

* Preliminary Draft, Comments Welcome, Please Do Not Cite without Authors' Permission.

A Feminist Way to Basic Income:

Claimants Unions and Women's Liberation Movements in Britain 1968-1987

Toru Yamamori¹

Abstract:

A resolution demanding an unconditional basic income was passed with a majority vote at the National Women's Liberation Conference in 1977. It means that an unconditional basic income was an officially endorsed, democratically determined demand in the British Women's Liberation Movement.

However, this fact has not been recorded in any academic literature either in feminism, in basic income studies, or in any other scholarship. Why and how is it that have we forgotten this fact which is important, at least, to basic income studies, to history of feminist movement, and to feminist speculations of a desirable society?

The resolution was raised by women in the Claimants Unions Movement. This paper looks closely at their activism, especially their intersections with other feminists and their articulation of the basic income demand.

“Why did we demand guaranteed basic income? Because it's good for people”.

(Interview with an ex-member of the Birmingham Claimants Union, as a working class single mother claimant during 1970's, held in Aylesbury on September 2009.)

1. Introduction

The first and long term demand of Claimants Unions, during the 1970s and 1980s, in Britain, was an unconditional basic income. Many in the movement were women, some of whom were associated with Women's Liberation movement. They elaborated a feminist rationale for

¹ Toru Yamamori is professor at Doshisha University, Kyoto, and is currently a visiting fellow at the University of Cambridge U.K. (till August 2015). However, the view of this paper does not represent any of the above organisations. Parts of the paper are based on the MEXT granted researches on *Welfare Rights Feminism and Socialization of Care* (2009-2013), and on *Gender, Race and Class on the Formation of 'Fifth Demand' in British WLM* (2014-2018). (The contact address: toruyamamori@gmail.com)

the unconditional basic income they proposed, and raised a resolution for it in the Women's Liberation movement which subsequently, was passed. This is almost forgotten in current academia both in Basic Income studies and in Feminist studies.

[The goals of paper]

This paper has three goals: firstly, to write a brief history of the Claimants Unions movement; secondly, to depict how their movement was interweaved with Women's Liberation movement and thirdly, to trace their development of the idea of an unconditional basic income.

[Previous research on CUs]

With the exception of two publications in 1973 (Jordan 1973, Rose 1973) and several papers by myself (Yamamori 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010), there has been almost no research on the Claimants Unions movement. Other than academic research, I found three memoirs which touched on the Claimants Unions movement: one by a devoted trade unionist who also worked for a claimants union (Grassby 1999), the other two by a leading women's liberation activists (Rowbotham 1989, Segal 2007).

All of above works (except mine) have been a luminary torch for me, especially Jordan 1973 and Grassby 1999, who along with their personal help for my research, offered me a basic picture of Claimants Unions at the early stage of my research. However, while their experiences, respectively in Newton-Abbot and South Tyneside, were illuminating and beautiful cases of how local claimants accepted the idea of an unconditional basic income and digested the idea for their own work, these places were not where the idea was initially originated. Also these two documents did not cover Claimants Union's correspondence with the Women's Liberation Movement. (And obviously Jordan and Rose only covered the early stage of the movement because they were published in 1973.) On the other hand, while two feminist memoirs obviously connoted a relationship between Claimants Unions women and women's liberationists, they touched on Claimants Unions only fragmentarily.

Claimants Unions published numerous documents such as journals, flyers and handbooks. Libraries and archives such as the British Library and the Women's Library have some of them, which has been useful and helpful for the initial stage of my research. However, these are fragments and only a small part of a massive range of documents. Also sometimes their estimated publishing year seems not to be correct.

[research method and the limitation of perspective]

Because of the limitation of literature explained above, the major part of the discussion of the Claimants Unions movement in this paper is based on my interviews with ex-members of the Unions and on materials they allowed me to access (journals, flyers, memos, minutes, and diaries, etc.). The interviews were conducted, intermittently between 2002 to 2014 . See Appendix 2 for the more details on interviews.

The Claimants Unions were neither political parties nor a single-issue campaign. The movement contained amazingly diverse people and characteristics, as I will depict next section. Although I have been interviewing several different strands of ex-claimants union members, this paper relies mainly (but not exclusively) on the interviews with several working class women: firstly because those women initiated CUs (with some working class men), or were most involved at very beginning, and continued to be active over a long period; secondly because it was they who first introduced the idea of an 'unconditional basic income' (with some working class men), and elaborate it (with some other people), and continued to demand this over a long period; thirdly because they had been at the centre of CUs' intervention in the Women's Liberation movement. Another group, of middle class women, were also active both in Claimants Unions and the Women's Liberation movement. I will mention them in this paper but relatively briefly. Even though their involvement lasted only for a relatively short period of time, I consider their relevance of the movement to be significant. The reason that they are underrepresented is mainly that I haven't managed to interview them so far.

Another thing I need to address here concerns the names of people. As I will mention next section, this movement was prefigurative: not only did they try to change the authoritarian and unequal society into one which was democratic and equal society, but they also tried to be democratic and equal in forming their own organization. They tried to avoid making a 'hero' or 'leader' of the movement, and preferred anonymity and collective authorship. On the one hand as an ex-activist of a similar minded movement, I respect this point and so try to avoid mentioning names in the paper whenever possible. On the other hand, it is necessary, as a social scientist, to identify who played a relatively important part in some particular proposals or actions. So in principle, I have identified but not disclosed their names in this paper. The policy I adopt is: (1) If literature already discloses names, I also disclose those names. (2) Names that are only identified by my own research, I keep anonymous. I disclose their gender, race, class, or other things, when I think this information could be relevant to readers.

2. The Claimants Unions movement

[The beginning and formation of NFCU]

The Claimants Unions (hereafter sometimes CUs) movement started in Birmingham in Autumn 1968. Four university students, who came from a working class background and claimed benefits, started the 'Claimants Action Group', and distributed flyers in front of the Social Security offices. At the first meeting, 6 claimants, including 2 single mothers, turned up in addition to the 4 initial claimants. They formed the 'Birmingham Claimants Union (hereafter sometimes BCU)'. The term 'claimants' itself was used in the administration of social security, but had never been considered as either a political subject or a collective identity before they formed their group². The term 'union' obviously came from trade union. BCU described itself as "Birmingham's trade union of assistance claimants (NFCU 1970:24)". West London CU, which was formed sometime before March 1970, also explained that "Each Claimants Union resembles a Trade Union, but unlike most Trade Unions, demands "workers control" of the Welfare State. . . . Like a Trade Union, the bargaining strength of the Union lies in the solidarity among its members (NFCU 1970:11)." One ex-member of BCU told me that 'all tactics of our Claimants Union came from trade unionist movements³.'

After BCU formed, many other CUs, spontaneously were also created. Birmingham CU, Brighton CU, East London CU, Manchester CU, North London CU, North Staffordshire CU, and West London CU gathered on 21st March 1970 at Birmingham and launched the National Federation of Claimants Unions (hereafter NFCU).

Not all CUs joined the NFCU.⁴ And after the FCU (In 1980, the name of NFCU was changed to the Federation of Claimants Unions, hereafter referred to as FCU) ceased to function sometime after 1987 some CUs continu(ed) to operate, and new ones continued to emerge⁵. Since austerity measures have been implemented after the recent financial crisis,

² One of founding members of BCU told me that they 'invented' the word 'claimants'. I interpret that their usage was a collective identity that was new at that time.

³ Interview with a woman who was involved in Birmingham Claimants Union, held at Peterborough on September 2009.

⁴ The most notable example is 'the Unemployed Workers' and Claimants' Union' formed by Joe Kenyon at Barnsley. Early in the 1970s Kenyon frequently spoke to the media and presented himself as *the* leader of 'the' Claimants Unions movement' and depicted CUs in and outside NFCU as his branches although he never attended NFCU meetings (See NFCU 1975). Some (media and public at that time, and writers later) mistakenly thought Joe Kenyon was *the* leader of NFCU, or was involved in NFCU. One example can be found at Database of Archives of Non-governmental Organisations (www.dango.bham.ac.uk/record_details.asp?id=3799&recordType=ngo).

⁵ The newsletter "Hassle" no.13 was distributed by an organisation called the 'National Claimants Federations' in 1991. People in 'Edinburgh Claimants,' which is active now, told me that around 1990s there was a national network for claimants called 'Groundswell'. There seem no organisational continuities between these nationwide networks in the 1990s and (N)FCU in the 1970s and 1980s, although it might be the case that some people or unions in (N)FCU might (have) join(ed) these new networks.

claimants groups have been newly formed and revived, and some of them name themselves again as a 'Claimants Union.'

However, this paper covers only those CUs that joined the NFCU; for three reasons: Firstly, in terms of numbers of participants, the NFCU was the biggest compared to other claimants unions contemporary to them, and also biggest throughout history. Secondly, among CUs more generally, only people in NFCU actively demanded an unconditional basic income and tried to persuade people in Women's Liberation movement to support it. Thirdly, the NFCU itself contained a huge plurality of people in their network, so depicting it covers various aspect of CUs movement.

[everyday activities of a local union]

As I have described before, the beginning of BCU was involved the distribution of flyers and organising a meeting by claimants. They shared the situations of each claimant and tried to fight back against welfare offices collectively: firstly, they negotiated them collectively, then they went to tribunals, and sometimes they occupied welfare offices.

In October 1969, the union had about 150 members, "[a]bout half the total are women on their own, the rest made up of old age pensioners and what the [Social Security] department calls able-bodied men"⁶. The same article reported that "the union has so far made 50 appeals" and won "nearly £1,000."

Gradually a certain model of activity (which could be called a 'Birmingham Model') emerged. That is:

- having a weekly meeting, open to any claimants.
- facing welfare officers collectively (at least not alone).
- avoiding moral judgment of each other, trusting each other.
- not having clear membership (though having a clear eligibility policy as cited later).
- being a 'self-help' group which empowers one another by avoiding having 'experts' or 'professionals' in the union.
- being directly democratic and anti-hierarchical by avoiding having 'committee' or bureaucracy.

These features did not come from elsewhere but mostly were invented by claimants

⁶ The Guardian, Manchester edition, 3rd October 1969, "Browbeaten by the Welfare".

themselves. The second feature, collectively confronting welfare officers, was quite new at that time, and contrasted significantly with the individualised approaches by other welfare right advocacy groups⁷. One of the ex-claimants, who became active in West London after hearing the Birmingham experience recalls:

We would go with, we would support each other in welfare offices. So for example, one of our members Rose, they tried to cut down her payment even though she had two small children. So we would go, several people to support her in the office. They didn't like us in office so they kept saying 'you can't have this'. And one of great victories in the early days was that in welfare offices we were allowed at least one person to support a claimant. This meant actually fighting over the basic rules, basic rules of payment.⁸

"Never meet the SS [Social Security officers] alone" became one of long-standing slogans of CUs, which was practical and fundamental. It was practical because it was vital for their claims not to be turned down. It was fundamental because it facilitated a sense of community or solidarity among claimants, along with other features such as the first, third and fifth among those listed above.

Some of the features above were not straightforward. At the very beginning, they tried to follow the usual structure of Trade Unions by having clear membership by subscription. In October 1969 a quarter of the 150 members were supposed to subscribe 'when they can afford it' but later they gave up the idea of having. Not having a 'committee' or 'officer' of a local union, nor having 'national executive' of NFCU was initially the result of a lack of resources including finance, though later it was deliberately justified as their way of achieving participatory democracy.

[principles of NFCU]

At the first meeting of NFCU, they discussed and clarified several principles for being 'A Bona-Fide Claimants Union'. These were:

⁷ It might be useful to be aware of how these welfare rights advocacies recognised CUs. A person in the Child Poverty Action Group wrote that "In contrast to the aggressive behaviour of the Claimants' Union, our style at CPAG made us more acceptable." (Curtis and Sanderson 2004: 123)

⁸ Interview with ex-claimant held at London on 6th June 2014.

- a) fights for all Claimants without regard to 'deservingness' or any other condition and to which all Claimants are admissable [sic] as members.
- b) the only category of membership is as follows:-
 - i. persons receiving Supplementary Benefits at present,
 - ii. persons who have received Supplementary Benefits,
 - iii. persons with incomes at or below Supplementary Benefit level and eligible for means-tested benefit.
- c) any other persons must be under the control of the membership and state that he or she:-
 - i. agrees with the aims and objections of the Union,
 - ii. will abide by the confidentiality of the Union,
 - iii. will advise or defend the Claimant unconditionally.

(NFCU 1970: 31. Underline is original)

They also adopted a "NFCU Policy", later termed as a 'Claimants Charter'. That is:

1. The right to adequate income without means test for all people.
2. A free welfare state for all with its services controlled by the people who use it.
3. No secrets and the right to full information.
4. No distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

(NFCU 1970: 31)

Although all components were articulated in BCU until autumn 1969, people collectively discussed and examined what it meant to them and to society before and even after they adopted it as NFCU policy. We will look more closely at the first point of the charter in the fourth section of the paper.

[activities as NF]

NF meetings had been held regularly 4 times a year. The first meeting was held in March 1970, as mentioned before. Documents show that they then had 4 federation meetings per a year until at least 1981. It is likely that this continued but currently I have no information to verify this.

My research shows that the NF functioned in three ways. Firstly, their meetings,

whether the regular quarterly one or one with some special purpose, were an important venue for sharing their experiences, information and tactics. The meetings also came with social events and members organised an annual summer camp with their children.

Secondly, they collectively published handbooks. Some provided practical information; others were to support political demands. Their first handbook was the 'Claimants Handbook for Strikers (c.1970-1)'. Diffusing the practical information and tactics about how strikers can get benefits was one of the important victories of early era of CUs, and also was relevant for their recognition among trade union movements. The second publication was the 'Unsupported Mothers Handbook (c.1970-1)', which had been frequently revised, and was later renamed as 'Women and Social Security (1975)'. They then published the 'Claimants Unions Guidebook', 'Homelessness Handbook', 'Sick and Disabled Handbook', 'Unemployed Handbook', 'Pensioners Handbook', 'Youth Handbook', 'The Students' Guide To Social Security', 'Prisoners Handbook', 'Guaranteed Minimum Income', etc.

Thirdly, they discussed and organised national campaigns. The first campaign was 'the Winter Heating and Christmas Present Campaign' in 1971. 'The Guaranteed Adequate Income Campaign' and 'Smash the Cohabitation Rule Campaign' were held in 1972. I will briefly mention the latter at the next section, and the former at 4th section.

[democracy]

Their aspiration for a democratic society was reflected in the structure of their organisation both at local union level and at federation level. At the local level, three features mentioned above are vital. Having regular and open meetings, along with their policy for avoiding being judgemental of each other, and avoiding having professionals among them, ensured equality among claimants on being heard. This open process also functioned as empowering people. A woman who was a claimant told me that she learnt how to speak to the public through Claimants Union weekly meeting⁹. Another woman who was in ELCU told me that she and others learnt, through claimants union's activities, how to be assertive, how to argue against authorities if necessary, and how to write an official letter.¹⁰

At federation level, they tried to be a horizontal network. One of ex-claimants who was a member of the West London CU recalls positively: "National Federation meeting was inspiring because it really was federal". Each union had a right to send delegates equally, the federation

⁹ Interview with ex-claimant held at Newton Abbot in March 2002.

¹⁰ Conversation with ex-claimant over dinner at her house in London in March 2014.

meetings were rotated; Birmingham, Manchester, London, Bristol, Swansea, etc. Pamphlets and handbooks were decided collectively; which union would be responsible for draft. They also had a 'regional co-ordinating union' in each region.

However, some people see this as lack of the structure. Jordan suggested that 'These [Claimants] unions had virtually no national federal structure, and no permanent headquarters of staff (Jordan 1973: 26)'. Rose depicted the situation as a 'tragedy' and 'Structurelessness' by using Joreen's famous criticism of the Women's Liberation movement in her 'The Tyranny of Structurelessness (Rose 1973: 199) '.

Having noted these criticisms, it is also worth emphasising that they kept running national federation meetings almost quarterly for over a decade¹¹, not being manipulated by political parties or factions (though attempts sometimes happened). At their federation congress on February 1981 in Norwich, a constitution was agreed after about a 1 year long discussion. The constitution consisted of 17 chapters over 19 pages, which clarified the democratic structure and procedures of the federation, by defining their objects, powers, membership, meetings, delegates, regional structure, officers and co-ordinating committee, accounts and auditors, etc.

[numbers]

Calculating the numbers of people is one of the difficult parts of depicting the history of CUs. Members of a local CU ranged from 5-10 to 400. The minutes of ELCU recorded around 10-20 attendances of weekly meeting throughout 1970s. Several people from Newton Abbot CU told me they had around 400 people at the height of their tide. The number of CUs is recorded as 89 in June 1972 (NFCU 1972), around 90 in 1973 (Rose 1973: 194), again around 90 in 1979 (Author(s) Anonymous 1979), and around 60 in 1981 (FCU 1981). The number of participants of NFCU meetings ranged from 20 at the beginning, to 250 in 1972 according to Rose 1973 (p.195).

[FCU and the Claimants' Educational Trust]

In April 1980, the name was changed from NFCU to Federation of Claimants Unions (hereafter FCU), as the Scottish Region of Claimants Union became Scottish Federation of

¹¹ The 40th conference of the NFCU was held on 6th and 7th September 1980 (Author(s) Anonymous 1980). Strictly speaking, if conferences had been kept running quarterly, it should have been 42th conference. In any case, given a lack of resources, especially shortage of money among other things, their (almost) regularity is a surprise. Let me paint some pictures of how conferences were: Several women recalls that they went to conferences by hitchhiking, and as young single mothers it was sometimes not a pleasant experience (several interviews held in September 2009). Jenny Lyn recalls when Swansea CU hosted a conference, she organised a crèche for 15 children, but around 50 children turned up (From 'Sisterhood and After', the British Library audio archive.).

Claimants Union. At this two days conference, delegates from 20 member unions attended, and 3 unions were newly affiliated. They decide to “investigate a charity / educational trust to finance: a) national publications, b) national communications, c) equip a permanent national office in a regional centre with a full or part time worker to service its activities (Author(s) Anonymous 1980a).” The document shows that ‘the Claimants Educational Trust’ was set up “to advance and promote the education and welfare of persons in receipt of social security or other income maintenance benefits” sometime before September 1981. The trust had “premises in the Bethnal Green Rights Shop” where some people in ELCU set up, and its “management committee consisted of two-thirds elected delegates from the Federation of Claimants Unions and one third people with particular skills (FCU 1981)”. So the nature and structure of NFCU itself didn’t change from the 1970s, but they also developed another body for facilitating the causes of the NFCU.

As far as I was able to trace, the latest publication by FCU was in 1987. The latest documents that touched on basic income were also published in the same year. So I tentatively limit the scope of the paper from 1968 to 1987. It does not mean either that FCU stopped functioning in 1987, nor that the demand for a Basic Income was abandoned at that time. One of interviewees recalls that she left ELCU in 1994, and a ‘Guaranteed Minimum Income’ had been always demanded up to the time of her departure.

3. Women’s Liberation Movement and CUs

Issue no. 4 of *Spare Rib* (1972) showed a photo of claimants in protest. The same photo was reused for a poster for International Women’s Day 1973, but its detail had been edited (See appendix 1 for the photos). Men were deleted. A slogan on the placard carried by a woman changed from ‘Smash Cohabitation Rule’ to ‘Equal Pay’ and some other demands. The Name of organisation on the placard was changed from ‘Claimants Union’ to ‘Women’s Liberation Workshop’. What does this manipulation mean?¹² In this section, I try to depict how the Women’s Liberation Movement and CUs movement were interwoven.

[WLM]

Although probably I do not need to depict the history of the Women’s Liberation Movement in Britain, I depict some facts relevant to the argument in this paper briefly in case some readers are not familiar with it. Around 1969 many small women’s group were formed by

¹² The reason I show this editing is not to read any intention of the ‘editor(s)’, but to read as an ironical coincidence with the collective forgetfulness that happened later in history.

“anger of many women felt over the discrimination they faced within British society mustered once more into an organized form (Setch 2002: 171)” The ‘London Women’s Liberation Workshop’ was formed in 1969. ‘The Ruskin Women’s Weekend’ was held in Oxford from 27 February for 3 days in 1970. About 500 women (and 60 men) gathered (Condon 1990: 26). This is now recognised as the first National Women’s Liberation Conference (Hereafter NWLC). On 20 November of the same year, a group of feminists protested against ‘Miss World’ contest at Royal Albert Hall, in London. Protesters outside the Hall showed the banner ‘We’re not beautiful, we’re not ugly, we’re angry’. Several protesters inside threw flour and smoke bombs along with flyers. Millions of British people who were at home watching the contest via TV witnessed it.

The second NWLC was held in 1971 and 4 demands were formally approved: 1. Equal Pay, 2. Equal Education and Job Opportunities, 3. Free Contraception and Abortion on Demand, 4. Free 24 Hour Nurseries. At this conference a Maoist man ‘physically intervened’ and this incident led to the NWLC totally banning the attendance of men (Collins 2006: 187). 1972 was the only year when two NWLCs were held. The third and fourth NWLC were held at Manchester and London respectively. At Manchester, Selma James, along with her organisation ‘Wages for Housework’ proposed to replace WLM’s 4 demands by demands articulated in her *Women, the Unions and Work, Or...What is not to be done* (James 1972) .

From 1973 to 1978, NWLCs were held annually, at Bristol 1973, Edinburgh 1974, Manchester again 1975, Newcastle 1976, London again 1977, and Birmingham 1978. At the Edinburgh conference, the fifth and sixth demands were approved: 5. Legal and Financial Independence for All Women. 6. The Right to a Self Defined Sexuality. An End to Discrimination Against Lesbians. At the Birmingham conference, The seventh demand was passed: 7. Freedom for all women from intimidation by the threat or use of violence or sexual coercion regardless of marital status; and an end to the laws, assumptions and institutions which perpetuate male dominance and aggression to women.

Although I know that listing up big events like old style political history did never catch what was really going on, still NWLCs were important for WLM, and these were symbolic venues when we consider the relationship between CUs and WLM. So let me start with what CU women did at these NWLCs.

[From CU to WLM: NWLC]

BCU made its ‘Women’s Liberation Statement’ and sent its delegate to ‘The Ruskin Women’s Weekend’, the first meeting of NWLC. The statement declared that “[t]he Claimants

struggle is a struggle for women's [sic] rights (NFCU 1970: 24)".

Catherine Hall, from Birmingham Women's Liberation Group, wrote the minute of the meeting held in Birmingham 3 June 1972 and the meeting was for preparation of 4th NMLC. The proposed program on the minute contained a workshop on 'Claimants' Unions' among 9 parallel workshops for a two hour slot (Hall 1972: 2). Several women who were in CUs recall that at almost of NWLCs they organised a workshop or a session as one of parallels.

Some members from East London CU recall that they raised a motion for a guaranteed basic income at NWLC in Manchester or Bristol. Although, I have failed to find any evidence for it so far, there is a record that their similar resolution was proposed at NWLC at London 1977. Mary McIntosh, a feminist and an academic at LSE, kept a piece of paper which seemed to have been distributed at the conference.¹³ The paper read:

WE WOMEN IN THE CLAIMANTS UNION MOVEMENT CALL ON THIS WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

"An immediate end to all forms of sexual discrimination contained in social security legislation.

In particular we demand the abolition of the cohabitation rule, the married couple rate, and the head of the household rule.

Women should be positively encouraged to claim in their own right.

Maintenance and affiliation matters should be outside the scope of the Supplementary Benefits scheme.

Every individual person, whether in or out of employment, should receive a Guaranteed Minimum Income as of right with clear legal entitlement.

Child benefits should be raised and paid on top of this to the person responsible for the day to day care of the child."

WE FEEL THIS RESOLUTION TAKES THE DEMAND FOR LEGAL AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE A STEP FURTHER IN MATTERS OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND INCOME MAINTENANCE. IT ALSO COVERS SOME OF THE ISSUES BY THE WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK CAMPAIGN.

THE WHOLE SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS SYSTEM IS CURRENTLY BEING REVIEWED, AND MANY ORGANISATION HAVE ALREADY SUBMITTED EVIDENCE. WE WOULD LIKE THIS RESOLUTION TO GO FORWARD AS AN

¹³ McIntosh, [MCINTOSH/1/18], LSE Library collection.

EXPRESSION OF THE VIEWS OF THE WOMENS LIBERATION MOVEMENT.

(Capital letters and underlines are original.)

The 1977 (or 1978) version of the *Women and Social Security* handbook by the CUs records that this resolution 'was passed (NFCU c.1977-8: 1)'. Although it had been difficult to find any record to confirm this from academic literature on the Women's Liberation movement, the documents that contained the record were found. One was written by a woman in the 'Liverpool Women's Action Workshop', sometime between April 1977 when the resolution was passed, to be presented in January 1978 when one of the Socialist Feminist conferences was held (Liverpool Women's Action Group c.1977). The other was written in a 11 page report of the conference in issue no.58 of *Spare Rib*. The former recorded that "the 1977 WLM conference passed a resolution from women in the Claimants Unions." The latter is a slightly strange report: It doesn't contain any information on who raised the resolution, but it records who was against it and why. It says:

At the mass meeting the Fifth Demand group (for Financial and Legal Independence) said they were behind the spirit of it but objected to the bit about a Guaranteed Minimum Income. They argued it was not a tactical demand as we couldn't expect to get it at the moment, and that it would amount to implicit support for the Wages for Housework Campaign, which they oppose. They wanted more discussion of the issues, but were outvoted. (*Spare Rib*, no.58, p.11)

The former document also recorded that:

The Legal & Financial Independence Group.....opposed Guaranteed Income because "There are problems about paying the same minimum to people who are not in work and who are not prepared to look for work". Also, "One is the practical problem of where the money is to come from...."

(Liverpool Women's Action Group c.1977: 3)

The Legal & Financial Independence Group opposed the resolution, although CU women had been taking part in the group. So far no published document, other than a report in *Spare Rib*, a

small piece of paper of the resolution that seems to have been distributed in the 1977 NWLC, a pamphlet produced by CUs and one memo written by the above woman, that recorded the resolution either in 1977 or on any prior occasion has been found. The only formally published document I found, a report in *Spare Rib* seems sympathetic to people who were against the resolution. Otherwise why would a report on a passed resolution omit information on who raised it, while providing a detailed explanation on who opposed and why? One of my interviewees recalled:

Middle class women didn't understand what the hell goes on it [the idea of basic income].....I spoke twice [for basic income at the National Women's Liberation Conferences]. The first time I spoke, Patricia Hewitt was in the chair. She didn't agree with Guaranteed Minimum Income.....Quite a few women in the Women's Liberation movement, who had a lot of qualifications, and high significant jobs, didn't agree with this. She was a solicitor. She thought it ridiculous.....Two times we did this. Both it got passed. Both. But I don't think Patricia Hewitt would admit it. She stoned that demand. She was so incensed by that discussion.She didn't want me to speak. She tried to block us speaking. She tried to stop us putting the resolution.The next year we went back made the resolution typed.We gave everybody the resolution beforehand. We caucused.....We worked with different groups beforehand to get them to support us.We knew, before we went, that we will have majority support. We were not gonna let Patricia Hewitt do that to us again: mess us up.....She was our biggest opponent. Unlike Barbara Castle and Jo Richardson, Patricia Hewitt just thought we were scum, I suppose.She didn't see us as a part of the working class, so, below the working class.¹⁴

(interview with an ex-claimant held at London on 5th April 2014)

Another woman who went to one of the above occasions recalled that they had collectively decided that she and the women above were going to speak for their resolution for an unconditional basic income, but she was very afraid because she had never before spoken in front of a huge audience. However, she recalled that something happened and, much to her

¹⁴ Patricia Hewitt was General Secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties in 1970s, and later served in the Cabinet between 2005 and 2007 under Tony Blair government. Both Barbara Castle and Jo Richardson were Labour MPs at that time. I cite the above voice, not to criticise any particular individual or organisation, but to demonstrate how women in the CUs understood the way their resolution was treated.

relief she did not have to speak after all and the resolution was passed.¹⁵

The other record on CU women in NWLCs was left at the Women's Library at LSE. The document titled as the "National Women's Liberation Conference Birmingham 1978", whose author(s) are unidentified, shows that there were 12 'planned agenda', and the 'Statement from claimants' union' was one of them.

So it seems there were at least three occasions where women from CUs spoke or planned to speak at plenary sessions of NWLCs. At the NWLC held in London in 1977 where 2,500 to 3,000 women attended (Ross and Bearn 1996: 27), they proposed a resolution for 'Guaranteed Minimum Income'. And if we were to believe what women from the CUs told me, the resolution for a 'Guaranteed Minimum Income' was also proposed at a NWLC prior to 1977, it was passed, but was later wiped out by the chair of the plenary session.¹⁶ It could have been at NWLC in Newcastle on April 1976. I haven't found any written record, but the following report from one women's group on the atmosphere of 1976 NWLC corresponds with the tension described by a woman in the CU in above citation:

There were very real splits in the Women's Movement; between gay and straight women, *working class and middle class women*, intellectual and non-intellectual women, socialists and non-socialists, radical feminists and others, monogamous and non-monogamous et.etc. (Bradford Women's Group's letter to *Wires* no.20, cited in Ross and Bearn 1996: 23. Emphasis in italics is mine.)

[From CU to WLM: other than NWLC]

Let me here indicate other aspects of CU women's contributions to WLM. There were cases of women in CUs who launched a local WL group. Jenny Lyn recalls the WL group at Swansea initiated by women who were at the Swansea Claimants Union.¹⁷ I found many letters at an ex-claimant woman's house, which asked her to give talks at local WL groups in London and in other parts of England.

The NFCU's Campaign against the 'Cohabitation Rule' in 1972 seems the epoch

¹⁵ Interview with women in ELCU held at London in August 2012. The same person recall this incident as "the reason I didn't have to speak was because after [the first speaker from NFCU] spoke there was such a feeling of agreement that someone proposed to move straight to the vote and it was carried unanimously (a correspondence in 2014)."

¹⁶ In Yamamori 2010, I wrote that it wasn't passed, on the assumption that there should be a record in WLM literature if it was passed. However, that assumption seems wrong. So I here admit my wrong description at that paper, and apologise to women who made huge efforts for their resolution in NWLCs.

¹⁷ From 'Sisterhood and After', the British Library audio archive.

making event in the sense of the recognition of CUs among WLM. The so-called 'Cohabitation Rule' is "the principle that the way that the social security entitlement of cohabiting couples is assessed should not involve any distinction between couples who do and who do not have marital status (Harris 1996: 123)". This rule "has been part of social security legislation since 1948 (Rutledge 2000: 13)". The relevant passage in the Ministry of Social Security Act 1966 is:

Where a husband and wife are members of the same household their requirements and resources shall be aggregated and shall be treated as the husband and similarly, unless there are exceptional circumstances, as regards two persons cohabiting as man and wife. (DHSS 1971: 1)

However, whether a claimant is cohabiting with someone is not evaluated from claimant's declaration. The DHSS systematically suspected single mother claimants of cheating the system. The DHSS itself apparently declared in a report by the Supplementary Benefits Commission:

In the Commission's view, some at least of their critics, in their proper concern for civil liberties and individual rights, too lightly dismiss the problems which arise becausethere are some claimants whose motives are suspect. It would be pushing naiveté to the point of imbecility to suppose that fraud is never attempted or that the truth about the relationship between a man and a woman will always be openly told. It is not therefore possible to rely on the unsupported word of persons to whom concealment or untruth can bring substantial advantage (DHSS 1971: 7).

If words by claimants are not to be relied on, then what did DHSS rely on? *Unsupported Mother Handbook* by NFCU documented well the measures the DHSS relied on.

BUT They use snoopers: SPECIAL INVESTIGATORS..... who watch to see who visits the house, they chat up the neighbours, caretakers in flats, ask whether a man has been seen around- THEY SPY. (NFCU c.1970-1: 27. Emphasis by capitals is original.)

According to the CUs, social security officers also asked other public servants such as local post office workers to spy on claimants. In some regions such as Birmingham, CUs succeeded in

creating solidarity with local post office workers union who agreed not to spy.

One of example of what was really happening to those claimants and how CUs fought back can be found in the same handbook:

An unsupported mother was really bugged by the S.S. [Social Security office(r)] because a friend used her house as an address. Her friend was a man. The S.S. applied all their puritan morality, which they deny having. He did visit her house – Its not a convent! It's certainly got nothing to do with the nosy S.S. On several occasions they cut her money and threatened to prosecute her. The S.S. even went so far as taking away the man's hostel vouchers in the hope of forcing him to live at her house, so that they could prosecute – one thing they enjoy doing. She joined the Union, when her money had been cut off again on groundless suspicion, and an appeal was lodged with the tribunal. The tribunal also showed the same moral prejudices – the Union representative replied that it has been proved that he did NOT live there. But that even if he did, it was irrelevant to the case. For 'cohabitation' to be proved, the S. S. has to show that there was a sharea [sic] 'household budget'. MORAL ARGUMENTS ARE IRRELEVANT EVEN THOUGH THEY KEEP USING THEM. The result was a victory. She got her order book back for the full amount.

(NFCU c.1970-1: 27. Emphasis by capitals is original. [] insertion is mine.)

According to this and many other documents, Social Security officers interpreted the meaning of 'cohabitation' far further than the meaning officially stated in the 'cohabitation rule' in the social security act. As a consequence, claimants women lost the freedom to have a sexual relationship and also friendship with men, if they did not want to lose benefit. The section on 'Cohabitation' in the handbook ended by following sentences:

WE CAN SLEEP WITH WHO WE LIKE AND WE DONT [sic] HAVE TO DEPEND ON ANY MAN' [SIC]

THE COHABITATION RULING HAS GOT TO GO!

(NFCU c.1970-1: 28. Emphasis by capitals is original. [] insertion is mine.)

So they had a national campaign against the cohabitation rule. The *Spare Rib* wrote an article reporting this, and took the photo, mentioned at the beginning of this section. It was a

first appearance of CUs in feminist journals, as far as I found. The national campaign lasted for a week in August 1972. However, similar national campaigns such as ‘stop sex snoopers’ were held in later years. Although the term ‘cohabitation’ eventually disappeared from Social Security Act since 1977, the ‘cohabitation rule’ continued to exist, and CUs kept fighting against it. CU women were apparently against both dependence on men and the assumption and enforcement of it by the state. At the same time, they were also against dependence on the state. The Unsupported Mothers Handbook ends with the slogan ‘WE’RE GOING TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO LIVE WITHOUT A MAN IF WE WANT TO’, along with the cautious remark that, ‘WE’RE STILL THE WOMEN AT THE BOTTOM’ because ‘we still wouldn’t have any control over it’ even if the state ‘suddenly turned into a fairy godmother and gave us enough to live on’ under the current social security framework (NFCU c.1970-1: 32. Emphasis by capitals is original). This view led them strongly to advocate an unconditional basic income. This will be considered in the next section.

Other than the ‘cohabitation rule’, CU women fought against other forms of institutionalized sexism. Until the early 1970s, council housing in London, provided either by GLC or by the local borough, didn’t allow the name of legally married women to be entered into rentbook. One woman from ELCU put it in court and won in c.1972.

CUs also functioned as ‘consciousness raising’ groups for working class women. They had women’s only activity inside CUs; small meetings at neighbourhood level; all London claimants women conferences¹⁸; national women’s claimants conference¹⁹; and women only occupation of the headquarters of DHSS.

They were keen to develop solidarity with women’s struggle in ‘workplaces’. Many of my interviewees recall their involvement in the protests during Grunwicks strike.

[From WLM to CU]

Surprisingly academic literature on history of Women’s Liberation Movement seems

¹⁸ “GAI News: Broadsheet of the National Campaign for a Guaranteed Adequate Income” written by North London CU (North London CU 1972) contains an announcement on “a meeting to discuss ‘the politics of claimants unions’ and the possibility of CUs and Womens [sic] Lib’ working together on the national campaign that both groups have recently launched”, on 27th April 1972.

¹⁹ Hackney CU announced: “At the NFCU conference in January it was decided to hold a national women’s claimants’ conference. This will take place on Friday 9th & 11th March. These dates were chosen because the International Women’s Day demonstration is on Saturday 10th and we thought people would be wanting to go to that and wouldn’t be able to come up to London twice in two weeks. The crèche has been arranged for the three days but....(Hackney CU 1973).”

not to have considered that the CU movement was part of WLM²⁰. However, this was not the case, at least, in the early 1970s.

The Body Politics: Writing from the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain 1969-1972 (compiled by Michelene Wander, 1972.) is one of the first anthologies to have come out of the Women's Liberation movement in Britain. Wander compiled two CUs related documents in this volume.

Also some people, who have been considered main icons of WLM, later acknowledged the CU women's contribution to WLM. Sheila Rowbotham mentioned 'Claimants' Union' eight times in her *The Past Is Before Us: Feminism in action since the 1960s* (Rowbotham 1989). She depicted CU as one of the 'organizations offering advice and help' along with 'Gingerbread' and 'Mothers in Action' (p.95), and sorted CU into '[t]he anti-statist strand' (p.145). She acknowledged that '[a] women at the Claimants Union Conference on women and unemployment' contributes to the debate on whether dependence on the state can be an alternative. Rowbotham interpreted a CU woman's statement that '[t]he State's worse than a jealous husband' as being opposed to the argument by the Wages for Housework campaign which Rowbotham categorised as an argument that the state is an alternative to the nuclear family (p.24).

It is unclear on whether Rowbotham considers those women in CUs as her fellow feminists. On the one hand, she acknowledged that CU women played an important part in campaigns such as the Family Allowance campaigns (p.32). Also she wrote:

'This handbook isn't just information, it's a weapon' declared the *Unsupported Mothers' Handbook*, produced in the early 1970s by the Claimants' Union. The evangelical dissemination of information has been very much a part of the struggle for women's liberation (p.155).

On the other hand, however, she wrote:

Militant tenants struggles and the growth of squatting [where many CUs women were also involved] meant that many middle-class *feminists* were learning from working-class *women*, some of whom were single mothers, of the harshness of

²⁰ Surprisingly, the CUs movement is also erased in other branches of academia. In Social Policy and Sociology, for example, *Understanding Social Welfare Movements* (Annetts, Law, NcNeish and Mooney 2009), one of series of *Understanding Welfare: Social Issues, Policy and Practice* does not refer CUs in its 294 pages volume. In case of Basic Income studies, see Yamamori 2010.

council housing departments and the impersonal bureaucracy of Social Security.

(p.143. [] insertion and italics are mine.)

Lynne Segal, another famous feminist activist, recalls that 'other Women's Liberationists, to whom I was closer, were more likely to be found in campaigns such as the Claimants Unions, defending those surviving on the meagre welfare available to single mothers. (Lynne 2007: 97)'

The protest at the 'Miss World Contest' held at London in 1970 was one of the iconic events of the Women's Liberation movement. Several women among the protesters were later involved in Claimants Unions, though for a relatively short period. Jo Robinson, one of those women recalls:

[Being asked about whether she joined any political party:] I didn't join in anything ...except claimants union. We campaigned actively around where we were, where we lived.because a lot of people were educated at Oxbridge.We used our privileged educated background ... as tools for other people.²¹

Jenny Fortune, again one of those women, reflects that "I still think it [Claimants Unions movement] was a very significant movement (email correspondence at 2014)". Fortune was active in Hackney CU, and she and Kate Trescott who was active in West London CU together wrote the document, a copy which Fortune kept for over 40 years:

Many of us got involved in the C.U.s because we wanted to organize with working class women and there seemed no concrete basis for doing this in the Women's Movement. We went through consciousness raising groups but these often remained at a subjective level and neglected any class analysis or practice. Also within the C.U.s we were organizing around our own needs, some of us are unsupported mothers, we didn't want to go out to work, and we had our own children to look after. We had seen the importance of organising with women outside the workplace partly from our own situation as claimants----[sic] women partly because we saw the necessity of people organising around their own particular exploitation and saw that

²¹ From 'Sisterhood and After', the British Library audio archive.

this was possible.

(Fortune and Trescott c.1972-5: 3)

Some of the practical documents in WLM contain contact address of CUs as useful information. For example, 'Single Mothers Survival Notes (Author(s) Anonymous c.1971-5)' refers to 'Claimants Unions' as one of those 'organisations,' along with the 'National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child', 'Gingerbread', 'Child Poverty Action Group' and 'Womens Liberation Movement'. 'Women in the East End (Author(s) Anonymous 1977)' refer to the "Women and Social Security" handbook by CU and CU as one of 11 "Women's Health Group" at "Information-Shortlist".

While the CU had been strongly active throughout the 1970s, and became more working class women centred because of the relative decrease of other currents inside CUs in 1980s, and CU women kept attending WL groups such as 'Campaign for Legal and Financial Independence of Women', their appearance in WLM literature somehow disappeared. In 1974, as a following publication of *Body Politic*, the first collection of WLM, *Conditions Of Illusion: Paper from the Women's Movement* (Allen, Sanders and Wallis 1974) was published. Not only it did not contain any document from CU, but also there was no mention of them. The next volume *No Turning Back: Writing from the Women's Liberation Movement 1975-80* (Feminist Anthology Collective 1981) was the same.

This underrepresentation is a mystery to be solved, and I will come back to this at the conclusion. Now let me move on to the unconditional basic income and its feminist justification in CUs.

4. Development of the idea of an unconditional basic income in CU

[The two types of guaranteed income]

In the 1970s, in Britain and North America, the idea of an unconditional basic income was referred to as 'guaranteed income' or 'guaranteed [adequate, minimum or annual, etc.] income'. What we should be cautious of though, is that the concept of 'guaranteed income' at that time was much wider than the current idea of an unconditional basic income. Philippe Van Parijs and Robert J. Van Der Veen distinguished two types of guaranteed income; namely *a basic income* and *a make-up guaranteed income*, 'whereby transfer payments are added to income from other sources up to the level of the guaranteed income (van Parijs and ven der Veen 1986: 161-163) .' While the former is an income paid to everyone without a means test and work test, the latter inevitably requires at least an income test, if not a means test.

These eminent academics were not first to make this distinction. People in Claimants Unions clearly articulated these two different concepts of guaranteed income, and discussed its meaning and connotation to them in 1972. In this section I look closely at the development of the idea inside the Claimants Unions movement.

[1970: BI at the beginning of CU movement]

The right to adequate income was there in CUs demands from the very beginning. However it was not clearly defined as an unconditional basic income in their documents in 1968 and 1969, as far as I have found. It can be read as *make-up guaranteed income* or social wage. The first clear statement of a guaranteed income as far as I could trace, was at the first meeting of the NFCU held on March 21st, 1970. As I mentioned in section 2, they adopted ‘NFCU policy’ which was later referred as a ‘Claimants Charter’. The first of four demands was “the right to adequate income without means test for all people.”

Two interviewees who were active at that time at the Birmingham Claimants Union recall that it already meant not *make-up guaranteed income* but *unconditional basic income*. They thought that it was a logical conclusion from their CU activity. What does ‘a logical conclusion’ mean? Two things. First in CUs many single mothers encountered sexist responses from Social Security office, as depicted in the previous section. The only way for claimants to be free from this institutionalised sexism was to abolish the means test. Second, there were a lot of people who were practically ‘unemployable’ but it was hard to be officially recognised as such by DHSS. The only way for these claimants to get an income was to abolish the work test.

Guaranteed Minimum Income demand came to us from personal experience, all of us and other people [in the Claimants Unions].....We all had nasty experiences of the social security systems, on the means test aspect and family thing, you know, the sexism, if you like, in the social security systems means tested. So we just wanted something like, best we can think of is Beveridge’s child benefit or family allowance. A universal benefit, not means-tested, guaranteed to everybody. Because you are a British citizen, you get it. So I suppose, we demanded it based on child benefit. (Interview with an women who was in BCU held in 3 May 2014)

The original idea of a basic income, as developed in CUs, came from a variety of different sources. This first demand in the ‘Claimants Charter’ brought by working class

claimants who were in Birmingham CU, as 'a logical conclusion' from their everyday activity, was the first articulation of it in a CU. However, it does not mean that there was no other source.

Jenny Fortune recalls:

I first came across it in a letter that someone called John Barker wrote when he was in prison..... I can't remember where the concept first came from, but no doubt it came from some anarchist literature . I remember we picked up the concept because of our campaign for Unsupported Mothers. We had a strong and active CU in Hackney, that was mainly single mothers, many of whom were occupying houses illegally in order to get somewhere to live. As feminists we were promoting the reality that women do the fundamental reproductive labour in the home of care and support. The CU gave women an opportunity to raise their children independently of often abusive relationships with men, and claim their right to be supported by society.

(email correspondence with her in May 2014)

John Barker was a member of West London Claimants Union, and has become known as one of central figures of the 'Angry Brigade'. On 20 August 1970 he was arrested, and sent to prison for 10 years. He was in a loose international network of situationists and anarchists. So Fortune's remark suggested there were at least two origins; one from the everyday activity of the Claimants Union in Birmingham, the other from the imaginary of situationist-anarchist revolutionaries. Barker himself told me the following:

[In answering my question on the relationship between the idea of basic income in CUs and the intellectual theorising by French Situationists and Italian Autonomists, etc.] There was a big political demand, which I don't know, I mean, you are asking about history of the idea, guaranteed income was coming from Autonomist Italy, But I think the idea in the claimants union was, you know, absolutely basic minimum income without questions, without hassling, without.....That was the first charter [of Claimants Unions].....

We had the second federation meeting in Manchester [in 1970], in which, again, we had a long discussion about what it [unconditional basic income] meant, what did it mean, you know, to have a basic income. I mean, apart from, you know, all kind of stories about, you know, rules and victories, small victories had been won and lost,

because sometimes.....

I think it [the idea of basic income] was collectively in there. If you are saying that to somebody you know, a comrade of mine in fact I wrote a letter from prison. I think it wasn't for me individual, I was saying something that it had already been articulated [inside the NFCU].

(Interview with John Barker held at London on 6th June 2014. [] insertions are mine)

Barker also told me that influence from the demand for 'wages for housework' by Selma James was as important as Italian Autonomists' idea of a guaranteed income, though the CU's articulation of a basic income was different from them. Fortune and Trescott pointed out that CU's idea of a guaranteed income was "based on our needs", while the the idea of 'wages for housework' was based "on our producing or reproducing surplus value (Fortune and Trescott c.1972-5)."²²

CUs had discussed the idea of a basic income since 1970, while the Wages for Housework campaign started in 1972. So chronologically speaking, their idea of an unconditional basic income came from their everyday encounter with social security offices. During the process of fine articulation, similar but different concepts such as 'guaranteed income' by Italian Autonomists and 'wages for housework' by Selma James helped them. Surely there might have been newer participants who first heard the idea outside of CUs. In that sense there was a plurality of origins. One man, who was active in South Shields CU, told me that two things led him to assimilate the idea of basic income, which came from NFCU, more easily. Firstly, he had already read a book on the idea, written by Juliet Rhys-Williams, and secondly, he and other members in the Union were influenced by 'existentialism'^{23, 24}.

[1972: National Campaign for GMI and two concepts]

In the spring of 1972, the NFCU decided to have a national campaign for a guaranteed adequate income. In the process, they collectively clarified the idea. I've found the 17 pages document titled "Claimants' Unions, Action Group and the Campaign for a Guaranteed

²² We will look closely at the relationship between CUs and the 'Wages for Housework' group and its demands, in the next section.

²³ Interview held in South Shields in August 2003. The book he mentioned is probably Rhys-Williams 1965.

²⁴ We can also trace another direction, and make a case that the idea for a basic income came from the CUs and spread into academia and other settings from there. For example, Bill Jordan, who was involved in founding the British network (the Basic Income Research Group whose name was later changed to Citizen's Income Trust) and the international Network (the Basic Income European Network, later to become the Basic Income Earth Network), encountered the idea when he was involved in Newton Abbot CU.

Income (Authors Anonymous c.1972)", which was kept at the house of one of ex-claimants'. It seems to have been circulated among CUs sometime around early 1972. One woman interviewed, who annotated the document, confirmed that it was typed by a claimant, who because of her trans-sexual identity, found difficult to obtain work. Both were from a working class background, and were active in East London CU. She said also that, although it was typed and annotated by these two claimants, it can be said that it was written collectively because it reflected prior discussion among claimants.

The document defined Guaranteed Minimum Income as follows:

It's a minimum weekly income for all adults, wether [sic] employed or unemployed. It is guaranteed because it is an income, as of right, it can't be cut off at any time. It is a minimum below which no-one will have to live. It will be [sic] permanently be kept at a level high enough for each of us to be able to live well, not merely subsist. (Authors Anonymous c.1972: 5)

It's not an income based on or related eraning [sic] when in work, which is partly what is being introduced in the U.S.A. Thatb [sic] would just reinforce the big differences between wages / salaries and the dole / S.S. payments. It is not a reward for having payments or a handout for looking after your kids. (Authors Anonymous c.1972: 6)

They recognised that the welfare system was sexist as we've already seen in the previous section. "The ludicrous sexism of women as dependents must be abolished (Authors Anonymous c.1972: 6)." They saw this demand as uniting various claimants together; single mothers, unemployed, school leavers, pensioners, prisoners, ethnic minorities, etc.

The document analyses the situation they and other working class people faced, then criticised mainstream Trade Unionists and Leftist Groups demand – *the right to work*. The fundamental tone of their analysis seems consistent with one of dominant strand of justification for a basic income: the increase of technological unemployment.²⁵ Taking this scarcity of employment for granted, they argued that "it [right to work] is a ludicrous demand because it ignores changes going on in capitalism (Authors Anonymous c.1972: 11)".

In this situation the demand for 'the right to work' is begging, in fact worse than

²⁵ This concept articulated by J. M. Keynes has been used for justifying a basic income by various scholars and activists.

begging because we don't get the money for nothing, but really for degrading ourselves by taking boring irrelevant jobs, probably at really exploitative wages. Such a demand can easily be turned against us because it is not far from the work-camp remedy for unemployment which at its crudest level is digging holes in order to fill them in. Because it is not a socially conscious demand it draws no distinctions. It could be the work of building more police stations and prisons. It in no way challenges the ruling class drive to maintain work for its own sake as repression, as discipline, as taking up our time to prevent us working creatively out of work for social control in the community. G.I. confronts this head on, because it attacks the 'incentive to work', which in reality means keeping us on the bread-line as claimants and unemployed, as a depressant, and as something which keeps us alive but keeps on the pressure to make us take any job. (Authors Anonymous c.1972: 12)

They also argued that "it destroys any basis for unity between claimants and the unemployed (Authors Anonymous c.1972: 11)". They thought of this demand as uniting claimants and workers together. As I described in the section 2, CUs supported Trades Unions when they had strikes. Some trades unions in the public sector also supported CUs, for example, by rejecting requests for their workers to spy on women claimants. However, there was a glowing sense within CUs that while they always supported the strikes by local workers, in the long term trade unions failed to give CUs similar support. They had hoped that the demand for a basic income could establish a longer term relationship between trade unions and CUs, but this turned out not to be the case²⁶.

According to the minutes of all London CU meetings held at North London CU on 24th March 1972, the CUs in London decided to propose to that the NFCU organise a National Campaign. They discussed terminology:

It was agreed that the word 'income' was better than the word 'wage' since the latter implies selling one's labour in a capitalist system.

It was eventually agreed that the idea of a 'minimum' income was better than an 'equal' income since people's needs will never be equal. (Author(s) Anonymous 1972a)

²⁶ Some trade unionists such as the Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards' Committee showed interest in a basic income, but these were a minority.

According to the minutes of all London CU meetings held at the ELCU on 31st March 1972, each union fed their experience or opinion back to the meeting, and discussed it. Highbury CU reported a discussion on the wages for housework in NWLC a week before in Manchester. Hackney CU 'thought it was important to attach a figure to the demand'. North London CU showed the detail of weekly living expenses of a single mother. West London CU suggested £10 per person, and North London replied 'Don't make it too utopian'. On 8th and 9th April an NFCU meeting was held in Deptford, and they agreed on the Campaign. A weekly meeting for GAI started in London and the North London CU made and distributed the "GAI. News".

The NFCU organised the conference on 'Guaranteed Minimum Income' on the 27th and 28th May in Swansea. According to the minutes of the conference they discussed 'Dangers of the G.A.I.', 'What is an Adequate Income? How would it be administered?', 'Whether to put demands that can or cannot be met?', and 'Two parts to the Campaign'. Discussed under the theme of 'dangers' were:

Experience of the Women's Liberation Conference held recently, during discussion of similar Guaranteed Income for women, danger was pointed out that such a G. I. might enforce women's position at home. But G.A.I for men, women and children stops dependence of children on parents, and women on men. Also, other considerations – such as that growing children need more than adults and that we've got too used to the idea that families with a lot of kids are necessarily poorly off. If it costs £10 to keep a kid in a state home it should cost the same in its family home.

Would differentials for blind, disabled etc, who need more than £10 involve means-testing. No – they would get more than the minimum as of right without means-test.

Campaign should not become like just submitting another wage claim.

In putting pressure on DHSS must avoid any concession to extension of means-test e.g. no sliding scale for children.

CUs cant [sic] campaign alone – especially in present state of confusion (as at National Federations. [sic]) The G.A.I. could only be presented as part of a Peoples' Charter for total socialist policies backed by the sanction of a general strike.

(Author(s) Anonymous 1972c)

This suggests, as well as the other minutes from all London CU meetings I've shown, that the

CU women went to NWLC (probably March 1972 in Manchester) and fed it back to NFCUs²⁷. They defended basic income as dissolving the patriarchal household by making children and women independent, against wages for housework as entrapping women in patriarchal household. They also acknowledged that some people should be paid not only a basic income but also other non-means-tested income.

Under 'What is an Adequate Income? How would it be administered?', they articulated two different concepts of GAI. These were:

- a) Income guaranteed for every person in the country, working or not. £10 through the post every week from birth to death. It was proposed that this would prevent any type of means-testing.
- b) Guaranteed adequate Income for all claimants and unemployed as of right without means-test, per person, per family. (Author(s) Anonymous 1972c)

The attendants decided to have a vote and preference was given to b) by the majority, because it "seemed more of a political and more of a realistic demand (Brapsstacks 1972)". A working class claimant from Birmingham who didn't attend the above conference criticised this decision as 'confusion' on July after he heard the decision. He wrote:

I ask you – we are supposed to have a charter which says "no means-test" and here is a Claimants Union group putting forward means tests! This idea is no different to that the right-wing Tories have been putting forward – negative income tax.....
We have to break the link LIVING=WAGE in peoples minds. Every step away from dependence on wages for security is a step forward for the working class. The free medicine, family allowance, housing & food subsidies introduced by Post-war governments, and all universal benefits, present a partial threat to the system of wage-slavery. It is better that we put forward a demand of only three pounds per head rather than ten pounds paid out in the manner suggested at Swansea, because at least we are affirming universality. (Brapsstacks 1972. Underline is original.)

A woman who was in ELCU recalls that everybody knew,

²⁷ According to the testaments of two interviewees and the minutes I've just mentioned, it seems at least four women were there, one from BCU, two from ELCU, and one from Hackney CU.

this was like, child benefit vs. guaranteed pension.You see this [unconditional basic income] is more revolutionary.Most people wanted this [unconditional basic income], but thought it was unrealistic, so this [make-up guaranteed income] was more pragmatic.

(Interview with a woman who was in ELCU held on 3rd May 2014)

I could not trace where this discussion went²⁸. Next time the NFCU clearly made pronouncements on basic income was their publication of *Women and Social Security* in 1975, as far as I have found.

[1975-1987: Women and Basic Income]

The NFCU handbook *Women and Social Security* was published in 1975 as a new version of the *Unsupported Mother Handbook*. The first draft of *Unsupported Mother Handbook* seems to have been written around 1970-71 by working class women in BCU at that time. *Women and Social Security* was written by working class women in ELCU, and revised several times. I found at least 5 different versions, but only 1985 edition and 1987 edition included the year of publication.

Although a copy of 1975 edition of *Women and Social Security* (clearly identified as such) hasn't been found, no. 39 of *Spare Rib* introduced the content of it. It started with:

A handbook by women in the Claimants Union.....The Claimants Union Movement demands the right of a guaranteed adequate income to each individual with no means test and no age limit.....Women are not treated as individuals by the social security system but as mere 'dependents' on men. The Government's sex discrimination legislation specifically omits the vast area of social security. (pp.6-7)

So here a basic income was considered as a tool for ending sex discrimination in the area of

²⁸ There was not only a dispute on the definition, but also on how this demand should be located in the whole of their struggle. Fortune and Trescott wrote: "[A]t first we saw guaranteed income not as a perspective out as a demand or slogan which would mobilise the whole of the working class. We thought of it as a campaign we could launch and started thinking about how much money we should demand. Whether kids should get it etc. rather than looking at ongoing on actual anti-capitalist struggles where the demand for a guaranteed income was already being posed or where it could be developed. G.I. was seen as an end in itself, a blueprint for a new society rather than a direction for revolutionary struggle. After seeing this mistake we launched the cohabitation campaign as part of the perspective for G.I. It aimed to get rid of the cohabitation rule and to get women an independent income unrelated to wage labour (Fortune and Trescott c.1972-5: 4)."

social security. Every version of *Women and Social Security* had a section for basic income.

“The Claimants Union Movement demands a Guaranteed Minimum Income for every individual person. But if we want this, we know we are going to have to fight an uphill struggle since such a change would be costly and require some fundamental rethinking about inequalities in our society. Nevertheless, it is the only way that women can obtain equal treatment with men.

(c.1977-8 version of *Women and Social Security*: p.3. Underline is original)”

“[Under a Guaranteed Minimum Income scheme,] [e]ach woman would be treated as a separate individual, and never as another person’s **dependant**. This would remove the humiliating investigation of personal relationships which is an integral part of the supplementary benefits scheme. Individually based benefits would put an end to the notorious cohabitation rule and all the snooping associated with it. It would also get rid of the intimidation and harassment of women claimants by liable relative officers and special investigators. A Guaranteed Minimum Income would radically affect the position of women in this society. It would undermine the sexual division of labour in the home and in employment. It would blur the divisions between ‘male’ and ‘female’ gender roles. And it would lead to autonomy for women in most areas of production and reproduction.

(1985 version of *Women and Social Security*: p.44. Emphasis is original.)”

In any version, ‘Guaranteed Minimum Income’ is defined as unconditional basic income, and is justified as a tool for women’s liberation.

5. ‘Guaranteed Income’ in the broader sense and the WLM.

In this section, we will see the similarity and difference of other group(s) who, broadly speaking, referred to the idea of a ‘guaranteed income’ in. Sheila Rowbotham wrote:

The rejection of work also appeared among women active in the Claimants’ Union in the early 1970s. A paper on ‘Work, Women and Unemployment’ for a Claimants’ Union Conference in the early 1970s insisted that ‘women are never out of work’, and argued that men and women should share domestic work and child care equally.

They saw women's liberation as part of a challenge to the work ethic that assumed paid labour in capitalism was a source of power and dignity. Behind the critique of work was the belief that it was not sufficient to resist on capital's terms. The starting point should be working-class people's needs. An argument was developed for a minimum living *wage* for women and men regardless of whether they had jobs.

(Rowbotham 1989: 186. Italics are mine)

What CU women demanded was not a living *wage*, but a living *income*, as we have seen in the previous section of this paper. Having said that, this passage is valuable because it sheds light on CUs not just as participants or protesters, but as theorists who have a vision for a better future. Rowbotham here categorised CUs as one of the groups that had a 'rejection of work' tendency, where she includes "the Wages for Housework grouping" and "New Left groups abroad, particularly in Italy and France (Rowbotham 1989: 186)".

I already located CUs and their demand for an unconditional basic income in the context of the Italian *Autonomia* movement, a significant component of "New Left groups abroad, particularly in Italy and France", in Yamamori 2006. So here let me present the case of the Wages for Housework campaign.

[WfH and WLM]

'The Wages for Housework' was initiated as an international campaign by women who lived in or visited Italy in 1972. Among them were Selma James, Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Silvia Federici (Tortorici 2013). James launched the group in Britain in 1972; Federici was involved in creating the group in the U.S. in 1973.²⁹

Selma James presented her pamphlet *Women, the Unions and Work* at the NWLC held in March 1972. She and the group argued that trade unions were an obstacle to women's liberation, and that the existing four demands of WLM should be replaced by the demands proposed in the pamphlet. These were:

1. WE DEMAND THE RIGHT TO WORK LESS.
2. WE DEMAND A GUARANTEED INCOME FOR WOMEN AND FOR MEN WORKING OR NOT WORKING, MARRIED OR NOT. If we raise kids, we have a right

²⁹ The British group delinked from other 'Wages for Housework' groups outside Britain in 1977. Although a significant number of women were expunged from the group in 1991, James's group, now called 'Global Women's Strike', has been active up to today.

to a living wage. The ruling class has glorified motherhood only when there is a pay packet to support it. We work for the capitalist class. Let them pay us, or else we can go to the factories and offices and put our children in their father's laps. Let's see if they can make Ford cars and change nappies at the same time. WE DEMAND WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK. All housekeepers are entitled to wages (men too).

3. It is in this context that WE DEMAND CONTROL OF OUR BODIES.....WE DEMAND THE RIGHT TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN.....

4. WE DEMAND EQUAL PAY FOR ALL.....

5. WE DEMAND AN END TO PRICE RISES.....,

6. WE DEMAND FREE COMMUNITY CONTROL- LED NURSERY AND CHILD CARE.....

(James 1972. Capital letters are original.)

The proposal invoked huge discussions within the WLM. Most of the published arguments were against the demand (c.f. Malos 1980). However, the discussion only focused on 'wages for housework'. 'A guaranteed income', a much broader concept in the proposal was almost neglected by the WLM at that time, except in CUs. James herself (and the group themselves) also did not touch on the concept 'guaranteed income' again.

[WfH and CUs: Co-operations and Conflicts]

Several women from CUs, who prepared for their national campaign for guaranteed minimum income, witnessed James's intervention at the NWLC in March 1972, as we already saw. CUs agreed with other WLM women's critique against the demand by worrying that the 'wages for housework' idea enforced the gender division of labour in households and thus also enforced patriarchy, while they thought that their own demand for a guaranteed minimum income would not. A woman who was in East London CU recalls:

Claimants Unions did reject the Wages for Housework argument. Because it was felt that women would end up stereotypically as housewives. We didn't want women as housewives. Housework should be divided between men and women, fifty-fifty. Not that under the value the wages for housework was a demand, which didn't seem very realistic. And this was always we fell out with Selma. It was that women should have the wages for housework. It wasn't that men should have the wages for housework. It

was that we should..that housewives should be paid as being housewives. That was an argument that we could never square. (Interview held on 5 April 2014)

Fortune and Trescott, who were active CUs in London, wrote:

We want to fight for the sort of society we want to live in – this is our main perspective. Here is where we disagree with the demand for ‘Wages for Housework’. While it may be an attempt to demystify the work done by women in the home of its ‘love / service’ trappings and demand recognition of its role in servicing capital, it says nothing about our function as reproducers of the social relationships of production in our role as mothers, housewives, sexual objects. As a demand posed from outside onto women’s struggle, it denies the fact that these struggles often go way beyond a recognition of women’s function as the reproducer of labour power. This raises the whole question of the nature and role of demands. (Fortune and Trescott c.1972-5)

Apart from the difference of their demands, what sort of relationship did the Wages for Housework group and CUs have? They together had a nation-wide campaign ‘Hands Off Family Allowance’ along with other women’s group. The Wages for Housework group invited CU women to their event, and also attended some meetings of the CUs. However, there were also conflicts. A woman, who witnessed Selma James’s intervention at NWLC in 1972 and worked with her group for ‘Hands Off Family Allowance’ campaign recalls:

Wages for Housework was a very Americanized version, they didn’t have English or British called politics, because American politics doesn’t seem to have ...trade union movement in the same way in this country....

They didn’t like trade unionism. Selma James was anti-trade unionist. Trade unionists are people who oppressed women...

Most of the organisations came .. had a strong affiliation with a political party. Labour party, Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party. Claimants Unions wasn’t tied in with any particular organisation. Neither Selma James. They were free floating organization. Difference was [that] Selma was very Americanised. She didn’t understand, I suppose, that we all focused on Class politics.Claimants Unions tried to be a trade union movement. And you have this organization which is similar.

But rejects trade unionism. I think that was the biggest difference between the two. And it is why we fell out with Selma. Because we had attracted quite a few trade unionists, or ex-trade unionists to the Claimants Union. And they couldn't stand with the Wages for Housework. Selma rejected all those [class politics associated with trade unions, Labour party etc] structures. So in a way we are all anarchists, but not really anarchist, we are our own anarchists. We were different anarchists. They are more middle class, I suppose. (Interview held on 5 April 2014)

Another claimant recalls:

[A woman in BCU] was a personal fan of Selma James, and I have nothing against her. However, the camp followers of Wages for Housework contained a good smattering of sectarian bullies who saw only their own campaign and nobody else's. A group somehow managed to get to one of the NFCU conferences and declared they had no other objective than to get us to discuss and adopt their demands, in which they were unsuccessful. Showing no interest in anything we were doing, they never came back. They were no doubt also hoping to recruit a few women to their movement – a classic “entrist” tactic of left-wing groups, the bane or curse of the socialist movement.

(email correspondence with a man who was in BCU on 5th April 2014)

I cite these voices, not to criticise any particular organisation, but to demonstrate how people in the CUs were themselves, different from the Wages for Housework group.

[Other arguments]

There were several voices arguing for a guaranteed income, in a broader sense, other than the group “Wages for Housework” and the CUs. Zoë Fairbairns published an article under the title “A Living Income in Their Own Right for Women or Men Who Care for Dependents at Home” (Fairbairns 1976). Logically the title means ‘wages for housework’. Because in Britain this term was so connected with the group ‘Wages for Housework’, she needed to use a ‘cumbersome’ word for discussing the idea while separating it from the arguments of Selma James and the group ‘Wages for Housework’. She argued for a guaranteed income for unpaid carers.

The document by a woman in the Liverpool Women's Action Group, which I mentioned in section 3, contained not only a record of the resolution by CUs women but also her own articulation and strategy for it. Her concept was both wider and narrow compared to the concept in CUs after 1975. She saw a guaranteed income as almost the equivalent of the 'social wage' favoured by Italian Autonomists. The Italian Autonomists, in the 1970s, saw payment via the welfare state as a part of wage and called it a 'social wage'. With this sort of understanding, she wrote that it is a "working class demand, based on our need (Liverpool Women's Action Group c.1977: 1)." She viewed 'wages for housework' as a particular form of guaranteed income, but also recognised that people who didn't support the former were still able to agree with a more generalised idea of the latter. Surely this concept of guaranteed income is much wider than the concept in CUs. At the same time, she argued for a guaranteed income (or independent income) "for women". In this sense, it is narrower than the concept in CUs. When she discussed strategy, she wrote:

We should decide on the best way of fighting for an independent income for those women who don't yet have any direct cash for themselves. For example, what are the possibilities of starting a broad campaign against the 'cohabitation rule' on social security, fighting for the right to money whether you live with a man or not, whether he's working or not. We know the Claimants Unions have fought this for several years, but haven't had much support from the rest of the socialist / feminist movement. This kind of broad campaign – with a lot of publicity / posters / leaflets / articles in feminist / left press would make a big difference to the many isolated groups of women fighting in different situations around wages / social security / for state-paid services.

(Liverpool Women's Action Group c.1977: 6. Emphasis by underline is mine.)

Although the articulation of a guaranteed income was different between this woman and CUs, the way of fighting back against the 'cohabitation rule' and for a guaranteed income was the same. She also acknowledged the CU struggle against the 'cohabitation rule' but thought it didn't receive proper support either from the feminist movement or the socialist movement.

Women who initially argued for a 'fifth demand' and The Campaign for Legal and Financial Independence of Women, both demanded abolition of the cohabitation rule (Gieve, Gilbert, McIntosh, Morton, Robinson, Wheatley and Wilson 1974: 277. Also see the London Women's Liberation Campaign for Legal and Financial Independence and Rights of Women

1979). CU women joined this campaign. However, as we saw in section 2, the Campaign group opposed the CU women's resolution for an unconditional basic income.

6. Conclusion

As we have seen throughout the paper, the CUs movement demanded a guaranteed income in broader sense from 1969 till 1987. In 1970, as they formed the National Federation of CUs, they collectively discussed this in their first and second meeting. At that time their demand was understood as an unconditional basic income, at least by a significant part of women and men in the federation. The idea was developed from their everyday encounter with institutionalised sexism in the welfare state. In 1972 the NFCU clearly distinguished 'unconditional basic income' from a 'make-up guaranteed income'. The majority vote in the federation went to the latter for 'practical' reasons. In 1975, NFCU defined their demand for a 'guaranteed minimum income' as an unconditional basic income, and kept this definition till 1987. Women in CUs saw basic income as a tool for women's liberation from both the nuclear family and the state.

Women in the NFCUs put the resolution for basic income at the NWLC, probably in 1976, in Newcastle upon Tyne. According to a woman who spoke for the resolution, although it was passed, the chair wiped it out because she was incensed by the idea. Women in the NFCUs put the same resolution forward again in 1977 at the London NWLC. It was passed although the Campaign for Legal and Financial Independence group opposed it. CUs women recalled that middle class women didn't understand the idea, and also some of them viewed CUs women as 'scum'.

Both the CU's demand for an unconditional basic income as a tool for women's liberation and the NWLC resolution for it has been somehow sidelined in the WLM (also in Welfare Rights industry, although I didn't touch it in this paper). They have also been neglected in academia. There can be several reasons: class issues and contempt for claimants, as CU women recall; race issues (although I do not touch it in this paper), simple misunderstanding, and a practical versus utopian demand issue (it existed, also, in CUs), etc.

The Owl of Minerva flew in the 1980s. Academics distinguished unconditional basic income from make-up guaranteed income, and the international network for basic income, promoted mainly by academics was launched. Feminist academics have started to argue about/in favour of a basic income since the 1990s. These moves have helped to spread the idea

to broad range of people, the majority of them wouldn't listen to claimants women's voices. This situation is welcomed by some CU women.

That was a part of the reason we went to minimum guaranteed income demand, because half of the activists in claimants unions are single parents.....We lost in terms of achieving the Guaranteed Minimum Income demand.But it is happening. (Interview with a woman who was in East London Claimants Union, held in September 2009 in London.)

I hope it is still in time to acknowledge and reclaim their struggle. We can learn from their struggle for today and for a better future.

Appendix. 1: Relevant Photos on CUs and WLM

[as a separate file]

Appendix. 2: Acknowledgement and the detail of interviews

The authorship of this paper is officially mine, and any mistakes and misunderstanding, if any, are also mine. However, this research could not be conducted without kind and passionate support and help from interviewees who were (some still are) claimants and activists relevant to CUs. This is *their* history and I am just a compiler. Here I would like to acknowledge them as well as explain the details of the interviews.

The first interview was held in March 2002 at Newton Abbot with former members of Newton Abbot CU, with great help from Bill Jordan, former secretary of Newton Abbot CU. Jordan also interviewed one ex-claimant and sent me the recorded tape. Then the interviews with members of Edinburgh Claimants and former members of South Shields CU were held in August, 2003. The latter was conducted with considerable help from Jack Grassby. Between 2004 and 2007, I interviewed some of those same people again along with other people who were involved in the claimants movements in Birmingham, Cambridge, Merseyside and East Anglia. Ed Emery organised a conference in Cambridge in 2006, on the contemporary relevance of the Italian Autonomia movement and invited me to speak on the claimants unions. He happened to be an ex-member of Cambridge CU and we had a workshop on a basic income and

CUs in 2007. Roger Clipsham kindly scanned some of the materials he has and sent them to me.

During 2009, 2011, and 2013 with great help of Roger Clipsham, one of the founding members of the Birmingham CU, a series of interviews with former members of Birmingham CU, East London CU, North London CU and New Castle upon Tyne CU were held at various places. Margaret and Chris Tyrrell, Pat Randall, Susan Cooper (from Birmingham, 2009), Lyn Boyd, Annette McKay, and Rosemary Robson (from Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009) recalled vividly how the administration of the welfare state harassed them and how they fought against this collectively as CU(s).

Julia Mainwaring (2009) and Jane Downey (2011) told me that their motion for an unconditional basic income was raised at National Women's Liberation Congress, and it was a starting point for the frame of this paper. I re-visited them a couple of times at 2014 and disturbed their family life by browsing diaries and documents all day long or by staying over night. Special thanks and apologies to Adrian and Olivia.

Susan Carlyle, in interviews held during 2012 and 2014, helped me to paint a picture of different strand of people in the Claimants union. John Barker kindly accepted and made time available for interview in June 2014. Jenny Fortune helped me by corresponding through emails and by scanning a relevant document and sending me it.

I acknowledge all people I mentioned here.

Pauline Gift kindly agreed to be interviewed by me, but sadly passed away before I manage to see her. Other interviewees have frequently and affectionately mentioned her and sometimes I had an impression that I am sharing a collective memory of her. Susan Cooper, who kindly taught me the relevance of trade unionism to CUs, also passed away. This paper is dedicated to collective memories of Pauline Gift and Susan Cooper.

I also would like to acknowledge those people who hugely encouraged me to conduct this research. A number of feminist activists in Japan invited me to talk on this research around 2009. Kaori Katada, one of them, joined several interviews I conducted in 2009. The Basic Income Korean Network invited me to talk in 2010, and some audiences then organised a workshop for discussing my paper. Feminist activists such as Cindy L'Hirondell in Canada and Barb Jacobson in the U.K. encouraged me. In making sense of this as an academic paper, Natalie Thomlinson and Lucy Delap advised me. Archivists at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archive and at LSE Library were also helpful.

The earlier version of the paper was presented at a workshop held at Navarra Public

University in Pamplona, Spain on 14th April 2014, organised by Rebeca Echavarri. This version was presented at the 15th international congress of the Basic Income Earth Network, held at McGill university in Montreal, Canada during 27th and 29th June 2014, and at the *Situating Women's Liberation; Historicizing a Movement* conference, held at the University of Portsmouth on 4th July 2014, organised by Sue Bruley. I do appreciate both opportunities the organisers gave me and positive comments from participants. Again any mistakes belong to me.

References

[materials from the Claimants Unions movement, not formally published]

- Authors Anonymous. c.1972. "Claimants' Unions, Action Group and the Campaign for a Guaranteed Income".
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1972a. "Minutes of the all London Meetings on 24 / 3 / 72 at North London".
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1972b. "Minutes of London Federation of C.U.'s Meetings - held at the East London C.U. 31-3-1972".
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1972c. "Minutes of Conference on Guaranteed Adequate Income Campaign. Swansea 27 / 28 May 1972".
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1979. "Claimants Union", 3 pages document, on the sheets with the footer of "Citizens Advice Bureau", with numbering "9.1.4.1", and dated in October 1979.
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1980. "Report of Claimants Union Conference held in Bradford, 12/13 April 1980".
- Brapsstacks, Billy. 1972. "The Confusion of Swansea: A little light on the G.A.I."
- Federation of Claimants Unions. 1981. *Internal Bulletin*, September, Handsworth CU.
- Federation of Claimants Unions. 1985. *Social Security and Women*.
- Fortune, Jenny and Kate Trescott. c.1972-5. "Women's Lives: A Basis For Struggle".
- Hackney Claimants Union. 1973. "National Women's Claimants' Conference".
- National Federation of Claimants Unions. 1970. *Journal of the National Federation of Claimants Unions*, no.1.
- National Federation of Claimants Unions. c.1970-1. *Unsupported mothers handbook*.
- National Federation of Claimants Unions. c.1971-2. A revised edition of *Claimants Handbook for Strikers*. Published between April 1971- October 1972.
- National Federation of Claimants Unions. 1972. "Address List of Claimants Unions as at 26 June 1972."
- National Federation of Claimants Unions. 1975. Letter to Mr. Kenyon.
- National Federation of Claimants Unions. c.1977-8. *Social Security and Women*.
- North London Claimants Union. 1972. "GAI News: Broadsheet of the National Campaign for a Guaranteed

Adequate Income”, issued in April 1972.

[materials from the Women’s Liberation movement, not formally published]

- Author(s) Anonymous. c.1971-5. *Single Mothers Survival Notes*.
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1977. *Women in the East End*. Published before 26th March in 1977
- Author(s) Anonymous. 1978. “National Women’s Liberation Conference Birmingham 1978”.
- Hall, Catherine. 1972. “National Womens Congress” (The minute of the meeting to plan 4th NWLC, held in Birmingham on 3 June 1972).-3
- James, Selma. 1972. *Women, the Unions and Work, Or...What is not to be done*.
- Liverpool Women’s Action Group. c.1977. *Guaranteed Independent Income for All Women*.
- Ross, Elizabeth Arledge, and Miriam L. Bearse (edited by Karen E. Boyle with the Oral History Project Advisory Group). 1996. *Chronology of the Women’s Liberation Movement in Britain: Organisations, Conferences, Journals and Events, with a Focus on Leeds and Bradford 1969-1979*.

[other references]

- Allen, Sandra, Lee Sanders and Jan Wallis. 1974. *Conditions Of Illusion: Paper from the Women’s Movement*. Leeds: Feminist Books.
- Annetts, Jason, Alex Law, Wallace McNeish and Gerry Mooney. 2009. *Understanding Social Welfare Movements*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Collins, Marcus. 2006. *Modern love: personal relationships in twentieth-century Britain*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.
- Condon, Judith. 1990. “The Women’s Weekend: The beginning of a movement”, *Women: A Cultural Review*, vol.1, no.1 pp.25-28.
- Curtis, Helene and Mimi Sanderson. 2004. *The Unsung Sixties: Memoirs of Social Innovation*. London: Whiting & Birch. p.123
- DHSS. 1971. *Cohabitation : the administration of the relevant provisions of the Ministry of Social Security Act 1966 : Report by the Supplementary Benefits Commission to the Secretary of State for Social Services*. London: HMSO.
- Fairbairns Zoë. 1976. “A Living Income in Their Own Right for Women or Men Who Care for Dependents at Home”, reprinted in *Feminist Anthology Collective* 1981.
- Feminist Anthology Collective. 1981. *No Turning Back: Writing from the Women’s Liberation Movement 1975-80*. London: Women’s Press.
- Gieve, Katherine, Lesley Gilbert, Mary McIntosh, Liam Morton, Lucy Robinson, Margaret Wheatley and

- Leonora Wilson. 1974. "The Independence Demand", reprinted in Allen, Sanders and Wallis 1974.
- Grassby, Jack. 1996. *The Unfinished Revolution: South Tyneside 1969-1976*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: TUPS Books.
 - Harris, Neville. 1996. "Unmarried Cohabiting Couples and Social Security in Great Britain", *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 18(2).
 - Jordan, Bill. 1973. *Paupers: The making of the new claiming class*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
 - London Women's Liberation Campaign for Legal and Financial Independence and Rights of Women. 1979. "Disaggregation Now! Another Battle for Women's Independence", *Feminist Review*, no.2. pp.19-31.
 - Malos, Ellen (ed.). 1980. *The Politics of Housework*. London: Allison & Busby.
 - Rose, Hinary. 1973. "Up Against The Welfare State: The clamants unions". in *Socialist Register*, vol.10, pp. 179-203.
 - Rowbotham, Sheila. 1989. *The Past Is Before Us: Feminism in action since the 1960s*. London: Pandora Press.
 - Rutledge, Desmond. 2000. "Living Together Appeals Revisited". *Adviser*, Sep.& Oct 2000.
 - Rhys-Williams, Juliet. 1965. *A new look at Britain's economic policy*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
 - Segal, Lynne. 2007. *Making Trouble: Life and Politics*. London: Serpent's Tail.
 - van Parijs, Phillippe and Robert ven der Veen (1986) "A Capitalist Road to Communism", reprinted in Van Parijs, Philippe (1993) *Marxism Recycled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
 - Setch, Eve. 2002. "The Face of Metropolitan Feminism: The London Women's Liberation Workshop, 1969-79", *Twentieth Century British History*, vol.13, no.2, pp.171-190.
 - Tortorici, Danya. 2013. "More Smiles? More Money", *n+1 magazine*, issue 17.
(<http://nplusonemag.com/issue-17/reviews/more-smiles-more-money>)
 - Wander, Michelene. 1972. *The Body Politic: Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain 1969-1972*. London: Stage 1.
 - Yamamori, Toru. 2003. "Basic Income: on the second demand of the Multitude", *Modern Thought*, vol.31, no.2, pp.130-147 (Tokyo: Seidosha / in Japanese).
 - Yamamori, Toru. 2006. "Una Sola Moltitudine: Struggles for basic income and the common logic that emerged from Italy, the UK and Japan", paper presented at *Immaterial Labour, Multitudes and New Social Subjects* conference held on 29-30 April 2006 at King's College, University of Cambridge.
(<http://www.thefreeuniversity.net/ImmaterialLabour/yamamoripaper2006.html>)
 - Yamamori, Toru. 2009. *Introduction to Basic Income*. (Tokyo: Kobunsha / in Japanese)
 - Yamamori, Toru. 2010. "Missing Women: The Forgotten Struggles of Single Mothers for Basic Income" in Basic Income Korea Network (ed.) *Sustainable Utopia and Basic Income in a Global Era*.