militancy found in older and more established radical left organisations such as the Socialist Workers Party. Yet, it is not entirely divorced from the so-called old left. This is not to say that Momentum fits with the pejorative descriptions of it as a means for far-left infiltration of the Labour Party, a la the Militant Tendency of the 1980s, though this line of thinking does represent the dominant narrative among some Labour MP and within the popular press (Shaw, 2015, Hattersley, 2019). Instead, the contention here is that it is important to address the categorisation around Momentum, both as an organisation and as a field site for the qualitative element of this thesis.

By Momentum's terms, its movement is "people-powered" and "vibrant," with the dual aims of transforming both the Labour Party, "our communities," and Britain (Momentum, 2021a). Central to the idea of people-powered was the idea that, as Rhodes put it in her reflections on Momentum's 2017 General Election campaign, "that YOU and your political knowledge was all that was needed to engage voters on the doorstep" (Rhodes, 2019, p.171). Rhodes argues that Momentum departed from the traditional 'professional' political party methods – which utilise a "a political marketing approach," whereby parties seek to sell their political product to a consumer public, and thus the party activists are expected to use communication and persuasive techniques to reinforce a 'brand' image (ibid, p.173) – Momentum instead offered a "people-powered political communication" strategy, whereby activists were invited to engage with voters in an individualised way, as opposed to a manner pre-defined by Labour or Momentum. In this sense, Momentum activists are granted a certain degree of authorship over the organisation's political message. One could immediately argue that this marks a departure from the militancy of organisation identified in other radical left

organisations (see Chapter Three) and, to an extent, a departure from the idea of militancy of the self. In Rhodes's framework, Momentum is not seeking to reproduce an idealised militant activist, disciplined, hardened, a mouthpiece for the party line.

Dennis (2020) expands somewhat on Rhodes's analysis. Drawing on Dommett and Temple (2018), Dennis argues that Momentum fits with the features of a "satellite campaign" (Dennis, ibid, p101), which "organised citizens to undertake tasks typically associated with party-political campaigning," such as voter registration, door knocking, phone banking, social media promotion and directing and transporting activists to marginal constituencies (ibid). By being such a satellite campaign, Momentum must navigate a certain degree of tension between the goals of a political party and those of a grassroots movement; what this results in, according to Dennis, is "parasocial interactions with the leaderships, in which supporters feels like they play an instrumental role within the community," but that ultimately the campaign itself "remained focused around its leader driven goals," (ibid, p.100).

Attempting to categorise Momentum inevitably leads to some consideration of the horizontals vs verticals debate, which has preoccupied both scholars of social movements and activists since the early 2000s. Briefly, the discussion revolved around different forms of political organising among social movements and originated from discussions in the European Social Forum of 2004. On one side, the verticals, which "assume the existence and legitimacy of representative structures, in which bargaining power is accrued on the basis of an electoral mandate," and the horizontals, who "aspire to an open relationship between participants, whose deliberative encounters (rather than representative status) form the basis of any decisions" (Wainwright, 2004). The latter concept originated from radical movements in Latin America and feminist and anarchist movements in Europe (Bray, 2018), owing some of its history to indigenous movements and self-organising peasant groups (Sitrin, 2006; Holloway, 2005). The debate in itself articulates crucial theoretical and practical concerns for

activists and scholars – questions around the differences between what Holloway expresses as ‘power over’, ‘power against’ and ‘power to’ (Greenman, 2018); about which forms of organising will empower the oppressed people of the world to resist their oppression; and about different forms of political communication among movement participants (Costanza-Chock, 2006); but, inadvertently or otherwise, the debate between horizontals and verticals has morphed into a debate around activist ontology. As Wainwright notes, horizontalism or verticalism is a “mode of doing,” which can be interpreted as a “mode of being” (Wainwright, ibid, no pagination), that is to say, to categorise entire groups as horizontals or verticals. Regrettably, perhaps, one might see this particular misplaced ontology in scholarship, which at times conflates all social movements into the horizontal camp, and all political parties into the vertical camp, and – by extension – that anarchist inclined movements are horizontalist, while Marxist movements are verticals (Chironi and Fittipaldi, 2017, Mouffe, 2016, Sitrin, 2012). Yet such a distinction is sometimes unhelpful – even in horizontalist movements, informal and unacknowledged hierarchies can persist, and unaccountable leaders (who will, of course, refute the label) can hold sway, as Freeman and others have argued eloquently (Freeman, 1972, Gordon, 2008, Wainwright, 2006).

To resolve some of the tensions within the aforementioned debate, recent scholarship has adopted the term “hybridity” or “hybrid party” to describe movements and groups that blur the apparent boundaries between parties and social movements. So-called “hybrid parties” attempt to find a “balance between the horizontalism of social movements and the efficiency of a party that aims to manage a share of state power” (Chironi and Fittipaldi, ibid, p.296). Such hybrid parties tend to arise when representative politics is in crisis or the public has lost faith in the existing political order (ibid). It’s important to acknowledge that hybridity has an alternative (though not unrelated) meaning within the literature. It refers to movements integrating social media to provide opportunities for decision-making into their organisational

strategies to direct or accentuate real-world activism. Momentum's use of social media is interesting in this regard, which is considered from a horizontalist vs verticalist perspective. In his study of Momentum's social media output and use of Facebook groups, Dennis concluded that, more often than not, the organisation used social media to instruct members and supporters and that outside of fleeting moments of policy discussion, decisions were mainly communicated from above, instead that agreed through dialogue with below (Dennis, 2020).

As discussed in the brief historical notes above, Momentum has achieved a level of social media rapport and popularity that outstripped the Labour Party during key election periods (Volpicelli, 2019). Dennis (2020) noted how the organisation used social media to amplify media coverage from outlets such as The Guardian and The Huffington Post (which, while not pro-Momentum as such, supported the group's overall aims or were critical of the Conservatives) but also engaged in a humorous and subversive manner with negative media coverage of the organisation and commentary from both Conservative and Labour MPs; notably, a viral video of cut footage of critics of the organisation branding Momentum as a "small, neo-Marxist cult", "a hard left neo-fascist [group],", and "a shady group" was set to melancholic music by Chopin, and ended with the caption "they slate us, we grow" and a raised fist emoji (combining both the sardonic colloquialism of internet speech with the established symbol of socialism and Labourism) achieved considerable shares and positive responses (Dennis, 2020, pp.103-104). Such material took advantage of the power of humour in creating viral connections via social networks (Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong, 2015) but also helped to foster group identity and deepen relationships among supporters who might otherwise have been demotivated by harsh media and public discourse (Dennis, ibid, p.105)

However, it would be understating the case to say that Momentum merely demonstrated savvy when generating viral content on social media and with information

technology more generally. For Gerbaudo (2019), Momentum was one of many political movements of the mid to late 2010s, which allowed the development and popularity of social media platforms to shape its organisational strategies. Along with the Five Star Movement of Italy, Podemos of Spain, the Pirate Party of various North European states, and La France Insoumise of France, Momentum amounts to a "platform party" or "digital party" and organisation which "corresponds to the digital society, in the same way in which the mass party reflected the nature of the industrial society," (ibid, p.188). Such 'platform parties' do not merely utilise the power of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to disseminate propaganda and court public support but also have developed online decision-making platforms to allow registered members to engage in policy debates, candidacies and leadership roles. In short, a platform party pursue organisational forms and philosophies which "are coherent with the nature of a digital society…directness, disintermediation, interactivity, adaptability and instantaneous responsiveness" (ibid). One could add to this that digital parties have a digital activist base. By this, I do not mean to say that the members of Momentum only engage with the organisation via digital media. It is merely to suggest that if Momentum incorporates a hybrid online and offline approach to its decision-making process and organisational forms, then its members' sense of themselves as activists would have its own online/offline hybridity. As Dean (2020) notes, pro-Corbyn politics owed themselves to alienation with Westminster and organisational patterns on the left, but also to "cultural and mediated processes" such as "the production, circulation and consumption of left-wing ideas, arguments and sentiments across a range of artistic and cultural forms, including popular music, film and TV, comedy, alternative news media, and social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter," (p.3).

Such findings were supported by my research data. For my participants, culture (especially online culture) played a role in both their recruitment to Momentum and

sustaining their sense of identity within the organisation. While many of my participants were well-read in Marxist theory and key texts from what one might call the "canon" of socialism (an intellectual and discursive phenomenon I return to in the next chapter), others found their way into Momentum via online media. For example, one of my participants, Rachel, told me that her political interest in Momentum began after her favourite comedian, Nish Kumar, retweeted the organisation's content and posted in favour of Jeremy Corbyn's politics. For Rachel, her activism was a blend of what one might call 'traditional' electoral activism "*Door knocking, giving out leaflets, like at the trains station and in, in the [shopping centre in Rachel's city]*," and making and sharing social media content within her University: "*we'd make stuff that was taking the piss out of…of the stuff they [the mainstream media] said about Corbyn, or about socialism and we'd make shitposts about the Tories and just share it, you know, on student groups on Facebook, group chat."* The practise of political shitposting – that is, producing social media posts with a "higher degree of irony," than regular memes which require "a deeper grasp of particular norms and in-jokes of a community to decipher," and function as the "instantiation of a habitus, incorporating humour and political disposition," and function to both gatekeep and establish a shared sense of identity in an online space (see Jahn, 2020, p.16-17) – is commonly associated with right wing social movements, especially the 'Alt-right' (Daviess, 2019), yet Momentum seems to have encourage and embraced the irony and absurdity of the medium, certainly more so than other left wing movements. Notably, two of my participants with backgrounds in more orthodox militant groups – Jacob and Reuben – highlighted the appeal of Momentum's social media habitus. The appeal wasn't just about entertainment; as Jacob put it, making and sharing content with other members of the organisation was "*cathartic"* but gave him a sense of palpable achievement as an activist, especially when "*you see people who weren't, like, super political sharing or commenting, maybe they'll get on board."* Reuben related the affective

impact of watching others interact with his content online: "*You'd see someone like something you'd posted on Instagram, a meme or something jokey, and you'd think 'oh, ok, there's someone I can talk to, maybe invite them to a meeting."* Implicit in this is an interesting point about not just recruitment and identity formation but also knowledge transmission. As Deleuze and Guattari (1988) argue, if we consider a text as a source of knowledge, we must not merely stop at thinking about its meaning and signification but consider what that text functions with and what kinds of intensities that text transmits (see ibid, p.4-5). Jahn (2020), following Massumi, makes the point that we must understand social media humour and shitposting as an affective phenomenon. At the same time, the digital can have "minimal impact on the body," which does not reduce social media posts' meaning to merely symbolic or linguistic, as such content can "activate thought through affective intensities." As I argued in Chapter Two, social movement cultures can be understood as affective spaces, and from this, we could see a hybridity of affective activation in Momentum's in-person and online activities; Momentum members' sense of identity as activists form through a combination of in-person activities (attending branch meetings, educationals, community activism) but also through online engagement with the organisation, whether by sharing content, or because Momentum's social media output is often used to direct activists time and energies (i.e. vote for particular NEC candidates, sharing sympathetic or humorous media content etc.), and implicitly including the membership in a collective and connective identity which is often polemic, iconoclastic, and youthful (Dennis, 2020).

Yet, as noted in the brief historical notes above, Momentum finds itself in a starkly different position than it was just a few years ago. In 2018, the organisation had demonstrably proved its effectiveness as a community campaigning entity in the 2017 election and held the majority of seats on the Labour Party's NEC (Goodall, 2018). By 2020, Momentum had lost

many of its NEC seats, and Corbyn and his allies were no longer in the shadow cabinet. Despite this, Momentum shifted its focus from electoral campaigning to community activism, revitalising political education and engaging in an ongoing participatory reflection process. In a sense, Momentum's influence declined, but at the same time, it went through (and continues to go through) what March and Mudde call "mutation" (March and Mudde, 2005). Faced with a crisis, Momentum mutated away from its initial aims of supporting a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour party to the broader goal of establishing "the support for socialist transformation," which was not as "deeply rooted as it needs to be, either in the Labour Party or in the country," (Momentum, 2021e, p.3).

So, how can Momentum be defined? For this thesis, I define Momentum as a "hybrid movement faction," I draw Dennis's (2020) definition of Momentum as a "movement faction" – that is, a political entity which "[operates] outside of the restrictions of formal party politics…[and] adhere to strict bureaucratic forms," (ibid, p110). Momentum is distinct from being a faction within Labour in that it positions itself as different from the expected norms and practises of Westminster politics while still invested in and intervening in the debates around policy and left imaginary, which would otherwise have only been the prevail of Labour Party itself. Momentum is, therefore, deterritorialised from the Labour Party rather than distinct from it, allowing itself to advocate for grassroots campaigning that remains centred around the party (McDowell-Naylor, 2019). Such a positionality also allows Momentum to foster a sense of movement identity, mediated by social media discourse, wry humour and confronting criticism in an adversarial manner, and separate from the professionalised messaging of the Labour Party (though, of course, such messaging will have some connection to a professional media strategy); it also allows for ease of mutation,

whereby Momentum as an organisation can both adapt and transform to adjust to the crisis point of 2019-2020.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has provided contextual and historical insight into Momentum as the field site for the project. I have used these historical and contextual notes to reiterate the case for analysing Momentum. Momentum's hybridity and its blurring of the boundaries between formal political practices, cultural celebration, and offline and online activities make it a distinctive and novel fieldsite compared to more orthodox and traditionally structured militant organisations. Momentum acted as a centre of gravity for the British left, where activists could find the most energy and activity for a while. The organisation drew its membership from various demographics within the political left and tried to unite these individuals under a common goal. Momentum's seeming rejection of some of the 'old left' practices makes it an interesting site to explore militancy, as that concept is not so institutionally embedded. Equally, Momentum's culture seemed to focus on affective and emotional practises – something I explore in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter Six: Culture and Contention in Momentum

Introduction

In this chapter, I draw from my empirical research to examine how members of Momentum form and develop their sense of personal identity, the extent to which this clashes or compliments a sense of collective identity within Momentum as a group, and where gender and sexual politics fit into these identities. Subsequently, this chapter analyses how gender and sexual politics are included or excluded within Momentum's political practices – by this; I mean the organisation's political programme, campaigning goals, organising tactics, and norms. Doing so, I reflect on my contention in a previous chapter that social movement cultures can be understood as 'counterpublics', a subset of publics that consciously oppose dominant ideology and subvert that ideology's construction (Fraser, 1990; Habermas, 1991).

Drawing on embodied performance and affective relations, I explore how Momentum's counterpublic tried to blur the boundaries between politics and fun and presented its iteration of socialism as spontaneous and cultured. At the same time, Momentum's culture was not immune from problematic sexual politics and practices, especially in social settings. Herein, I demonstrate how Momentum's participants experienced both positive and negative affects around sexual politics, characterised as "positive" and "negative" sexual politics by one of my participants. My fieldwork uncovered some examples of blatant sexism and misogyny (though this is mainly discussed in Chapter Seven). In this chapter, I touch on how the interpretation of affective practises was disputed and how some attempts to include resulted in exclusion.

Embodied performance and affective relations

A conceptualisation of embodied performance and affective relations is a fruitful means of understanding the sexual politics and formations of masculinities within left-wing movements. It also provides insight into the frames of reference activists utilise to navigate the culture within their movements. "Embodied performance" is defined by Dean and Maiguascha as the "aesthetic dimension of politics" – that is, the "verbal, sartorial, and bodily norms" of political groups, movements and cultures (Dean & Maiguascha, 2018, p.396). Indeed, embodied performance has been utilised within social movement studies. Examining global justice movements through the broader lens of performance and performativity, Juris reminds us that "performances are constitutive; of meanings, identities, images, feelings and even bodies" (Juris, 2015, p.231). However, while Juris does call for the concept of embodied performance to be used on the micro-level, his deployment of the idea falls broadly in line with how social movement theorists have understood direct action and other macro levels of forms of politics to be performative – as an outward-facing, often visual phenomena which create a specific image or symbology around a particular group for an outside observer, wherein Juris sees an embodied performance in the "specific dynamics of embodied special tactics," (Juris, ibid, p235; Eyerman, 2006). While interesting, this conceptualisation of embodied performance does not go far enough to explore the reproduction of identities at the micro level. Such identities can often be deeply seated in the power dynamics of activist culture in such a way that reproduces problematic behaviours and ethics, especially around gender, sex and race (Coleman & Bassi, 2011; Seikkula, 2019). To engage in what my participants called "negative sexual politics," it was not necessary for an organisation to adopt policies hostile to feminism or LGBTQA activists or to even engage in as blatant a form of misogyny as the Comrade Delta crisis; instead acts of speech, comportment and

bodily movements (or in some cases, lack of movements) can result in the creation of an environment which feels hostile to women, or other marginalised groups.

In addition, I suggest that the concept of affective relations helps attempts to understand how resistance to dominant modes of masculinity and militancy manifests within left-wing groups. From a movement studies perspective, I draw from Dean & Maiguashca's definition of affect as "the ways in which feelings, emotions, and bodily sensations manifest themselves through political practices, in ways that…shore up or disrupt established ways of thinking and practising politics," (Dean & Maiguascha, ibid, p.398). However, what I try to add to Dean & Maiguascha's way of thinking here is an understanding that affect can be a vague and often dissonant experience – and here, I deploy Raymond Williams' concept of the "structures of feeling," the "structures of feeling" refers to Williams way of trying to capture the often paradoxical sense of lived experience, how an individual might perceive "structures" where official discourse failed to identify them, it is where one is "feeling much more than [of] thinking – a pattern of impulses, restraints, tones," (Williams, 2015, p.159). For Williams, the structures of feeling are a means by which one can attempt to understand the dissonant and seemingly paradoxical experience of change in a context of conflict between dominant cultural traditions and personal lived experience. This is not as simple as the Gramscian conception of the tension between hegemonic and counterhegemonic ideas because what Williams was concerned with was not the conflict between something as concrete as hegemony vs counterhegemony but something inarticulate and emerging, around bringing together hitherto formally unconnected concepts to form something new. When one 'structures feelings', one articulates new thinking and new identities, norms, and affective landscapes.

Bodies in motion, bodies in Momentum – collective and interpersonal embodied performances within Momentum's culture.

It is possible to distinguish a tension within the embodied performances and cultural practices within Momentum. On the one hand, my interview participants related how Momentum created a habitus wherein music, dance, dress and entertainment blended with radical politics, encasing possibility in moments of collective joy. On the other hand, for some participants (notably, my female participants), such moments of collective joy were sometimes marred by the same problematic behaviours that occur in non-radical spaces – harassment, groping and sexual pressure. Additionally, some of my male participants reported that when transitioning from 'formal' political activities into 'informal' social activities, their performances and understandings of themselves and their masculinities would often reproduce oppression.

Dancing was not a topic I had anticipated coming up in interviews that touched on sexuality, misogyny, hope, hopelessness, and the incandescence of a radical political imaginary in the post-Corbyn world. Yet, to my surprise, one recurrent theme in my interviews was dancing, music, and fashion. Lewis described the draw of Momentum to him as follows:

> *There's that quote about revolutions and dancing, and that was the thing about Momentum, especially in 2017, 2016, the early days. There was this …this… cultural excitement, this buzz in the air. When you went to a Momentum event, you weren't just going to a Trot meeting. There was music, dancing, comedy. They got you in with the good music, and then they hit you with the politics when you were already having fun.*

It is worth clarifying that while the latter sentiment might be read as manipulative if taken out of context, Lewis conveyed this to me in our interview as a jokey figure of speech.

Yet, there is significant insight within that joke. The image that Lewis paints here is one of a kind of political performance, in the sense that cultural performance was how Momentum brought members and supporters together – dancing and politics might not be natural bedfellows, but they linked together through enjoyment. Here, one could argue that Momentum's culture was about both experiencing a sense of collective joy and framing its version of socialism as the radical and utopian possibilities within that joy. Segal (2017) contends that a radical form of happiness exists in collective action, which reaffirms and cultivates ties between one another and the wider world. Moments of collective joy – those experiences in dancing, singing, laughing, and celebrating – can intrinsically link to the collective joy of radical resistance to an existing order that promotes and encourages misery (ibid). Fun and collective joy are essential concepts to consider in understanding constructions of the self: research has shown that culture and cultural practises can predict affective responses (Markus and Kitayama, 1994); often, who we are can depend on how we feel (Ashton-James et al., 2009), and "one's behaviour, cognitions, and self-constructs – at any given point in time depends on the fundamental interplay between affect and culture" (ibid, p.345). Drawing on Ahmed (2004), we might say that affect plays a role in creating a sense of collective identity, as emotions "*do things*, and work to align individuals with collectives – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachment," (ibid, p.28). Ahmed's analysis utilises the example of white supremacist narratives, which articulate a coordinated response of hate, "*together we hate and this hate is what makes us together*" (ibid, p.26). In Momentum's case, we might say that there was more of a sense of "we experience joy together, and this joy is what makes us together."

Momentum mobilised the bodies of their members in the form of mass rallies, picket lines, door knockers in marginal seats and all the other expected from a movement of the

radical left, but its mobilisations were often in and around the arena of popular culture, musical groups such as Grime4Corbyn (a collective of left-wing grime artists), Rag and Bone Man, Charlotte Church and so on were an integral part of the Momentum (or at least Momentum adjacent) cultural assemblage, by performing and attending Momentum events. More widely within what is now called Corbynism, notable affective moments (Dean, 2020) took place at cultural events, notably Corbyn's rapturous reception at the 2017 Glastonbury Festival (which Lewis – who was on his branch of Momentum's organising committee at the time – recalled as a point where social media attention, emails and messages about joining the movement skyrocketed). The unofficial anthem of the Corbyn project (an often-discordant chant of "Oh-Jeremy-Cor-byn!") was itself a pastiche of the popular song *Seven Nation Army* by the White Stripes, one of the most played songs in British clubs, intrinsically linking the radical possibilities of Corbyn's Labour party to the point of shared cultural reference. In some ways, the cultural elements of Momentum and Corbynism – the music, the chants, the utilisation of memes and tongue-in-cheek millennial vernacular (Dennis, 2020) – helped to differentiate both Momentum and Corbynism from both the political 'establishment' but also from the informal 'establishment' within the radical left. Ben, formerly of Manchester Momentum, described it like this:

> **Ben:** *[*It was*] exciting, fun, kind of, kind of energised, and it felt like a cultural moment, as well as, like, a political thing.*
> ***Int:*** *And did that feel markedly different for you, like a shift in culture or the role of culture? Like, in comparison with SS [*Socialist Students*]?*
> ***Ben:*** *When we did, when there was stuff with SS, or with Marxism Festival [*annual SWP event*], they'd do like open mics and poetry readings and whatnot, but it always, it was sometimes a bit forced. Like, ok, we've planned the revolution now; let's go listen to someone cover Billy Bragg badly. With Momentum, it was spontaneous, and it felt, it felt real. Also, I, I like that, you know, the cultural stuff made me realise that I wasn't alone, like, you know, like Stormzy was a comrade, like Architects are comrades.*

Ben was not the only participant who shared with me a sense of an intensely affective culture, which provoked – in certain areas – strongly positive emotions. Most – though not all – of my participants described their (initial) engagement with Momentum as "exciting" and "energising," Rachel told me how she felt "alive, really alive," as part of a crowd who watched Jeremy Corbyn speak at a Momentum organised event in Leeds before the 2017 General Election (an event, incidentally, I attended while living in the city at the time). From this, we can see how the cultural side of Momentum and Corbynism offered a more genuine sense of cultural engagement than that seen in other radical left-wing groups – it "felt real" compared to the more jilted efforts at weaving music and politics together. It also allowed Momentum members to experience a sense of collective identity with other movement members and actors in the broader cultural arena, ranging from grime artists Stormzy to metalcore band Architects. As Dean (2020) points out, the high point of Corbynism (and, by extension, Momentum) between 2015 and 2019 saw a permeation of left-wing, feminist and anti-racist sensibilities and values emerging into the broader arena of commercial culture via musicians, comedians and popular television shows. The role played by celebrities in either tacitly or openly supporting Momentum's politics was not framed to me as a vapid or emptily performative attempt to care for the sake of caring in service of some vague conception of philanthrocapitalism (Farrell, 2012). Instead, the support of cultural celebrities granted legitimacy and possibility to causes that might (pre-Corbyn) have seemed fringe or subaltern. Herein, it could be contended that the engagement of cultural stars in Momentum's cultural framework did not dilute the "underdog and populist quality" (Bassett and Gilbert, 2021, p.173), as celebrity power is not derived from institutional or state social control, but from a sense of social influence derived from public attention (Meyer, 1995) . The social power of those celebrities who immersed themselves in Momentum added to the compelling nature of that cultural assemblage.

Indeed, to be a member of Momentum was to immerse oneself in this cultural assemblage's vibrancy. Tim, a Momentum member from Southwark, described his experience of attending Momentum meetings and socials as "*more like a party at times"* than anything else and contrasted this with the *"drab and dry*" nature of his work within the trade union movement, and the Labour Party itself. Indeed, Momentum often explicitly blended political education and cultural expression. Several of my participants recounted direct or second-hand experiences of a Momentum fringe event at the Labour Party's 2017, where a three-hour-long political education morphed into a rave dance party (Anon, 2017). The idea that cultural activity – dance, music, comedy, all activities that involve the movement of bodies, laughter, and joy – can form part of an embodied performance of identity is not necessarily new within academic literature; Scarry (2020) notes that the human body possesses a "sheer material factualness" whereby it is a site where ideology and power are seen, experience and made real. Especially within moments of ideological crisis or shift, the body and movements of bodies can substantiate the ideology in question (Ibid, p.14). As Dave (2020) writes in his analysis of militant subjectivity in Guinea during its early post-colonial days, dance and music were integral practises to the practice of radical identity; through a politicised embodied performance, it was possible to subvert the dominant and domineering reality of the coloniser, envision another way of being, and heroize the militant anti-colonial zeal needed to achieve it (Dave, 2020, p.726). Culture can be a manner by which embodied performances of militancy can be exported; as Wilcox (2018) notes, Maoist China used dancing and performance as a form of soft diplomacy in East Asia, using music and culture as a means of conveying revolutionary ideals about cooperation and respect through the cultural movement of bodies. Drawing on the work of the late Mark Fisher, Gilbert argued that the vibrancy and joy of the culture around Momentum and Corbyn – which he dubs "Acid

Corbynism" after Fisher's sadly incomplete work on "Acid Communism," – linked together radical politics, cultural forms, and the performance of a kind of collective joy (Gilbert, 2017). As activists Phull and Stronge put it, Acid Corbynism and the cultural forces around Momentum offered a "glimpse of post-capitalist collectivity in the moments of soundtracked togetherness that we achieve on the dancefloor," (Phull and Stronge, 2017, no pagination).

The sense of a performance of the possible within Momentum's culture was another feature noted by my participants, and immediately painted a different picture of that of the more austere aesthetics and comportment of other militant groups. Expectations around clothing might not seem to be a significant concern around radical left activists; participants related to me a distinct difference in styles of dress between Momentum and other radical groups. Yangzom (2016) argues that clothing can function as a form of non-verbal communication and as a means of negotiating one's identity, and within the context of a social movement, styles of dress can embody the movement's political consciousness and become a means of sharing its goals. Claire, a Momentum member from Sheffield, described what she perceived to be an "*activist uniform"* worn by many men among radical leftists as "*big overcoats, big boots, old t-shirts,"* or "*knackered jumpers, like, old professor clothes*,". Rueben – who had previously been a member of a Trotskyist group – agreed with this description and stated that while there was never any pressure to dress in a particular way, he felt that members of his group took the view that "*politics is serious, so we need to dress kind of serious*," with the seriousness here coming with connotations of intellectualism, or militaristic garb. Tim contrasted both his Labour branch and UCU branch – where members are "*not particularly worried about their own personal aesthetics. They, it was like, you know, they wear a T-shirt from a rally 20 years ago, old jeans and stuff,"* – to Momentum, which had a much more diverse sartorial expression. For Tim, this contributed towards the inclusive

atmosphere he found in the organisations and the signifying elements of dress: "*there's someone who looks like me, who cares about the things I care about, who cares about fashion and who cares about their regime or whatever. But it was nice because, you know, the people involved cared about things, but it didn't feel like the movement was their entire life?"*.

Herein, the embodied performance of dress signified a conscious attempt at a new political imaginary and of a differentiated subjectivity from the militancy of the self discussed in previous chapters. Not only did Momentum members not adhere to a strict understanding of an 'activist uniform', but they also indicated a different affective relationship to politics. The more diversely and vibrantly dressed Momentum members signalled a difference from the militant concept of activism as work by suggesting that "the people involved cared about things" but without the movement being "their entire life." Within this is a sense of emotional liberty and perhaps a less narrow approach to life. As noted in the excerpt from my field notes above, my experiences attending in-person Momentum events after the easing of lockdown restrictions in the Summer of 2021 indeed attested to the diversity of dress and how these signalled different performances of masculinity. While attending the annual protest against the Tory Party Conference, it was male (or at least, male presenting) activists who were dressed most flamboyantly – colourful shirts, faux-military jackets most commonly associated with 'Emo' culture, kitsch German football shirts from the 1970s – which clashed with the more ostensibly militant 'black bloc' style attire of our Young Communist League (YCL) comrades, with whom we marched at the protest set off from outside of Manchester University Students' Union.

I was struck during the march by the stark contrasts in behaviour I witnessed between the YCL and Momentum blocs: initially, as we waited for the various blocs to form up behind

the Trade Union groups, YCL and Momentum members intermingled, talked, shared smoking material and now seemingly ubiquitous conversations of the lockdown generation, in which everyone tries (and understandably, fails) to summarise ‘how I’ve been' for 18 months in 30 seconds or less. However, when the march began, the YCL formed rigid ranks a few paces ahead of us, concealed their faces behind red masks, and marched in step, chanting lines from *The Internationale*. In contrast, the Momentum bloc played loud dubstep music, and the chants (predominantly led by the male presenting activists in our bloc) ranged from the raucous renditions of “Whose streets/our streets” to more earthy and scatological chants. The experience here highlighted a stark contrast between the more orthodox, and perhaps even dour, militancy of the YCL and the jubilance of the Momentum bloc (even if the cynicism I noted in my field diary seemed to bubble away under the surface). Within Momentum’s performance of collective dissent, there felt like a palpable (if somewhat world-weary) sense of an attempt to “turn the struggles for greater participatory democracy into sites of collective exhilaration” (Segal, 2017, p. 148).

“Negative sexual politics” and the culture within Momentum

The hybridity with which I characterise Momentum is mirrored in the hybrid experiences of being part of the organisation. Thus far, I have explored how Momentum’s culture involved expressions of collective joy, cultural activity, affective activations and positivity in wry humour. However, not all of my participants experienced this to the same extent. Several participants reported experiencing conflict between their sense of self and culture within Momentum, a sense of being at odds with a collective identity rather than a part of it. This is hardly unusual; various sociocultural influences produce conceptions of the self, and differing cultural contexts provide different schemes (or frameworks) for how one

forms one's sense of who one is and whether or not one is a "good" person in that context. Thus, "two people, even those in similar sociocultural circumstances…are unlikely to feel exactly the same way in a given set of circumstances" (Markus and Kitayama, 1994, p.92). It was in this conflict that we can begin to tease out the existence of what Ben named "negative sexual politics,"

> *I feel like some men and women do genuinely care about gender inequalities and all the negative sexual politics within Momentum. And I don't know how… an organisation should attack that issue in a good way. Because if I'm honest, I think there is a lot of saving face.*

I will return to Ben's pertinent question about how "an organisation should attack" that issue in the next chapter, but for now, let us focus on the concept of "negative sexual politics." One could interpret the use of the word "negative" in this context in two ways – firstly, as a pejorative, taking a moral stance around the behaviours and actions of some in Momentum; or, secondly, negative in the sense of negative freedom, i.e. the freedom engage in a kind of politics without interference from other agents on the grounds of gender or sex.

One would be forgiven for thinking that the culture within Momentum had broken loose of the rigid and, at times, sexually problematic constraints of the militant diagram. In what follows, I draw from my fieldwork to suggest that while there was evidence to address problematic sexual politics and masculinities, such attempts were often scattered. More importantly, in particular cultural arenas (significantly, the social arenas), activists would often fall back on the same tired old scripts which reproduced traditional gender hierarchies and mechanisms of sexual power. In particular, this section reflects on the behaviour and performances of Momentum activists both within what one might consider the formal world of movement politics (that is, the meetings, the demos, the canvassing, etc., which will be a standard feature of activist life) and also at the fringes of formal movement politics, that is, in social spaces, in pubs, at get-togethers after major political conferences. In addition, I draw

attention to the contested nature of sexual etiquette within Momentum. To paraphrase Ahmed, I conclude that if "it takes conscious willed effort not to reproduce sexism," Momentum's willed effort is semi-conscious at best.

In my interviews, almost all of my participants reflected on the sexual politics and gender dynamics of Momentum meetings. Some participants noted that Momentum had taken steps to try to make meeting forums accessible for women, non-binary people, and other minorities. In particular, the rationale for such actions was understood within a gendered framework as part of the conscious attempt to reject aggressive, male-orientated forms of politics in the mainstream political world and other activist movements. Attempts to integrate inclusive policies and practices into left-wing spaces have a long history. They can be seen as a response to the socialist left's "bewildered [response to] the rise and success of movements that articulated different forms of oppression to that of class and used different conceptual tools to understand that oppression" (Derbyshire, 1980, p.89). Several participants, especially those from Manchester Momentum, referred to training sessions run by the activist organisation NEON for Momentum activists and branch committee members. In Ben's words, such training sessions were about *"creating essentially a safe space for people of different genders, races, ethnicities, ages, disabilities, and how to facilitate productive meetings, how to have constructive debates and discussions."* The very existence of such training offered to all activists in the branch shows again a means by which Momentum tries to distinguish itself from other radical left organisations and address some of the practical ramifications of what Bakan (2012) calls the "epistemological dissonance" between socialism and feminism. This, indeed, was noted by participants who had participated in other radical left-wing groups, especially those which the majority of my participants characterised as "old left" (SWP, CPGB, etc.) which were described as "*all like women were just shouted down in meetings"*

and having "*a general hostility towards women."* As I discuss in the next chapter, this did not mean that women in Momentum did not experience being shouted down by men or experiencing hostilities.

However, Manchester Momentum participants disagreed about how effective this inclusivity training proved. One key takeaway from the training which was adopted into Momentum policy was around giving the floor to minority speakers where possible (referred to colloquially as 'let the women speak"). Some participants, like Ben, saw this as a positive, which helped male presenting comrades to "*understand that as a man, I have a like, power, I have an advantage, a social advantage and a power dynamic.*" However, for other participants, measures aimed at creating a safe space for minorities resulted in excluding other minorities. Tariq, a gay male member of Manchester Momentum, described how measures to include inclusivity contributed to his feelings of exclusion.

> ***Tariq:*** *Sure, lots of times, I would be about to speak and be told to sit down.*
> ***IN:*** *And how did that make you feel?*
> ***Tariq:*** *Honestly? No judgement?*
> ***IN:*** *No judgement at all. How did it make you feel?*
> ***Tariq:*** *A bit pissed off, to be honest. Of course, I, I get it, you know. Politics is a very male thing, and it's a good thing to let women comrades have the floor, but…I don't know. I suppose I had to learn not to be pissed off. As a gay man, I feel like I was being shut down, and I've dealt with that a lot in my life…but, you know, um, if I were being kind to them [the Chair] I would say that I guess I'm 'straight passing' and so maybe they'd forget I was gay…*

Tariq's experience here speaks to cultural anxieties around identity and inclusivity within activist and leftist cultures. His narrative of being made to cede the floor to someone female-presenting articulates a kind of logic: we aim to be inclusive to groups that would face additional discrimination under neoliberal capitalism (sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.), and I (Tariq) as a gay man should be able to benefit from that inclusivity. His frustration arises from not being 'read' as gay by other activists, for being "straight passing," and (while

he was trying to be “kind” to the Chair) he felt that his identity was forgotten. Herein, his experience touches on normative ideas around sexuality and gender performance. As Day & Schoenrade (1997) found in their work on sexuality and organisation, closeted or ‘straight passing’ gay men and women are far more likely to face negative attitudes than' out' colleagues. Since gender performances are produced through and against normative ideas around gender, sex and sexuality, social recognition becomes essential for an individual to feel authentic and validated by others. However, concepts such as “passing” or being “closeted” or otherwise not being perceived as queer rely on presumed essentialism of gender and sex, whereby “some individuals might be recognized as authentically and therefore unremarkably “belonging” as members, while others may only hope to “pass” into relatively inauthentic membership as wannabes,”(Pfeffer, 2014, p.4). In other words, Tariq’s experience resulted in him being perceived inauthentically by other group members, with an affective relation of invalidation, of “being shut down.” Yet Tariq’s experience also points towards tensions and presumptions around masculinity within Momentum’s culture. Men who have sex with men face “structurally-induced conflicts around masculinity” (Connell, 1992, p.737) in the form of conflicts between their social presence as men and their sexuality. In Tariq’s case, one could argue that the latter was not -apparently – clearly signposted and thus invisible. At the same time, the former remained visible and resulted in him being told to disengage from the discussion. When prompted as to why members of his group might have forgotten his sexuality, Tariq noted that while he was out, his performance of masculinity broadly fitted with expectations and cultural markers of heterosexual masculinity “*I’m big, I’m loud, I like a beer, I wear my Spurs stuff,*” – in other words, his embodied performance of his masculinity meant that his experience conformed with what Serano (2013) calls the unspoken “heterosexist assumption” of movement cultures – that is, that if an individual is

not visibly ‘queer’ enough, then they lose the ability to stake a claim within both queer politics or the queer aspects of mainstream politics.

Tariq’s experience also ties into ongoing anxiety within leftist culture, that is, the tensions between ‘identity politics’ and ‘class politics’ (Das, 2020). The full extent of these discussions is, while interesting, beyond the scope of this chapter. However, it is worth mentioning that while many militant organisations displayed hostility to what they perceived as identity politics (which, at times, include feminism and LGBT rights), newer movements of the left have tried to integrate identity politics into their orientational frameworks (Edelman, 2001), though this has led to new cultural expectations for movement participants, and also new taboos (Serano, 2013). Tariq hesitated to discuss his experience, asking me if I would judge him. He felt anxious about saying anything that would appear to criticise measures to promote female inclusivity within Momentum.

Outside of formal proceedings, my research suggested that negative sexual politics were prevalent within Momentum’s social events and present at ad hoc or impromptu social gatherings of Momentum members. One participant, Claire, told me, *“It happens everywhere, so why should be it be different here?”* when I asked her about problematic sexual politics and behaviour in pub meets after. However, other participants disagreed with this assessment; Rachel and Sarah told me that they had never experienced inappropriate comments or harassment from men in Momentum in social spaces. Sarah, in particular, was explicit that men in Momentum social spaces were “*mostly well-behaved,*” but that the real sexism occurred in formal political spaces such as meetings, where “*you couldn’t get a word in edgeways*.”

> ***Sarah:*** *A lot of the time, it's fine. It can, it's ok, but there's just, there's these moments – and I think it's when tensions are high, like I remember when Owen [Smith MP] challenged Corbyn there was this knot in my stomach. Because, because you went from people being mostly well-behaved to like this, just, this wall of sound, and it wasn't always men but it was, in my experience, it was mostly men and you, you couldn't get a word in edgeways, because they just, they needed to tell everything 'this is what we do'.*

I was given numerous stark examples of this; Brendan told me of witnessing an International Women's' Day meeting in his branch where male voices dominated; both Claire and Ben (who were members of the same Momentum branch) told me of a series of tense meetings in the lead up the 2019 General Election, in which – to quote Claire – "*old white men shouted down women of colour,*"; Theresa and Leila – both of whom were deeply embedded in their branches as both a parliamentary PCC and branch secretary respectively – experienced what they characterised as deeply sexist bullying in meetings. I discuss these examples in the next chapter as an illustration of the disciplining of identity in Momentum. However, the sexual politics of social spaces is less clear; in part, this is because the most common answer I got from my male participants about the social side of Momentum was, "I'm not sure." Several of my male participants reported that they did not socialise with other Momentum activists; for Tim, this was due to family commitments; for Brendan, not wanting to "*be that old guy who's following around twenty-five-year-olds*,"; for others, Momentum was never really a social space for them – Marcus and Tariq both mentioned "*having the odd beer*," after a meeting. However, they did not attribute particular significance to those spaces. We might, from this, conclude that the social relations in Momentum were, for some, dis-

embedded. Such activists acknowledge the existence of a Momentum counterpublic but choose not to go there for one reason or another.

However, those activists who were more embedded in the social events of Momentum offered me insight into the contested nature of sexual etiquette and notions of allyhood within the organisation. Momentum's social spaces were places of affective activation for these individuals, but whether that activation was rationalised as political or not was unclear.

"But when you're done with the meeting… it's different,"? Sexual contentions in Momentum

In Chapter Two, I argued that cultural identity formation is not always coherent and cohesive. The same affects can produce different results, and meaning-making and expression may not be the same for every activist. My interview with Reuben was an example of this in action. Reuben offered a peculiar framework for thinking about his activism – for him, there was a demarcation between what went on in Momentum meetings and what went on in the pub afterwards, with the latter being a chance to "… *just let your, your hair down and have a laugh over a beer and be…be, I don't want to say normal, but like normal. Because being an activist isn't like being a normal person all the time, is it?"* In this sense, Reuben rationalised his activism as something where one could 'put in the hours' but disengage (as many workers do) at drinks after work. It's worth highlighting here that his framework was not quite the same as that of the militant who saw activism as work, for in that conceptualisation, there is no true 'outside' of activism work. His thinking here can be seen as an operationalisation of Tim's reading of the embodied performances of Momentum members – as people who care but for whom the movement is not their entire life. The question then becomes how this affects the values and ethical practices in those quasi-movement spaces and what frames of

references activists draw from in building and sustaining their performances. In Reuben's case, he hinted at a framework by his differentiating activist behaviour from "being a normal person." When prompted, Reuben expanded on his view on behaviour in Momentum social spaces:

> ***Rueben:*** *Um…well, yes, I'd say there was, but that's just, that's just the way people are? Guys are going to be guys, aren't they? And if there's a fit girl in the pub, then, sure, let's have a go, right? Look, I, I don't want to say that people forgot themselves when they socialised, like, we're all comrades, but when you're done with the meeting…it's different.*

My interview with Reuben stuck in my mind not simply for the insight he presented me about social life and free time within Momentum but also because, reflexively, it challenged my position as an anti-sexist researcher. I will reflect briefly on the challenge and expand upon it in the next chapter. What struck me about Rueben's comments was the reproduction of normative understandings of gender roles. His use of the phrase "guys are going to be guys" hinges on the assumption of a normative assumption of what it is to be masculine (in this case, to pursue women in public spaces sexually) – especially since he perceived the pub as a place to be "normal" thus equating normality with normative masculinity. By framing this to me with the idiom of "guys are going to be guys," Rueben here appealed to a shared framework of understanding about the behaviours, expectations and goals of masculine performance – and one (at least presented as) grounded in objectivity; men *will* be men, as opposed to *can* be, or *might* be. The colloquial use of phraseology such as "boys will be boys", and the like has been heavily criticised for validating toxic male behaviour (Clune, 2014) and for justifying victim-blaming sociocultural models of understanding sexual violence and abusive conduct (Murnen et al., 2002, Sears et al., 2006). In addition, Reuben's framing of the goal of "guys being guys" being to "have a go" at a "fit girl in the pub" mirrors the vernacular of what theorists call "lad culture" – that is, a male

“group mentality articulated through activities such as sport and heavy alcohol consumption, and characterised by sexist and homophobic ‘banter’,” (Phipps et al., 2018, p.1). In this linguistic framework, women appear to be a)valued based on their physical appearance, and b)fair game of any socialist wanting to play at being ‘normal’.

Rueben’s response caught me off guard; his use of language, the talk of guys being guys, and terms like “fit girl” were outliers in my interviews with men. I will discuss my broader reflections on left-wing masculinity in the next chapter, but to provide a brief overview: the men I interviewed were intelligent, theoretically articulate, and very careful in their language. At many points in my interviews, there were silences and pauses after I had posed a question; part of this, I suspect, was a feature of the inarticulacy I discuss in the next chapter, but it also struck me as an attempt to navigate the way I had positioned my masculinity to my participants; put another way, I suspect no one wanted to be considered to a sexist by the ‘anti-sexist’ researcher.

However, it would be overstating the case to suggest that Rueben embodies some hypermasculinity or “hostile masculinity” here (Malamuth and Thornhill, 1994). Furthermore, there seems to be no compelling argument for an absence of sexual relations between movement participants or that pursuing sex was somehow problematic. Viewed from the perspective of militancy, one could argue that specific models of militancy were thoroughly sex-negative – one thinks here of the catechisms laid down by Nechayev (Nechaev, 1971), Lenin’s ambivalence to sexual practises (Zetkin, 1934), or the militant’s general antipathy towards forms of pleasure (Blanc, 1972). However, models of militancy exist that take different approaches to sexual behaviour. The radical left group Weatherman Underground engaged in “enforced antimonogamy, the rotation of sexual partners, and group

sex," in practice known as 'wargasm' (Thoburn, 2010, p.130), which served as a "corresponding mode of sexuality," to the collective constitution of militant bodies. Whether there is a corresponding mode of sexuality within Momentum is less clear. On the one hand, Rueben's willingness to "have a go" in the pub with women could be understood as a sign that – following Gross (1978) – men tend to isolate sex from other aspects of social life due to its importance. However, Rueben was not the only participant to give me an insight into the contested nature of sexual behaviour within Momentum.

Jacob, a former member of Leeds Momentum, brought up his experiences of being a Momentum delegate at the 2018 National Union of Students Conference. Momentum had encouraged a significantly high number of delegates to attend the NUS conference that year to support Momentum member Sahaya James in her bid for the role of NUS President (James, unfortunately, was unsuccessful, winning only 15% of the final vote (Busby, 2018)). Jacob described the atmosphere in the lead-up to and at the conference as "*frantic, exhausting, but weirdly, like, fun,*" as he and other delegates worked to back James and support other NUS policies that fit Momentum's goals. Notably, for Jacob, Momentum's support was to continue the NUS Transgender Liberation campaign (which NUS leadership intended to close down). As a gay, transgender man, Jacob felt a personal affinity towards this policy and reported being "*so relieved that I like, I was allowed [by Momentum] to work on our amendments," rather than focusing* exclusively on James' electoral campaign. Broadly, Jacob felt well supported by fellow Momentum activists as an out transman and spoke positively about his experiences of transitioning while in the organisation. However, it was in the social spaces around the NUS conference where Jacob felt his experience changed. After hours of long sessions, fierce debates and bureaucratic manoeuvring, NUS conference delegates would head en masse to bars and pubs around the conference centre and, in Jacob's

words, "*avoid going home sober or alone*." In this sexually charged atmosphere, Jacob reported feeling excluded and isolated compared to his cisgender comrades:

> **Jacob:** *It was like, like, I was a bit invisible when, you know, people were hooking up. Like guys would be giving speeches on like the conference floor, or like doing fringes on trans-rights but when it's after like, in Underground* [a popular gay bar in Glasgow, where the 2018 conference took place] *those same guys keep their distance, they don't always want to be, to be seen drinking with me cos…like…what, it's cringe to be with a trans guy?*

Transphobia is common among some gay male communities (Weiss, 2004), and prejudice and exclusion for transmen and transwomen have been noted in gay dating, especially on the hookup app Grindr (Shield, 2018, Blair and Hoskin, 2019). Herein, we see the reproduction of exclusionary practices outside the activist culture. Additionally, Jacob's understanding of these encounters was that his masculinity was 'cringe' – a vernacular term used to imply feelings of discomfort, embarrassment, and inauthenticity (Bochkariov, 2020). The affective impact of this conflicted with the vocal performances of allyship Jacob witnessed among his cisgender comrades, resulting in a dissonance between word and action. Here, we could see a form of what is often referred to as "performative allyship" (Kalina, 2020) in the sense of allyship, which is not consistent and is not constantly seeking to improve the lot of marginalised groups. The point made here is not that Jacob was entitled to sexual attention but that the behaviour of his comrades mirrored the same sorts of exclusionary dynamics seen in mainstream gay dating culture.

Concluding remarks

The first empirical chapter has sought to address the first of this thesis' research questions, that is, to understand the role of affect in movement cultures and how affective practises include or exclude gender as a category of analysis. Above, I have utilised interview

data to map out Momentum's culture. My conclusion is that Momentum tried to build a counterpublic in which the boundaries between cultural and political experiences broke Through expressions of collective joy and the rejection of the dour uniformity of militancy, and a sense of carnivalesque inclusivity was fostered – and the feeling that to be a radical socialist was to be spontaneous, culture, and fun. In this sense, one could argue that Momentum culture represented a form of prefigurative politics, which "considers the means and ends of movement organising to be intricately linked to each other" (Maeckelbergh, 2011, p.16). However, at the same time, it became clear that within that culture, structures of exclusion existed, especially around matters relating to sex, sexual etiquette, and the negotiations of markers of identity and intimacy – all sociocultural practices from mainstream culture. It is hardly new to say that a movement reproduces (intentionally or otherwise) many structures it seeks to oppose. The phenomena have been discussed at length within social movement literature (Tominaga, 2017; Venegas, 2021; Freeman, 1972), and given my argument earlier about Momentum's status as a hybrid between movement and faction, some hybridity of cultural frames is not unusual.

However, what is notable about the reproduction of problematic sexual politics within Momentum is that they do not ostensibly try to justify themselves by utilising the logic of socialism. By this, we can distinguish between the problematic politics seen in the SWP or WRP (see Chapter One) and what we see in Momentum. In the case of the former, the frameworks charged with ideological and cultural significance were utilised to excuse or justify negative male behaviour (framing criticism of Comrade Delta as criticism of Leninism (Callinicos, 2013) or seeing sexual coercion as part and parcel of a good militant *a la* Gerry Healy (Pirani, 2013)). In Momentum's case, it felt more like an epistemic silence around exclusionary practices. Where examples of problematic sexual politics occur, they are often

experienced by movement actors as dissonant and paradoxical, as suggested by Williams's conception of the 'structure of feeling' – the tensions between inclusivity measures which exclude, between comrades who stand up for trans rights in some settings, yet isolate them in others. As I shall argue in the subsequent chapter (which explores models of masculinity and militancy in Momentum), what becomes apparent within Momentum is that sexual politics is a matter often wrapped up in feelings of confusion and inarticulation, yet a sense of something being amiss remains.

Chapter Seven: Is it "like a language they don't understand?" Inarticulate masculinity and an ethics of gender

Introduction

> *"It's like they never, no, I think they do genuinely never talk about it, and if you do, they shut it down, and they punish you,"*
>
> Leila, a former member of Oxford Momentum
>
> *"I, um, it's like, you...like, you have to be, like...properly, properly like...you've got to be accountable to...um...[laughs]...bloody hard question!"*
>
> Marcus, York Momentum.

I open this chapter with two brief snippets from my interview data because they illustrate an affective tension within left-wing masculinity. The "it" that Leila refers to is in response to my asking her if men in her branch, her union and her left circle of friends ever discussed anti-sexist politics or practises without a woman or non-binary person initiating such a conversation. Her response highlights a silence on the matter and the aggressive silencing of others should the topic arise. Leila was not the only female participant who believed that, among left-wing men, actualising an anti-sexist conversation was an area of absence, one of pervading silence. In the case of Marcus, I asked him how he thought men in left-wing movements could practise being anti-sexist in their day-to-day lives. His staccato response, filled with false starts and speech dysfluency, suggested to me something slightly distinct from silence on the issue of anti-sexism: a very literal inarticulation and the inability to speak. Marcus' response is perhaps the most literal incarnation of it among my participants. However, in a more metaphorical sense, my research suggests to men that within left-wing masculinity, there exists a "moment of inarticulation." This inarticulation manifests as an intensely affective phenomenon. It latches onto left-wing men's sense of how to practise anti-sexism or pro-feminism. However, equally, it mirrors the sites of inarticulation within more

mainstream and dominant masculinities – topics such as vulnerability, emotional trauma, and, in some cases, their relation to sex and intimacy. I consider this moment of inarticulation to be affective, more so than emotional. My understanding of affect here is informed by what Shouse (2005) – following Massumi (Massumi, 1995, Massumi, 2001) – refers to as a "non-conscious experience of intensity...a moment of unformed and unstructured potential," which is inarticulate as it "cannot *be fully realised in language*," (Shouse, ibid, italics mine). Indeed, as I shall discuss below, some of the more intensive moments in my fieldwork were experiencing these moments of inarticulation with my participants – both in their inarticulation causing them frustration or, at best a bemusement, but also in my reflexive position as a "researched researcher" knowing that I could neither position myself as an "expert" nor necessarily articulate more clearly than my participants. In several interviews, participants would convey feeling jilted by their inarticulation but also find it cathartic that they were not the only ones to do so. The moments of inarticulation I witnessed were made even more striking because the men I interviewed were - for the most part - articulate. I mean this both in the sense that they were articulate speakers, often eloquent, and able to weave compelling narratives of their involvement in the left, but also *theoretically* articulate. The men I interviewed were familiar with what one might colloquially think of as the significant players in leftist theory – Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Luxembourg were all frequently mentioned – but many of them were also familiar with theorists and ideas in broader Sociological thinking come up as topics of conversation. I had not anticipated the part of my interview with Brenden when he proffered me a rather thought-provoking reflection on the distinctions between toxic masculinity and R.W. Connell's conception of hegemonic masculinity, nor Jacob quoting Julia Serano at me as a means of expressing his frustrations with superficial trans allyhood. The broader articulacy of my male participants was evidenced in what they made theory *do* in the interview setting; Whitaker and Atkinson (2019) highlight

that voices in research interviews must be understood as a form of social action which is governed by a range of "cultural tropes", responses, all part and parcel of the performance of the self in what they call an "interview society,"; like Holmgreen (2011), I reflected that theory was used not just to tell me about what my participants knew on an intellectual level, but also to tell me something about them as people. All the more reason why the moments of jilted speech, the long pauses, the expressions of frustration or at times confused curiosity which I observed via my webcam were so notable.

This chapter focuses on inarticulation, its connection to affect, and the role that affective and inarticulate dynamics play within left-wing masculinity. However, this chapter also considers the role of solidarity and silence, and I link this back to competing models of militancy described earlier in the thesis. In short, the Militant Diagram – as identified by Guattari - is a figure of both silence and silencing – silence on matters of emotion, vulnerability (and, as I have argued, misogyny), and silencing of those who fail to fit with the rigidity of their world view. The study of silences is a valuable aspect of the social sciences and part of our unlearning project (Spivak, 1988) of resisting colonising mindsets or understanding the workings of oppression. Foucault points out that there "is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses" (Foucault, 1990, p.27) or that radical movements are in themselves an attempt to articulate on or for, the silenced, or fill the silences with righteous anger (Medina, 2012). However, if we return to the quotes from Leila and Marcus above, we can see that silence and inarticulation can be interwoven. Here, the affective nature of inarticulation becomes helpful for understanding the relationship between fragmentary speech and the absence of speech; since affect is pre-personal, and "does something to a body *before the articulation of what one thinks is happening*," it can often seem non-existent, or

silent (Reeser, 2019, italics mine). Kiesling (2011) draws upon sociolinguistics to argue that masculine identities relate closely to the practice of stance-taking – that is, the way that speech acts and speech activities form stances, which are "culturally linked to masculinity" (p.8) – thus, stances, acts and activities mediate gender. Stance can often be conflated with affect within the literature (Kiesling, ibid), but affect – while implicated in language – is also prelinguistic; it is more experienced than read (O'Sullivan, 2001). From this, Reeser talks about the concept of an "affective break" where circumstances and expectations of masculinity clash, resulting in a crisis for masculinity (Reeser, 2017). This relationship between stance-taking and affect helps to frame some of how militant men utilise both social integration/ostracism and language to discipline and reproduce militant subjectivities

"The solidarity-with-me" brigade – masculinity and disciplining identity.

Theresa offered me some reflections on the affective impacts of militant masculinity. Theresa found herself thrust firmly into the frontlines of leftist politics when she was nominated as PCC (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate) for the Labour Party in the 2019 General Election, backed by her Constituency Labour Party and her Momentum branch. Her positionality as a working-class woman in a position of leadership clashed with the ideas of the "*left-wing old guard*" of her party. Throughout our interview, Theresa told me she was subjected to gendered verbal bullying, name-calling, rumour spreading (about her political abilities and her capacity to be a mother and a PCC), isolation, and ostracism. The misogynistic treatment she experienced resulted from her refusal to conform to the "*very kind of masculine ideal of what leadership should be*," - something her older male comrades actively pressured her to do: "*...all of a sudden, [I was expected to] stand in front of anyone, and have a vision of x,y and z, but not my vision, their vision, their language*." We might well

say that this is not (on the surface) out of the ordinary for political participation; all parliamentary political parties require a certain degree of party cohesion, including sticking to the "party line" in times of election (Russell, 2014). However, the pressure that Theresa was under to conform to the political vision of her male comrades can also be seen as what Bösel (2018) calls an "affect disposition(ing) regime" (p.16). "Affect disposition(ing)" refers to how affect can be "called, invoked or summoned" through a dynamic set of processes and activities to "arrange things in certain, deliberate ways"; when such disposition[ing] becomes hegemonic, it becomes a regime (Ibid). In other words, such a regime is a means by which we can understand the interpretation, management and organisation of affect – and, for our purposes, how affect is used to discipline identities.

Let us return to Theresa. The tension between her and her comrades can be understood as a clash between her affective dispositioning and the hegemonic regime. Theresa's reluctance to conform was motivated by her desire to take a different approach to leadership (something she saw embodied in the leadership style of Jeremy Corbyn). She presented the regime to me as one which conflicted not just with her political ethics but also with her understanding of what it meant to express and experience solidarity:

> "*...There are people, I call them the 'solidarity-with-me' brigade. They're not 'the solidarity brigade', in solidarity with me, it's as long as you agree with me you will have solidarity, but don't offer anything different...it's an awful lot like a performance...they love to stand on a platform and deliver a big speech and get the big cheers. But they're not doing anything at heart, they don't care or understand how you feel...or how they feel."*

Theresa's experiences here exemplify how militant masculinity attempts to create, sustain and discipline new iterations of itself – Theresa could lead, but only if she did it in a way that was fitting to the male militants in her branch. The processes of disciplinary power worked

down to the micro level, "*their vision*" over hers, "*their language*" over her language. Militant subjectivity must, it seems, reproduce militant subjectivity, but this is an experience linked to the visibility of a gendered body – both in the way that Theresa saw an element of inauthenticity in those men who wanted to be seen "*delivering a big speech*," and that a symbolic value was written onto her body as woman, a value far less than – it is implied – that if she'd been a man. Her leadership performance was, if anything, undermined (in her detractors' eyes) by the embodied nature of her gender. Solidarity might have been expressed in these "big speech[es]", but it was not shown, not felt.

Solidarity is a contested term. It is perhaps most commonly understood as "'we-feelings', a sense of belonging to a group or imagined community, and aspirations to a common project" (Shaw, 2019, p.557); in other words, a sense of belonging linked to a shared form of labour; one experiences solidarity with others not simply because of who others are in relation to us, but because we share a feeling of connectedness to them based on *what they do*. Solidarity refers to "we-feelings" and "we-do-things-together-feelings. " For Marx, this aspect of solidarity is linked to transformative political action: solidarity "is not a question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment" but "is the first condition of their [the proletariat's] own social emancipation" (Marx, 1870, p.75). We cannot lose our chains if we don't feel a sense of belonging with people who share those chains and express that to them. Thus, solidarity can be understood as having an affective element, as affect plays a role in the social formation of senses of belonging (Sharma and Tygstrup, 2015). Therefore, the concept of "solidarity-with-me" becomes striking, as it functions as a bastardisation of Marx's sense – belonging is only guaranteed if an individual fits into the whims of the militant who polices the boundaries of identity through an affect disposition(ing) regime. Theresa's sentiment here was echoed by Leila in her interview, where she described how she felt as if she was

"*expected to scrape off bits of myself, censor or suppress bits of myself,*" in order to be accepted by the militant masculine men in her branch – in her case, Leila framed the disciplining of her identity and actions as an almost violently affective process, miming the act of scratching her cheeks when described scraping parts of herself away. For Theresa, her attempts to campaign in her way – to be what she described as a "*community-led candidate*" – were greeted by misogynistic treatment, both implicit and explicit: *"They [the men] just expected me to do what they wanted, I was this little bird they could have at the forefront, their symbolic woman…but they were the informal male leadership, and they wanted me to be a man, but only if I were like them."*

If to express solidarity is to create a sense of affective belonging, then the absence of solidarity is to enforce a form of loneliness, of isolated individuality in a collective movement. Similarly to Theresa, Leila experienced the tension between solidarity and isolation when, after a dispute about alleged gender abuse in her branch, figures from Momentum national attended to clear the air:

> *"They [*the members from National*] put time and effort in to do meetings and chats with the men. It was like, 'Oh, let's go for a beer, let's talk about it.' And the women they completely ignored. They didn't even try. They just froze us out. Not a single member [of National] came up to us and said 'oh, we'd love to have a chat about what's happened here. We care about how you must be feeling."*

Leila's description here mirrored Ben's experience of Leeds Momentum. In the case of Ben's branch, tensions had erupted between older male "*veterans*" who "*had this urge to be heard...and loved talking over people*" and younger (and more gender diverse) members. Eventually, Momentum National had to intervene "*because of how fucking toxic*" the situation had become. Yet, similar to Lauren, the responses were starkly different between demographics:

> *"The guy [from Momentum National] took, like, all the old guys out to the pub, you know, talk it out over a few beers and then the next meeting they were all there and it was fine and we need to get on with it. I don't think they spoke to any one of the women who were like raising the concerns in the first place."*

In a sense, we can see a form of "solidarity-with-me" and a "solidarity-without-you" –the misogynistic eclipsing of women and men with alternative masculinities that do not conform to the militant diagram. By taking men aside and forming social bonds with them at the exclusion of others, men with militant masculinity practise what Sedgwick calls homosociality, a form of male bonding which preserves the dominant male order and close links with both homophobia and misogyny (Sedgwick, 2015). In all three cases, it is homosociality which denies not simply solidarity to those who do not fit militant masculinity but also denies their feelings, their emotional response to (by the sounds of it) emotionally fraught contestations within what should, ostensibly, be a space of comradeship.

Interestingly, though, the work of affect here is visible and hidden simultaneously. Theresa and Leila note that the men who mistreated them "*don't care*" about how they feel in the situation, but there is also a question of whether they "*understand how you feel…or how they feel*." Here, we can connect with the role of emotion in the construction of male identity. The idea that many iterations of masculinity thrive on a form of tight-lipped stoicism or emotional inarticulation is well-acknowledged within the literature (Pike, 2017; Goodey, 1997). Sometimes, "…the subjectivity of these male [identities] rests on their very inarticulateness. Their masculinity is constructed through an inarticulate, pre-conscious, emotional-bodily response to the living world" (Lousley, 2009, p.227). Masculinity, then, is interwoven with the work of affect. Deleuze and Guattari do go far as to suggest that affect can be utilised strategically, that - and it is worth noting the militaristic and arguably

masculine coded terminology that is utilised here - “affects transpierce the body like arrows, they are weapons of war,” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.400) and “the active discharge of emotions, the counter-attack…affects are projectiles just like weapons…weapons are affects, and affects weapons,” (ibid, p.400). Here, what is being claimed is not that affect is militant or masculinist per se but that there is a distinct form of gendered, exclusionary form of affect. In this sense, the work of Solidarity-with-me/solidarity-without-you can be read as a tactic within the repertoire of the militant, echoing Guattari’s claim of the “perverted fondness for creating splits on matters of principle” inherent in militant subjectivity (Guattari, 1984, p.178), but also the work of a dominant masculinity, policing the boundaries of its culture.

Solidarity is not just about social interaction with other members but also about offering practical and material support to one’s comrades (McDonald, 2002); for several of my participants, disciplining and sustaining militant masculinity involved withdrawing or refusing material support and aid. Leila, for example, had helped re-found her local branch shortly before Covid-19 caused the United Kingdom to enter lockdown; for the early months of 2020, she had worked “20 to 30 hours voluntarily each week” to sustain her branch, on top of full-time employment. On the brink of burnout, she reached out for help to another male organiser, who had previously promised aid when the branch was re-founded:

> *“I just said, “I'm really struggling, I can't do this, I need help,” and the response I got was just shocking. He did a complete 180, completely turned on me… The reasons he gave me were completely like complete misjudgements of my character and when I tried to talk to him, he interrupted me and said I was manipulative and a liar…I just wanted to support. I started doubting myself, questioning myself.”*

Leila went on to tell me a similar story to Theresa – that masculine animosity towards was rooted in an alleged refusal to conform to a specific vision for political organising: “*he said…he had made suggestions to me or something which I didn’t listen to, so, as a result, it*

was all turned back on me,". However, in Leila's narrative, her request was merely for a form of solidarity on both a personal and political level that went beyond words; or, as she put it, "*without those resources, without that life force, you have no choice but to disappear*. " Much like Theresa, the denial of solidarity in a material sense (of resources, administrative support, and so on) seemed to be a tactic to demarcate the boundaries of her choices and actions politically, as they did not fit with a militant subjectivity. Feeling unsupported, Leila reached out to contacts in Momentum more widely and in her network of friends in socialist and trade union movements and "*built my network.*" This, however, provoked chagrin on the part of the other organiser, who made a formal complaint against Leila, leading her to be summoned to a disciplinary meeting, in which she was "*called a liar and manipulative…like all these judgements were just being made upon me…they kept saying my tone was concerning, my tone is problematic, it was weird, very gendered, gaslighting*,".

Marcus did not experience the same denial of solidarity as Theresa and Leila, but his fear of it underpinned his political engagement. Marcus disclosed in the interview that he was transitioning, though he continued to present as a cisgender man to his branch. In our discussion, he was frank about the fact that he feared rejection from his comrades if he presented himself authentically:

> *"I guess I…I worry, like, that people just talk about it [trans rights] but maybe they won't want to know me as they did? Does that make sense? It's a feeling of, you know, like I look at the men in my branch, mostly the older men, they, speak about gender but they don't speak about it. Like, they'll share a statement about LGBT stuff online but there's something…something that makes me think that if I started wearing girls, girls clothes, they'll…it feels like they wouldn't stand next to me on a picket line."*

Marcus' invocation of standing with someone on a picket line invokes a kind of symbolic action within the radical left; picket lines are both formative to the history of the labour and

trade union movements, but - as Nield (2021) explains – they are also a performative act of political militancy and solidarity (hence the intense taboo in leftist culture about 'scabbing', whereby guilt becomes a weaponised emotion against workers who would break the line (Linstead, 1995, Guard, 2004)) One stands on the picket line with those one thinks to be authentic. Therefore, refusal to stand with someone (or even the fear of it) carries significant weight within activist culture and functions as a withdrawal of solidarity. For Marcus, this fear is rooted in the fact the changes in his gender, and the way it is performed, would be rejected by men in his branch as inauthentic, and perhaps antithetical to their understandings of masculinity and militancy. Speech, authenticity and the work of affect play a strong role in this account – Marcus identified something performative about the nature of allyhood displayed by men, the willing to "share a statement" about LGBT rights, but (it is implied) not follow that with concrete action (echoing a similar comment from Theresa that allyhood for militant men is an *"awful lot of performance, it's performative, it's all rhetoric,"* yet this was a feeling he struggled to put into words, a sense of unease about presenting as transgender that he sensed would be a source of hostility.

I would have forgiven many of my participants for feeling enraged, livid and resentful at their experiences of misogyny – something that I experienced as I listened to their narratives. However, my interview participants broadly acknowledged that for many of these militant men, the work of affect might be unknown to them or something they struggle to conceptualise and understand –they "don't understand…how they feel," in my quote from Theresa above. Despite the often harrowing accounts of misogynistic bullying and treatment my participants related to me, I was struck by the degree of empathy that my participants displayed; Tim, for example, (recounted to me the story of a union rep who was criticised for being overly tactile with female comrades), stated at several points in his interview that "I felt

sorry for him," or "He just didn't get, I feel for him, I don't think he got it." Leila, who had a background in mental health work, suggested to me that misogynistic treatment was often a vitriolic response to the problem of vulnerability:

> *"…they've not had the opportunities to delve into their vulnerabilities and trauma…there's like a guardedness…there's a fear, I mean I come across this in my work when you work with people that are deeply traumatized they have very, very strong defence mechanisms are in place, and if you start to edge towards it, then…can it can result in hostile behaviour. So I think that I think that that's triggering for people."*

Leila added that for militant men, the vulnerability was "too messy…you can't put in the rulebook," and, therefore, "it's perceived as weakness." In short, the affect of vulnerability within the lives of militant men confounds them; affect is something they can weaponise but struggle to control. Reeser, drawing on Massumi's statement that "actually existing, structured things live and through that which escapes them" (Massumi, 1995, p.96-97), contends that the autonomy of affect is a threat to hegemonic or normative masculinity "because it reveals that a male body is not in full control," due to the "unpredictable ways" that affect affects (Resser, 2019, p.104). Affect troubles the male subject because it strips him of his ability to "contain, control and capture" that which is suddenly outside of his "discursive control" (ibid).

This idea of autonomous affect being, in some ways, a threat to dominant masculinities relates to how affect can threaten the framework of militancy. Suppose political organising focuses on affective relations (emotional politics, empathy, compassion and so on). In that case, it is a shift from the stable and acknowledged (the rigidity – and perhaps inertia – of militancy) to something immediate, emergent, and becoming. The willingness to embrace that which is perhaps unknowable (or, as I'll argue in the next section, sometimes inarticulable) is evident in the clash between the models of militant masculinity my

participants identified and the emergence of new subjectivities. For Leila, to be a socialist was to be "always questioning ourselves, we should be eternal students; we should love learning, training, questioning, we should understand that everything is involving and changing," instead of being "stuck in a position of authority." Indeed, the displays of compassion and the acknowledgement of the militant's vulnerability were evident in my participants – indeed, this, like many of the Left's 'gender problems' appears to have a long history, albeit it has largely been forgotten. The activists behind the *Big Flame* journal were also keen to point out that:

> It [responding to feminism as a socialist] is about recognising that 'militants' are also people with personal anxieties, fears, and hopes like everybody else. In fact, because of the isolation that can come from being a socialist/feminist militant, they may well need a lot more support.
>
> (Wilson, 1981, no pagination)

For the socialists of *Big Flame*, part of the task of reworking socialist masculinity and militancy was about "trying to understand and be honest about how your own needs and desires interrelate with your political involvement," a practice which they contrast with the militant's practises of "nastiness and empire building," (ibid)

What emerges from these accounts is something that is hinted at by Guattari and made more explicit by Williams - that is that subjectivity is both unified and in conflict; it is, as Williams puts it, "...a set, with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension," (Williams, 1977, p.130). Militancy is riddled with contradictions that somehow form a whole, a "collective phantasy of omnipotence" which involves being both of the masses and yet above them. Militant masculinity demonstrates similar contradictions and cohesions around the work of affect. The militant men described by Leila, Marcus and Theresa both profoundly reject the work of emotion, feeling, and vulnerability, yet their embodied performance is

deeply affective to those around them. As a result, we see that militant masculinity contains a sense of inarticulation, a palpable absence of language, especially around compassion and solidarity, which only fits with the aims of militancy rather than any real sense of embodied belonging.

"It's like a language they don't understand," –Left-wing masculinity and inarticulation.

I use a line from my interview with Leila as the subtitle of this section, as I feel it illustrates, but does not necessarily explain, the problems within left-wing masculinity. Leila used the phrase, "It's like a language they don't understand," when I asked her what made it so hard for the male militants around her to engage in anti-sexist or pro-feminism work. Other women and non-binary echo her sentiment here I spoke– for Sarah, it was a *"deafening silence,"* that she constrasted with the *"wall of sound*" she described during moments of tension with male comrades (see Chapter Six); for Theresa, an *"empty statement,"* for Jacob, an *"unspoken topic,"* - in short, that anti-sexist practice expressions, words and deeds were either silent or hollow and meaningless. After all, to use Leila's terminology, if there is a language that one cannot understand, then why speak it? Better surely, to stay silent than speak gibberish.

However, what emerged from my interviews with men is what I am calling a moment of inarticulation within masculinity that centres around anti-sexism. In some cases, this was a literal inability to get words out – see the quote from Marcus that opened this chapter. However, there is something more subtle at work here around inarticulation and the work of anti-sexism. Before I move to the data, it's important to clearly state the terms of reference: I use the term inarticulate here because being inarticulateness "goes beyond mere shyness,

anxiety or reserve" (Booth and Booth, 1996, p.56). However, it is not the same as being silent (I.e. the refusal to speak) or being silenced (being prevented from speaking). Inarticulation is affective because it is pre-emptive of language, much as affect is pre-emptive of feeling. Much research links masculinity to inarticulation, especially emotional inarticulation (Sattel, 1976; Lousley, 2009). I contend that what is evident is not just a general inability to speak about anti-sexism, but more that there is a moment of inarticulation, where I understand a moment to be the set of conditions and possibilities which combine to make left-wing masculinities response to anti-sexism inarticulate. This inarticulation can (and it would appear, often is) read as silence by women and non-binary people. However, inarticulation does not mean unawareness – the men I interviewed were very aware of the problems their female and non-binary comrades faced. However, the response and solution to those problems were a complex matter.

This moment of inarticulation can be understood best via Williams's concept of the structures of feeling. Williams defines the structures of feeling as "characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, tone, specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships, not feelings against thought, but thought as felt, and feeling as thought" (Williams, 1977, p.132); such structures of feeling exist "at the very edge of semantic availability, has many of the characteristics of a pre-formation, until specific articulations – new semantic figures – are discovered in material practices," (ibid, p x). In short, Williams is offering us a way of trying to explain how the work of affect, that which blurs the boundaries between feeling and thought, can be inarticulate until it finds new means to express itself; this, it would seem, functions in opposition to Guattari's militant diagram. There, the militant has an almost perverse fondness for reiterating preexisting semantic figures, the demands of the past, and resignifying the new into the old.

As an example of this moment of inarticulation in practice, I offer this snippet of my interview with Ben. Ben had told me several times in our conversation that he disliked when men talked over women or failed to challenge their sexism. Thus, I asked him what *being* anti-sexist looked like to him:

> ***Ben:*** *It's easy to sort of feel, but not do if you get me? We talk about men needing to hold each other to account, so call out their bullshit, but you don't know what to do until you have to do it, you have to suddenly, you know, there's a situation and its like you have to come up with new words to change it.*
> ***Int:*** *So, is it a case of being afraid of getting it wrong?*
> ***Ben:****It's more a case of being afraid of not getting it right.*

Here, Ben points out the problem of anti-sexism as a performative experience – he can "feel" what the right thing to do is, and he possesses a framework of sorts for it "men needing to hold one another to account," but how this becomes articulated into word and deed is something which eludes him – it requires "new words," which he implies he either does not have or is uncertain of their validity. Anti-sexism is not so much a language he doesn't understand but a language he vaguely knows but fears how to express himself in the present. He can acknowledge a method which has a history – the idea of men holding other men to account – yet at the moment, in that second, he becomes inarticulate. As Williams reminds us, social experiences contain "frequent tension between the received interpretation and practical experience" (ibid, p.x); this tension can manifest itself as "unease, a stress, a displacement, a latency, a moment of conscious comparison not yet come" (ibid). Note the interesting distinction between my proposal that there is a fear of getting something wrong versus Ben's statement that the issue is that he may not get it right. This suggests some comparative knowledge of what "rightness" is, but that rightness is emergent, still becoming unformed – in short, Ben's inarticulation comes from a fear of being inauthentic in his actions. In a

previous chapter, I linked authenticity to the function of ideology – one acts in particular ways because one perceives oneself – or hopes to be perceived – as authentic within the context of one's political ideology. Guattari's militants arguably engage in this authentic stance-taking process, allowing them to elevate themselves above the 'masses.' However, ideologically, what is authentic becomes less clear when trying to reconcile socialism, feminism and anti-sexism. This echoes Segal's reflection on what scuppered the work of the anti-sexist men's movements that grew around publications like *Big Flame* and *Achilles Heel*, that is, the "[reduction] of politics in its entirety to the individual struggles of personal life," (Segal, 2006, p.272).

Lewis highlighted a moment of inarticulation around anti-sexism by pointing out that his understanding of what it meant to be anti-sexist was not unproblematic:

> *….we are all starting to see some of the hypocrisy and the double standards. Like, when I was young…I was very much like 'I'm a male feminist, I'm an ally, I won't take up space, I'll acknowledge my privilege…' and now I'm older, I can see that's a bit performative, crass, like…like I think a lot of women see the male feminist as a trope, a sinister trope, another version of the nice guy who just expect them to sleep with him because he's not a sexist pig. And when you grow up a bit, you realise…its difficult, like, difficult to know what to do with these deeply held convictions, especially when you see some of your comrades call themselves feminists and not give a shit.*

Several elements stand out from Lewis' statement here; there is the tension between received interpretation and practical experience – the stance-taking of the younger Lewis (and by implication, other left-wing men) as "male feminist[s]" – but this stance is now perceived as inauthentic, "performative, crass." Anti-sexist masculinity finds itself in an 'affective break' (to use Reeser's (2019) term); the attempt to actualise as something other than sexist masculinity is exposed as a trope based on what Segal calls "'new man' - a softer, more emotional, self-conscious sex object himself - may still retain, if less infallibly than ever

before, his hegemony over women," (Segal, 2006, p.291). Thus, anti-sexist men cannot take a stance, resulting in inarticulation, *"it's difficult…difficult to know what to do with these deeply held convictions."*

The discomfort of the men experiencing this moment of inarticulation was something that I felt strongly about in my interviews and tracked in my field notes. The striking nature of this inarticulation was evident in the fact that the majority of the men I spoke to were articulate (in a more colloquial sense)- they were well-versed in leftist theory, able to describe and narrate their stories within the radical left, to enunciate the forms of structural oppression faced by women and nonbinary people – yet when I asked them what being anti-sexist looked like in their practice, the timbre and fluidity of that speech was disrupted, their confusion, and at times frustration became evident on the Zoom calls. This frustration mirrored my own in many ways: I was asking these men to articulate something I – reflexively – knew to be inarticulable myself. In many ways, this inarticulation felt unexpectedly threatening – partially to me as a researcher (one of my field notes simply said 'how can I be an 'expert' on anti-sexist masculinity if I can't speak it? Do they [my participants] think I'm a fraud') but for my participant – keen to differentiate themselves from the misogynistic behaviour and misogynistic militancy – find their authenticity in this stance-taking under threat. Their 'different' masculinity faces a mirror image of the threat faced by militant masculinity – the inability to work around affect; as Reeser reminds us – "...a male subject may sense that he cannot use words to contain, control and capture an affect which remains linguistically autonomous, outside his discursive control," (Reeser, 2019, p.104).

Where men did articulate some form of anti-sexist practises, they were often couched in tones of self-doubt and hesitancy. Take, for example, this anecdote from Stephen, on having

to confront men in his branch who –in his words – engaged in "sexism" driven by "this genuine privileged belief that they have the right to be heard and everyone should listen to them,":

> *Every now and again - which is something I've been very conflicted about- but when people get, particularly on this track, and they're not right every now and again I have said, "actually you're… you're just wrong and here's the reason why, and I think, maybe you need to give other people a chance to engage in a different way" but I feel very conflicted about doing things like that, because then its like… like largely like slightly aggressive behaviour because…. you're sort of slapping down even though in your head you know that…like well you're slapping someone down because you're just sort of vaguely bullying everybody into agreeing with them… but yeah I don't really feel good about doing that...*

Stephen's quote illustrates what I think could be a kind of uncomfortable articulation. By this, I mean the process of taking a stance which feels on shaky ground, where it feels like it conforms to, and simultaneously undermines, the framework of an ethics of gender. Stephen's discomfort in relating this story was very evident in the Zoom call. We had been speaking for nearly 40 minutes at this point, and he spoke up at a rapid pace, maintained eye contact with me over the call and expressed the kind of intellectual articulacy I had seen in my other participants with significant levels of educational and cognitive privilege. However, here, Stephen became more hesitant, and the flow of his speech became more disrupted; he started to look off to one side, and it seemed that he was trying to consider his words carefully while also struggling to wrap his head around what those words meant. Why should someone be "very conflicted" about confronting the people he had identified to me as "bullies" (even if they might, at the moment, only be "vaguely bullying")? Indeed, as Lewis said, suppose there is a political necessity for "men needing to hold each other to account" within the ethics of gender. Why should Stephen feel conflicted about engaging in that process of holding someone to account? To me, Stephen seemed acutely aware of the danger of reproducing the same forms of masculine behaviour he had condemned – "slapping down", the "largely, like slightly aggressive behaviour" (note here how he changes the intensity of his self-perceived

aggression) yet even in the process of articulating his attempted anti-sexist practise, he experienced significant discomfort, he "did not feel good" about *both* the process of calling out another men's behaviour, or – to paraphrase Williams – existing on the edge of semantic availability. The idea that men find it difficult to "call out" the sexism and misogyny of other men out of fear of being emasculated is highlighted by many researchers in masculinities studies (Kimmel, 1998; Conlin and Heesacker, 2018). I don't for a second dispute that this is an issue at all in masculine interaction – I conjecture that what we can perceive in the moment of inarticulation (and the discomfort it brings) is *a reluctance to call out men's behaviour because there is a fear of perpetuating, rather than subverting, dominant masculinity*.

"It's more a case of being afraid of not getting it right." : The problematic male feminist and the ethics of gender.

Whether or not men can 'be' feminists remains a subject of intense debate (Harding, 1998; Heath, 2003; Kimmel, 1998), and whether or not men can claim to 'do' feminism is equally contentious. As Tienari and Taylor (2019) point out, there is a "fragility and ambivalence" around men's engagement with feminism. Indeed, my female and non-binary participants treated self-identified male feminists with a mixture of ambivalence and, at times, suspicion. Such men were "*performative and attention seeking*" (Theresa), "gaslighters" (Leila), and "hypocrites" (Sarah). The connotations of such language are fairly damning – feminist men are problematic, acting to increase their social capital, inclined towards manipulation or distortion of reality, and trivialising the stakes of emancipatory or revolutionary politics, potentially rendering the goals of feminism as fragile by men who "jump on board", to borrow Bojin's (2013) language. Some of my male participants also expressed suspicion or ambivalence around men who identify as feminists; Lewis's "sinister

trope" (quoted above) comes to mind; Brendan referred to self-identified male feminists in his branch as "self-righteous, self-congratulatory," Jacob described such men to me as " 'look-at-me' feminists" while miming exaggerated speech marks around the word "feminists". In other words, my male participants also highlighted the ambivalence of male feminism. However, what complicates that reflection is that out of 12 male participants, 11 told me that they were either "feminists," "pro-feminists," or "socialist-feminists." Thus, these men identified to a greater or lesser extent with something they regarded with ambivalence.

In this ambivalence, I argue, we can find the roots of inarticulation. One way to understand it is as a dilemma as to how one can be recognised as authentically "doing" feminism as a man. A sense that emerges from some of the interview data is that some men position themselves as feminist to be socially recognised as such. Take this anecdote from Brendan:

> *[It was] international woman's day, it was two years ago. They [the branch] asked…asked people to talk about women that inspired them. And the first six people that talked were men…. I was like "for fucks' sake." Today of all days, you could just shut up and let someone else like…I'm sure some of the women in this group have people they'd like to talk about, right, but they [the six men] genuinely thought: "I'm here on International Women's Day talking about women that inspire me. Look how good a feminist I am!" and I was like well actually that's just reaffirming the male privilege…you're the first one to talk, everyone has to listen to you.*

The idea of being "heard" seems to be critical here, as does when someone *should* speak, as opposed to when one *does* speak. As Crowe (2011) remarks, men tend to be "used to entering any discussion and automatically being heard" (p.52) – by implication, then, men in those situations are used to being in situations where they feel that they *should* speak like they have something meaningful to contribute. In the account above, the six men who opened the International Women's Day event thought they should speak. However, that speech was

about saying something meaningful about them as people and their stance taking *"I'm here on International Women's Day talking about women that inspire me. Look how good a feminist I am!."* Brendan is clear here that such things being heard were not meaningfully contributing (and I am inclined to agree); similar sentiments emerged from other participants' accounts of men who "*love the sound of their own voice*" who "*have a desperate need to be heard*," and so on. If there is a need to be heard, who is meant to be doing the hearing? Kimmel (2013), among others, suggests that masculinity is a homosocial enactment conducted under the "constant, careful scrutiny of other men." Therefore, men "test ourselves, perform heroic feats, take enormous risks all because we want other men to grant us our manhood" (p.187). Who then 'grants' we men our feminism?

Conlin and Heesacker (2018) make a compelling argument for the importance of men's "self-labelling" as feminist/pro-feminist/anti-sexist; in their study, men who self-labelled as feminists were more likely to engage in activism and activist behaviours around gender equality, even if they faced some stigmatisation from other men. While their analysis is intriguing, it doesn't give much in the way of indicating whether men who self-label as feminists are more likely to actualise gender equality in their movements authentically. Ross (2013) argues that self-labelling male feminists are part of broader aspect of what he calls "theoretical men," that is, the "wide variety of discursive positions through which men culturally engage with feminist issues – contexts in which men discursively construct themselves, or are discursively constructed by others as 'men in feminism,'" (p.86). The self-labelled feminists in Brendan's anecdote above hardly seem to be doing so. In fact, Brendan referred to such men as "disguised feminists," a phrase he derived from the concept of "disguised compliance," a term for when abusive individuals pretend to comply with (usually) safeguarding services, while perpetuating the abuse behind closed doors (Leigh et

al., 2020), In a more sobering story, Ben told me about a particular man in his Momentum branch – a self-proclaimed feminist – who had multiple complaints made against him for "bothering girls," at social events, and trying to pressure at least one woman into sharing explicit images with him. Eventually, this individual was expelled from the organisation. For Ben, this was a moment of schism which eventually led to his resignation from Momentum:

> *It felt stupid, to be honest. Like, yes, he was kicked out, but it was a hard job, and I distanced myself from lots of comrades because they kept saying things like 'oh, he's great on the doorstep' and 'it's just boys being boys' and 'he's a feminist' and all I could say to them was 'Comrade Delta'.*

Ben wasn't the only participant who told me about the actions of a self-labelled feminist who – for want of a better phrase – practised over misogyny. Leila said to me that when she raised concerns about the bullying she experienced at the hands of a male organiser (detailed above), she was told that "*...I'd bullied him, that he made suggestions to me or something which I refused to listen to, that he'd never speak to me like he did because he was a 'feminist'.*" Sarah posited to me that c

This brings us back in a way to the question of silences. Earlier, we considered how silencing is used to discipline identity and reinforce dominant masculinities. What, then, is the role of silence for men? Several of my male participants suggested that there was a utility in masculine silence: above, Brenden indicates that "*Today of all days you* [men] *could just shut up,"* Ben told me of meetings in which he wished men would "*just learn to fucking zip it*,"; Tim spoke to me of "*learning when to hold your tongue,"*. Words say that words should not say. The prevailing attitude towards silence in both popular and academic links silence to passivity and powerlessness (Williams, 2002). However, to my mind, this somewhat conflates being *silenced* with being *silent* in the sense of choosing not to speak. In his Tractatus

Logico-Philosophicus, Wittgenstein concludes with the sentiment that "'Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent'" (Wittgenstein, 2013). Thus, there is a space for silences where one cannot achieve truth. Ferguson (2003) has written eloquently on how similarities in the form of silence do not equate to similarities of the function of silence; silence can, in particular social roles, function to create communities (such as among religious orders like the Quakers.) Could it then be said that an anti-sexist masculinity arises from silence? Brendan seemed to think so, telling me rather bluntly that anti-sexism for men should begin with "*going to that meeting and shutting up, you know, because maybe today is the day you'll stop and listen to them and see what we can learn."* However, can a new masculinity be built on silence? To use Ferguson's (ibid) own words, the problem with silence is that it "disturbs": silences can resist interpretation but also elicit it (see ibid, p.15). Silence, therefore, can be ambivalent.

What is the meaning of the absence of words? While the idea that men needed to *stop* speaking was fairly common among my female and non-binary participants, men's failure to speak could also perpetuate sexism. I asked participants who disclosed experiences of discrimination and exclusionary behaviour from men whether any other men in their branches tried to intercede or show support for them. In most cases, the answer was "no". Again, speech and silence characterised these experiences: "*No one ever spoke*," "*He didn't say a word,*" "*didn't say anything*," etc. It would seem to be impossible to resolve the apparent tension between speech and silence – surely one either speaks or does not?

Claiming to be a pro-feminist man, then, is claiming an identity subject to contestation; that contestation was evident in the attitudes of some of my female participants, who expressed scepticism about the validity and authenticity of male pro-feminism.

However, the men I interviewed equally found that staking a claim to a feminist epistemology was something they felt uncertain about or were unable to express verbally. So, in a sense, I had a discursive closeness *and* a closeness of inarticulation. This contestation primarily linked to what I called in my field notes "an ethic of gender." By this, I do not mean a feminist ethic (though I do think that ethic is informed by feminist thinking), but more of a sense of a field of acceptable and unacceptable practises, stances and values with which one would need to negotiate and navigate privilege and gender (both one's own, and others). A significant part of this ethic was pre-linguistic or positioned as such. My male participants often framed it as such, and phrases like "it goes without saying…" that one supports feminism. My recollection of my entry into activism was entering a world with stringent rules that no one had ever clearly explained. It was understood that one 'let women speak' and include one's pronouns when introducing oneself. One understood that at every new initiative to oppose the government's austerity agenda, there would be a "women's caucus" and an "LGBT caucus" and that, as a man, one accepted the decisions made within those spaces to which I was forbidden. I often heard of comrades who had not conformed to this ethic, either temporarily or permanently withdrawing from the movement. It seems that there is a concept here about *correctness*, one which Ross (2013) compares with the "stern, descriptive" politics of Left-Leninism and its obsession with having the "correct line" or the "correct" analysis – we might say that the concept of correctness has been deterritorialised from Left-Leninism, and reterritorialized in feminism. I should be clear here that I am not comparing feminism within Momentum to the militant dogmatism of Leninism (though I did encounter, as part of this project, expressions of aggressive militancy which wore the name of 'feminism' – something I reflect on in the last empirical chapter); instead, I contend that I offer this summary of my own experiences not to dismiss the ideas and values inherent in those practises; such values appear to be rooted in emancipatory politics. My reflection here is

meant to illustrate that the milieu of my fieldwork was one where concepts were *felt* more than they were *defined* – something that I suspect informed the expressions of inarticulation.

What I am trying to point toward is akin to the affective field in which white or white presenting scholars and activists have struggled to navigate the issue of white silence and anti-racist allyhood. Purvis captures this struggle in a reflective piece around his own experience of anti-racist organising:

> I have struggled to construct this piece and articulate my contribution without being anxious that I might use the wrong language or write something misjudged or problematic, as well as resisting the urge to lean on labour from black friends and colleagues for validation
>
> (Purvis, 2022, p.65)

Here, the problem is twofold (and again, the sense of 'correctness' I outlined above seems to underpin both problems) – firstly, the fear of "us[ing] the wrong language" and the unwillingness to "lean on labour" from a marginalised group for validation. We might reframe this as fear of harming (i.e. "problematic" language) and fear of reproducing harm (i.e. exploiting the labour of a marginalised group for one's gratification). Purvis refers to this as the "shibboleth of 'making space'" and the "ideation of it's not my place" (Ibid, p.62). Such notions contain intense resonance for white anti-racist activists, yet they also come with pitfalls: making space can equate to "inaction and silence," considering that it is not my place can result in "avoiding difficult topics…and leaving the labour of addressing systemic injustice to those most oppressed by them," (ibid). Here, Purvis builds on the conception of "white guilt" from the work of Audre Lorde, who reminds us that guilt can serve a useful purpose if it leads to the development of new knowledge, but it can also be:

> …just another name for impotence, for defensiveness destruction of communication; it becomes a device to protect ignorance and the continuation of things the way they are, the ultimate protection for changelessness.
>
> (Lorde, 2017, p.114)

In this sense, silence can be comfortable for maintaining the status quo. If we take the logic within this affective field and then applying to gender and sexual politics, we can see the analogous iterations of "male silence." This is a concept that is already reasonably developed within the literature, though it refers more to how men's inaction helps to sustain patriarchy and gender violence (Thorne-Finch, 2019; DeShong, 2017); however, what seems to be suggested here that men's silence can be constitutive; men's silence create the spaces for women and gender non-conforming people to speak, and act, and develop their meaning-making processes. Is silence the solution to the moment of inarticulation, the remedy for inarticulate masculinities? This answer to me seems intellectually unsatisfying, at least in specific contexts. Herein, I must reflect on my experience of silence and inarticulation when interviewing Reuben.

As discussed in the previous chapter, my conversation with Rueben took me aback; his sudden shift from a relatively eloquent discussion around socialist theory to deploying a lexicon of "fit girls" and "having a go" was jarring; his language put me in mind not of a socialist counterpublic, but of the vocabulary of early 2000s "lads mags,", publications which – under the pretence of not being taken too seriously - have been identified by feminist researchers as a source to "teach young men sexist attitudes and practises," and that quotes from such publications were often indistinguishable from those of convicted rapists (Horvath et al., 2012). While this was not the only discomfort in my research (discussed in more detail in the final empirical chapter), I found myself caught out and floundered. Such was evident in my transcription:

Rueben: *Um…well, yes, I'd say there was, but that's just, that's just the way people are? Guys are going to be guys, aren't they? And if there's a fit girl in the pub then, sure, let's have a go, right? Look, I, I don't want to say that people forgot themselves when they socialised, like, we're all comrades, but when you're done with the meeting…it's different.*
Int: *[Inaudible]*
Rueben: *Are you ok? Still there?*
Int: *Yes...sorry…I'm…that's interesting…I'm…um…[inaudible] sorry, I lost my train of…*
Rueben: *No, do you want to –*
Int: *Um, could we maybe go, can we…back to the…could you say a bit more about that?*

In the moment, I was struck by inarticulacy and internally torn about how to respond. I experienced deeply conflicting feelings – firstly, I wanted Rueben to expand on his thinking here, but secondly, I felt like I needed to act and 'call out' the language used. In other areas of my life, I was conscious that I had at least attempted to highlight to male friends when I felt discussions around girlfriends and partners, and women slipped into tasteless territory. So why not now? Yet what if I denied myself further insight, some essential aspect of the thesis, but acted on what I felt was a moral imperative to speak? In part, I was confused by my sudden sense of needing to intervene; a phrase I have often used in research interviews – to put participants at ease, as much as for any other reasons – is "express yourself however is easiest for you." Was not Rueben doing so? What if I derailed the interview and lost a participant? As a result, I stumbled in my speech, and my question asking Reuben to expand on his answer felt like the natural next question for a researcher, but not, perhaps, as an anti-sexist.

I hesitate to write this and wonder if I am making a mountain from a molehill. Yet, it must be remembered that research interviews can be understood as affective exchanges. Interview events are "always new and emergent...composed of 'endless relational affective systems," generating both lines of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and possibilities that direct the conversation in an unexpected direction that may exceed the interviewer and interviewee

while also “shap[ing] the contours of the encounter,” (Willink and Shukri, 2018, p.188). In my case, that unexpected direction pointed me towards a fundamental question of correctness, the tension I felt between myself as a researcher and myself as an activist at that moment and the sudden anxiety that I – to paraphrase Ben – did not get it right in relation to either of that axis of my identity.

Concluding remarks

When I began this research, I anticipated that I might find a moment of apathy around anti-sexism within left-wing masculinity. After all, given the number of evocative and eloquent accounts written by women who had experienced sexism in leftist spaces, the labour movement and socialist parties, what else could it be apart from lip service paid to feminist politics while patriarchy is consistently reinforced?

The reality is much more complex; left-wing masculinity becomes inarticulate when navigating the issues, challenges and contentions raised by gender and sexual politics. Instead of contempt and a stubborn refusal to critique the innate nature of patriarchy, my participants revealed a deeply affective experience of frustration, uncertainty, and the complexities of trying to locate correctness in thought and action. It is not so much “a language that they don’t understand” as much as it is a series of affective relations which is emergent, slowing becoming, but also stuttering, stumbling and struggling to take form, that “moment of conscious comparison not yet come” that Williams identifies in the structures of feeling. What comes after the moment of inarticulation is harder to say – after all, can words say that words cannot say? But in the final chapter, I offer reflections on new millitancies and inconsistencies that became apparent in my fieldwork.

Chapter Eight: Alternative militancies and activist inconsistencies

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I attempted to map out Momentum's culture and the forms of masculinity within that culture. I have argued that Momentum's hybridity as an organisation mirrors that of its cultural practice – blurring the boundaries between leisure and politics and seeming to move away from discriminatory practises on the one hand while still practising and indeed reproducing some of those hierarchies. Within this culture, contentions and vaguely defined ideas about "correctness" in sexual politics resulted in the development of inarticulate masculinity, which acknowledges the importance of sexual politics and gender dynamics but was rendered inarticulate by its inability to navigate them.

In this chapter, I return to the militant diagram. In short, my crucial question is how helpful the militant diagram is as a tool for understanding identities within left-wing social movements. I will examine how left-wing masculinities converge or diverge from the diagram. In particular, I focus on convergence and divergence in practices around knowledge, emotions and intimacy, and compassion. I reflect on glimpses of alternative militancies I uncovered in my fieldwork – but it is also a reflection on the inconsistencies, the sites of contention, and the ambiguous aspects of left-wing masculinity that emerged from the fieldwork. The materialisation of such inconsistencies is further evidence of what March calls the "gaping lacuna" in academic knowledge around gender and sexual politics within the radical left; if we know very little about sex and gender on the left, then it would seem we know even less about intersections with ethnicity and age. In several of these sections, I

reflect on small flashes of insight hitherto un-interrogated aspects of left-wing culture. However, these insights are insufficient to draw a definitive conclusion; they point towards avenues for further scholarship.

Similarly, my fieldwork involved an experience of unexpected hostilities. I had anticipated the need to navigate complex dynamics around the issue of being a male researcher researching an issue that affects women and gender-nonconforming people (see my methods chapter for a full discussion on this issue). However, the only hostility I encountered was around transgender rights from individuals who presented as socialists and feminists (I say 'presented' for a good reason, and discuss why in more detail below). I conclude the chapter by reflecting on the various strategies my male participants used to navigate the complexities of the ethics of gender.

Who is a militant? Knowledge and learning.

In a previous chapter, I reflected upon scholarly understandings of political militancy. I contended that a militant is defined by what they do (how they organise), *what* they are willing to do (militancy of tactics), as well as *who* they are and how they navigate their emotions (militancy of the self). A clearer understanding of militants, and militancy, serves to plug a gap in academic discourse, wherein such terms are often deployed but not defined. Yet the extent to which the word "militant" resonated with my participants varied; those who had backgrounds in Marxist groups such as the RCG, SWP, CPGB, etc., were more likely to understand that when I used the term "militant" in my questions, I was referring to a certain kind of activist persona. We might say that such men had carried over the language of militants and militancy from the habitus of their previous movement.

Participants outside of that political tradition – those, for instance, who had engaged solely with Labour and Momentum – only knew the term in the context of "Militant Tendency," a Trotskyist group which was infamously expelled from the Labour Party in the 1980s (Crick, 2016). Given the unfavourable comparisons made by the right-wing press between Momentum and Militant (something I discuss in Chapter Five), bringing up the term "militant" often provoked dismissive responses from certain participants ("*We're not them*," Stephen told me, making the direct link, and speaking both firmly, and with a slight sense of frustration). From this, we can draw the idea that the meaning and resonance of specific terms vary among the different intellectual and political heritages of the radical left. It raises an additional question –whether or not we can identify Guattarian militants if such a militant does not label themselves as such. And can we identify alternative militancies when there is not, perhaps, an acknowledged and shared sense of militancy?

The militant diagram has a peculiar relationship with knowledge. In a sense, the militant thrives on being the sole purveyor of knowledge within the party; the militant is hostile toward ideas that do not fit the party line and becomes "closed in upon itself" (Guattari, 1984, p.33). Yet, it is possible to perceive a particular strand of anti-intellectualism in the way that the militant becomes uncompromising and repeats "statements" and "dogma" ad infinitum; the language of intellectualism might be here, but the substance of it is lacking. Neveu (2019) points out that there is an ambivalence in the militant's relationship to knowledge; on the one hand, militants pride themselves on having a "claim to understand the world, to develop on-the-spot investigations, and to learn and produce knowledge from anything," (p.94), but at the same time, militant fascination for knowledge (or, perhaps, being seen to be the producer of knowledge) was coupled with a "coarse anti-intellectualism that

targeted the institutions and productions of both academia and press," (ibid, p.94). Militants do not necessarily fetishise knowledge for its own sake but more for their role in being the arbitrators of that knowledge; they are "better soldiers insofar as his obedience comes from his inner option, from his consciences, and not from regulatory mechanisms" (Valverde, 1986, p.2, in Sales et al., 2018, p.584). Being a knower is important, but being able to arbitrate over who else can be a knower is also crucial.

Indeed, there is some convergence with the masculinities I encountered in the field. If we think of the more egregious experiences of sexist bullying recounted in previous chapters, the common feature is an imposed supremacy of male knowledge – think here of Theresa, whose knowledge of campaigning was relegated by her male comrades. Even in less extreme examples, intellectual power played a role; the men who dominated the conversation in Brendan's branch's IWD event seemed keen to demonstrate their knowledge of women's contributions to socialist politics but also to be the mouthpiece through which that knowledge was shared with the broader group. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the role of knowledge in the political left does not simply come from the intellectual power of knowing one's theory or being well-versed in the history of one's movement – theory is used as part of a means of stance taking, of saying something about the self.

Perhaps it is on the knowledge question that emergent possibilities of new subjectivities can be seen. Leila made the point to me that knowledge should not be treated as a tangible thing in itself, but that in her world view, to be a socialist was to:

> *…reject being in a position of authority…be always questioning like we are eternal students…we love learning, we love questioning, we love questioning. We should understand that everything is evolving and changing…when we, we find new*

> *ideas, new experiences, we should approach them as 'oh that's interesting, why are you doing that*,' *not like 'why we shouldn't be doing that.'*

On one level, Leila here articulates the need for humble reflexivity. At the same time, her framing of an "eternal student" who rejects authority put me in mind of the often partially quoted aphorism of Marx of the need for a "ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be," (Marx and Engels, 1975, p.49). As Kellogg (2018) observes, what Marx refers to here is the need to be "conscious of the muck of ages sullying the tools" with which revolutionaries approached building a new society. In this sense, we can see sense within Leila's sentiment that revolutionary politics must reject the dogmatic and rigid approach that rejects the unknown and embraces learning. As she elaborated in the interview, there was, in her mind, a "*culture clash between those that learn the theory, and those that want to change the world with it.*"

Can this be a possible divergence from the militant diagram? The idea of being an "eternal student" seems to be at odds with the militant, who does not need learning because they are already a "specialist in social change or revolution" (Andrew, 1999, n.p). Yet, among my participants, there was tension between being a student and the need to be educated. Take the below quotation from Sarah. Sarah's response here is drawn from her reflections on the men in her branch who played a significant role in why she had distanced herself from both Momentum and the Labour movement in general:

> *It's what they, what they do: they take a thing, like feminism, like anti-racism and they colonise it and its.. its like another tool for them, like they speak, they don't think before they speak. These men they have this, they need to always be teacher, but its, its like they need to take a step back, and go educate themselves, you know?*

The statement that an individuals needs to "educate themselves" about the realities of a marginalised group has something of a contentious history within liberation movements. The term appears to originate from black feminist critiques of white feminism; in an especially incendiary intervention, black feminist writer Carol Camper declaimed to her white readers that "YOUR RACISM IS SHOWING" when such individuals refuse to "educate yourself. Don't ask another black woman to explain it all to you. Read a book," (Camper, 1994, p.40). Of course, there is no issue with informing oneself about the nature of a topic before engaging in discussion. However, the statement is not unproblematic, as there is an implicit assumption about knowledge acquisition being accessible, available, and neutral. As Foucault reminds us, this ignores that "we should admit…that power produces knowledge" (Foucault, 2012). Lai, writing for the Everyday Feminism blog, makes this point more explicit: "there is a wealth of information on the web to learn about these things but… certain people find it easier to access that information…people with stellar educations, people raised in middle- or upper-class families…people who are time and/or resource-rich…" (Lai, 2017, no pagination). Such an approach to education is a product not sure of certain kinds of class and cognitive privilege but also a product of certain online expressions of feminism. Reagle (2016) suggests that certain forms of online feminism draw from the norms of geek culture, expressly the "obligation to know" and a more explicit designation of knows and the extent to which they know through social media flairs and forum discussions. Reflecting on my participants, I have highlighted in a previous chapter that many of them (regardless of gender) were educated to some degree and, by extension, possessed a particular form of cognitive ability. Given Momentum's hybridity and relationship with social media usage, it is not unusual for online lexicons to be deployed offline. However, how can we conceive of "go educate yourself" in the context of militancy? It strikes me as a somewhat different sentiment to being "an eternal student." The former implies the need to withdraw and follow a

curriculum, mirroring perhaps the process of institutional education before returning to the group to demonstrate one's new-found knowledge. Dzodan (2014) makes the salient point that "educating yourself" can function as part of a performative practice, as that education – along with the broader process of being 'called out' – "*is intended for an audience*" (italics in original: no pagination).

Fundamentally, both Sarah and Leila's approaches identify the same problem – we, as individual leftists (or, perhaps, individual leftist men), lack the knowledge to act and uphold emancipatory forms of politics effectively. In this sense, knowledge is closely linked to actions, the presumption being that if one knows the right things, one can act correctly. However, the two approaches diverge in how knowledge acquisition is meant to take place – one appears to be an organic, holistic and ongoing approach, a form of never-ending learning open to new possibilities. The other implies that a body of knowledge exists in some ambivalent places, which is not here. It becomes an individual's responsibility to depart (physically or metaphorically) from here and return once that knowledge has been acquired. The former approach seems to reject the logic of the militant diagram; the latter is (while not identical) similar in that it appeals toward a hierarchical structure of knowledge.

Sex, giving up activism and possibilities for change.

Sex was a topic that did not appear in my interviews as much as I had anticipated. By this, I do not mean that discussions around sexual matters were absent; as I alluded to in a previous chapter, some women alluded to experiencing sexual harassment in left-wing spaces, and sexual violence came up concerning the Comrade Delta scandal in the Socialist Workers Party (the spectre of which continues to haunt the British left, nearly ten years after

the fact). What I mean is that sex as an act of intimacy, sex as an act of pleasure, or sex as an act of bonding, and the role of sex within a left-wing culture was curiously skirted around. This is not to say that the politics of sex, rather than sexual politics, are absent in broader left-wing discourse. As I write this chapter, I am listening to a podcast about whether there is a socialist framework for ghosting, part of a series of podcasts produced by Novara Media as part of their "Doing it Right: Sex on the Left" project (Novara Media, 2022). This suggests that there might be some appetite among socialists for discussing intimacy, relationship etiquette and so on. Yet, questions about sex essentially went inarticulated by my male participants. I had initially considered including some questions about left-wing men's attitudes and experiences of sex, but after an attempt to pose those questions created a certain amount of awkwardness in my pilot interviews, I chose to abandon specific questions and see whether the topic emerged through broader questions about left-wing men's relationship to intimacy, closeness and feeling of safety. The fact that very few of my male participants were willing to talk about sex is not out of line with the experience of other masculinities researchers; men tend to get fewer responses to questions about sex than women in qualitative interviews (Flood, 2013, p.66). On the flip side, female researchers get more self-disclosure about men's sex lives and more emotional expressivity (Scully, 2013, p.12). Gender constructs the interview as much as the interview constructs gender. It is, however, worth reflecting on the snippets of a sense of what role sex plays within a left-wing culture.

Brenden suggested that within the left-wing culture, the connection between masculinity and sexuality was "almost inextricable." For him, this took the form of "*young people on the left*," who "*go to great lengths to talk about how sexually liberated they are, but [they]are some of the most sexually conservative people I know*." When I pressed him on this, he elaborated that many younger left-wing men had "*very traditional…within the lines of*

the colouring book ideas about what sex and sexuality are," but that this conservativism is hidden by "*a couple of labels that they've learned like 'polyamorous' and 'kink shaming'*" which they kind of "threw in" to discussions. In this sense, we might say that sex for these men played a role similar to theory, i.e. it is used to tell us something about who they are, as much as it is about what they do in intimate settings. In Brenden's eyes, there was an equivalence between what he saw as the 'performative' male feminist who "*thinks 'as a man, my main job is to be a feminist which can translate into my job is to save women, and to kind of perpetuate the whole problem*,'" and a "*performative openness*" around sex and sexuality, which was more of a *"'I'm really open to all forms of sexuality but I am actually quite traditional in my views.*" Brendan's insight here reminded me of two other particular moments in my conversations with male participants – firstly, Jacob's frustration at feeling excluded as a transgender man within what he felt was a sexually charged gay hook-up culture, and secondly Lewis's invoking of the figure of the "male feminist trope," – that is, the man who engages the language and attitudes of feminism as a means to gain greater sexual access to women. What links these three experiences is the dual experiences of shame and inauthenticity – shame at being either a) rejected as a potential sexual partner on principle or b) at being misrecognised as a philanderer, and inauthenticity in not being treated as one's preferred gender, or as a hypocrite. Sex is a site of considerable contention and raises socio-ethical questions for left-wing men. According to Brendan – who, of my male participants, had the most to say about sex – sexual activity in left-wing culture exists in "*a kind of weird subtext*," which links sex and sexual activity to something "*nasty, Tory, sleazy*." This exists simultaneous with the "*performative openness*" because, in this context, sex is comfortably couched in the realms of political posturing rather than reflecting on one's relationship to intimacy. Hence, within a culture seemingly about "*let's welcome everything that isn't harmful, let's really empower people to do what's right for them*," there is a

reluctance to talk about sex. For Brendan, there is a sort of inarticulacy going on here; most left-wing men "*feel a level of embarrassment about things like masturbation, porn, lust*," and perceive those things as connected to "toxic masculinity," without realising that "*the toxic element defines what you do about it, not the feeling in and of itself*." Brendan's description here reminded me of the remarkable empathy with which Leila spoke about the men who had subjected her to misogynistic abuse. She characterised the men who bullied her as people who have "*not had the opportunities to delve into their own vulnerabilities and trauma*." Ironically, Those men created and were the victims of a social world in which there was "*fear, there's lots of fear, I think there's fear of anything new*." Similarly to left-wing men performing openness around sex while feeling deep shame about it, Leila saw left-wing men as unable to process or cope with the consequences of their emotions – because such things were "*messy*" and "*perceived as a weakness*" - at the same time as vilifying the emotional displays of others; Around both sex, and vulnerabilities, we find individuals trapped in a cycle of contradictory practises, which were ultimately self-destructive, and destructive to others.

Complexities and compassion

It's worth noting that Brendan and Leila disclosed that they were both mental health therapists, albeit in quite different disciplines of psychology. Their insights into the politics around intimacy appeared to be deeply informed by that professional engagement in well-being and to have blended into their sense of socialism. Both admitted to me that their frankness about sex and vulnerability had provoked, if not hostility from their comrades, but an awkwardness; such awkwardness was *"a bit disorientating*," according to Leila, as someone who was used to the cultural norms of other well-being practitioners. Indeed, the intersection between activist and professional cultures produced intriguing glimpses of different forms of masculinity. In my interview with Stephen, he told me – by way of

example as to what he thought was positive sexual politics – of a work colleague of his, whom he characterised as "*very Northern, very standard, leaves work, has a pint, goes home, missus cook's dinner*." A young woman from Stephen's Momentum branch joined his workplace, and Stephen highlighted his colleague's first conversation with the new team member:

> *…it's very first meeting with her, and I was there, and he said something that I thought was just brilliant: he said, "[Stephen] and I are middle aged, middle class, white men, we can't ever be anything else. It's not your job and I recognise that there's an element of unfairness in asking this, but if we're ever being patriarchal, misogynistic or wherever doing something that makes you feel like you're not being valued equally and your voices isn't being heard….Can you please just tell us, because we absolutely won't have meant it and we want to give you the permission to do that. And we want to recognise it's not your responsibility to do that we're going to work on ourselves." I remember thinking "this is fucking brilliant!" because he's just…he's just….he's made it uncomplicated.*

Stephen explained that his colleague was left-leaning but not a member of any left-wing movement. However, his colleague's actions stand out because of their "uncomplicated" nature – a straightforward statement capturing ideas around positionality and accountability. It's important to state that I do not necessarily propose that such simple expressions are the solution to the moment of inarticulation I identified in the previous chapter – though I feel inclined to agree with Stephen's description of it perhaps being a "template of how to handle situations. " Why this template emerged in a workplace, rather than in a 'transformative' social movement like Momentum, is an interesting question in and of itself. Perhaps what it comes down to the fact that activist cultures sometimes thrive on self-generated complexities; Ahmad (2015) captures this in his reflections on the problems of activist culture and progressive communities, in which the boundaries of who is 'in' and who is 'out' "…is constructed through the use of language and terminology – a language and terminology that are forever shifting and almost impossible to keep up with," (no pagination). In other words, knowing if one is doing something wrong becomes difficult because the boundaries of right

and wrong are unstable. We might connect this to what is ultimately an affective experience, that is, "how movements enable people to grow their own capacities and become new people (or don't)" (Bergman and Montgomery, 2017, p.89). Momentum certainly attempted to enable growth, but as we have established, it sometimes just reproduced many of the hierarchies and practised it claimed to oppose – and by all accounts, inhibited the growth of others, if my participants are to be believed.

Does activism or activist milieu overcomplicate things, or at least make it harder to make any fundamental constructive changes to undertake transformations of the self? As Guattari reminds us, the militant diagram requires a certain amount of self-perpetuating for the sake of it to be repeated: "ad infinitum," (1984, p.192). The infamous *Do or Die* article, *Give up Activism*, acknowledges this tendency:

> The 'activist' is a specialist or an expert in social change – yet the harder we cling to this role and notion of what we are, the more we actually impede the change we desire…the supposedly revolutionary activity of the activist is a dull and sterile routine – a constant repetition of a few actions with no potential for change. Activists would probably resist change if it came because it would disrupt the easy certainties of their role and the nice little niche they've carved out for themselves…if everyone is becoming revolutionary then you're not so special anymore, are you?
>
> (Andrew, 1999, no pagination)

What's critical here is the idea of "easy certainties" for some – the militant or 'activist' to use Andrew's language - at the expense of overt complexities for others. What I draw from my research is that while there are possibilities for transformation within Momentum's culture, those are often possibilities that only apply to some or seem insincere (foregrounding sexual openness, not for its virtue, but because it positions one as superior in a given circumstance, for example). As a result, a people-powered movement becomes oddly

closed off; the door is always open, but not everyone will like what they find inside. Brendan summarised this in eloquent terms:

> *Sometimes these [left wing spaces] can be horrible places, not aggressive, not all the time, but it's more like…I'm sat in some of these meetings and I'm thinking to myself 'I haven't got a bloody clue what these people are on about!' And I'm, I'm a smart guy, you know, I've got a degree, I'm well educated, but some of these people they…at times, I'm embarrassed to be a socialist, like I cannot imagine walking down the streets near here, where there's people having their benefits cut, being sanctioned because they didn't turn up to an appointment because their addiction service was closed that day, you know, trying to kill themselves and being told by the mental health crisis team that they should make a cup of tea and have a hot bath…like imagine I brought someone like that to our meetings, because that's where there are supposed to be these people who want those people fed and housed and supported…and they'd just be in a room full of people saying 'oh yes, well, I've read this, this journal article on blah blah blah blah" or [**Laughs]** talking about some fucking, like, socialist model for cryptocurrency or like they're in an Oxbridge lecture or…like…I kid you not, that person would walk out of that meeting a Tory. I kid you not*.

What space for new possibilities is there when – seemingly – cognitive privilege and complexities would drive away even the people socialism is supposed to support? If anything, Brendan's comment here could be taken as a more direct reason to "give up activism," or, at least, to think (paraphrasing Marx) if that is activism, I am no activist. Perhaps it is only when activism is, if not given up, at least put to one side, that possibilities for new forms of politics and masculinity become available.

'Old white men', age and discourses of perpetration.

A common stereotype about misogyny is that such attitudes are more prevalent in older men. The idea of the resurgence of an "old school" misogyny or "retrosexism", primarily perpetuated by older men, is commonly deployed in journalistic discussions around gender relations (see, for example, Valenti, 2019; Cork, 2021); the implications here being older men are more like to resist the advances of feminism and transformations in social

attitudes around gender relations, while younger men are somehow more progressive (or at least, less overtly sexist). Such a stance on older men is something I encountered in left-wing circles long before I commenced this research project – I have lost count of the number of times I heard a female comrade bemoaning the actions of "some old white man" in the post-meeting social event. My female and non-binary participants did not solely voice this antipathy towards older men. Ben spoke of his frustration at the "*older male veterans"* who were too "*self-important*" in Momentum meetings to allow anyone else to speak. Rueben was emphatic to me that it was "*older guys…that were, like, talking over women…just not caring how they behaved and stuff. Like…there's so many examples of it.*"

Yet what was interesting was that despite their being "so many examples", I heard very few of them. Ben told me about a particularly contentious meeting (which I have outlined in a previous chapter). Still, his other examples of problematic male behaviour were from younger men, such as a Momentum member who was expelled from his branch for harassing women. Reuben similarly highlighted examples of younger men making "*transphobic jokes*." However, his example of a 'problematic older man,' – whom he described as "*a bit touchy-feely*" – was only "*what, 45 or so"* and was jokingly referred to as "*comrade dad"* in group chats – hardly an 'older guy'. Ben and Reuben were among the youngest of the men I spoke to (both in their early 20s), and my younger female participants shared their enmity towards older people. Something is interesting about the intergenerational politics of their identity formations; Zeng and Abidin (2021) note that for younger people – the so-called 'Gen Z' – collective objections to "' Boomer mentalities and ideologies" (including, but not limited to, perceived support among older people for social policies such as Brexit, complicity in generational income inequality and structural racism, sexism and homophobia etc.) result in the "draw[ing] of generational borders that can be ambiguous,"

(p.2461). To an extent, my younger participants were establishing a "generational we-sense," (Bolin, 2016, p.92). This we-sense – the idea that the brunt of sexism in the left was the product of older men – conflicted with the stories of sexism perpetrated by younger comrades. Indeed, for many of my participants, the role of older men was more inclined to be inclusionary than exclusionary. Theresa, for example, spoke warmly of the *"older men, you know, in their seventies, who'd been in the Communist Party back in the day*," and the role they played in her first experience of organised left-wing politics; such men were "*very encouraging*" of her and other women in her branch, and those men worked to "*democratise systems*," and "*really try to get people involved*" in the decision-making processes. These older communists were more authentic in their socialism because they "*practise what they preach*," and their approach to sexual politics was "*genuine*." Tim gave me a similar insight. Reflecting on both his Momentum branch and his trade union work, he told me that it was *"...some of the older men, older people – women too, but mostly men I feel – who are the, you know, the ones at the cutting edge of championing inclusivity.*" Tim went on to tell me about how older men in his Momentum branch, for example, advocated heavily for the rights of trans and non-binary people. Older men's work around inclusivity wasn't simply restricted to the realm of policy; Brendan told me he saw the most obvious anti-sexist practice from older men in his branch. For Brendan, it was almost exclusively the "*younger white men*" in his branch (whom he characterised as "*intellectual snobs*" and "*pseudo-intellectual bullies*") who practised an exclusionary form of politics which was "sexist by consequence." In contrast, the older men in the group were the ones who confronted these younger men about their behaviour, *"saying [to them] 'you're being too passionate,' or 'you're being almost aggressive making your point, and I'm concerned that you might be shutting some people out of the conversation,"* - a far cry, it seems, from the older man who sustains and thrives on misogynistic practice.

My data did not suggest that older men were exclusively advocates for feminism, while younger men were more likely to engage in militancy and exclusion. At times, throughout my interviews, participants also described problematic behaviour from older men. Tim, for example, told me about an older male organiser (known to him from his work with UCU, as well as Momentum) who would be overtly tactile with female members, "*he put his hands on out of our female committee member's shoulders, and [said] 'it'd gonna be alright'…it was clear he would never done that to me*." However, the way this was framed to me was not as an intentional act of sexism – Tim described this individual as a "*parental figure*" and a *"traditional masculine man*" who did not always "*acknowledge the hierarchies"* in the spaces he occupied. At worst, we might accuse this individual of "benevolent sexism," that is, the sexism that "relies on kinder and gentler justifications of male dominance and prescribed gender roles…encompass[ing] feelings of protectiveness and affection towards women" (Glick and Fiske, 1997, p.121). However, there is also a point about different political habitus to be made here; it seemed that the relationship between anti-sexist practice and age was linked to the politico-cultural frameworks those men inhabited. Theresa clarified that the men who had empowered her were Communist Party men who had navigated their way into Labour/Momentum. The behaviour of such men was in stark contrast with older men from different left-wing cultures – she frequently referred to one older man who took the lead in bullying her, referring to him as both a self-proclaimed *"a big socialist*," but also a "*pseudo-Blairite*"; a very different culture of that the Communist Party. Similarly, Brendan identified the older men in his branch as "*they were miners, trade unionists through and through, old school*," who were, for the most part, committed and inclusive community activists who would deliver foodbank parcels in their free time; for Tim,

similarly, the men who were "*on the cutting edge*" of advocating for greater parity between genders were older trade unionists, who saw it as a "*moral duty to...raise everyone up*."

Establishing a coherent framework for the generational politics of the left and how they relate to sexual politics is outside this thesis's scope. However, my snippets of data on this point raise some intriguing points for reflection. In my field notes, I noted the idea of a 'discourses of perpetration' – a set of expectations and responses regarding how age and men's wielding of patriarchal power functioned. First, there was a discourse among my younger participants about older men being more likely to engage in sexist practices; this, to my mind, was in part a product of a broader set of cultural and intergenerational grievances between Gen Z and millennials and so-called 'Boomers' within wider society, and one which has certainly been amplified on social media platforms with predominantly younger users (see Zeng and Abidin, 2021; Bristow, 2020; White, 2013). Second, we have a discourse that identifies younger, more educated men with greater intellectual and cognitive capital degrees as most likely to engage in performative and inauthentic 'male feminism'.

In comparison, older men are less likely to posture and more likely to get on with things. Thirdly, and perhaps concurrently with the previous discourse, we might identify a way of representing older men who acknowledge a propensity for benevolent sexism but are more willing to forgive them and see it as a misstep. We might colloquially understand this as, "Oh, he's a product of his time, but he means well." The full nature of these discourses, the contentious role they play in left-wing culture, and their interactions with ethics of gender are subjects for further study.

Finally, how does the generational politics of the left fit, or not, with the militant diagram? The various critiques of militancy we have reviewed within this thesis have scant to say on age but much on hierarchies. The militant is a contemptuous leader, an arbitrator, a teacher – a subjectivity, in short, that requires itself to be above the masses. Since older people are, in general, placed higher within social hierarchies, we might be able to consider ambivalence towards them to be an attempted rejection of militancy, but only an attempt. As we have established with our analysis of Momentum's old culture, positioning one's self or organisation as distinct from the old – an old left or old leftist – does not necessarily guarantee that the new would be virtuous.

Hostilities, altruistic hate mail and the militant diagram

Like many male researchers engaged in work on sex, gender and feminism, I had anticipated that I would have to navigate some hostility or tepid reception from my participants. Such hostility would be understandable and is a phenomenon commented on by other feminist-informed male researchers (Tiemari and Taylor, 2019; Heath, 2003; Kamuf, 2013). Equally, while there is much to say for scholar-activism, I had previously encountered unexpected tensions when researching a movement that I had been a part of as a former member of the SWP trying to make sense of the 'Comrade Delta' scandal as part of my M.Phil. However, the hostilities I did encounter did not come from the individuals I interviewed. Instead, I experienced hostility from an unexpected demographic online; the point of contention was less about my positionality as a 'man in feminism' than my stance on transgender rights. These encounters were deeply uncomfortable but offered insight into how other identities within the left (outside of masculinities) converged with the militant diagram.

When I took part in the Red Labour event described in my Methods chapter, I was aware that being the only man on an all-female panel about sexism was causing some consternation in the comments section, both on the Zoom call where the panel took place, and also in the comments on the live Facebook broadcast. Comments tended to be pejoratives about me– I was mildly amused to see someone write in the chat "MANSPLAINER" in all-caps mere seconds after I was introduced but before I'd even begun speaking. However, to my mind, I interpreted these comments as expressions of frustration at a perceived lack of action on sexism by left-wing men, a group of whom I happened to be a convenient representative. That said, I noted a noticeable change in the comments when the panel was asked a question on how anti-sexist work could include support of transgender rights. As my fellow panellists had provided far more eloquent and thoughtful answers than I could, I said something along the lines of the need for an intersectional class struggle and that trans rights were an essential aspect of my understanding of socialism. Barely had I said this when I noticed an acceleration in Facebook comments attacking me for being a cisgender man who had spoken in favour of trans rights; comments from accounts seemingly belonging to women claimed that I was a misogynist, that I was a proponent of "gender ideology", and that I hated "biological women." This is not to say that my fellow panellists did not experience their abusive comments (in the case of Apsana Begum MP, I noted a fair few Islamophobia slurs in the chat, a depressing reminder that left-wing culture is no more insulated from racial and religious bigotry as it is from sexism and misogyny). However, the sustained hostility seemed targeted mainly at me, which continued beyond the meeting. Red Labour had shared my call for participants to promote the event, which contained my academic email address and participant information sheet. I was unprepared for the barrage of emails and messages on Facebook and Twitter; this provoked – sadly, only a handful concerned participating in my

study. Instead, I was the target of a tidal wave of individuals who took issue with my (extremely mild) comments about transgender rights.

The emails and social media messages can broadly be separated into two camps. The first camp contained messages written by (people positioning themselves as) women not interested in being interviewed. Instead, they wanted to either declaim their stance on trans rights, criticise me, or both. Several of these messages included statements such as "my sex is woman, I do not identify as having a gender (sic)" or "I don't have a gender," "I am a woman, not a 'cisgender' woman, a woman,"; in some cases, the criticism was more overt, and lapsed into outright aggression. One woman wrote to me: "You claim to be an ally against misogyny, but YOU won't back the scientific fact that only WOMEN have a cervix, making you the MISOGYNIST," (I did not know how to respond to this since I cannot for the life of my recall the last time I used the word 'cervix' in any context). Some of the messages lapsed into outright hate mail, with one particularly insistent individual on Facebook demanding that I should cut my wrists and that (in an addendum to the threat that I admit I found darkly funny) "there are plenty of sisters in Manchester who will help if you aren't man enough to do it yourself!"

The second camp of messages was from (people positioning themselves as) women who *did* want to take part in the research project. Still, it made it clear that they believed I needed to reframe the research to explore the 'sexism and misogyny' of transgender people. In one particularly striking example. I received a lengthy email from someone who appeared to have academic credentials, rewriting my participant information sheet with tracked changes to remove references to questions about "gender and sexual politics" and replace these with "gender and trans ideology." I also noted that words like "non-binary" and "self-

defining" (i.e. "self-defining man") were left in the document but highlighted in red and struck through. "This," I was informed by my impromptu editor, "would be a more appropriate project for a man who claims to be an ally to feminists." These messages provoked a rather complex series of feelings; firstly, I was affronted that someone felt the need to rewrite my research; secondly, I couldn't help but marvel at the perversely altruistic, almost pedagogical approach – it framed me as an erstwhile student, fumbling clumsily with the minutiae of social research, as someone who needed to be gently corrected by the teacher. Put bluntly, someone had taken quite a lot of time to 'correct' my epistemological and ontological errors, even if their idea of correction was something I found both amusing and repellent. At the time, I noted in my field journal that I had received altruistic hate mail for want of a better phrase. I politely declined to take the feedback on board.

It is worth emphasising a few points here; there are some workings of social privilege in that I could view these encounters as humorous. While it was uncomfortable, that didn't stop me from resorting to humour as a coping mechanism. I would show some of the more egregious messages to my (somewhat unamused) partner in the same way that I would show her an amusing meme or a Tweet that had made me chuckle. My sense of myself as a man, a relatively experienced researcher, and someone on the receiving end of much more severe and coordinated cyberbullying earlier in my life meant that I could laugh it off to a point. I am under no illusions that others, especially those with more direct experience of structural and virtual discrimination than me, might take things differently. In addition, I did offer to interview people in the second camp, those who were not just engaging in abuse, but every offer I made for an interview was either ignored or turned down. Finally, the reader will note that I have hesitated to group all the individuals who contacted me as women. Some of them were those who used their emails and real names and whose identities I could confirm with a

swift Google. Others, especially those on social media, claimed to be women, but whether or not this was true or not, I cannot say. Many accounts that messaged me were throwaways with no profile pictures and a handful of followers. Therefore, I cannot say with certainty that women targeted me, but only those positioning themselves as women.

There are several reflections to draw from these encounters and what they tell me about the sexual and gender politics of the left. Firstly, there seems to be an apparent epistemological contestation around questions of identity – a refusal not just to accept transgender people as authentic and valid but to reject the concept of gender itself. This does not appear to be the product of the postgenderism alluded to by thinkers such as Donna Haraway (2006) but instead drawn from the framework of so-called 'gender critical' feminism (more commonly referred to as 'trans-exclusionary radical feminism' or TERFs) (Pearce et al., 2020). Such anti-trans attitudes have, sadly, become increasingly influential in the UK's political sphere (Anon, 2020; Mclean, 2022; Ferreira, 2022). Not only does this contestation locate itself around the identity of women, but also the meaning of misogyny. Misogyny, according to these women, was not simply about the structural and interpersonal role of cisgender men in perpetuating structures of patriarchy, but the idea that, as Michelis (2022) puts it, transgender people have " 'residual' male privilege…[which] might disrupt the sense of sisterhood and solidarity amongst women…or even make some women feel uncomfortable and unsafe," (ibid, no pagination). That such a set of ideals would find root in the cultures around socialism is not as outlandish as it might seem, partially because movement cultures are not hermetically sealed against the reproduction of oppressive dynamics. Still, also because gender-critical feminism often utilises the language and lexicography of broader feminist practice, that is, the critique of gender as a social construction (Hanlon and Wallace, 2019).

Secondly, the approach of these individuals converged some of the features of the Guattarian militant diagram. Similar to the way that the militant uses "statements…hardened into dogma, and taken completely out of the context in which they had been made" (Guattari, 1984, p.192), the gender-critical feminists use the language of "gender ideology" or "trans ideology," – terms which Graff (2016) eloquently identifies as "what conservative Catholics construe as the evils of liberalism in the realm of human sexuality," (p.268) – the language of conservatism is re-signified as the language of radicalism; liberation from misogyny can only happen on terms which eradicate the complex needs of transgender people. Much as the militant acts as the gatekeeper for the interests of the proletariat, so these individuals (whether it be in their messages to me or the barrage of comments against the speakers of the panel) appointed themselves arbitrators of not only who can be involved in liberatory politics, but also what is or is not definable as misogyny – most explicitly evidence in the impromptu editing of my participant information sheet. Serano (2016) identifies oppositional sexism as the root of transphobia and homophobia; this worldview sees masculinity and femininity as "rigid, mutually exclusive categories, each possessing a unique and non-overlapping set of attributes, aptitudes, abilities and desires," (p.14); transphobia in this reinforces the gender binary. One might argue that the Guattarian militant sees the wider world in oppositional rather than inclusive terms. Further research might find utility in Guattari's work when trying to make sense of the Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist's peculiar (but sadly more frequent) persona.

Thirdly, these encounters raised the complex positionalities I found myself navigating as a male researcher studying sexism and experiences of misogyny, things I had never directly experienced. In these encounters, what was the proper conduct? To defend the rights

of trans people, of my trans comrades and loved ones (which was my gut feeling), and in doing so, 'speak over' women? Would doing so run the risk of feeding the arguments of gender-critical feminists, of becoming what Lawford-Smith (2022) identifies as justification for her controversial monograph on the need for gender-critical feminism, that is, a man who "claim the authority to tell women who must be included in feminism, or what feminism must be like," (p.1)? Suppose my epistemological (and, I would argue, ethical) framework was to treat my research participants as equal knowledge co-creators. How did I balance a political need to express solidarity and to intervene against oppression with not invalidating the perspectives of a group when I had none of their lived experiences? In these encounters, I experienced a sense of what Braidotti (2013) calls "lacking the lack" (p.235), lacking the historical experience of oppression based on sex, thereby, a kind of ability to exist in that discussion as anything other than the "empirical referent of the historical oppressor of women," (ibid). On reflection, much of my turmoil about this issue came down to my male discomfort. This discomfort is perhaps inevitable in research where the researcher must problematise their situated self and question whether they might perpetuate the social ills they study. As Heath (2003) reminds us, male researchers must approach their work "knowing one is a man, and what that means" (p.32).

Concluding remarks: Strategic methods for navigating sexual politics in left-wing spaces

It is clear that militancy and the militant *are* reproduced within Momentum, but it is not relatively as straightforward. As this chapter has demonstrated, on specific issues – knowledge, intimacy, age - Momentum activists converged or diverged from the militant diagram. Here, it is possible to see potential lines of flight out of the confines and hierarchies of militancy. However, these remain avenues for further scholarship rather than definitive

conclusions. Men in Momentum are (mostly) aware that things have changed; in the new and novel context of the movement, the seemingly simple question of "How do I as a man behave?" becomes immeasurably complex; how and when does one speak? And when does one not? If I might be permitted to be hyperbolic, how does one navigate the fear of being called out for something one did not know was a sin?

My research suggests that men use strategies to navigate these complexities. Firstly, there is evidence that some men in Momentum did not appear to care less; the men who gaslit and bullied Theresa and Leila would fall under this camp. These were men whose militancy was largely undiminished, their domineering unimpeded. To a lesser extent, we might add men who claimed a feminist stance without substantiation to this camp, such as those men who used the International Women's Day event in Brendan's branch to grandstand their own 'feminist' credentials. Why engage with the complexities of sexual politics when one can bulldoze through them?

Secondly, men might try to distinguish between when they are an activist and just a man. We might call this colloquially as 'being off the clock'. Here, I am thinking about Rueben's tactics, whereby he claims an articulate and sensitive masculinity informed by feminism and feminist critique in meetings. However, once outside those spaces, he lapses back into hegemonic masculinity. Rueben's strategy could also be understood as a kind of rejection of militancy. As we established earlier, there can be no outside of the ideal militant subjectivity – a militant is always a militant, always committed to the party, to the cause, and never able to be off the clock. Reuben might not have been rejecting the sexual objectification of women by conceptualising his female comrades as "fit girls in the pub." However, he cannot be said to be embracing militancy.

Thirdly, men might choose not to speak. As I noted in the previous chapter, the idea of men knowing when to "shut up" resonated with my female, non-binary and male participants. As Foucault reminds us, there is not one, but many silences. Silences can be both symptoms of powerlessness or power. Silence can provide opportunities for reflection and self-knowledge; drawing on Socrates and Max Picard, Caranfa (2004) argues that silence plays a vital role in the "predicament of selfhood" because it "cannot be explained or defined or manipulated according to the laws of rational knowledge." It provides the "momentum necessary to move beyond apparent contradictions or opposition" (p.223). Rose (2020) makes a distinction between active and passive silence, the latter being something imposed through oppressive power dynamics, but the former being a "form of meta-communication; it says that something is not being said" (p.109). My sense from the interview data was that, ultimately, this was what the men who opted for silence wanted; when Ben, Brendan, Stephen or Marcus talked about the importance of knowing when not to speak, they were communicating to their female comrades that they knew that it was – to put it colloquially – *your* space, not mine; my silence is a signal that I understand the complexities of speech. However, the problem with a strategy of active silence is that it can be perceived as a passive silence – the silence of 'I don't care' rather than one of 'I do care, and I am letting you speak'. Perhaps we might understand men's silences in this context to be a form of relief; there, the pressures and uncertainties of the ethics of gender can be put to one side for a moment. In my uncomfortable experience of the Red Labour event outlined above, I chose the strategy of silence in a situation where I was not only under attack for simply being there but because I also knew that my contribution was limited to academic knowledge rather than lived and embodied experiences; over an hour and a quarter, I spoke for approximately six minutes, and there was a relief in not having to speak further, in ceding the floor to those

whom I felt had more to contribute than I. Men's silences are rarely conceptualised as a form of relief; if anything, it is men speaking which is seen to be a form of relief when men's silences are understood as a form of repression (Addis, 2011) or as a form of perpetuating dominant masculinities (Mclean, 2018). Dalessandro et al. (2019) suggest a notion of men's 'strategic silences' in their study on college-aged men's attitudes towards contraceptive decision-making processes. Still, their understanding is limited to a strategic silence which "uphold[s] lock constructions of hegemonic masculinity" (p.772). In other words, men's silences are frequently conceptualised as reinforcing the existing order rather than trying to undermine it, as appeared to be the case among my participants. Reflecting on my research, I wonder if there is a way that we might think of male silence as something emergent, becoming, something that contains possibilities rather than reiterations of an existing order. However, it is also important to note that relief in being able to be silent is limited; Heath (2003) makes the salient point that while "falling off into silence," can provide a space for men to contemplate and rethink, it is only ever a short term solution. I encountered the limits of this relief at the Red Labour talk when I struggled with the question of whether to call out what I perceived to be transphobia; in the case of my participants, men's active silence was interpreted as a passive one; Active silences "falter when one party refuses to accept the multiplicity of messages and instead chooses to interpret silence as an index of absence," (Rose, 2011, p.109-10). It is ironic, perhaps, that silences are understood so easily as a dialogic.

Fourthly, and finally, men might try to renounce masculinity outright or adopt an ambivalence towards it. The idea that in the face of feminist critiques of men and men's power, the only thing men can do is reject being men is hardly new. Indeed, it is something previous generations of male activists in left-wing movements struggled to come to terms

with. In an anonymous article in *Brothers Against Sexism* – an early anti-sexist socialist men's journal in the keeping of *Achilles* Heel - the author describes how when he joined a majority female protest against the anti-choice Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC), and men began to lead the chants. "How fucking ironical - men shouting that [Women's Liberation Slogans]...there were men up to their old tricks by leading chants and shouting their heads off with women's slogans and demands - some fucking choice!" (South London Men Against Sexism, 1974, p.16). Later, the author - who did not take part in the chants - recounts being "harangued by a sister 'fucking men leading the chants - fucking men!'." His response is one of deep shame "...at being lumped together with the offending men, but just for being...being a man…[I wanted] a new word to describe us - we didn't want to known as 'men'" (Ibid.) Interestingly, among my interview participants, none of the men I spoke with openly argued for rejecting masculinity, but masculinity itself occupied an uncertain place in their worldview:

> **Ben:** *Is there a different left male identity? Like maybe there are guys out there who are good and fit the bill, are positive…but its really fucking hard to just…not be like just men in general, cos men are just this like fucking spectrum of people, and they fall into pockets and you're more likely to be a misogynist if you're in this organisation as opposed to that but ultimately…men just get really defensive when you try to talk to them about stuff like this, even me, I, like I fucking do it, no one wants to admit to just…like…maybe we can't even get away from it, unless we just stopped being men* ***[Laughs]***

Ben's response here is interesting because he suggests several important things about strategies. While he is willing to accept that there might be men on the left who are "positive," he seems to conclude that there is something inimically linked to sexist with "men in general" or that there is something about men that makes them read as such, for "male bodies are inscribed by others with certain qualities and potentialities (or lack thereof) and we are seen as cultural and symbolic carriers of white male privilege," (Tienari and Taylor,

2018, p.956). Men – including himself – respond with defensiveness when they are called to account, yet when he raises the idea that "we just stopped being men," his tone and dry laugh suggest that it was not a realistic strategy. For Ben, men are damned if they do and damned if they don't. Masculinity is not rejected here but is held in an ambivalent place.

Ambivalence characterised the responses of other male participants; when asked if masculinity could be transformed, answers such as "I don't know" or "its complex" were the most common, to the extent that Nvivo suggested "I don't know" as its code when I was conducting my data analysis. Brendan suggested that for many men on the left, ambivalence towards masculinity was rooted in an attitude of shame towards intimacy and the self (discussed earlier in this chapter); for him, men often *"see themselves as having this like toxic masculinity, and not realising that the toxic element defines which you do about it, not, the feelings, the being, in and of itself,"* Many of the moments of inarticulation I witnessed in the interviews linked to questions about the possibilities of alternative masculinities developing in left-wing spaces. Here, my findings are not out of step with those of researchers who have worked with pro-feminist men; Holmgren (2011) notes that 'pro-feminist' men engage in the process of stance-taking, whereby they are somehow more 'real' and 'radical' than other men, at the same time as displaying an ambivalent attitude towards being a man. The ambivalence towards masculinity is not just something that arises from men who understand the complexities of the ethics of gender. Janne Tienari writes that his experience of being a male scholar engaging in gender studies and pro-feminist research was a:

> … a schizophrenic experience. While receiving encouragement from many people, I have also sensed suspicion from the beginning, that is, since I first shared my intention of writing a PhD on gender and management. My closest feminist colleagues – women who have become friends – tell me that for the first 10 years, they did not believe that I was sincere in what I was doing. From the beginning, these women were extremely

> conscious of my special position in the local context…My feminist colleagues-cum-friends continued to see me through my privilege and alleged opportunism.
>
> (Tiernari and Taylor, ibid, p.954)

Tiernari's reflection is helpful as it expresses the suspicion which affects men who exist in what might be best thought of as a liminal space for masculinity – acknowledging and accepting the complexities of sexual politics, aware of the existence of an ethics of gender, but consistently suspected of inauthenticity or subversion. Men like Tiernari, or those men I spoke to, are in many ways out of place. Perhaps we can understand this through Kraus's (2008) idea of structural aporia. Structural aporia refers to a "…logical impasse or contradiction produced by the epistemological structures of a particular discourse…in every discursive field there would be a moment where one encounters a fundamental contradiction in the system, a logical impasse that cannot be resolved" (Farough, 2003, p.42). This is not just about contradictions at the level of discourse, for such contradictions inform "material practises in a social order," (Kraus, ibid, p.67). In other words, individuals find themselves trapped in the contradictions of a discourse, unable to think of a way to resolve those contradictions. Farough (ibid) uses this to understand how white men resist discourses of white male privilege, resulting in frustration, ambivalence and mixed emotions (ibid). A similar phenomenon seems to be happening around left-wing masculinity, yet the contradictions come from responses to the various strategies I have outlined. Men who try to undermine patriarchy and reject sexist politics are critiqued for speaking as much as they are critiqued for not speaking. Those who set out to be allies are regarded with suspicion and seemingly no way to ever *not* be suspect.

At this point, it is worth clarifying my intent. I am not trying to imply that men are somehow the primary victims in the complexities of left-wing sexual politics or a weaker force in the ethics of gender. When considering these issues, one must remember that similar

questions are being asked by reactionary and anti-feminist critics, who seek to embolden a "men under threat/war on men" discourse. Such a discourse has significant resonance within right-wing politics and often functions as a gateway into more overt expressions of the far right (see White, 2019; Kelly, 2017; de Boise, 2019). Feminist and feminist-informed masculinities scholars must wholeheartedly reject and refute the idea that the only rehabilitative space for masculinity is the far right. What I am trying to do here is capture a series of frustrations: firstly, the frustrations arising from inarticulate masculinity, the frustrations of not knowing how to act or speak in a given situation; secondly, the frustrations I observed as an activist in my movement of a culture where women were victims of abuse, men who attempted to do something about it were suspects, and, inevitably, other men carried on perpetuating the abuse; thirdly, frustrations as a researcher that I cannot present to my reader a clear and coherent solution to the problem of sexism in left-wing space, the problems of militancy, or the problem of men's relationship to feminism. If anything, my contribution is less a solution and more a sharpening of the lens through which the problem might be viewed.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

Introduction

This thesis has set out to plug the "gaping lacuna" in academia about the gender politics of the left; it has set out to map the parameters of what we might call left-wing masculinity and to understand how the culture of radical left-wing movements shapes, disciplines and transforms performances of gender. A central theme that emerges through all the empirical chapters is the concept of affect, which impacts speech and sense of self. Every form of masculinity, from the hardened Guattarian militant to the post-masculine figures of *Brothers Against Sexism,* experiences affect and are moved by it – whether they want to or not.

This final chapter restates some of the critical findings thematically. I examine the role of cultural practises and reproduction, the examples of hegemonic masculine power and sexist bullying, the inarticulation that seems central to understanding left-wing men, and the areas where the data hinted, rather than confirmed, other areas for empirical research. This chapter reiterates the critical claim of the thesis, which is that left-wing masculinity is an affective and emergent phenomenon.

Summary of key findings

On a theoretical level, this thesis makes several contributions. Firstly, I have proposed that scholars can utilise affect theory to analyse social movement culture. Affective understandings of social movement culture go beyond the findings of framing and cultural toolkits, as they allow us to understand that cultures are both unified and disputed. Affective and cultural practices can bring people together but also push them apart. Affect theory also

considers that cultural fields and practises can be messy and incoherent, and this allows us to understand better how radical cultures interact with dominant cultures and, thus, the reproductive of discriminatory practises in radical spaces.

Secondly, I address the development of social identities within the affective cultures of movements. Scholars already acknowledge the role of affect in the formation of social identities, and I make several additions to this discussion. I have posited that militancy and the figure of the militant are products of the affective cultures of left-wing movements and help reproduce those cultures. I also argue that the analysis of militancy and Guattari's militant diagram provide theoretical tools for understanding distinct and gendered forms of affect that shape and sustain specific kinds of masculinity in left-wing cultures. Additionally, I advance the 'structures of feeling' to understand emergent and sometimes inarticulate social identities that emerge from affective contestations within cultures. Williams' theory sadly remains underutilised in social movement scholarship; however, this thesis has argued for the structures of feeling as a means to understand the connections between militancy, affect, and masculinity and as an appropriate theoretical tool for a more nuanced study of culture and emotions within social movements.

This thesis has offered empirical insights into cultures connected to radical left-wing movements. I have argued that findings from Momentum offer some insights into the broader cultures of the British left. As a 'centre of gravity' within the left, Momentum brought together activists from various traditions and cultures on the left, and such individuals would have helped to shape, and been shaped by, the cultural and affective practises in the movement. Momentum made many attempts to break away from the 'old left' and adopt a youthful, energetic and affective culture that blurred the boundaries between politics and fun. Despite militancy not being so institutionally embedded within the organisation, this thesis has highlighted how problematic sexual and gender politics persisted. From this, it seems

likely that similar practices and problems continue in other elements of the British left; in addition, the inarticulate masculinities I uncovered do not seem to be isolated to Momentum as a culture but instead by a symptom of the tensions between the old and the new, between entrenched and emergent practises around sex and gender.

My research calls attention to the distinctive culture within Momentum. This is a movement where a supposed divide between 'politics' and 'culture' was broken down and where embodied performances of joy, humour, sarcasm and youthful energy combined with canvassing, door knocking and electoral mobilisation. Momentum captured the attention of younger activists, utilising music, comedy and vernacular wit to politicise optimism. Momentum also distinguished itself from its approach to the aesthetics of politics through sartorial distinctiveness and an almost irreverent approach to political participation.

Momentum seemingly tried to do things differently in terms of its organising strategies. Participants recounted to me the importance of meeting etiquette; the idea that the voices of women and minorities should be prioritised in meetings was of principal importance. However, even in this well-meaning initiative, unintended structures of exclusion manifested, especially if one was not perceived as part of a marginalised group.

Here, we gain our first glimpse of what was characterised to me as "negative sexual politics" in Momentum. This form of sexual politics played out in several ways, both in formal meetings and in less formal social settings. For an organisation that blurred the boundaries between politics and fun, Momentum's attempted inclusivity did not seem to extend to its social spaces, where participants would often fall back on hegemonic masculinity and dominant performances of gender.

Furthermore, there was evidence that these negative sexual politics were more deeply rooted than inappropriate comments in the pub. I was struck by the exclusionary practices

that my participants had experienced. For female participants – especially Leila and Theresa – the experience of gendered bullying, gaslighting, of 'solidarity-with-me' (that is, of only being treated in a comradely manner if one did not diverge from a masculine approach to politics) formed a significant part of their engagement with Momentum, and with the broader labour movement. This misogyny was characterised as coming from all angles of the Labour movement; the so-called Labour Right was undoubtedly not above sexism, it seems (unsurprising in the aftermath of the Forde Report (Forde, 2022)). However, women also reported bullying and abuse from self-styled socialists in Momentum, men who claimed the mantle of a kinder, gentler politics but did not practise it.

There is, however, another form of exclusionary practises. I do not consider these equivalent to the structural and emotional violences experienced by my female participants, but this does not mean that these other kinds of practices can be overlooked. I speak here of how men often found themselves in a liminal space when they tried to practise anti-sexism. Sometimes, this resulted from Momentum's well-meaning attempts to make spaces more inclusive, measures which failed to account for the multiplicity of performances of gender and sexuality. In addition, there was evidence of a more ambiguous set of rules, expectations and ideas about how men should navigate gender and sexual politics. I argue that these rules resulted in a new, inarticulate form of masculinity – something I elaborate on below.

We should acknowledge the apparent contradiction: how can a culture have both entrenched performances of hegemonic masculinity and dominant gender roles and spaces of ambiguity and inarticulation? Here, it is helpful to remind ourselves that cultures are never entirely coherent and that contradictory areas, uncomfortable moments, and expected tensions characterise cultural practice. On this latter point, I received unexpected hostilities after participating in a Red Labour event on sexual politics on the left. To my surprise, this hostility was less about my positionality as a man researching issues that generally affect

women but as a man who had made a mildly supportive statement about trans people. The vitriol I receive might have been amplified by the habitus of a certain kind of political, social media - where the cut and thrust of the discussion is combative, and ideas around correctness and who can and cannot speak often descend into aggression – but it points towards another seeming contradiction in left-wing cultures: transphobia in spaces which are meant to be emancipatory.

I also draw attention to an inarticulate masculinity. This is a masculinity that attempts to reject the logic and practises of misogyny, patriarchy and so on but finds itself unable to express itself, fully realise with language what it means to be a 'left-wing man'. The inarticulate nature of this masculinity is even more striking as many of the men who experienced moments where language seemed to elude them were theoretically articulate, intelligent, well-read, and often eloquent to the point where I felt self-conscious about my language use. These moments of inarticulation were emergent within the context of the interviews – men who were erudite when speaking on one issue stumbled, paused, and hesitated when I asked them practically how one 'does' anti-sexism as a man on the left. This emergent inarticulation is, perhaps ironically, evidence of an emergent form of masculinity.

The motivation for these moments of inarticulation came down to a collective knowledge of how *not* to be. My male participants voiced justified suspicion, and even outright contempt, at the self-declared 'male feminist' figure and at figures of militant misogynists, or Comrade Delta. These figures, their actions, and the consequences of those actions for women and gender non-conforming people were both well-known and reviled. But if it is clear how a man can 'get it wrong', how does he 'get it right'? How does one be an anti-sexist man? How does one 'do' gender correctly? Here, language begins to fall apart.

Anti-sexism, it seems, is not so much a language that some men cannot understand but one they have a vague familiarity with but cannot express themselves or expand their vocabulary.

It became clear that rules are at play here – rules about acceptable masculine conduct and what isn't. I'm not talking about the obvious: the textbook examples of 'problematic' men mentioned in the previous paragraphs. Here, the issue is the more subtle stuff men do, the often well-meaning behaviours, actions, and stances. What are the rules for these interactions? When should men speak? When should they stay silent? I have used the term 'an ethics of gender' to describe a field of acceptable and unacceptable practices, stances, and values which one needs to navigate in relation to gender (both one's own and others). To me, this ethic seems deeply embedded in certain left-wing cultures. This ethic is pre-linguistic – no one sits you down to explain how to get gender 'right' - yet the idea of correctness and the fear that one will get it wrong seemed to drive many of the men I interviewed into inarticulation, anxiety, and the fear of misjudgement. After all, how can you express what has never been expressed for you? And what happens if (potentially) your standing among your peers is determined by that?

I understand these moments of inarticulation as affective –moments of intensity which were felt viscerally, and when attempts were made to categorise those intensities into emotions, frustration and confused curiosity were the most apparent feelings on display. I have argued that we see Williams' structures of feeling in action here. A disjoint between feeling and thought often manifests as inarticulation; after all, Williams' theory tries to capture moments of change, which are often also moments of disconnect. Men in left-wing cultures experience what Williams calls a "frequent tension between the received

interpretation and the practical experience" – that is, between what men are *supposed* to do in feminist-inclined spaces and what they *actually* do.

Consequently, men navigating masculinity in left-wing cultures have several strategies. They can not care; they can reproduce patriarchal structures with radical veneers and to hell with the consequences. They can adopt a hybrid approach, where they are an ally in some spaces and 'normal' man in others. They can choose to be silent, to engage in the process of active non-speech that cedes the floor to more marginalised voices (though it seems that this kind of silence is often considered complicity with patriarchy). Finally, men can treat masculinity as what it seems to be – ambivalent, unclear, and existing in a liminal space. Embracing ambivalence can, it seems, relieve some of the tensions of navigating the ethics of gender, but it remains a frustrating experience.

What next for gender and the left?

It feels like a difficult time to speculate about the future of the British left during the spring of 2023. The situation for radical left-wing movements and activists is decidedly bleak. Under the leadership of Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour Party is seemingly reinventing itself as an "increasingly narrow church" (Fletcher, 2022). Numerous left-wing organisations and factions within Labour have been proscribed (BBC, 2022); Momentum has escaped prohibition and claims to retain around 30,000 members (Morris, 2021). However – as discussed in a previous chapter – Momentum currently finds itself in unusual and ambiguous places and cannot meaningfully be considered the hub of activity for the left that it was during 2015-19. Despite Starmer's economic relationship with promise-keeping on policies (Barradale, 2023) and the bizarre claim that Labour is the home of British conservativism

(Singh, 2023), Labour appears to be on track to win the next general election. In short, the left appears marginalised, and those of us who wish to support socialism electorally are, it seems, politically homeless.

In this depressing state of affairs, it would be understandable to think that conversations on the future of the left and the left's gender and sexual politics, are mistimed. The flip side of this argument is that if there were a time for the British left to articulate a radical and transformative agenda for gender and sexual politics within society, now *would* be that political moment. The current so-called "Culture Wars" in British political discourse is have fixated on issues around gender. In particular, transgender rights have found themselves in the firing line, but additionally, the culture wars have articulated broader societal contentions around identity and values that have implications for the rights of women and LGBTQ people. The extent to which the British public is as invested in the hostilities as our political and media commentators is debatable (see Duffy et al., 2021); regardless, the British state continues to propose regressive gender politics and undermine hard-fought-for rights. The quandary, however, goes beyond this: within the cultural arena, online misogynistic extremism – such as the content of 'misogynist influencer' Andrew Tate – has grown in both popularity and intensity among younger men and boys (see Copeland, 2022; Miller, 2023). Such online content has real-world implications for violence against women and girls (Clugston and Fraser, 2022; Fazackerley, 2023) but also must not be divorced from what Rivera (2021) argues is the resurgence of a toxic and extremist form of 'traditional masculinity' and the rejection of feminism and progressive sexual politics. Scholarly commentary on this has (quite rightly) focused on educators' role in countering misogynistic ideas among young men and boys (Vail, 2023), but there seems to be an absence of a radical counternarrative about masculinity and men's relationship with women and with feminism at present. Conversations about new forms of masculinity have taken place in the academic left

for around three decades, yet have failed to move into the activist left. Socialists – at least in Britain – have had very little to say on a radical framework for masculinity (with the exception being *Achilles Heel* and journals like it), yet the need for advocating for a radical and anti-sexist masculinity grows more and more pertinent.

Advocating for the radical left to speak on masculinity is easier said than done. The attempts of British socialists to do have largely fallen into obscurity. However, I argue that the left's reluctance to do so allows conversations around masculinity to be monopolised by the political right. If the political right intends to fight a culture war on the issue of gender, why should the left not give a full-throated response?

Beyond an Ethics of Gender?

This thesis has proposed the conceptual notion of an 'ethics of gender' to understand how affective and ambiguous rules affect the shaping of gender identities within left-wing social movements. While I have highlighted the problematic consequences of an unspoken field of ethics, it is essential to state that such ethics have a role within transformational and radical politics. Ethics of gender seems to conceive of the self as opposed to existing power relations. It involves questions of action (how do I interact with others in a way that undermines existing power structures?) and identity (how should I be as a new kind of person). Thus, for men, this seems to take the form of rejecting actions and deeds that are culturally coded as 'traditionally masculine', such as aggression, sexual boasting, and social dominance (in how they interact with others, but particularly with women). But in a sense, it is also about trying to develop a new form of masculinity as part of a broader transformation of social identities.

At the same time, the ethics of gender requires further development as both a theoretical and political concept. How can we move beyond the ambiguity and frustration

outlined in previous chapters towards a more coherent newer sense of masculinities? Could an ethics of masculinity help provide men with new conceptual, cultural, and emotional frameworks?

One possible way forward is to conceptualise masculinities from a zemiological perspective. Emerging out of Criminology, Zemiology is a comparatively new academic discipline that seeks to study 'social harms', that is ", harmful structures, policies, decisions and practices" (Toombs and Cannings, 2021, p.1) that are the products of social structures. Zemiology's relevance for building on this current project is that as an approach, Zemiology is concerned with "generating sustainable and radical changes" (ibid) to the social harms it identifies. Tombs and Canning argue that Zemiology "only makes sense as an activist as well as an academic activity" (ibid, p.139).

A zemiology of masculinity would fit with the broader work of ethics of gender due to the particular attention given to both social harms and the reduction or removal of those harms. The idea of 'hegemonic masculinities' presumes a zemiological logic – men who practise hegemonic masculinities benefit from patriarchy by perpetuating social harms against women and men with alternative masculinities. With a focus on social harms and a concern for rectifying those harms, a zemiological approach to masculinity could help to equip activists with new tools to reconceptualise male identities. From a scholarly perspective, zemiology's relative infancy as an academic discipline means its potential as a tool for scholars of gender remains relatively untapped. A complete examination of this is beyond the scope of the current document, but it indicates a possible avenue for future research.

Further research

The avenues for further research this project highlights can be broadly divided into areas relating to the study of the British left social movement research, and issues of significance for studying masculinities and affect.

One of the ever-present challenges of researching contemporary movements is that events can move fast, and the status quo is more often in flux than stable. When I commenced my fieldwork, Momentum was reeling from the loss of 2019. There was a feeling of malaise, certainly, or even open depression, yet something of an insurgent mood remains. The long months of lockdown saw Momentum grapple with its own identity, flirt with the idea of more community-focused activism, and try to make sense of what might be called Corbynism without Corbyn. Momentum's future is even more ambivalent. Whether or not Momentum survives and in what form remains to be seen. I should note that I do not entirely agree with Bassett's suggestion that Momentum is "centred upon the fate of one man and…driven forward by the perceptions of his unfair treatment" (2020, p.180). Indeed, the absence of Corbyn himself has affected the movement. Still, to my mind, the more significant contribution from Momentum was that which I outlined in Chapter Five: the development of an affective and joyful praxis that blurred the boundaries between politics and culture, between political work and political fun. That kind of politicised collective joy, that seemingly insurgent spirit of 2017, seems rather alien in the overall much bleaker circumstances of 2023. Whether that kind of politics is recoverable remains to be seen.

Ethnicity and the politics of race were issues that existed on the fringes of the project; I was conscious of this as a researcher and activist. As noted in my methods section, all bar one of my participants were white; I, while mixed race, am white-passing, so I occupy an

ambiguous place as a researcher, read as one identity, yet very much aware of being in a liminal space of belonging and *un*belonging. Yet, I could not shake the feeling that ethnicity was on the tip of my tongue throughout the project; the knowledge that my sample size was homogenous, or that in my reflections of the various radical left movements I have engaged with over the course of my life, anti-racist sentiments were often expressed, but I never had consciously interrogated how much they were put into practice. Equally, the intersections between masculinity and ethnicity in my fieldwork were primarily reduced to participants' observations that being a white or white-passing man was a positionality that denoted privilege and that privilege was another element to be navigated. Recent research has called attention to the dire need for insurgent anti-racist scholar activism within the academy (Joseph-Salisbury and Connelly, 2021); such an approach is as important to the study of radical left-wing social movements as it is to any other field of sociology.

Following on from this project, it would seem that the issue of anti-racist politics in the labour movement is in dire need of further critical interrogation. Throughout this project, problems of race and race have been present in my mind as a researcher and activist. In the Red Labour panel, I was very aware of racist and Islamophobia comments targeted at my fellow panellist, Apsana Begum MP. While my only BME participant did not recount experiencing overt racism, this does not preclude the need for a greater understanding of the racial politics of the left, especially the left associated with what we might call Corbynism. Racial politics is associated with this particular period and section of British politics; here, I speak both of the media fixation on antisemitism in the Labour Party, but also the sustained racist attacks against left-wing Labour MPs such as Diane Abbot, detailed in the infamous 'leaked Labour report' (The Labour Party, 2020), and affirmed in both the Forde Report (Forde, 2020) and the Al Jazeera documentary "The Labour Files," (Al Jazeera Investigations

Unit, 2022). A dynamic critical analysis of the racial politics of the radical left seems overdue.

More evident to me were the tensions about trans rights. Of course, the idea that the left is more willing to accept trans people than the right is rather superficial. The radical left, especially the orthodox communist tradition, has its fair share of open transphobia. One thinks here of the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist Leninists) (CPGB-ML), which has in recent years declared that LGBTQ oppression does not exist and that trans rights are irreconcilable with both socialism and feminism (Ti, 2020). However, outside of these more overt incidents, it seems unlikely that the growth of transphobia in mainstream political and media discourse would not filter into social movement cultures. My reader may feel that I am emphasising the Red Labour event and the subsequent animosity I experienced after that. These incidents are worthy of further critical exploration, as it seems to be implausible that I was simply unlucky.

This thesis has also suggested some possibilities for further work into masculinities. The concept of inarticulate masculinity highlights the need for further research about masculinity and silence. As I noted in chapter seven, men's silences are usually conceptualised as being regressive or harmful: men are silent because they are unwilling to confront patriarchy or because they are unable to express their emotions; equally, the silence of men around issues of stigma is the subject of a reasonable amount of scholarship. What seems to be missing within the academic literature is a fuller theoretical conceptualisation of men's active silences, the silences where men use the absence of language to cede ground and take a stance whereby the speech of others can be enabled. Broadly, I contend that further research needs to gain a holistic and contextualised understanding of the meaning of men's silences and what roles those silences can play in progressive or radical politics.

Bibliography

ADDIS, M. 2011. *Invisible men: Men's inner lives and the consequences of silence,* New York, Macmillan.

AFAQ. 2008. *What is vanguardism and why do anarchist reject it?* [Online]. Anarchist Writers. Available: https://anarchism.pageabode.com/afaq/secH5.html [Accessed 05/11/2019 2019].

AHMAD, A. 2015. A note on call-out culture. *Briarpatch Magazine,* 2.

AHMED, S. 2004. Affective economies. *Social text,* 22**,** 117-139.

AHMED, S. 2006. *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others*, Duke University Press.

ALLEN, M. 2017. *The SAGE encyclopedia of communication research methods*, SAGE publications.

ALLIANCE, M. 2016. Critical dialogue on engaging men and boys in gender justice. *Washington, DC*.

ALTHUSSER, L. 1970. Philosophy as a revolutionary weapon. *New Left Review***,** 3.

ANDREW, X. 1999. Give up activism. *Do or Die,* 9**,** 160-166.

ANON. 2017. *Acid Corbynism - the leftwing ideology you can rave to!* [Online]. Manchester: The Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/shortcuts/2017/sep/26/acid-corbynism-leftwing-ideology-you-can-rave-to [Accessed 17th June 2023].

ANON. 2020. *Trans right: government reported to be dropping gender self-identifying plans* [Online]. The Guardian News Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jun/14/trans-rights-government-reported-to-be-dropping-gender-self-identifying-plans [Accessed 6th February 2023].

ANSARI, H. S. 9th December 2020 2020. The Male Leftist Trope: Yes I've Read Marx, Can We Have Sex Now? *Feminism in India* [Online]. Available from: https://feminisminindia.com/2020/12/09/male-leftist-trope-read-marx-sex-now/ [Accessed 1st August 2022].

ARAC, J. & YANACEK, H. Keywords, Structures of Feeling, and the Novel. Novel: A Forum on Fiction, 2021. Duke University Press, 121-129.

ARENDELL, T. 1997. Reflections on the researcher-researched relationship: A woman interviewing men. *Qualitative sociology,* 20**,** 341-368.

ASHTON-JAMES, C. E., MADDUX, W. W., GALINSKY, A. D. & CHARTRAND, T. L. 2009. Who I am depends on how I feel: The role of affect in the expression of culture. *Psychological Science,* 20**,** 340-346.

AVRUCH, K. 1998. *Culture & conflict resolution,* Washington DC, US Institute of Peace Press.

BADIOU, A. 2003. *Saint Paul: The foundation of universalism,* Stanford, California, Stanford University Press.

BADIOU, A. 2012. *Philosophy for militants,* London, Verso Books.

BAKAN, A. 2012. Marxism, Feminism, and Epistemological Dissonance. *Socialist Studies/Études Socialistes,* 8.

BARSADE, S. G. & KNIGHT, A. P. 2015. Group affect. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior,* 2**,** 21-46.

BASSETT, L. & GILBERT, J. 2021. Introduction: Corbynism and its Aftermath.

BAYNES, C. 2019. Greta Thunberg condemns 'unlawful' police ban on Extinction Rebellion climate change protest. *The Independent*, 16th October 2019.

BAZZANO, M. 2022. Everybody wants to be a manager: On masculinity, microfascism and the manosphere. *European journal of psychotherapy & counselling,* 24**,** 173-186.
BBC. 2020. *Momentum founder Jon Lansman quits as chairman* [Online]. Online: BBC. Available: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-52694053 [Accessed 17th June 2023].
BC, E. 2012. Misogyny and the left - we need to start practising what we preach. *Blind Carbon Copy* [Online]. Available from: http://bccwords.blogspot.com/2012/12/misogyny-and-left-we-need-to-start.html [Accessed 17th June 2019].
BEALE, D. 2003. Engaged in battle: Exploring the sources of workplace union militancy at Royal Mail. *Industrial Relations Journal,* 34**,** 82-95.
BEAN, E. 2017. *Momentum carpool brings activists to crucial by-election campaign.* [Online]. labourlist.org: Labour List. Available: https://labourlist.org/2017/02/momentum-carpool-brings-activists-to-crucial-by-election-campaigns/ [Accessed 6th July 2021].
BEAULIEU, A. 2010. Research Note: From co-location to co-presence: Shifts in the use of ethnography for the study of knowledge. *Social Studies of Science,* 40**,** 453-470.
BENFORD, R. D. 1997. An insider's critique of the social movement framing perspective. *Sociological inquiry,* 67**,** 409-430.
BENFORD, R. D. & SNOW, D. A. 2000. Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual review of Sociology,* 26**,** 611-639.
BENJAMIN, W. 1974. Left-Wing Melancholy (On Erich Kästner'new book of poems). *Screen,* 15**,** 28-32.
BERGMAN, C. & MONTGOMERY, N. 2017. Joyful militancy: Building thriving resistance in toxic times. Chico, California: AK Press.
BEVINGTON, D. & DIXON, C. 2005. Movement-relevant theory: Rethinking social movement scholarship and activism. *Social movement studies,* 4**,** 185-208.
BINH, P. 2013. How Not to Handle a Rape Allegation: the Case of the SWP. *IndyMedia UK* [Online]. Available from: https://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2013/01/505436.html [Accessed 28th December 2022].
BIRCHALL, I. H. 2011. *Tony Cliff: A Marxist for his time*, Bookmarks.
BLAIR, K. L. & HOSKIN, R. A. 2019. Transgender exclusion from the world of dating: Patterns of acceptance and rejection of hypothetical trans dating partners as a function of sexual and gender identity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships,* 36**,** 2074-2095.
BLANC, D. 1972. *Militancy: highest stage of alienation* [Online]. Lyon: Organisation des Jeunes Travailleurs Révolutionnaires. Available: https://libcom.org/library/militancy-ojtr [Accessed 2023 17th June].
BOCHKARIOV, M. A. The representation of TEEN slang in social media. LinguaNet, 2020. 14-19.
BOJIN, K. 2013. Feminist solidarity: no boys allowed? Views of pro-feminist men on collaboration and alliance-building with women's movements. *Gender & Development,* 21**,** 363-379.
BOLIN, G. 2016. *Media generations: Experience, identity and mediatised social change,* New York, Routledge.
BOOKCHIN, N., BROWN, P., EBRAHIMIAN, S., ENMEDIO, C., JUHASZ, A., MARTIN, L., MIRZOEFF, N., ROSS, A., SAAB, A. J. & SITRIN, M. 2013. *Militant research handbook,* New York, New York University.
BOOTH, T. & BOOTH, W. 1996. Sounds of silence: Narrative research with inarticulate subjects. *Disability & Society,* 11**,** 55-70.

BÖSEL, B. 2018. Affect disposition (ing): A genealogical approach to the organization and regulation of emotions. *Media and Communication,* 6**,** 15-21.
BOURNE, A. 2017. Social Movements as 'Arenas' and 'Actors' in Transnationalizing Public Spheres. *Journal of Civil Society,* 13.
BRAIDOTTI, R. 2013. Envy: Or with your brains and my looks. *Men in feminism.* New York: Routledge.
BRAY, M. 2018. Horizontalism. *In:* FRANKS, B., JUN, N. & WILLIAMS, L. (eds.) *Anarchism: A conceptual approach.* New York: Routledge.
BRENNAN, T. 2004. *The transmission of affect,* Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press.
BRIGHT, S. 2020. *The Remaking of Momentum* [Online]. Online: Byline Times. Available: https://bylinetimes.com/2020/06/15/the-remaking-of-momentum/ [Accessed 17th June 2023].
BRISTOW, J. 2021. Post-Brexit Boomer blaming: The contradictions of generational grievance. *The Sociological Review,* 69**,** 759-774.
BROAD, K. L. 2002. GLB+ T?: Gender/sexuality movements and transgender collective identity (de) constructions. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies,* 7**,** 241-264.
BROWN, J. & JOHNSON, M. D. 2015. *Maoism at the Grassroots: Everyday Life in China's Era of High Socialism,* Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.
BROWN, W. 1999. Resisting left melancholy. *boundary 2,* 26**,** 19-27.
BROWN, W. L. 1998. *Manhood and politics: A feminist reading in political theory,* Totowa, New Jersey, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
BUESNEL, R. 2020. National Socialist Black Metal: a case study in the longevity of far-right ideologies in heavy metal subcultures. *Patterns of Prejudice,* 54**,** 393-408.
BURGIN, S. 2012. Understanding antiwar activism as a gendering activity: A look at the US's anti-Vietnam War movement. *Journal of International Women's Studies,* 13**,** 18-31.
BURKE, K. 1969. *A rhetoric of motives,* Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California Press.
BURKE, K. 1984. *Attitudes toward history: With a new afterword,* Berekeley, California, University of California Press.
BUSBY, E. 2018. Shakira Martin re-eleced as NUS president after beating Momentum activist. *The Independent*, 28th March 2018.
CALLAGHAN, J. 1987. *The far left in British politics*, Basil Blackwell.
CALLINICOS, A. 2013. Is Leninism Finished? *Socialist Review.* London: Socialist Workers Party.
CAMPER, C. 1994. To White feminists: you just can't handle us having any real power. *Canadian Woman Studies,* 14**,** 40.
CARANFA, A. 2004. Silence as the foundation of learning. *Educational theory,* 54**,** 211-230.
CARTER, P. L. 2019. Looking for something real: Affective encounters. *Annals of Tourism Research,* 76**,** 200-213.
CASEY, E. 2010. Strategies for engaging men as anti-violence allies: Implications for ally movements. *Advances in Social Work,* 11**,** 267-282.
CHAPMAN, R. & RUTHERFORD, J. 1988. *Male order: Unwrapping masculinity,* London, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.
CHARALAMBOUS, G. & IOANNOU, G. 2019. *Left radicalism and populism in Europe,* New York, Routledge.
CHEN, A. 2013. More SWP rape crisis accusations "a dangerous environment to be in.". *Madam Miaow Says* [Online]. Available from:

https://madammiaow.blogspot.com/2013/03/more-swp-rape-accusations-dangerous.html [Accessed 28th December 2022].
CHIOCCHETTI, P. 2016. *The radical left party family in Western Europe, 1989-2015,* New York, Routledge.
CHIRONI, D. & FITTIPALDI, R. 2017. Social movements and new forms of political organization: Podemos as a hybrid party. *Partecipazione e conflitto,* 10**,** 275-305.
CHOONARA, J. & KIMBER, C. 2011. *Arguments for Revolution: The Case for the Socialist Workers Party,* London, Socialist Workers Party.
CHRISTENSEN, A.-D. 2011. Resistance and violence: Constructions of masculinities in radical left-wing movements in Denmark. *norma,* 5**,** 152-168.
CLEMENT, B. 1985. WRP flats 'used for debaunchery'. *The Times*, 31st October 1985.
CLOUGH, E. 2021. Devil Is Fine, Devil Is Kind: Slave Spirituals, Satanic Black Metal, and Cultural Appropriation in the Music of Zeal & Ardor. *Comparative American Studies An International Journal,* 18**,** 337-354.
CLOUGH, P. T. 2007. Introduction. The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social. *The affective turn: Theorizing the social***,** 1-33.
CLUNE, B. 2014. *It's time we stopped using the 'boys will be boys' line.* [Online]. Online: The Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/apr/02/its-time-we-stop-using-the-boys-will-be-boys-line [Accessed 17th June 2023].
COLEMAN, L. M. & BASSI, S. A. 2011. Deconstructing militant manhood: Masculinities in the disciplining of (anti-) globalization politics. *International Feminist Journal of Politics,* 13**,** 204-224.
COLEMAN, R. 2018. Theorizing the present: digital media, pre-emergence and infra-structures of feeling. *Cultural Studies,* 32**,** 600-622.
CONLIN, S. E. & HEESACKER, M. 2018. Feminist men?: examining men's feminist self-identification, activism and the impact of language. *Journal of Gender Studies,* 27**,** 928-942.
CONNELL, R. W. 1990. A whole new world: Remaking masculinity in the context of the environmental movement. *Gender & Society,* 4**,** 452-478.
CONNELL, R. W. 1992. A very straight gay: Masculinity, homosexual experience, and the dynamics of gender. *American sociological review***,** 735-751.
CONNELL, R. W. & MESSERSCHMIDT, J. W. 2005. Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & society,* 19**,** 829-859.
CORK, T. 2021. *Carol Vorderman warns older men's misogyny is 'ruining a generation of girls'* [Online]. BristolPost.co.uk: The Bristol Post. Available: https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/carol-vorderman-warns-older-mens-5075068 [Accessed 17th June 2023].
COSTANZA-CHOCK, S. 2006. Analytical note: Horizontal communication and social movements. *Annenberg School of Communication*.
COSTON, B. M. & KIMMEL, M. 2013. White Men as the New Victims: Reverse Discrimination Cases and the Men's Rights Movement. *Nevada Law Journal,* 13**,** 5.
COWBURN, A. 2020. Labour leadership: Momentum faces backlash over 'ludicrous' ballot of members. *The Independent*, 14th January 2020.
CRADDOCK, E. 2019. Doing 'enough'of the 'right'thing: The gendered dimension of the 'ideal activist'identity and its negative emotional consequences. *Social Movement Studies,* 18**,** 137-153.
CREESE, G. 1999. *Contracting Masculinity: Gender, class, and race in a white-collar union, 1944-1994*, University of Toronto Press.
CRICK, M. 2016. *Militant,* London, Biteback Publishing.

CROWE, J. 2011. Men and feminism: some challenges and a partial response. *Social Alternatives,* 30**,** 49-53.
CROWLEY, M. Borderless Young Men?–The 'Other'and English Working-Class Masculinity as Represented in Post-Millennial Literature. Bloomsbury C21 Writings Conference, 2014 University of Brighton.
DALESSANDRO, C., JAMES-HAWKINS, L. & SENNOTT, C. 2019. Strategic silence: College men and hegemonic masculinity in contraceptive decision making. *Gender & Society,* 33**,** 772-794.
DARLINGTON, R. 2009. Leadership and union militancy: The case of the RMT. *Capital & Class,* 33**,** 3-32.
DAS, R. 2020. Identity politics: a Marxist view. *Class, Race and Corporate Power,* 8**,** 5.
DAVE 1982. Anti-Sexist Practise! *Big Flame.* Liverpool: Big Flame.
DAVE, N. 2020. Becoming militant: embodying the Guinean revolution and Guinea–China relations. *Africa,* 90**,** 721-745.
DAVIESS, B. 2019. 'Making Memes and Shitposting': The Powerful Political Discourse of Alt-Right Meme Culture. *Available at SSRN 4118990*.
DAY, A. 2004. Hammer and Crescent. *The New Humanist.* London: The Rationalist Association.
DAY, N. E. & SCHOENRADE, P. 1997. Staying in the closet versus coming out: Relationships between communication about sexual orientation and work attitudes. *Personnel Psychology,* 50**,** 147-163.
DE BOISE, S. 2019. Is masculinity toxic? *Norma: International Journal of Masculinity Studies,* 14**,** 147-151.
DEAN, J. 2012. *The communist horizon,* London, Verso Books.
DEAN, J. 2015. Radicalism restored? Communism and the end of left melancholia. *Contemporary Political Theory,* 14**,** 234-255.
DEAN, J. 2020. Left politics and popular culture in Britain: From left-wing populism to 'popular leftism'. *Politics***,** 0263395720960661.
DEAN, M. & PERRETT, R. 2020. Overcoming barriers to women's workplace leadership: insights from the interaction of formal and informal support mechanisms in trade unions. *Industrial Relations Journal,* 51**,** 169-184.
DELEUZE, G. & GUATTARI, F. 1988. *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia,* London, Bloomsbury Publishing.
DENNIS, J. 2020. A party within a party posing as a movement? Momentum as a movement faction. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics,* 17**,** 97-113.
DERBYSHIRE, P. 1980. Sects and sexuality: trotskyism and the politics of homosexuality. *Homosexuality: power and politics***,** 104-15.
DESHONG, H. A. 2017. " The Will to Forget": Silence and Minimisation in Men's Talk on Violence. *Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies,* 42.
DICTIONARY, O. E. N.D. "militant, adj. and n.". *Oxford English Dictionary.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DOMMETT, K. & TEMPLE, L. 2018. Digital campaigning: The rise of Facebook and satellite campaigns. *Parliamentary Affairs,* 71**,** 189-202.
DOUZINAS, C. & ŽIŽEK, S. (eds.) 2010. *The idea of communism,* London: Verso Books.
DOWNES, J. 2017. "It's Not the Abuse That Kills You, It's the Silence": The silencing of sexual violence activism in social justice movements in the UK Left. *Justice, Power and Resistance,* 1**,** 35-58.
DOWNES, J., HANSON, K. & HUDSON, R. 2016. Salvage: Gendered violence in activist communities. Leeds.

DUDINK, S., HAGEMANN, K. & TOSH, J. 2004. *Masculinities in politics and war: Gendering modern history,* Manchester, Manchester University Press.
DUYVENDAK, J. 2011. *The politics of home: belonging and nostalgia in Europe and the United States,* London, Palgrave Macmillan.
DYER, N. 2015. *'How Does it Feel?': Masculinity, Transformation and Structures of Feeling in British Television in the 1970s and 1980s,* London, University of Wales Trinity Saint David (United Kingdom).
DZODAN, F. 24th February 2014 2014. Come one, come all! Feminist and social justice blogging as performance and bloodshed - Flavia Dzodan. *Lib Com* [Online]. Available from: https://libcom.org/article/come-one-come-all-feminist-and-social-justice-blogging-performance-and-bloodshed-flavia [Accessed 25th July 2022].
EATON, G. 2015. *Pro-Corbyn group Momentum vows to resist SWP "infiltration"* [Online]. London: The New Statesman. Available: https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2015/10/pro-corbyn-group-momentum-vows-resist-swp-infiltration [Accessed 17th June 2023].
EATON, G. 2019. Inside Momentum: "We're going to be here long after Jeremy Corbyn and I are dead.". *The New Statesman*, 4th December 2019.
EDELMAN, M. 2001. Social movements: changing paradigms and forms of politics. *Annual review of anthropology,* 30**,** 285-317.
EDWARDS, G. 2014. Infectious innovations? The diffusion of tactical innovation in social movement networks, the case of suffragette militancy. *Social Movement Studies,* 13**,** 48-69.
EDWARDS, P. 2016. *Owen Smith evokes 1980s struggle as he brands Momentum 'a party within a party'.* [Online]. labourlist.org.: LabourList. Available: https://labourlist.org/2016/09/owen-smith-evokes-1980s-struggle-as-he-brands-momentum-a-party-within-a-party/ [Accessed 6th July 2021].
EGEBERG HOLMGREN, L. 2011. Cofielding in qualitative interviews: Gender, knowledge, and interaction in a study of (pro) feminist men. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 17**,** 364-378.
ERIBON, D. 1991. Michel foucault, trans. *Betsy Wing, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP*.
EYERMAN, R. 2006. Performing opposition or, how social movements move. *Social performance: Symbolic action, cultural pragmatics, and ritual***,** 193-217.
FAGERHOLM, A. 2018. The radical right and the radical left in contemporary Europe: two min–max definitions. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies,* 26**,** 411-424.
FAROUGH, S. D. 2003. Structural aporia & white masculinities: White men respond to the white male privilege critique. *Race, gender & class***,** 38-53.
FARRELL, N. 2012. Celebrity politics: Bono, product (RED) and the legitimising of philanthrocapitalism. *The british journal of politics and international relations,* 14**,** 392-406.
FERGUSON, K. 2003. Silence: A politics. *Contemporary Political Theory,* 2**,** 49-65.
FERREIRA, L. 2022. British media, 'your bigotry is killing trans people' *openDemocracy* [Online]. Available from: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/british-media-your-bigotry-is-killing-trans-people/ [Accessed 31st May 2022].
FINE, L. 2014. *More Than a Feeling: The Transmission of Affect and Group Identity.* Honours Degree, Bringham Young University.
FINN, D. 2021. *Keir Starmer has spent a year push Labour to the right* [Online]. jacobinmag.com: Jacobin. Available: https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/04/keir-starmer-labour-party-leader-uk-left [Accessed 12th July 2021].
FISHER, A. 2020. Momentum is focussing on community campaigns - it's where it is most powerful. *I News*, 22nd September 2020.

FLAM, H. & KING, D. 2007. *Emotions and social movements,* London, Routledge.
FLOOD, M. 2013. Negotiating gender in men's research among men. *Men, masculinities and methodologies.* Springer.
FORDE, M. 2022. The Forde Report. Online The Labour Party
FOUCAULT, M. 1990. The history of sexuality: An introduction, volume I. *Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage,* 95.
FOUCAULT, M. 2012. *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, Vintage.
FRASER, N. 1990. Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social text***,** 56-80.
FREEMAN, J. 1972. The tyranny of structurelessness. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology***,** 151-164.
FRFI. 2017. *Update on RCG statement regarding sexual harassment (31st December)* [Online]. www.revolutionarycommunist.org: Revolutionary Communist Group. Available: https://www.revolutionarycommunist.org/9-uncategorised/5056-our-311217 [Accessed 19th February 2020].
FROMM, E. 1941. *Escape from Freedom*.
GAMSON, W. A. Commitment and agency in social movements. Sociological Forum, 1991. Springer, 27-50.
GAMSON, W. A., FIREMAN, B. & RYTINA, S. 1982. *Encounters with unjust authority,* Belmont, California, Dorsey Press.
GERBAUDO, P. 2019. The platform party: The transformation of political organisation in the era of big data. *In:* CHANDLER, D. & FUCHS, C. (eds.) *Digital Objects, Digital Subjects: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Capitalism, Labour and Politics in the Age of Big Data.* London: University of Westminister Press.
GILBERT, J. 2017. *What is Acid Corbynism?* [Online]. Online: Red Pepper. Available: https://www.redpepper.org.uk/what-is-acid-corbynism/ [Accessed 19th June 2023].
GILLAN, K. & PICKERILL, J. 2012. The difficult and hopeful ethics of research on, and with, social movements. *Social movement studies,* 11**,** 133-143.
GLICK, P. & FISKE, S. T. 1997. Hostile and benevolent sexism: Measuring ambivalent sexist attitudes toward women. *Psychology of women quarterly,* 21**,** 119-135.
GOFFMAN, E. 1974. *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*, Harvard University Press.
GOODALL, L. 2018. *Crucial National Executive Committee vote transforms Labour's future* [Online]. news.sky.com: Sky News. Available: https://news.sky.com/story/crucial-national-executive-committee-vote-transforms-labours-future-11209060 [Accessed 15th July 2021].
GOODEY, J. 1997. BOYS DON'T CRY: Masculinities, Fear of Crime and Fearlessness. *The British Journal of Criminology,* 37**,** 401-418.
GOODFELLOW, M. 2016. *More Corbynism than Communism - TV "expose" of Momentum was remarkable only for being ordinary* [Online]. labourlist.org: Labour List. Available: https://labourlist.org/2016/09/little-controversy-and-even-less-communism-tv-expose-of-momentum-was-only-remarkable-for-being-ordinary/ [Accessed 15th July 2021].
GOODWIN, J. & JASPER, J. M. 2006. Emotions and social movements. *Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions***,** 611-635.
GORDON, U. 2008. *Anarchy alive!: anti-authoritarian politics from practice to theory,* Loughborough, Loughborough University.
GOULD, D. 2013. Rock the boat, don't rock the boat, baby: Ambivalence and the emergence of militant AIDS activism. *Emotions.* London: Routledge.

GRAFF, A. 2016. 'Gender Ideology': Weak Concepts, Powerful Politics. *Religion and Gender,* 6**,** 268-272.
GREENMAN, R. 2018. Revolutionary Organisation: Horizontal or Vertical? *The Invisible International* [Online]. Available from: https://richardgreeman.wordpress.com/invisible-international/revolutionary-organization-horizontal-or-vertical/ [Accessed 11th July 2021].
GREGG, M. & SEIGWORTH, G. J. 2010. *The affect theory reader,* London, Duke University Press.
GROSS, A. E. 1978. The male role and heterosexual behavior. *Journal of Social Issues,* 34**,** 87-107.
GUARD, J. 2004. Authenticity on the line: women workers, native" scabs," and the multi-ethnic politics of identity in a left-led strike in cold war Canada. *Journal of Women's History,* 15**,** 117-140.
GUATTARI, F. 1977. Everybody wants to be a fascist. *Semiotext (e),* 2**,** 62-71.
GUATTARI, F. 1984. *Molecular revolution: Psychiatry and politics,* New York, Penguin Group USA.
GUATTARI, F. & DOSSE, F. 2008. *Chaosophy: Texts and Interviews 1972--1977,* Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.
GUEVARA, C. 1968. Message to the Tricontinental:"Create two, three… many Vietnams". *In:* GERASSI, J. (ed.) *Venceremos! The speeches and writings of Ernesto Che Guevara.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
GUEVARA, C. & ZIMMERMANN, M. 1967. *Man and socialism in Cuba,* New York, Pathfinder Press.
HABERMAS, J. 1991. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*

An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.
HAENFLER, R., JOHNSON, B. & JONES, E. 2012. Lifestyle movements: Exploring the intersection of lifestyle and social movements. *Social Movement Studies,* 11**,** 1-20.
HALL, S. & JEFFERSON, T. 1993. *Resistance through rituals: Youth subcultures in post-war Britain,* London, Routledge.
HANLON, S. & WALLACE, A. 2019. Socialism and the fight against Transphobia. *Irish Marxist Review,* 8**,** 15-23.
HARAWAY, D. 2006. A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late 20th century. *The international handbook of virtual learning environments.* Springer.
HARDING, S. 1998. Can men be subjects of feminist thought. *In:* DIGBY, T. (ed.) *Men doing feminism.* London: Routledge.
HARDT, M. 1999. Affective Labour. *Boundary 2,* 26**,** 89-100.
HARRINGTON, M. 2021. *The problem with male feminists* [Online]. UnHerd. Available: https://unherd.com/2021/06/the-problem-with-male-feminists/ [Accessed 17th March 2022].
HARTMANN, H. I. 1979. The unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism: Towards a more progressive union. *Capital & Class,* 3**,** 1-33.
HATHERSLEY, O. 2013. *A Tale of rape claims, abuses of power and the Socialist Workers Party* [Online]. Online: The Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/08/socialist-workers-party-rape-investigation [Accessed 17th September 2019].
HATTERSLEY, R. 2019. *We fought Militant in the 1980s. The far left's hold is now much worse.* [Online]. Manchester: The Guardian. [Accessed 7th February 2022].

HEARN, J. 1987. *The gender of oppression: Men, masculinity and the critique of Marxism,* London, Wheatsheaf.
HEATH, S. 2003. Men in feminism: Men and feminist theory. *In:* JARDINE, A. & SMITH, P. (eds.) *Men in feminism.* London: Routledge.
HEILMAN, B., GENEVA, C., MATOS, K., HASSINK, A., MINCY, R. & BARKER, G. 2016. State of America's fathers: A MenCare advocacy publication.
HENDLER, G. 2001. *Public sentiments: Structures of feeling in Nineteenth-Century American literature*, Univ of North Carolina Press.
HO, M.-S. 2011. Manufacturing manhood: The culture of hegemonic masculinity in Taiwan's labour movement. *Politics of Difference in Taiwan.* Routledge.
HOLMGREN, L. E. & HEARN, J. 2009. Framing 'men in feminism': theoretical locations, local contexts and practical passings in men's gender-conscious positionings on gender equality and feminism. *Journal of Gender Studies,* 18**,** 403-418.
HOOKER, J. 2020. *Intervention–"Militant Research and the Epistemologies of Pandemic Segregation"* [Online]. Available: https://antipodeonline.org/2020/08/06/militant-research-and-the-epistemologies-of-pandemic-segregation/ [Accessed].
HOOKS, B. 1989. *Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black,* Toronto, Between the Lines.
HORSNELL, M. 1985. *Vanessa Redgrave denies WRP 'lies'* [Online]. London: The Times. Available: https://link-gale-com.manchester.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/CS604606821/TTDA?u=jrycal5&sid=bookmark-TTDA&xid=295357a4 [Accessed 2019 8th October].
HORVATH, M. A., HEGARTY, P., TYLER, S. & MANSFIELD, S. 2012. "Lights on at the end of the party": Are lads' mags mainstreaming dangerous sexism? *British Journal of Psychology,* 103**,** 454-471.
HOWLETT, M. 2021. Looking at the 'field'through a Zoom lens: Methodological reflections on conducting online research during a global pandemic. *Qualitative Research***,** 1468794120985691.
HURWITZ, H. M. & CROSSLEY, A. D. 2018. Gender and social movements. *The Wiley Blackwell companion to social movements***,** 537-552.
JAHN, A. 2020. *Politigram: Leftist Political Instagram and Horizons of Knowledge.* Masters of Arts, University of Chicago.
JASPER, J. M. The emotions of protest: Affective and reactive emotions in and around social movements. Sociological forum, 1998. Springer, 397-424.
JENNINGS, W. 2020. *Covid-19 and the 'rally-round-the flag' effect.* [Online]. ukandeu.ac.uk: UK in a changing Europe. Available: https://ukandeu.ac.uk/covid-19-and-the-rally-round-the-flag-effect/ [Accessed 13th September 2021].
JOHNSTON, H. 1995. A Methodology for Frame Analysis: From Discourse to Cognitive Schemeta. *In:* KLANDERMANS, B. & JOHNSTON, H. (eds.) *Social Movements and Culture.* London: UCL Press.
JONES, D. 2017. *What is Red Labour?* [Online]. Labour Briefing Labour Representation Committee (LRC). Available: https://labourbriefing.org/blog/2017/10/6/what-is-red-labour [Accessed 19th August 2022].
JONES, O. 2015. *Jeremy Corbyn is in the Labour leadership race. The real debates starts here.* [Online]. Manchester. [Accessed 8th April 2021].
JONES, O. 2016. *Momentum has shown how to rise above the media's rightwing bias.* [Online]. Manchester: The Guardian. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/20/momentum-media-bias-channel4-dispatches [Accessed 8th April 2021].

JOSEPH-SALISBURY, R. & CONNELLY, L. 2021. *Anti-racist scholar-activism,* Manchester, Manchester University Press.
JURIS, J. S. 2005. Violence performed and imagined: Militant action, the Black Bloc and the mass media in Genoa. *Critique of anthropology,* 25**,** 413-432.
JURIS, J. S. 2015. Embodying protest: Culture and performance within social movements. *In:* ALEX FLYNN & TINIUS, J. (eds.) *Anthropology, Theatre, and Development: The Transformative Potential of Performance.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.
KALINA, P. 2020. Performative allyship. *Technium Soc. Sci. J.,* 11**,** 478.
KAMUF, P. 2013. Femmeninism. *In:* JARDINE, A. & SMITH, P. (eds.) *Men in Feminism.* London: Routledge.
KARLSEN, M. P. & VILLADSEN, K. 2015. Foucault, Maoism, Genealogy: The Influence of Political Militancy in Michel Foucault's Thought. *New Political Science,* 37**,** 91-117.
KELLY, A. 2017. The alt-right: Reactionary rehabilitation for white masculinity. *Soundings,* 66**,** 68-78.
KELLY, J. 2018. *Contemporary Trotskyism: parties, sects and social movements in Britain,* London, Routledge.
KHOMAMI, N. 2017. The US Bernie Sanders campaigners lending Jeremy Corbyn a hand. *The Guardian*, 30th May 2017.
KIBASI, T. 2021. Keir Starmer's leadership needs an urgent course correction. *The Guardian*, 16th February 2021.
KIESLING, S. F. 1997. Power and the language of men. Language and masculinity, ed. by Sally Johnson and Ulrike Hanna Meinhof, 65-85. Oxford: Blackwell.
KIESLING, S. F. Stance in context: Affect, alignment and investment in the analysis of stancetaking. iMean conference, 2011.
KIMMEL, M. 2017. *Manhood in America*, Oxford University Press New York.
KIMMEL, M. S. 1998. Who's afraid of men doing feminism. *In:* DIGBY, T. (ed.) *Men doing feminism.*
KIMMEL, M. S. 2013. Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. *In:* GERGEN, M. M. (ed.) *Toward a new psychology of gender.* Routledge.
KLANDERMANS, B. & STAGGENBORG, S. 2002. *Methods of social movement research,* Minneapolis, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press.
KLUG, A., REES, E. & SCHNEIDER, J. 2016. Momentum: A new kind of politics. *Renewal: A Journal of Social Democracy,* 24**,** 36.
KOSHY, Y. 2017. What we saw at The World Transformed. *New Internationalist*, 28th September 2017.
KRAUS, N. K. 2008. *A New Type of Womanhood,* London, Duke University Press.
LAGALISSE, E. 2010. The limits of "radical democracy": a gender analysis of "anarchist" activist collectives in Montreal. *Altérités,* 7**,** 19-38.
LAI, L. 2017. Why telling someone to go educate themselves is complicated. *Everyday Feminism* [Online]. Available from: https://everydayfeminism.com/2017/04/go-educate-themselves-complicated/ [Accessed 25th July 2022].
LAMONT, E. 2015. The limited construction of an egalitarian masculinity: College-educated men's dating and relationship narratives. *Men and Masculinities,* 18**,** 271-292.
LANGE, P., IRVIN, C. & TARROW, S. 1990. Mobilization, social movements and party recruitment: The Italian Communist Party since the 1960s. *British Journal of Political Science,* 20**,** 15-42.
LAWFORD-SMITH, H. 2022. *Gender-Critical Feminism,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

LEDWITH, S. 2012. Gender politics in trade unions. The representation of women between exclusion and inclusion. *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research,* 18**,** 185-199.
LEE, D. Interviewing men: Vulnerabilities and dilemmas. Women's Studies International Forum, 1997. Elsevier, 553-564.
LEIGH, J., BEDDOE, L. & KEDDELL, E. 2020. Disguised compliance or undisguised nonsense? A critical discourse analysis of compliance and resistance in social work practice. *Families, Relationships and Societies,* 9**,** 269-285.
LEIGHTON, K., KARDONG-EDGREN, S., SCHNEIDEREITH, T. & FOISY-DOLL, C. 2021. Using social media and snowball sampling as an alternative recruitment strategy for research. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing,* 55**,** 37-42.
LEMON, B. 2016. Why This Radical Leftist is Disillusioned by Leftist Culture. Available from: https://medium.com/@UptheCypherPunx/why-this-radical-leftist-is-disillusioned-by-leftist-culture-63419aa85a58#.nekoysiq5 2019].
LENIN, V. 1973. *What Is To Be Done?Burning Questions Of Our Movement],* Moscow, Foreign Languages Press.
LIBERTY, T. A. F. W. 2017. *The Alliance for Workers' Liberty: Our Constitution* [Online]. www.workersliberty.org: The Alliance for Workers' Liberty. Available: https://www.workersliberty.org/archive/awl-constitution [Accessed 10th November 2019].
LINDER, C. & JOHNSON, R. C. 2015. Exploring the complexities of men as allies in feminist movements. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis,* 4.
LINSTEAD, S. 1995. Averting the gaze: Gender and power on the perfumed picket line. *Gender, Work & Organization,* 2**,** 192-206.
LO, J. 2019. *Vote at home or at Uni? Momentum launches tool for students to decide.* [Online]. leftfootforward.org: Left Foot Forward. Available: https://leftfootforward.org/2019/09/vote-at-home-or-at-uni-momentum-launches-tool-for-students-to-decide/ [Accessed 6th July 2021].
LOBERA, J. & PORTOS, M. 2020. Decentralizing electoral campaigns? New-old parties, grassroots and digital activism. *Information, Communication & Society***,** 1-22.
LORDE, A. 2017. *Your silence will not protect you,* London, Silver Press.
LOUSLEY, C. 2009. Masculinity, Emotion and Ethics of Place. *Emotion, Place and Culture***,** 227.
LUTHAR, B. & PUŠNIK, M. 2010. *Remembering utopia: the culture of everyday life in socialist Yugoslavia,* Washington DC, New Academia Publishing, LLC.
LYON, D. & TUNÅKER, C. 2021. *Zoom, Boom! And the Micro-ethnographic Moment* [Online]. The Sociological Review: The Sociological Review Foundation. Available: https://thesociologicalreview.org/magazine/november-2021/methods-and-methodology/zoom-boom-and-the-micro-ethnographic-moment/ [Accessed 6th July 2023].
MACASKILL, E. 2016. *At home with Momentum: the rise of 'Corbyn's shock troops'* [Online]. Online: The Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/mar/08/momentum-corbyns-shock-troops-labour [Accessed 5th April 2021].
MADDOX, J. & CREECH, B. 2021. Interrogating LeftTube: ContraPoints and the possibilities of critical media praxis on YouTube. *Television & New Media,* 22**,** 595-615.
MAECKELBERGH, M. 2011. Doing is believing: Prefiguration as strategic practice in the alterglobalization movement. *Social movement studies,* 10**,** 1-20.

MAIGUASHCA, B. & DEAN, J. 2018. Gender, Power and Left Politics: From Feminisation to "Feministisation". *Politics and Gender,* 14**,** 376 - 406.
MAIGUASHCA, B., DEAN, J. & KEITH, D. 2016. Pulling together in a crisis? Anarchism, feminism and the limits of left-wing convergence in austerity Britain. *Capital & Class,* 40**,** 37-57.
MALAMUTH, N. M. & THORNHILL, N. W. 1994. Hostile masculinity, sexual aggresion, and gender-biased domineeringness in conversations. *Aggressive behavior,* 20**,** 185-193.
MARCH, L. What We Know and Do Not Know about the Radical Left (and What Do We Want to Know?). presentation at the ECPR General Conference, 2013. 4-7.
MARCH, L. & MUDDE, C. 2005. What's left of the radical left? The European radical left after 1989: Decline and mutation. *Comparative European Politics,* 3**,** 23-49.
MARKUS, H. R. & KITAYAMA, S. 1994. The cultural construction of self and emotion: Implications for social behavior. *Emotion and culture: Empirical studies of mutual influence.*: American Psychological Association.
MARX, K. 1870. Letter to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt. *April.*
MARX, K. 1982. *Economic and philosophic manuscript,* London, Lawrence & Wishart.
MARX, K. 2008. *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* Maryland, United States of America, Wildside Press LLC.
MARX, K. & ENGELS, F. 1965. *The German Ideology (1845),* London, Lawrence & Wishart.
MARX, K. & ENGELS, F. 1967. *The Communist Manifesto. ,* London, Penguin.
MARX, K. & ENGELS, F. 1975. *Marx & Engels Collected Works Vol 01: Marx: 1835-1843,* London, Lawrence & Wishart.
MASON, P. 1st November 2016 2016. Why I Joined Momentum...and it's not becuase you get a badge. *Mosquito Ridge* [Online]. Available from: https://medium.com/mosquito-ridge/why-i-joined-momentum-e2e8311ea05c [Accessed 15th July 2021].
MASON, R. 2015. *Labour leadership: Jeremy Corbyn elected with huge mandate* [Online]. Manchester. [Accessed 29th March 2021].
MASON, R. & PIDD, H. 2019. *Labour leadership race begins as senior figures back Rebecca Long-Bailey* [Online]. London: Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/dec/15/labour-leadership-race-begins-as-senior-figures-back-rebecca-long-bailey [Accessed 2021].
MASSUMI, B. 1995. The autonomy of affect. *Cultural critique***,** 83-109.
MASSUMI, B. 2001. *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation,* London, Duke University Press.
MAYHALL, L. E. N. 2000. Defining militancy: radical protest, the constitutional idiom, and women's suffrage in Britain, 1908–1909. *Journal of British Studies,* 39**,** 340-371.
MCCORMACK, M. 2007. *Public Men: Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain,* London, Palgrave Macmillan
MCDONALD, K. 2002. From Solidarity to Fluidarity: Social movements beyond'collective identity'--the case of globalization conflicts. *Social movement studies,* 1**,** 109-128.
MCDONALD, K. 2012. *Feminism, the Left, and Postwar Literary Culture,* Jackons, Mississippi, Univ. Press of Mississippi.
MCDOWELL-NAYLOR, D. 2019. # GE2017: Digital media and the campaigns. *Political Communication in Britain.* Springer.
MCDUFFIE, K. & AMES, M. 2021. Archiving affect and activism: Hashtag feminism and structures of feeling in Women's March tweets. *First Monday,* 26.
MCKEOWN, M. 2011. *Rape and the Occupy Movement* [Online]. OpenDemocracy.net: OpenDemocracy Available:

https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/rape-and-occupy-movement/ [Accessed 28th December 2022].
MCLEAN, C. 2018. The politics of men's pain. *In:* MACLEAN, C. (ed.) *Men's ways of being.* London: Routledge.
MCLEAN, M. L. 2022. *"If they sound like a man, hang up," - how transphobia became rife in the gender-based violence sector* [Online]. gal-dem.com gal-dem. Available: https://gal-dem.com/transphobia-in-sexual-violence-services/ [Accessed 31st May 2022].
MEDIA, N. 2022. Doing it Right: Sex on the Left. novaramedia.com: Novara Media.
MEDINA, J. 2011. Toward a Foucaultian epistemology of resistance: Counter-memory, epistemic friction, and guerrilla pluralism. *Foucault Studies***,** 9-35.
MEDINA, J. 2012. *The epistemology of resistance: Gender and racial oppression, epistemic injustice, and resistant imaginations,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.
MELUCCI, A. 1995. The process of collective identity. *Social movements and culture,* 4**,** 41-63.
MELUCCI, A. 1996. *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
MESSNER, M. A. 1998. The limits of "the male sex role" an analysis of the men's liberation and men's rights movements' discourse. *Gender & Society,* 12**,** 255-276.
MEYER, D. S. 1995. The challenge of cultural elites: Celebrities and social movements. *Sociological inquiry,* 65**,** 181-206.
MICHELIS, I. 2022. Re-centring white victimhood in the age of Black Lives Matter: a 'gender critical' project? *Engenderlings* [Online]. Available from: https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/2022/01/12/re-centring-white-victimhood-in-the-age-of-black-lives-matter-a-terf-project/ [Accessed 31st May 2022 2022].
MILLER, S. D., TAYLOR, V. & RUPP, L. J. 2016. Social movements and the construction of queer identity. *New directions in identity theory and research***,** 443-470.
MILLS, A. J., DUREPOS, G. & WIEBE, E. 2010. Encyclopedia of Case Study Research.
MILTON, J. 2005. *Paradise lost*, Hackett Publishing.
MOMENTUM. 2021a. *About Us* [Online]. peoplesmomentum.com: Momentum. Available: https://peoplesmomentum.com/about/ [Accessed 6th July 2021].
MOMENTUM. 2021b. *Eviction Resistance* [Online]. peoplesmomentum.com: Momentum. Available: https://peoplesmomentum.com/evictionresistance/ [Accessed 14th July 2021].
MOMENTUM. 2021c. *The Leon Panitch Leadership Programme* [Online]. peoplesmomentum.com: Momentum. Available: https://peoplesmomentum.com/building-the-movement/leo-panitch-programme/ [Accessed 14th July 2021].
MOMENTUM 2021d. Our Eviction Resistance campaign handed Housing Minister Robert Jenrick an eviction notice yesterday.

As the evictions ban ends today we made sure the govt knows - when profiteering landlords send in the bailiffs, we will defend our communities. *In:* @PEOPLESMOMENTUM (ed.) 12:43 ed.: Twitter.
MOMENTUM. 2021e. *Refounding Momentum* [Online]. peoplesmomentum.com: Momentum. Available: https://peoplesmomentum.com/transforming-labour/refounding-momentum/ [Accessed 14th July 2021].
MOMENTUM 2021f. Socialist Organising in a New Era: 2021-2024. peoplesmomentum.com: Momentum.

MOMENTUM. 2022. *MyCampaignMap: Neaby Action Groups* [Online]. mycampaignmap.com: Momentum. Available: https://www.mycampaignmap.com/recommendations/M2%205DB [Accessed July 7th 2022].

MOMENTUM, M. June 15th 2021 2021g. *RE: Become A Socialist Councillor in Manchester.* Type to WAUGH, C.

MORTIMER, J. 2018. *No, Momentum didn't cost Labour a victory in the local elections* [Online]. leftfootforward.org: Left Foot Foward. Available: https://leftfootforward.org/2018/05/no-momentum-didnt-cost-labour-victory-last-night/ [Accessed 6th July 2021].

MOUFFE, C. 2016. *In defence of left-wing populism* [Online]. theconversation.com: The Conversation. Available: https://theconversation.com/in-defence-of-left-wing-populism-55869 [Accessed 11th July 2021].

MUIR, H. 2013. *Diary: How the SWP turns drama into crisis - fresh accusations rock the party* [Online]. Online: Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/jul/08/hugh-muir-diary-swp-rock [Accessed 2020].

MURNEN, S. K., WRIGHT, C. & KALUZNY, G. 2002. If "boys will be boys," then girls will be victims? A meta-analytic review of the research that relates masculine ideology to sexual aggression. *Sex roles,* 46**,** 359-375.

MURPHY, T. S. 2020. Antonio Negri (1933–). *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism.* London: Routledge.

NAT. 2011. Occupations, Safe Spaces and The Privilege Denying Left. *Forty Shades of Grey* [Online]. Available from: http://fortyshadesofgrey.blogspot.com/2011/10/occupations-safe-spaces-and-privilege.html 2019].

NEAME, K. 2022. *Exclusive: Momentum Organisers slate win majority on the group's executive* [Online]. labourlist.org: Labour List Available: https://labourlist.org/2022/07/exclusive-momentum-organisers-slate-wins-majority-on-groups-executive/ [Accessed July 12th 2022].

NECHAEV, S. G. 1971. *The Catechism of the Revolutionist,* London, Kropotkin's Lighthouse Publications.

NEGRI, A. 1978. *Il dominio e il sabotaggio: Sul methodo marxista della trasformazione sociale,* Milan, Feltrinelli.

NEVEU, E. 2019. Life Stories of Former French Activists of "68". *In:* FILLIEULE, O. & NEVEU, E. (eds.) *Activists Forever?: Long-Term Impacts of Political Activism.*

NEWS, B. 2007. *Brown will enter No 10 unapposed* [Online]. news.bbc.co.uk: BBC News. Available: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6660565.stm [Accessed 6th July 2021].

NIELD, S. 2021. Toward a Theatrical History of the Picket Line. *In:* RAI, S. M., GLUHOVIC, M., JESTROVIC, S. & SAWARD, M. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Politics and Performance.*

NIETO-VALDIVIESO, Y. F. 2017. The joy of the militancy: happiness and the pursuit of revolutionary struggle. *Journal of Gender Studies,* 26**,** 78-90.

NOY, C. 2008. Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research. *International Journal of social research methodology,* 11**,** 327-344.

NUNES, R. 2013. Notes Towards a Rethinking of the Militant. *Communism in the Twenty-First Century,* 3.

O'SULLIVAN, S. 2001. The aesthetics of affect: Thinking art beyond representation. *Angelaki: journal of theoretical humanities,* 6**,** 125-135.

OSBOURNE, S. 2019. *Russian city allows gay pride parade then bans it 'because children might see it'* [Online]. London. Available: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-gay-pride-parade-ban-strezhovoy-children-nikolay-alexeev-a9005381.html [Accessed 4th January 2020].

PAJUMETS, M. & HEARN, J. 2021. Doing gender by not doing gender in eco-communities. *Men, Masculinities, and Earth Contending with the (m) Anthropocene*.

PARTY, T. L. 2020. The work of the Labour Party's Governance and Legal Unit in relation to anti-semitism, 2014-2019 Online The Labour Party

PARTY, T. W. R. 2017. *From 1917 Centenary - Forward to World October!* [Online]. News Line: The Workers Revolutionary Party. Available: https://wrp.org.uk/features/from-1917-centenary-forward-to-world-october/ [Accessed 10th November 2019].

PEARCE, R., ERIKAINEN, S. & VINCENT, B. 2020. TERF wars: An introduction. *The Sociological Review,* 68**,** 677-698.

PENNY, L. 2013. *Laurie Penny on sexism on the left: What does the SWP's way of dealing with sexual assault allegations tell us about the left?* [Online]. www.newstatesman.com: The New Statesmane. Available: https://www.newstatesman.com/laurie-penny/2013/01/laurie-penny-what-does-swps-way-dealing-sexual-assault-allegations-tell-us-abou [Accessed 21st April 2020].

PETERSON, A. 2018. *Contemporary political protest: Essays on political militancy,* London, Routledge.

PFEFFER, C. A. 2014. "I don't like passing as a straight woman": Queer negotiations of identity and social group membership. *American Journal of Sociology,* 120**,** 1-44.

PHIPPS, A., RINGROSE, J., RENOLD, E. & JACKSON, C. 2018. Rape culture, lad culture and everyday sexism: Researching, conceptualizing and politicizing new mediations of gender and sexual violence. *Journal of Gender Studies,* 27**,** 1-8.

PHULL, M. & STRONGE, W. 2017. *Acid Corbynism's next steps: building a socialist dance culture.* [Online]. Online: Red Pepper. Available: https://www.redpepper.org.uk/acid-corbynisms-next-steps-building-a-socialist-dance-culture/ [Accessed 20th July 2023].

PIKE, S. 2017. Articulating the Inarticulate: Performance and intervention in masculine gender (re) presentation. *Social Alternatives,* 36**,** 48-54.

PINSKY, D. 2015. The sustained snapshot: Incidental ethnographic encounters in qualitative interview studies. *Qualitative Research,* 15**,** 281-295.

PIRANI, S. 2013. *The Break-up of the WRP: From the Horse's Mouth* [Online]. www.libcom.org: Lib Com. Available: https://libcom.org/history/break-wrp-horse%E2%80%99s-mouth-simon-pirani [Accessed 19th September 2019].

PLATT, E. 2014. Comrades at war: the decline and fall of the Socialist Workers Party. *The New Statesman.* London.

PLEYERS, G. 2020. The Pandemic is a battlefield. Social movements in the COVID-19 lockdown. *Journal of Civil Society,* 16**,** 295-312.

POLLETTA, F. 2016. Storytelling in social movements. *Culture, social movements, and protest.* London: Routledge.

POLLETTA, F. & JASPER, J. M. 2001. Collective identity and social movements. *Annual review of Sociology,* 27**,** 283-305.

PRESSMAN, J. & CHOI-FITZPATRICK, A. 2020. Covid19 and protest repertoires in the United States: an initial description of limited change. *Social Movement Studies***,** 1-8.

PROCTOR, K. 2019. *Labour gets support from Bernie Sanders campaigners in US* [Online]. Manchester: The Guardian. [Accessed 19th June 2023].

PURVIS, B. 2022. It's Not My Place: On White Silence and Feeling Uncomfortable. *Field: A Free Journal For Architecture,* 8**,** 61-69.

QADIR, S. 2015. *Why the Left is (still) sexist* [Online]. Online. Available: https://www.tanqeed.org/2015/12/why-the-left-is-still-sexist/ [Accessed 7th February 2021].
REAGLE, J. 2016. The obligation to know: From FAQ to Feminism 101. *New Media & Society,* 18**,** 691-707.
REESER, T. W. 2017. Theorizing the masculinity of affect. *Masculinities and Literary Studies.* London: Routledge.
REESER, T. W. 2019. Approaching affective masculinities. *Routledge international handbook of masculinity studies.* London: Routledge.
RENTON, D. 2016. Why I don't buy Socialist Worker *Lives;running* [Online]. Available from: https://livesrunning.wordpress.com/2016/05/22/why-i-dont-buy-socialist-worker/ [Accessed 28th December 2022].
RHODES, A. 2019. Movement-led electoral campaigning: Momentum in the 2017 general election. *Political Communication in Britain.* Springer.
RITZER, G. & STEPNISKY, J. 2017. *Sociological theory,* London, Sage publications.
ROBERTSON, S. 2006. 'I've been like a coiled spring this last week': embodied masculinity and health. *Sociology of health & illness,* 28**,** 433-456.
ROBINSON, S. 2011. London protest shows solidarity with Egyptian revolution. *Socialist Worker*, 5th Feb 2011.
ROLNIK, S. 2006. Cartografia sentimental. *Porto Alegre: Editora da UFRGS.*
ROSE, D. B. 2020. The silence and power of women. *Words and Silences.* London: Routledge.
ROSEN, A. 2013. *Rise up, women!: the militant campaign of the Women's Social and Political Union, 1903-1914,* London, Routledge.
ROSS, A. 2013. No question of silence. *In:* JARDINE, A. & SMITH, P. (eds.) *Men in feminism.* Routledge.
ROWAN, J. 2005. Achilles Heel and the anti-sexist men's movement. *Psychotherapy and Politics International,* 3**,** 58-71.
ROWBOTHAM, S. 2015. *Woman's consciousness, man's world,* London, Verso Trade.
ROY, M. S. 2012. Rethinking female militancy in postcolonial Bengal. *Feminist Review,* 101**,** 124-131.
RUSSELL, B. 2015. Beyond activism/academia: militant research and the radical climate and climate justice movement (s). *Area,* 47**,** 222-229.
RUSSELL, M. 2014. Parliamentary party cohesion: Some explanations from psychology. *Party Politics,* 20**,** 712-723.
RUXTON, S. 2020. Men and gender equality: Challenges and opportunities. ICMEO.
SALES, A. L. L. D. F., FONTES, F. F. & YASUI, S. 2018. (Re) framing a problem: militancy in question. *Temas em Psicologia,* 26**,** 565-577.
SATTEL, J. W. 1976. The inexpressive male: Tragedy or sexual politics? *Social problems,* 23**,** 469-477.
SAUER, B., DIETZE, G. & ROTH, J. 2020. Authoritarian right-wing populism as masculinist identity politics. The role of affects. *Right-wing populism and gender: European perspectives and beyond***,** 23-40.
SAVAGE, M. 2019. *Just how radical are Labour's conference pledges?* [Online]. London. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/sep/28/labour-manifesto-just-how-radical-schools-health [Accessed 5th April 2022].
SCARRY, E. 2020. *The body in pain: The making and unmaking of the world,* London, Routledge.

SCHMIDT, M., EDINBURGH, L. V. D. W., PRESS, A., HIRSCH, S., AMSTERDAM, L. V. D. W. & PRESS, B. 2009. *Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism (Counter-Power, Volume 1),* Chico, California, AK Press.
SCHMITZ, R. M. & KAZYAK, E. 2016. Masculinities in cyberspace: An analysis of portrayals of manhood in men's rights activist websites. *Social Sciences,* 5**,** 18.
SCHOFIELD, K. 2020. *Momentum vows to 'hold Keir Starmer to account' after Labour left suffers heavy defeats.* [Online]. politicshome.com: Politics Home. Available: https://www.politicshome.com/news/article/momentum-vows-to-hold-keir-starmer-to-account-after-labour-left-suffers-heavy-defeats [Accessed 12th July 2021].
SCHWALBE, M. L. & WOLKOMIR, M. 2003. Interviewing men. *In:* HOLSTEIN, J. & GUBRIUM, J. F. (eds.) *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns.* Sage.
SCULLY, D. 2013. *Understanding sexual violence: A study of convicted rapists,* London, Routledge.
SEARS, H. A., BYERS, E. S., WHELAN, J. J. & SAINT-PIERRE, M. 2006. "If it hurts you, then it is not a joke" Adolescents' ideas about girls' and boys' use and experience of abusive behavior in dating relationships. *Journal of interpersonal violence,* 21**,** 1191-1207.
SEDGWICK, E. K. 2015. *Between men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire,* New York, Columbia University Press.
SEGAL, L. 2006. *Slow motion: Changing masculinities, changing men,* London, Springer.
SEIDLER, V. 2009. *Recreating Sexual Politics (Routledge Revivals): Men, Feminism and Politics,* London, Routledge.
SEIDLER, V. J. 1992. *Men, sex, and relationships: writings from Achilles heel*, Psychology Press.
SEIKKULA, M. 2019. (Un) making 'extreme'and 'ordinary'whiteness: Activists' narratives on antiracist mobilisation in Finland. *The Sociological Review,* 67**,** 1002-1017.
SEN, A. 2006. Reflecting on Resistance: Hindu Women 'Soldiers' and the Birth of Female Militancy. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies,* 13**,** 1-35.
SERANO, J. 2013. *Excluded: Making feminist and queer movements more inclusive,* Berkeley, California, Seal Press.
SERANO, J. 2016. *Whipping girl: A transsexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity,* London, Hachette UK.
SEXISM, S. L. M. A. 1974. *Brothers Against Sexism,* London, South London Men Against Sexism.
SEYMOUR, R. 2013a. The crisis in the SWP, part II. *Lenin's Tomb* [Online]. Available from: http://www.leninology.co.uk/2013/03/the-crisis-in-swp-part-ii.html [Accessed 17/08 2022].
SEYMOUR, R. 2013b. The crisis in the SWP, part III. *Lenin's Tomb* [Online]. Available from: http://www.leninology.co.uk/2013/03/the-crisis-in-swp-part-iii.html [Accessed 17/08 2022].
SEYMOUR, R. 2013c. The crisis in the SWP, part IV. *Lenin's Tomb* [Online]. Available from: http://www.leninology.co.uk/2013/03/the-crisis-in-swp-part-iv.html [Accessed 17/08 2022].
SEYMOUR, R. 2013d. The crisis in the SWP: Part I. *Lenin's Tomb* [Online]. Available from: http://www.leninology.co.uk/2013/03/the-crisis-in-swp-part-i.html [Accessed 17/08 2022].
SHAFER, A., ORTIZ, R. R., THOMPSON, B. & HUEMMER, J. 2018. The role of hypermasculinity, token resistance, rape myth, and assertive sexual consent communication among college men. *Journal of Adolescent Health,* 62**,** S44-S50.

SHARMA, D. & TYGSTRUP, F. 2015. *Structures of feeling: Affectivity and the study of culture,* Nordlingen, Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.
SHAW, E. 2015. *Is Momentum a return to the bad old days of Labour's militant tendency?* [Online]. [Accessed 7th May 2020].
SHAW, R. M. 2019. Altruism, solidarity and affect in live kidney donation and breastmilk sharing. *Sociology of health & illness,* 41**,** 553-566.
SHIELD, A. D. 2018. Grindr culture: Intersectional and socio-sexual. *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization,* 18**,** 149-161.
SHOUSE, E. 2005. Feeling, emotion, affect. *M/c journal,* 8.
SHUKAITIS, S., GRAEBER, D. & BIDDLE, E. 2007. *Constituent imagination: Militant investigations, collective theorization,* Oakland, CA, Ak Press
SITRIN, M. 2006. *Horizontalism: Voices of popular power in Argentina,* Oakland, CA, AK press.
SIVIER, M. 10th August 2016 2016. Tom Watson's 'proof of Trotskyist Labour infilitration' was cribbed from right-wing think tank Progress. *Vox Political* [Online]. Available from: https://voxpoliticalonline.com/2016/08/10/tom-watsons-proof-of-trotskyist-labour-infiltration-was-cribbed-from-right-wing-think-tank-progress/ [Accessed 15th July 2021].
SKOGAN, J. H. 2020. *A Vehicle for Socialism: Momentum and the Labour Party.* Masters, University of Oslo.
SLOAM, J. & HENN, M. 2019. Youthquake: Young People and the 2017 General Election. *Youthquake 2017.* Springer.
SMITH, J. A. & BRAUNACK-MAYER, A. 2014. Men Interviewing Men: The Benefits and Challenges of Using Constructed Mateship as a Tool to Build Rapport When Interviewing Anglo-Australian Men About Their Health. *International Journal of Men's Health,* 13.
SMITH, M. 2016. *Momentum-backed candidates sweep Labour ruling body election in boost for Jeremy Corbyn* [Online]. London: The Daily Mirror. Available: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/momentum-backed-candidates-sweep-labour-8590476 [Accessed 8th March 2021].
SNOW, D. A. & BENFORD, R. D. 1988. Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization. *International social movement research,* 1**,** 197-217.
SORIN, C. R. 2022. Hybrid masculinities and the limits of anti-violence efforts in BDSM communities. *Men and masculinities,* 25**,** 546-565.
SOTERIOU, E. 2022. *Truss pledges to stop 'militant action' from trade unions 'paralysing' the economy* [Online]. LBC.co.uk: LBC. Available: https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/truss-militant-action-trade-unions-economy/ [Accessed October 6th 2022].
SPARKS, H. 1997. Dissident citizenship: Democratic theory, political courage, and activist women. *Hypatia,* 12**,** 74-110.
SPIVAK, G. C. 1988. Can the subaltern speak? *In:* NELSON, C. & GROSSBERG, L. (eds.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
STAINES, P. 15th September 2016 2016. Leak: Labour Moderates infilitrated Momentum. *Guido Fawkes* [Online]. Available from: https://order-order.com/2016/09/15/labour-moderates-secretly-investigated-corbynistas/ [Accessed 15th July 2021].
STEEL, M. 2013 *Oh Good Lord what has the SWP gone and done NOW?* [Online]. marksteelinfo.com: Mark Steel. Available: https://marksteelinfo.com/2013/03/oh-good-lord-what-has-the-swp-gone-and-done-now/ [Accessed 29th December 2022].
STEINBERG, M. W. 2002. Toward a more dialogic analysis of social movement culture. *Social movements: Identity, culture, and the state,* 208**,** 210.

STEWART, H. 2019. *Momentum urges Labour to adopt 'radical' pledges in next manifesto* [Online]. London. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/momentum-urges-labour-to-adopt-radical-pledges-in-next-manifesto [Accessed 19th May 2022].
STRATTON, A. 2010. David Miliband keeps Diane Abbott in Labour Leadership race. *The Guardian*, 9th June 2010.
SULLIVAN, S. 2007. " Viva Nihilism!": On Militancy and Machismo in (anti-) globalisation Protest. *In:* DEVETAK, R. & HUGHES, C. W. (eds.) *The Globalization of Political Violence.* London: Routledge.
SWIDLER, A. 1986. Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review*, 273-286.
SWIDLER, A. 2013. *Talk of love: How culture matters,* Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press.
TAECHARUNGROJ, V. & NUEANGJAMNONG, P. 2015. Humour 2.0: Styles and types of humour and virality of memes on Facebook. *Journal of Creative Communications,* 10, 288-302.
TARROW, S. G. 2011. *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
THOBURN, N. 2008. What is a Militant? *In:* BUCHANAN, I. & THOBURN, N. (eds.) *Deleuze and politics.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
THOBURN, N. 2010. Weatherman, the militant diagram, and the problem of political passion. *New Formations,* 68, 125-142.
THOMAS, M. 2015. *Momentum: welcome and worries* [Online]. Workers Liberty The Alliance for Workers' Liberty. Available: https://www.workersliberty.org/story/2017-07-26/momentum-welcome-and-worries-published-october-2015 [Accessed 27th March 2023].
THOMPSON, N. 1995. Men and anti-sexism. *The British Journal of Social Work,* 25, 459-475.
THORNE-FINCH, R. 2019. Ending the Silence. *Ending the Silence: The Origins and Treatment of Male Violence against Women.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
TI. 2020. Marxism and Transgender Liberation: Confronting Transphobia in the British Left. *Red Fightback* [Online]. Available from: https://redfightback.org/read/transphobia_in_the_left [Accessed 22/12/22 2022].
TIDY, J. 2016. The gender politics of "Ground Truth" in the military dissent movement: The power and limits of authenticity claims regarding war. *International Political Sociology,* 10, 99-114.
TIENARI, J. & TAYLOR, S. 2019. Feminism and men: Ambivalent space for acting up. *Organization,* 26, 948-960.
TOMINAGA, K. 2017. Social reproduction and the limitations of protest camps: openness and exclusion of social movements in Japan. *Social Movement Studies,* 16, 269-282.
TROTSKY, L. 2005. *Literature and revolution*, Haymarket Books.
TÜRKEN, S., NAFSTAD, H. E., BLAKAR, R. M. & ROEN, K. 2016. Making sense of neoliberal subjectivity: A discourse analysis of media language on self-development. *Globalizations,* 13, 32-46.
The Labour Files 2022. Directed by UNIT, A. J. I. United Kingdom: Al Jazeera.
VALENTI, J. 2019. Old Men are back to saying women should question their success. *Medium.com* [Online]. Available from: https://gen.medium.com/retro-sexism-is-back-and-awful-as-ever-fc1e34c9ac0a [Accessed 13th June 2022].

VARON, J. P. 2004. *Bringing the war home: the Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and revolutionary violence in the sixties and seventies,* Berkeley CA, Univ of California Press.
VENEGAS, M. 2021. Between community and sectarianism: calling out and negotiated discipline in prefigurative politics. *Social Movement Studies***,** 1-18.
VENTURINI, F. 2020. Social movements' powerlessness at the time of covid-19: a personal account. *Interface: a journal for and about social movements*.
VISSER, M., LUBBERS, M., KRAAYKAMP, G. & JASPERS, E. 2014. Support for radical left ideologies in Europe. *European journal of political research,* 53**,** 541-558.
VOLPICELLI, G. M. 2019. *The Facebook election fight is now between the Tories and Momentum* [Online]. wired.co.uk: Wired. Available: https://www.wired.co.uk/article/facebook-adverts-general-election-momentum [Accessed 6th July 2021].
VYSOTSKY, S. 2020. *American Antifa: The tactics, culture, and practice of militant antifascism*, Routledge.
WAHLSTRÖM, M. 2011. Taking control or losing control? Activist narratives of provocation and collective violence. *Social movement studies,* 10**,** 367-385.
WAINWRIGHT, H. 2006. Imagine There's No Leaders. *Z Magazine,* 9**,** 3.
WARD, B. & GUGLIELMO, M. 2022. Pop-socialism: A new radical left politics? Evaluating the rise and fall of the British and Italian left in the anti-austerity age. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations,* 24**,** 686-701.
WARREN, C. A. 2012. Interviewing as social interaction. *The Sage handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft***,** 129-142.
WARREN, C. A., BARNES-BRUS, T., BURGESS, H., WIEBOLD-LIPPISCH, L., HACKNEY, J., HARKNESS, G., KENNEDY, V., DINGWALL, R., ROSENBLATT, P. C. & RYEN, A. 2003. After the interview. *Qualitative Sociology,* 26**,** 93-110.
WAUGH, C. 2019. In Defence of Safe Spaces: Subaltern Counterpublics and Vulnerable Politics in the Neoliberal University. *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University.* Springer.
WAUGH, C. 2022. 'Over the portal of the new world,'Be Thyself'shall be written': Ideology, connectivity and authenticity of the self in radical left social movements. *Political Perspectives,* 10**,** 1-27.
WEISS, J. T. 2004. GL vs. BT: The archaeology of biphobia and transphobia within the US gay and lesbian community. *Journal of bisexuality,* 3**,** 25-55.
WELSKOPP, T. 2004. The political man: the construction of masculinity in German Social Democracy, 1848-1878. *In:* DUDINK, S. (ed.) *Masculinities in Politics and War. Gendering Modern History.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.
WENGRAF, T. 2001. *Qualitative research interviewing: Biographic narrative and semi-structured methods*, Sage.
WHATELY, R. 1863. *Condition of a Church Militant: A Charge Delivered at the Annual Visitation of the Diocese of Dublin, in the Cathedral of Christ-Church, Dublin, 16th June, 1863,* London, Parker, Son and Bourn.
WHITAKER, E. M. & ATKINSON, P. 2019. Authenticity and the interview: a positive response to a radical critique. *Qualitative Research,* 19**,** 619-634.
WHITE, J. 2013. Thinking generations. *The British Journal of Sociology,* 64**,** 216-247.
WHITE, M. 2019. *Producing masculinity: The internet, gender, and sexuality,* London, Routledge.
WHITEHEAD, S. M. & BARRETT, F. 2001. *The masculinities reader,* Hobeken, NJ, John Wiley & Sons.

WHITTIER, N. 2013. Gender and social movements. *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*.
WILCOX, E. E. 2018. *Introduction to" Revolutionary Bodies: Chinese Dance and the Socialist Legacy",* Berkeley CA, University of California Press.
WILLIAMS, K. D. 2002. *Ostracism: The power of silence,* Guilford, Guilford Press.
WILLIAMS, R. 1977. *Marxism and literature,* Oxford, Oxford Paperbacks.
WILLIAMS, R. 2001. *The long revolution,* London, Broadview Press.
WILLIAMS, R. 2011. Culture is ordinary (1958). *Cultural theory: An anthology,* 5359.
WILLINK, K. G. & SHUKRI, S. T. 2018. Performative interviewing: affective attunement and reflective affective analysis in interviewing. *Text and Performance Quarterly,* 38**,** 187-207.
WILSON, R. 1981. The Problem of Men in Big Flame. *Big Flame.* Liverpool: Big Flame.
WINTOUR, P. 2015a. *Activists to harness Corbyn campaign energy with Momentum* [Online]. Manchester: The Guardian. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/oct/08/activists-to-harness-corbyn-campaign-energy-with-momentum [Accessed 1st December 2019].
WINTOUR, P. 2015b. *Left Unity party to consider joining Labour* [Online]. Online: The Guardian Media Group. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/nov/19/left-unity-party-ken-loach-to-consider-joining-labour-jeremy-corbyn [Accessed 20th April 2021].
WINTOUR, P. 2015c. *Unite challenges expulsion of alleged Trotskyists from Labour party* [Online]. Manchester: The Guardian. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/oct/23/unite-challenges-expulsion-of-alleged-trotskyists-from-labour-party [Accessed 14th October 2021].
WITTGENSTEIN, L. 2013. *Tractatus logico-philosophicus,* London, Routledge.
WORTH, O. 2021. Reasserting hegemonic masculinity: women's leadership within the far right. *International Affairs,* 97**,** 503-521.
WRIGHT, S. 2021. *The Weight of the Printed Word: Text, Context and Militancy in Operaismo,* Leiden, the Netherlands, Brill.
YANGZOM, D. 2016. Clothing and social movements: Tibet and the politics of dress. *Social Movement Studies,* 15**,** 622-633.
YERRELL, L. J. B. 2020. *Corbynism and Democracy: A Political Movement in and Against Neoliberalism.* PhD, The University of Manchester (United Kingdom).
ZAJAK, S., STJEPANDIĆ, K. & STEINHILPER, E. 2021. Pro-migrant protest in times of COVID-19: intersectional boundary spanning and hybrid protest practices. *European Societies,* 23**,** S172-S183.
ZEMBYLAS, M. 2002. " Structures of feeling" in curriculum and teaching: Theorizing the emotional rules. *Educational theory,* 52**,** 187-208.
ZENG, J. & ABIDIN, C. 2021. '# OkBoomer, time to meet the Zoomers': Studying the memefication of intergenerational politics on TikTok. *Information, Communication & Society,* 24**,** 2459-2481.
ZETKIN, C. 1934. *Reminiscences of Lenin,* New York, International Publishers, .
ZIZEK, S. 2009. *In defense of lost causes,* London, Verso Books.
ZIZEK, S. 2012. *The year of dreaming dangerously,* London, Verso Books.

BLANK PAGE