

#1 Fucking as Work

On Wednesday 10 May, the group met to discuss a selection of texts from the 1970s compiled by Laura Guy: Silvia Federici's early writing found meaning within a constellation of work emerging internationally from a group connected with the Wages for Housework movement. Alongside Federici's short essay 'Sexuality is Work' (1975), we will read 'Fucking is Work' (c. 1975) by the Wages Due Collective Toronto/ Ellen Agger et al and a selection of manifestos reflecting on sex work in the 1970s, including statements by San Francisco Wages for Housework; The English Collective of Prostitutes; Wages Due Lesbians, London and Toronto and an anonymous group of sex workers in Brooklyn, New York.

'Sexuality as Work' or 'Why Sexuality Is Work' (1975) was originally written by Federici as a presentation made to the second international Wages for Housework conference held in Toronto in January 1975. Wages Due Lesbians Toronto formed out of the Wages for Housework Campaign in Canada in the early 1970s. Concerned with connecting the material struggles surrounding lesbian and heterosexual women's lives, the group organised around a range of connected issues including housework, wage, the family and child custody, and sexuality. Wages Due Lesbians had close links with sex workers aligned with the Wages for Housework struggle, linking experiences of lesbian-identity and prostitution through harassment, the necessity of financial independence and the way in which both revealed fucking as work.

Texts

Federici, Silvia. 'On Sexuality as Work (1975)'. In *The Commoner*, no.15 Winter (2012): 88–94.

The Wages Due Collective, Toronto. 'Fucking Is Work', c. 1975.

Selection of manifestos relating to sex work, c. 1970s.

Additional background on Wages Due Lesbians

Rousseau, Christina. 'Wages Due Lesbians: Visibility and Feminist Organizing in 1970s Canada'. In *Gender, Work & Organization* 22, no. 4 (2015): 364–74.

#2 Reform and Revolution

Harry Weeks selected texts that address the question of 'reform or revolution', which was raised during the group Fucking as Work in relation to the dual discourse of rights and structural critique occurring in the work of Wages Due Lesbians.

In Rosa Luxemburg's 1908 book *Social Reform or Revolution* she states: "At first view the title of this work may be found surprising. Can the Social-Democracy be against reforms? Can we contrapose the social revolution, the transformation of the existing order, our final goal, to social reforms? Certainly not. The daily struggle for reforms, for the amelioration of the condition of the workers within the framework of the existing social order, and for democratic institutions, offers to the Social-Democracy an indissoluble tie. The struggle for reforms is its means; the social revolution, its aim."

Whilst Luxemburg was speaking very specifically about the Marxism of the Social Democratic Party in Germany around the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, the question is equally significant to feminism, and particularly the issue of social reproduction. Wages for Housework, for instance, was a reformist demand with a revolutionary underpinning. Rather than set Luxemburg's text, however, Harry Weeks elected two texts which raise the question of reform and revolution in feminist contexts.

Texts

Federici, Silvia. 'The Unfinished Feminist Revolution'. In *The Commoner* 15 (2012): 185–197.

hooks, bell. 'Feminist Revolution: Development Through Struggle'. In *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1984: 157–63.

Additional Reading

Luxemburg, Rosa. *The Essential Rosa Luxemburg: Reform or Revolution & The Mass Strike*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2008.

#3 Black Macho

Michelle Wallace's book *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman* selected by James Bell to be read alongside Audre Lorde's 'Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference'.

From the 1990 introduction, Michele Wallace says: "When I first re-read the book in preparation for writing this, my immediate gut response was to destroy the book so that no one would ever read it again. How many black women writers, in the twentieth, nineteenth, or even eighteenth centuries have thought and done precisely this?"

I wanted to destroy the book because my desire for something more from life than my marginal status as a black woman writer could ever offer was so palpable in its pages. In obsessively repeating the stereotypes of black women and black men, I wanted to burst free of them forever. However, this has only been slightly more possible for me than it was for Harriet Wilson, Harriet Jacobs, and Charlotte Forten. But perhaps if we can begin to claim our own words and our own feelings within the public sphere, we will seize the means of reproducing our own history, and freedom will become a possibility in a sense that it never has been before."

Texts

Wallace, Michele. *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*. London: Verso, 2015.

Lorde, Audre. 'Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference'. In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press, 2007.

#4 Cultural Reproduction

Kirsten Lloyd selected Marina Vishmidt's contribution to the special issue of *Third Text* titled 'The Two Reproductions in (Feminist) Art and Theory since the 1970s' (2017): "In her contribution to this special issue, Marina Vishmidt, whose work in connecting art and social reproduction has been foundational, calls attention to distinct paths by which 'social reproduction' becomes relevant to an analysis of the art field overall. Discussing both the thematisation of reproductive labour in art and the institution of art as a form of reproduction, she points to the contemporary re-

invigoration of debates that originate in the early 1970s.” – Kirsten Lloyd and Angela Dimitrakaki.

This was read alongside Pierre Bourdieu’s essay ‘Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction’. In *Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change: Papers in the Sociology of Education*, edited by Richard Brown, 71–84. London: Tavistock, 1973.

Texts

Vishmidt, Marina. ‘The Two Reproductions in (Feminist) Art and Theory since the 1970s’. In *Third Text*, edited by Kirsten Lloyd and Angela Dimitrakaki, Vol. 31. London: Routledge, 2017: 49–66.

Bourdieu, Pierre. ‘Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction’. In *Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change: Papers in the Sociology of Education*, edited by Richard Brown. London: Tavistock, 1973: 71–84.

#5 Endless Work

In solidarity with members of the reading group and higher education workers taking part in the UCU pensions strike, we read ‘Pension and Social Reproduction’ written by Serap Saritas Oran from *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*.

The strike began in Edinburgh on Monday 26 February with picketing all across the UK following the largest vote for industrial action seen in higher education to date. The action is centred on a dispute on ‘UUK’s proposals to end the defined benefit element of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme. UCU says this would leave a typical lecturer almost £10,000 a year worse off in retirement than under the current set-up. In the recent strike ballot UCU members overwhelmingly backed industrial action. Overall, 88% of members who voted backed strike action and 93% backed action short of a strike. The turnout was 58%. A full breakdown of the results by institution is available [here](#).’

Text

Saritas Oran, Serap. ‘Pension and Social Reproduction’. In *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*, edited by Tithi Bhattacharya. London: Pluto Press, 2017.

#6 Ageing and the Menopause

We found locating materials on menopause and art difficult and wanted to address this lack in the discussion. Jennie Temple chose two texts on ageing and generational dialogue: Lynn Segal’s ‘Generational Warfare’ and Linda Nochlin on Louise Bourgeois ‘Old Age Style’.

Texts

Segal, Lynn, ‘Generational Warfare’. In *Out of Time: The Pleasures and Perils of Ageing*. London: Verso, 2013/4.

Nochlin, Linda, ‘Old Age Style: Late Louise Bourgeois’. In *Women Artists: The Linda Nochlin Reader*, edited by Maura Reilly. London: Thames & Hudson, 2015.

#7 Menstruation

Camilla Rosvik selected three texts on menstruation and pharmaceuticals. The first was a short text written by Katherine Dalton that investigates a proposed relationship between menstruation and crime from the 1961 *British Medical Journal*. The second text looks at pharmaceuticals and advertising for 'Seasonale', a 'feminist' menstrual product. A third reading came from Paul B. Preciado's *Testo Junkie*.

Texts

Dalton, Katherine. 'Menstruation And Crime'. In *The British Medical Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 5. 1961.

Mamo, Laura and Fosket, Jennifer Ruth. 'Scripting the Body: Pharmaceuticals and the (Re)Making of Menstruation'. In *Signs*, 2009.

Preciado, Paul B. 'Pharmacopornographic Era'. In *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs and Biopolitics in Pharmacopornographic Era*. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2008/2013.

#8 Many Many Women

In conjunction with the Eve Fowler exhibition *what a sight. what a sound. what a universal shudder*, we hosted an open reading session at Dundee Contemporary Arts on Tuesday 12 June with texts selected by Catherine Spencer. As well as watching a short extract from Fowler's film *with it which it as it if it is to be* (2018), we read and discussed the following texts.

Texts

Stein, Gertrude. 'Many Many Women', 1910.

Grant, Catherine. 'A Time of One's Own', *Oxford Art Journal* 39, no. 3 (December 2016):357–376.

An extract from Nelson, Maggie. *The Argonauts*. Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 2016.

#9 Automation at Work

On 10 July the group met at Chapter Thirteen at The Pearce Institute to discuss a selection of material related to automation and work compiled by artist Shona MacNaughton.

The first reading is 'New Technology and Domestic Labour' by Ursula Huws from *The Making of a Cybertariat: Virtual Work in a Real World* (2003) that looks at the rise of new technologies in the workplace and home, its impact on employment, modes of organisation and new divisions of race and gender that are created as part of this process. The second is, 'On Automation and Free Time by Yuk Hui' in *e-flux*, March 2018. The third is an online artwork by Elisa Giardina Papa titled *Technologies of Care* which "presents portraits of online workers on the front page of rhizome.org in a 26MB ZIP file that explores gender, empathy, digital labour, and new dynamics of care and service on the network. Each portrait in the ZIP is its own folder, activated by an HTML file marked 'play_it.'" A further suggested reading was 'The Crisis of Social Reproduction and the End of Work' by Helen Hester and Nick Srnicek.

Texts

Huws, Ursula. 'New Technology and Domestic Labour'. In *The Making of a Cybertariat: Virtual Work in a Real World*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2003.

Hui, Yuk. 'On Automation and Free Time', *e-flux*, March 2018.

Giardina Papa, Elisa. 'Technologies of Care, Rhizome The Download Commission', *Rhizome*, curated by Paul Soulellis, 2016.

Hester, Helen and Srnicek, Nicholas. 'The Crisis of Social Reproduction and the End of Work,' in *The Age of Perplexity: Rethinking the World We Knew*, Barcelona: Fundacion BBVA, 2017.

#10 Gentrification

For this session, Kirsten Lloyd selected two texts relating to the housing questions of the 21st century. Our discussion took place in an Airbnb apartment, booked for the occasion. Much of the material the group has previously read on gentrification looks at early examples from the 1980s and 90s, although the term itself is now around 50 years old. Both written by sociologists, the selected readings bring gentrification debates up to date by respectively centring working class and women's everyday experiences. The texts also link with Shona Macnaughton's performance *Progressive* (2018), which was played during the meeting. Kirsteen Paton's chapter is taken from her 2014 book which takes Glasgow as a case study, supported by Westgap. Winifred Curran's is the text ventures into less familiar territory – Chicago – to consider parenting, schools, community organising and public housekeeping. Together, these texts consider gender, class and stigmatisation.

Texts

Paton, Kirsteen. 'Gentrifying Working-Class Subjects: Participating in Consumer Citizenship'. In *Gentrification: A Working-Class Perspective*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014: 125–154.

Curran, Winifred. 'Social Reproduction'. In *Gender and Gentrification, Routledge Critical Studies in Urbanism and the City*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2017: 49–64.