



Albreda House
Lydgate Lane
Sheffield
S10 5FH
(0742) 668857



What does it do ?

Sheffield Film Co-op is an ACTT-enfranchised workshop working under the workshop declaration. This is an ACTT union agreement which allows for the continuity of funding to groups in the independent film making sector who are concerned most of all with the cultural, social and political contribution of their work as an alternative to mainstream and commercial product.

As socialist feminist film makers working in film production, distribution and exhibition we place a high priority on engaging with the current concerns of ordinary women in the local community and on sensitively representing their experience in film. Our work is intended to combine a challenge to the usual representation of women in the media with the depiction of their real activity in society in a useful and accessible form. Using the documentary or drama-documentary format in different ways we have produced films on the important themes of abortion, domestic violence, job opportunities for girls, low paid women's work and women's history. Currently we are working on a fiction around the theme of health and birth control.

We also have a wide ranging distribution service and our films are regularly screened locally and nationally at community centres, women's groups, union meetings, schools, colleges and film centres. We welcome invitations to be present at screenings of the films where discussions with the audience can take place. This relationship with our audience plays a vital role in the continuing development of our film practice.

Sheffield Film Co-op hopes to continue producing films that are enjoyable and that stimulate discussion in a way which furthers the understanding of women's experience, their representation in film and the possibilities for social change.

How did it develop ?

Sheffield Film Co-op was established in 1975 and made its early films on grants to specific film projects received from sponsors and other interested institutions, such as the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, the National Women's Aid Federation, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Yorkshire Arts Association, and used the equipment resources of the Sheffield Independent Film Group.

It was not until 1980 that wages became an element of our financial support. We were registered as a Workers Co-operative in 1980 and joined the Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians. We received funding from the YAA and Sheffield City Council to support some full-time waged work and a programme of film production, distribution and exhibition activity. Our distribution network developed extensively and films were being shown at a wide range of local venues. Continuity of funding for these activities became more vital as independent film making was developing on a national scale and other groups like ours were emerging. In response to this the Workshop Declaration was formulated within the ACTT, and confirmed the union's acknowledgement of the cultural and social intervention of independent film makers and established a precedent for the regular funding of workshops like Sheffield Film Co-op. We became an enfranchised ACTT workshop in 1982 and received funding from the British Film Institute and were able to establish a production office and editing room with equipment from Channel Four Television. Further financial support for our work into 1984 comes from the newly set up BFI Regional Production Fund.



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Sheffield Film Co-op is a group of socialist feminist film makers working together with the following aims:

- ★ to produce films around issues of concern to women
- ★ to develop our skills as film makers
- ★ to use these skills with other women in the community to enable them to have access to and control over their representation in the medium.

SHEFFIELD FILM CO-OP PRODUCTIONS

A Woman Like You	1976	18mins	16mm/Col/Opt	
That's No Lady	1977	14mins	16mm/Col/Opt	
Jobs For the Girls	1979	29mins	16mm/Col/Opt	VHS/U-matic video
A Question of Choice	1982	18mins	16mm/Col/Opt	VHS/U-matic video
Red Skirts on Clydeside	1984	40mins	16mm/Col/Opt	VHS/U-matic video
Changing Our Lives	1984	18mins		VHS/U-matic video
Women of Steel	1984	27mins		VHS/U-matic video
Let Our Children Grow Tall!	1986	52mins		VHS/U-matic video
For A Living Wage	1986	16mins		VHS/U-matic video

Remember our dreams after the war?

Who would have thought that in 1985 one in three children would be living in poverty — that 12 million people would depend on some form of State Benefit?

But is this surprising in a country with mass unemployment and when one third of the adult workforce earns less than £100 a week?

In this video, women with children living on low wages or benefits, and some of the young people themselves, present their analysis of the situation — their criticisms of the Thatcher Government's spending priorities, challenging, for instance, the wisdom of nuclear arms and cuts in public expenditure; their anger at the conditions they have to put up with, in particular bad housing conditions and housing unsuitable for children, made worse by cuts in Local Authority housing budgets; their concerns for their children's futures, if radical changes are not made and current trends continue.

All the participants come from different parts of Sheffield and are active in their communities in a variety of ways. Their contributions are supplemented by visual sequences including animation by Gillian Lacey, accompanied by some quotations from Margaret Thatcher, that illustrate the class interests and practical reality of Tory policy.

let our children grow tall!

AVAILABLE FOR HIRE FROM
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video camera/lighting:

Nancy Schiesari

video sound:

Hilary Wilkinson

editor:

Angela Martin

assistant video sound:

Bec Goldstone

lighting trainee:

Davinder Kaur

animation:

Gillian Lacey

Margaret Thatcher voice:

Steve Nallon

Sheffield Film Co-op Production
research & co-direction:

Gill Booth

film camera:

Chrissie Stansfield

production & assistant editing:

Bernadette Moloney

film lighting & direction:

Christine Bellamy

U-matic/VHS video 42 mins 1986

Sheffield Film Co-op is an ACTT enfranchised workshop
funded by the British Film Institute and Channel 4 TV.

Design: Fi Frances

Typesetting & printing: Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op Ltd.

A LIVING WAGE

More than 40% of the adult workforce in Britain – 8 million people – earn less than £115 basic wages per week (the Low Pay Unit guideline for the definition of low pay).

The majority of these are women, black people, young people, most of whom have traditionally been low-paid. The current Government's plans for a low-wage economy are bringing the wages of the lowest paid down even further, and drawing more and more people into the low-wage category.

FOR A LIVING WAGE illustrates which are the major low-paying areas of work, and points to the underlying causes of women, black people, young people, being confined to those jobs, in addition to the Government's policies.

The video then suggests some of the measures that need to be taken to challenge low pay, either for individuals who are low-paid, or by the Trade Unions and Government, locally and nationally.

FOR A LIVING WAGE
is intended for use
by individuals or groups and organisations
concerned to tackle low pay.

It was funded by
Sheffield City Council, London Borough of Greenwich,
COHSE, T&GWU, GLC Jobs Year Campaign

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Design: Fi Frances

Typesetting & Printing: Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op Ltd.

Additional crew:
Lighting:

Nuala Campbell
Nina Kellgren
Cath Patton

Assistants:
Black Heart Video Co-op
Produced & directed by
Sheffield Film Co-op

VHS Video 15mins 1986





RED SKIRTS ON CLYDESIDE

This film is a documentary which looks at the process of rediscovering women's history using the 1915 Glasgow Rent Strike as a focal point. The rent strike, which took place during the first World War, was a protest against Glasgow landlords who were exploiting the war situation. The women of the tenements and the Glasgow Women's Housing Association organised a vigorous protest which forced the Government to take action.

The film celebrates this victory and presents for discussion some of the problems in attempting to rediscover women's past achievements, giving an indication of the many other struggles that remain unknown and the reasons why it is important for women to reclaim their history.

Lighting: Anne Cottringer

Camera: Caroline Spry

Sound: Moya Burns

Music: Fish and Plume

Produced and directed by Sheffield Film Co-op

Colour 16mm 40mins 1983

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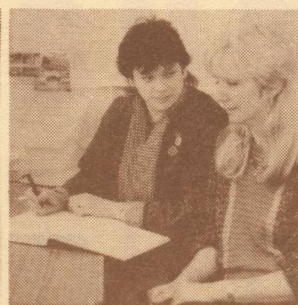
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Designed, typeset & printed by Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op Ltd

changing our LIVES



5 ARCHES COMMUNITY CENTRE

This video was made in co-operation with a group of women living on a council estate in Sheffield.

Three years ago by squatting they began a struggle to improve their lot. Supported by adult education workers and with council funding and support, their centre is now providing some of the basic daily needs of the local women. This includes a full-time creche, a kitchen and education classes.

In a lively and optimistic portrayal the women show what their involvement in the centre has meant to them, how it has increased their confidence and changed their lives, both individually and as a group.

A Sheffield Film Co-op production
1984 18 mins VHS video

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*Designed by FI Frances
Typeset and printed by Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op*

A Sheffield Film Co-op production
1984 27 mins VHS video

A documentary about the part played by women in the Sheffield munitions factories during the Second World War.

The women talk about the jobs they did, the unions, the conditions, and how they combined all this with their home responsibilities. Their interviews are intercut with archive film and stills showing the propaganda images of women munitions workers used during that period.

Women of Steel

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*Designed by Fi Frances
Typeset and printed by Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op*

THAT'S NO LADY

'That's No Lady' raises the problems associated with violence in the home and attempts to dispel some of the myths about battered women: "She asked for it" — "She must enjoy it" — "He must be sick."

It is not the story of one woman and her problems but instead a series of scenes illustrating the kinds of experiences and relationships that can develop in the life of any woman who gets battered. It shows the isolation felt by women in this situation and the problems of trying to cope.

The domestic scenes alternate with scenes from a working men's club where a comedian is telling jokes about women. This raises for discussion the general question about socially accepted attitudes towards women in our society.

'That's No Lady' was funded by the National Women's Aid Federation.

BUT NOTE: The law has changed since this film was made, so the information which the solicitor gives is now out of date. It is now possible to apply for an injunction without first having to commence divorce or separation proceedings. Also, the woman's application for housing is likely to be treated with more discretion than is shown by the housing officer in the film.

A Sheffield Film Co-op production
1977 14mins 16mm/Col/Opt

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This film is the story of a girl about to leave school. In most respects Pat's life is unexceptional until she decides to try and get a job as an apprentice mechanic in a garage. Then her easy relations with her boyfriend, friends and parents become strained. The film raises for discussion the pressures acting on girls to conform to traditional feminine patterns and the problems that an individual faces in trying to cope. At the same time in seeing the situation that her mother and married sister now find themselves in, the film puts into perspective the significance of the decisions that Pat is about to make.

'Jobs For The Girls' is designed to stimulate discussion particularly amongst young people and would be useful to teachers, careers advisers etc. as well as any group interested in these issues.

The film was funded from grants from the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Manpower Services Commission and Yorkshire Arts Association.

A Sheffield Film Co-op production
1979 29mins 16mm/Col/Opt VHS/U-matic video

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JOBS FOR ^{the} GIRLS

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Designed, typeset and printed by Sheffield Women's Printing Co-op

a woman like you

'A Woman Like You' was made at the time of proposed changes to the abortion legislation, to promote discussion of some of the issues involved. It is a dramatised documentary showing the difficulties experienced by a married woman with two children who tries to get an abortion on the NHS.

It raises the question of whose choice abortion should be and other issues — such as the way women are often treated by members of the medical profession and the social pressures on women to have children.

A series of slides shows an outpatient abortion procedure and there are interviews with a local woman doctor and a consultant gynaecologist.

'A Woman Like You' has been screened extensively in schools, colleges and to women's groups. It has also been used by the British Pregnancy Advisory Service for training counsellors.

A Sheffield Film Co-op production
jointly funded by the BPAS
and Yorkshire Arts Association

1976 18mins 16mm/Col/Opt

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