



# One for the Soul

A Labor Day Speech

Line Mertens  
for and with *Tiny Demolitions*  
Antwerpen, May 2024



Hi

and welcome  
to the written version  
of our *Tiny Demolitions'* speech of May.

This piece  
will consider:  
labor, value and –

*yes?*

*yes.*

*are you sure?*

*I thought I was.*

it will consider  
– the soul.

But first, a sidenote on stories.



### **A sidenote on stories**

as they are written about in these pages. In *Tiny Demolitions* we deal with stories, as part of our tract of thought and feeling.

We care about stories in the way they shape our horizons, the way they inform how we can exist, or, potentially, how we cannot.

It is through stories that we can imagine – *in a flicker!* – a good life, a good person, a healthy family, hard work.

Really, all of this shit.

We believe there is work to be done in understanding which narratives shape us, and how, to not take them for granted or as natural, and to continually inform them with our lived experience, and the lived experience of others whom we can – *yes, oh, yes!* – learn to attend to.

## CHAPTER ONE: the Soul and Hesitation

I hesitate  
in writing  
and speaking about the soul,  
the very word  
seems to come with a warning.  
I think this hesitation  
is two-fold.

### FOLD 1: TEMPORALITY

I am talking to you  
from the month of May.  
On May the First  
we had the international celebration  
of Labor Day  
de *Dag van de Arbeid*  
which can remind us  
at its best  
to think about  
tangible, pressing issues  
like:  
working conditions  
care as labor  
and the ongoing exploitation  
and destruction of huge swaths  
of the living world.  
To move our thoughts, then,  
– to thinking about the – eh –  
soul  
something, seemingly, out of this world  
something unclear  
something  
my parents had already classified  
as catholic bullshit  
from which they had rightfully  
rid themselves  
– well, this can cause some  
hesitation.

Nevertheless, I want to go on  
precisely because I think  
the story of the soul got lost,  
when we might need it.  
That it was made

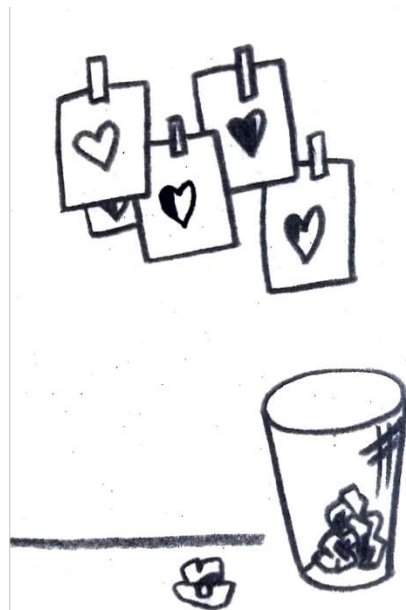
intangible  
and elusive  
out of this world  
and so hard to even consider  
when at the same time  
through the perpetual  
crises of our capitalist  
world order  
– sometimes it feels  
like my soul hurts.  
How could it not?

So I am writing and speaking about the soul  
and it would give me great pleasure  
if you could bear with me.

## FOLD 2: DISCLAIMER – LOSING THE SOUL

I grew up  
without a soul  
– that is to say  
without any concept  
of a soul  
and without any thought  
about it.

My father,  
born in 1948  
in the small town of Lier, Belgium  
had a teacher  
at the age of 6,  
and for each of his pupils  
this teacher had put  
a white piece of paper on the wall,  
and on this piece of paper  
he had drawn a heart.  
*Dit, kindjes, is jullie ziel*  
This, he said, is your soul.  
And every time  
they did something wrong  
there would of course  
be physical punishment  
which was a given at the time,  
but in addition  
he would color  
part of that white paper heart  
black



2/ a note on stained  
hearts in the present

to show the stain sins left  
on these 6-year old's souls.

My parents grew up  
undergoing weekly pastor's preaches  
filled with looming doom.  
They connect *de ziel*, the soul,  
to words like *zielenheil*  
which implies salvation  
and thereby also the alternative  
of eternal burning.  
They learned to connect *de ziel*  
to lonely fears  
in the dark,  
hidden under their blankets.  
Fears of the devil  
lifting them from their beds  
as they attempted to sleep,  
their bodies vessels of sin  
tiny, weak and fragile,  
their young souls stained.

And all of this  
they learned to shed -  
as they grew up  
when society  
seemed to grow away from catholicism,  
the influences of priests and devils waning.  
And while their mothers  
still went to church,  
they learned to tell themselves  
*it wasn't true*  
so they could sleep.  
And the devil  
would not come and get them.  
And they were not filled with sin.  
*it wasn't true – it wasn't true – it wasn't true.*  
They gradually left the soul  
for what it was  
and went on with their lives  
and made some progeny  
because *ga en vermenigvuldig u*,  
go forth and multiply,  
was part of "a good life"  
and so I grew up  
with parents who thought and felt  
#parentsarepeople



but there were no stories  
about a soul.

And you see  
how this can lead  
to some hesitation  
– I do not wish the soul  
of my parent's childhood  
upon anyone.

But that does not mean I want to give up on the soul altogether.

**CHAPTER TWO:**  
**Value and Labor**  
*Waarde en Arbeid*

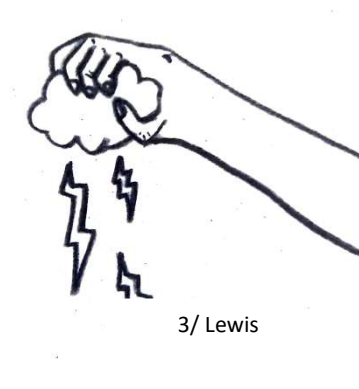
Let me go back, briefly  
to *de Dag van de Arbeid*  
and with it to the concept of value.

I think what *de Dag van de Arbeid*  
reminds us of mostly  
is the “value” of labor  
which needs reminding  
because it is quite often  
devalued, in terms of money  
and paychecks that vary  
from barely sufficient to non-existing.  
And through this reminder  
that labor is nonetheless valuable,  
we are reminded  
of the value  
of those who do labor.

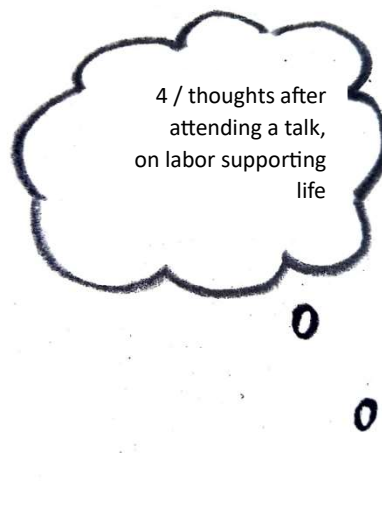
I understand the need  
for continued and increased attention  
to working circumstances  
in a capitalist world  
that drives on exploitation and extraction  
and I support  
all commemorations  
of social action.

And yet,  
there is something uneasy  
about this celebration.  
There is something uneasy  
in the assumption,  
that what is of value  
is that which makes an economic contribution,  
that which makes the world go round,  
which is, and I quote Sophie Lewis here:  
“nothing much to be proud of,  
given the state of the world.”

Moreover,  
there is something sad  
about this step in between  
*die tussenstap*



– that we would only value  
those who labor  
through their labor  
rather than  
valuing people  
for just – being alive  
– acknowledging  
that life going on  
is valuable in itself.



**CHAPTER THREE:**  
**The Unaffected Realm of The Family**  
**– the Sorrow of Motherhood**

This is the point  
where I turn to my mother  
who is the person  
who took on  
the re-productive labor  
the never-ending feeding, washing,  
playing and comforting  
on which I grew.  
To say it unfaithfully with Karl Marx

5/ Federici + Gotby

She mixed her labor  
with my earth  
and in so doing  
changed me  
and herself alike.

6/ Marx in Gilmore in  
Bhandar & Ziadah (ed.)

Kind of.

She did this  
without any breaks  
and fully within the narrative  
that the world was harsh  
and home would be our refuge.

And I believed this  
even though  
my always busy mother  
was haunted  
by spells of depression  
that later turned  
into seemingly random  
outbursts of rage.

My mother believed  
not in a soul  
but in the sacred story  
that through my children  
I find happiness  
*Goddank heb ik jullie nog*  
thank God, I still have you,  
even if the daily reality,  
and experience,  
the endless work of the house  
and the built-in loneliness,  
betrayed this story.

She had ingrained that this experience  
did not hold knowledge  
and that it didn't matter

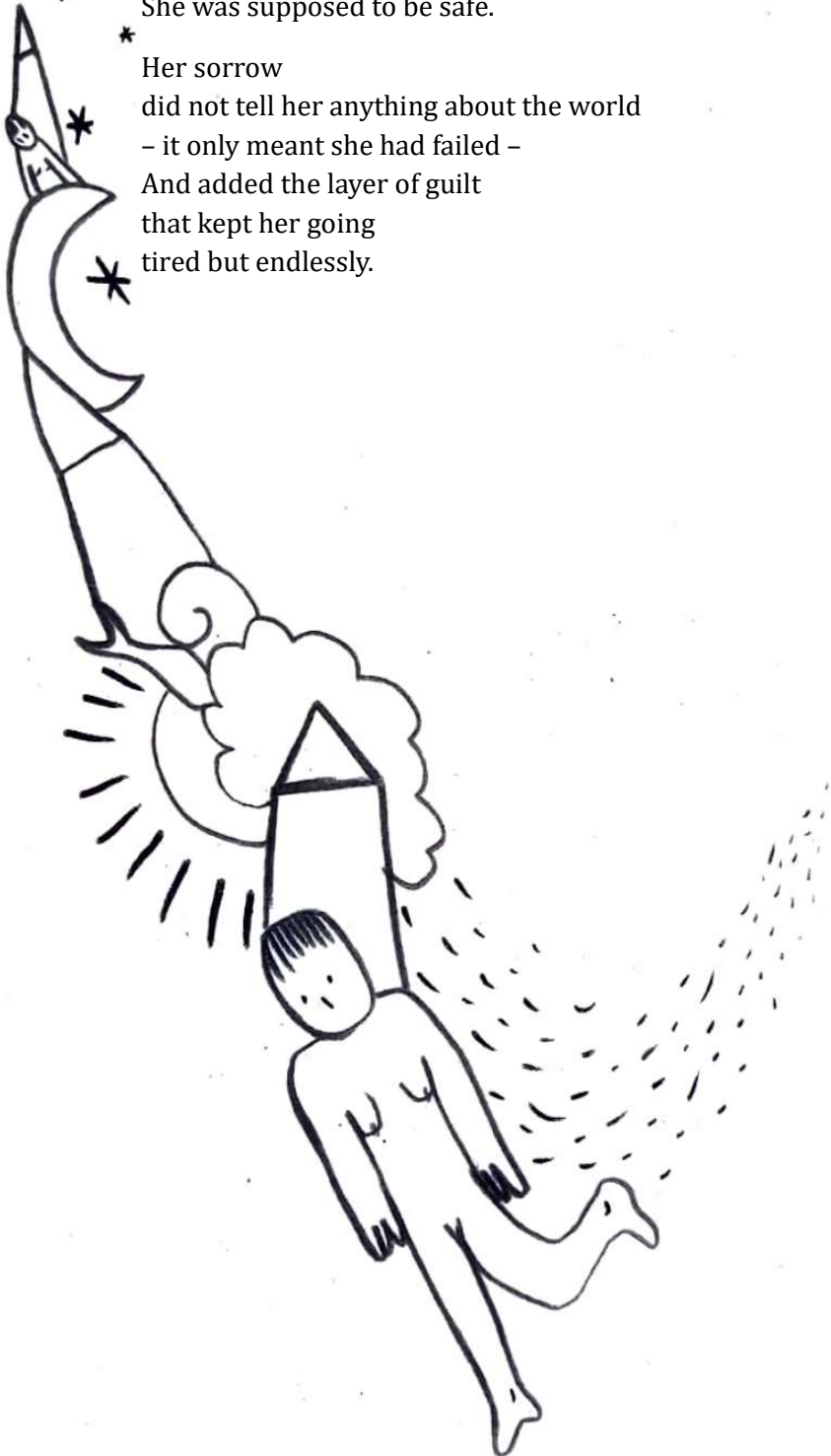
The very reasonable frames  
with which she had modeled  
her life

– a house, an income,  
a family –  
had been procured.

She was supposed to be safe.

Her sorrow  
did not tell her anything about the world  
– it only meant she had failed –  
And added the layer of guilt  
that kept her going  
tired but endlessly.

9/ The Raconteurs



## CHAPTER 4: Frames that Matter

There are frames I had learned  
to think with,  
frames I thought mattered.  
First and foremost  
I wanted to be reasonable.  
Reasonability was the only  
way in which you would be taken seriously.  
Religion was stupid,  
again, we only did Reason  
and this made us smart  
or it made us at least smart-er  
than others,  
whom we could talk to  
but not really listen,  
because they were not  
quite as reasonable as us.  
Ethics were tricky  
and only to be discussed  
in material terms  
– Marx, yes, Jesus, no,  
Audre Lorde, who is that?  
And if you talked too much  
about ethics  
you would have to watch out  
because the world  
as it was  
– and honey, you cannot change the world -  
was organized  
according to the principle of self-interest,  
people care mainly for themselves  
– so you better organize your life  
to protect yourself  
from the harm that comes  
from the self-interest of others.  
Being too kind, means you will lose  
and you will not be safe  
– and to understand  
what it means to not be safe  
just turn on the news,  
or glance  
at the people who live in the streets.  
Don't look too close,  
you need to learn to ignore

7/ a who-is-who footnote

8/ Tsing and Ebron

- just long enough  
to understand that there is danger  
and you need to be safe.  
So get a house,  
get a family  
and get a job.  
And you will be safe.

The life of my mother  
did not make sense  
according to these parameters.  
The promised safety  
seemed transformed  
into daily torment,  
and by the time I was a teenager  
I knew very well  
that my mother  
did not enjoy life.

The status of the emotional framework  
in all of this  
was unclear.  
I experienced emotional warmth  
– yes  
and in my family  
there was a tendency towards kindness  
– yes  
But it sure had its limits.  
I remember being a rather fierce child  
and sometimes  
getting the label  
hysterical.  
I think overall  
anger was not appreciated  
in particular for me and my mother  
as we seemed to fall  
on the girl-side of the family.

I still  
don't know how to do conflict.

The idea that emotions  
could hold information  
would have been met  
with seriously raised eyebrows.  
In this way, it seems  
like there was still some catholic remnant  
of passions needing to be controlled  
in order to grow

10/ a friend's reminder  
and Simona Forti

as a human being,  
which now might not mean  
be virtuous,  
but rather, be functional.

And this view of emotions  
which I would call  
reluctant recognition  
got tied to medicalization,  
for many people in my family  
suffered from depression  
and other psychiatric disorders  
So the general advice was  
– beware of emotions  
they are treacherous  
and they might hurt you  
so cultivate reason  
and you might be safe  
and know when to medicate.

And all of this  
I learned  
with its great focus  
on Reason and Safety  
and I was truly great  
at being very reasonable  
but I did not know when to medicate  
and crashed very reasonably  
into depression at the age of 20.

Brace yourself: we are getting towards the soul.



**CHAPTER 5:**  
**We are getting towards the Soul**

I had therapy, and medication  
like so many people  
living in Belgium today  
and to this day  
I am still on a daily dose of duloxetine  
have been for about ten years  
and as long as it helps me  
to be alive to my fullest extent  
I don't plan to quit it.

I am not interested  
in living my pure natural self  
truly  
I don't think it even exists.

But up until recently  
regardless of the emotional work  
I did in therapy,  
regardless  
of the close analysis of my nuclear family  
and the pharmaco-remedy  
that restored my  
neurotransmitter-balance,  
I could still be haunted  
by shame and guilt  
and loneliness,  
not as a response  
to a particular situation,  
but as an existential  
layering of my experience  
that resurfaced on a regular base.

What I am getting at  
is that the frameworks I was brought up in  
did not hold up  
to take into account my lived experience  
and it haunted me.

And this persisted  
even when I was  
quite well-read in feminism  
in politics of social justice.  
Even if I had learned to believe  
and defend,  
that my anger was a good thing,

which it is  
#angeranger – roar!

Hold on.  
I don't want to brush over this.

When the frameworks you have  
the ways you think  
about what matters  
and what does not  
when these frameworks  
do not take you into account  
– your lived experience  
when they do not take into account  
the lives of people you are close to  
and whose wellbeing affects you  
– then you might want to question  
these frameworks,  
and reading about feminism,  
and social justice  
can help you do that.

Let me be very clear here,  
we are part of a world  
in which not all lives are equally valued  
in which many lives  
are actively forgotten  
and ignored.

It took me  
a lot of reading, and listening  
to understand that  
when so many lives are ignored  
in our accounts of history  
as well as in our expectations  
of daily life, of “a good life”  
this does not only  
do active violence  
to those who are ignored  
it means these stories themselves  
are based on ignorance.  
Ignoring so many lives  
harms our understanding of the world  
and through it  
it makes it harder  
for everyone  
to live.



11/ Gotby

I quote bell hooks,  
 I think I need to do that every time,  
 she points out  
 we live in “white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy”,  
 and that we need this heavy phrase  
 to keep reminding us of it.  
 That this is not a natural state  
 but that it has grown  
 through a shitload of violence  
 by states and corporations alike  
 effacing lives and experiences  
 communities and species.  
 Its continuation  
 is premised on ideologies  
 of separation and domination  
 which define our reality  
 and still run  
 through our bodies, houses and streets.  
 This is knowledge that needs to be taught.

It is knowledge  
 that has brought me a lot,  
 not in the least  
 the solid ground  
 that my experiences  
 are connected to the experiences of others  
 – that I am not alone  
 – and that when I struggle  
 to live in the conditions  
 set out by white-supremacist, capitalist, patriarchy,  
 my struggle does not mean  
 failure  
 It does not mean  
 I am doing something wrong.  
 This isn't true.  
*it isn't true – it isn't true – it isn't true.*

I think what changed  
 for me to feel less guilty  
 less inadequate  
 on an existential level  
 is not that I gained knowledge about the world  
 though knowledge is important  
 – I did not analyze my guilt away  
 and in all its overwhelming misery  
 knowledge of the world,  
 can be a straight line to burn-out.

What will you do with all this knowledge?

And this is the point  
where something changed.  
Something changed  
in my position towards knowledge  
that allows me to acknowledge sorrow  
even when I am unable to fix it.  
I will not fix it.  
I am not outside of it.

And I think this helped my soul.

It helped me to stop running and crashing  
– running had never been my strength, anyway.  
It helped me to regain loving relations  
with the people I am connected to.

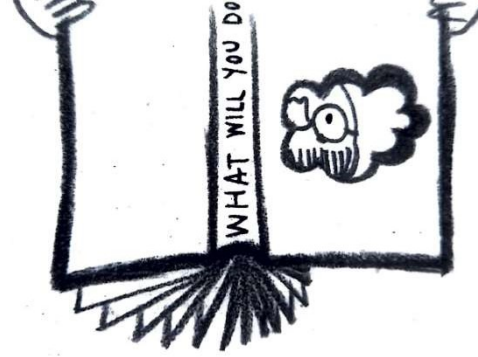
In an interview,  
Sylvia Federici said:  
through my engagement in the women's movement,  
I regained my mother.  
I have a similar experience  
of regaining my mother  
not as a flawed representation of iconic motherhood  
but as a person  
close to me  
in the world I am part of.

13/ Federici

I think my change in position  
resembles  
something Veena Das has described.  
She is an anthropologist  
and she talks about the difference  
between 'knowing' and 'acknowledging'.  
Knowing has an assumption  
to resolve something  
and be done with it.  
Acknowledgement  
requires something else,  
an ongoingness,  
a relationship,  
"a repeated attention  
to the most ordinary of objects and events."

13/ Veena Das

I think this slow, gradual shift  
allowed me  
– *don't hesitate* –  
it allowed me  
to be part of the world



to be affected by it  
and to take that seriously.

When my mother  
experienced the sorrow  
of the lonely construction of motherhood  
– and blamed it on herself  
I think she missed a frame of reference  
that could connect  
her back to history  
and the living world  
– and it hurt her soul  
And as I am permeable  
and built with her labor  
I feel this pain too.

In what I have told you today  
I wanted to talk about the soul  
as an intervention  
in a logic of self-containment  
that does not exist.  
The soul  
in this story  
refuses the idea  
that anyone could thrive  
on the principle of self-interest  
as it does not acknowledge  
that anything like  
enclosed self-interest  
could exist:  
there is no self  
served by separation.

To attend to the self  
and to attend to the world  
are interlocking projects  
and attention for our primary caretakers  
is somewhere in the mix.

I am so glad we made it here.  
Thank you for reading  
and bearing with my thoughts  
incomplete as they are.

14/ Leanne  
Betasamosake  
Simpson



## ADDENDUM

16/ Veena Das

I know this speech draws heavily on the nuclear family. I hope it is clear, I do not want to celebrate this structure. The way I see it now, is that the nuclear family and its story are very much part of the problem. The promise they entail, of emotional well-being or of protection against loneliness, are betrayed by most people's daily experience, not in the least that of women and children. I want to acknowledge these experiences – not as something to solve instantly, I don't want you to blindly abandon the people you care for. But I do think there is an awareness, a sensibility, or a consciousness – you see how my vocabulary still rambles – that matters. It matters for your soul, which is entrenched in the world. Since the nuclear family is the structure I have always lived, I take its sorrows seriously, and hope that we can – *yes, oh, yes!* – train sensibilities together. So that different possibilities can emerge.

17/ Ruth Wilson Gilmore

Hi!

I am glad you made it here. These are the footnotes.

Here you can find fragments from other authors I drew on while building this text. I try to give you a glimpse of their original context and a short explanation of how they are invoked in this speech.

This list is not complete: all thoughts in this text build on the work of many authors/thinkers/people who made it possible. When I had an active reference in mind, I added it here, but there is a lot more work and conversation it draws on indirectly.

1. First Footnote!

But was there ever any domination which did not appear  
natural to those who possessed it?

In *The Patriarchs*, Angela Saini opens the first chapter 'Domination' with this quote by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill. It is a quote from 1869! Just to get us started.

At the end of the chapter, Saini writes:

When we settle for resting the case for 'patriarchy' on something as simple as 'biological difference', when the evidence points to a reality that is far more complex and contingent, we lose the capacity to see just how precarious it might be. We stop asking how it works, or the ways it's being reinvented. We don't dissect the circumstances that might help us undermine its ideological power right now. The most dangerous part of any form of oppression is that it can make people believe there are no alternatives.

I add the following sentence by Amade M'charek, quoted in 'Black Afterlives Matter' (essay by Ruha Benjamin). It does not express the exact same thing, but furthers the thought, and has been on my mind a lot:

The factness of facts depends on their ability to disconnect themselves from the practices that helped produced them.

Ha, what great phrasing!

2. Here are two stories, relating to this stained-soul-heart, tangling into the present.

First story

A friend who went through the Dutch immigration machinery, told me a story about his stay in an *azielzoekerscentrum (azc)*. You would call that a refugee and migrant centre in UK terminology, a reception centre according to EU glossary. To live there, is to live in uncertainty, and fear of being denied access to the country you have sought refuge in. In addition to this continuous uncertainty, there was the threat of *the black dot*. It was said, that if you "misbehaved", there would be a sanction in the form of a

black dot on your file, i.e. your file would be marked, stained, and it would harm your chances of being allowed to get asylum in the Netherlands.

Second story:

My daughter, who is now 6, has no paper hearts on the walls in her classroom. However, as it is a school in which many kids are marked as children with ‘behavioral issues’, for each child, there is a traffic light – green, orange, red. Every day, kids start on the green light. When they “misbehave”, they go to orange. If the “bad behavior” continues, they go to red. This does not mean eternal damnation of the soul – but they will not get a sticker that day. The stories have shifted, but the mechanism of punishment and rewards is still broadly used “for the child’s own good”.



3. From: Sophie Lewis, *Feminism Against Families: Full Surrogacy Now*.

The same argument is there made in regards to motherhood, which can sometimes be valued on the premise that mothers make an economic contribution to society, by supplying labor force – which they do.

The aim is not to praise gestation as an essential use-value. [...] frankly, the fact that gestation “makes an economic contribution” or “makes the world go round” is nothing much to be proud of, given the state of the world. (I’m more impressed by contributions gestating might make to this world’s destruction.) No, making the labor of social reproduction visible – again, we Marxist feminists cannot stress this enough – is very much not an end in itself.

If you wonder about this “social reproduction”, see footnote 5!

4. I attended a public talk with Sylvia Federici and Territorio Doméstico.

Territorio Doméstico is a collective space for struggle and empowerment of women, mostly migrants and domestic and care workers. It was a great evening.

What they all reminded us of, with great eloquence and joy, is that domestic work and care work is work that supports life, which stands in stark opposition to the industry of war, to prisons, to police aggression, and polluting, soil-depleting industries. To put value in what supports life is not abstract thing, and it is definitely not commonly held knowledge and practice among those who create policies and execute power.

5. Social reproduction and reproductive labor refer to all the work that goes into reproducing the labor force, making people productive members of a capitalist society. This involves a lot of care work and domestic work, but also an emotional aspect.

Consider the following passage from Federici’s ‘Wages Against Housework’, as it goes into celebrating ‘Mother’s Day’. Great fun!

[...] from the viewpoint of work we can ask not one wage but many wages, because we have been forced into many jobs at



once. We are housemaids, prostitutes, nurses, shrinks; this is the essence of the 'heroic' spouse who is celebrated on 'Mother's Day'. We say: stop celebrating our exploitation, our supposed heroism. From now on we want money for each moment of it, so that we can refuse some of it and eventually-all-of it

It is an article from 1975, which called for women to organize, which they did (try and google 'wages for housework').

In *They Call it Love*, Alma Gotby explores the emotional aspect of reproductive labor. From the introduction:

This book explores the construction of emotional needs and the material and subjective organization of labour that is necessary to meet them. [...] Emotional reproduction includes the forms of work that go into maintaining people's emotional wellbeing and their ability and willingness to continue to engage in capitalist productive labor.

6. Disclaimer: I never read Marx. This is an altered rendering of an indirect quote by Ruth Wilson Gilmore in an interview in *Revolutionary Feminisms* (Brenna Bhandar and Rafeef Ziadah). It goes:

One of the formulations that I always found very beautiful is where he talks about how we mix our labour with the earth, and in so doing we change the external world and change our own nature. I think that's a really beautiful thing. I also think it's true.

I agree. I also think it's true and beautiful.

And you see how my rendering is really very unfaithful, even to this. I added this motherhood-thing, reminding me also of this poem by Hugo Claus '*De Moeder*', and I would not take too much advice from Claus on family bonds, but it opens with this phrase:

*Ik ben niet, ik ben niet dan in uw aarde.*  
or: I am not, I am only in your earth.

I do think it is a beautiful poem.

7. A who-is-who



**Karl Marx**

1818 – 1883

German writer,  
philosopher, economist,  
...

As Wikipedia says:

Marx's ideas and their subsequent development, collectively known as Marxism, have had enormous influence on modern intellectual, economic and political history.

**Jesus**

c. 6 to 4 BC  
– AD 30 or 33

Palestinian preacher,  
messiah,...  
the C in BC,  
the D in AD.

As Wikipedia says:

a first century Jewish preacher and religious leader. He is the central figure of Christianity.

**Audre Lorde**

1934- 1992

American writer,  
philosopher, poet,...

As Wikipedia says:

She was a self-described "Black, lesbian, feminist, socialist, mother, warrior, poet" who dedicated her life and talents to confronting all forms of injustice, as she believed there could be "no hierarchy of oppressions".

8. On the organization of safe spaces and wasteland in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. I read 'Feminism and the Anthropocene' by Anna Tsing and Paula Ebron. This article taught me a lot. Its content is still reverberating in my thoughts.

A fragment:

We explore how separations between "security" and "wasteland" structured postwar growth, giving shape to Cold War expansion. The dream of safe spaces from enemies and toxins (however impossible such safety) justified the classification of other spaces, with their resident people, flora, and fauna, as expendable. [...] the regime of separation between safety and waste spaces was made through mobilizing race and gender. White nuclear families anchored imagined "safety" while communities of color were made available for sacrifice. (663)

At the least, I hope this works against the idea of the "natural, nuclear family". This article helps to make the politics of this story tangible, historically situated.

9. *Steady as she goes* / The Raconteurs

I keep thinking about these lyrics:

Find yourself a girl, and settle down.  
Live a simple life in a quiet town.

Only I was never advised to find myself a girl, rather to be found a girl. Still.  
“Settle down” and “live a quiet life” applied.

10. A friend reminded me that this thought goes back way further, can be tied at least into Antiquity, and this seems to me true, and reminded me of an article by Simona Forti ‘New Demons: Rethinking Power and Evil Today’, which I think might bring you to a more substantial exploration of the matter.

11. In the introduction of *They Call it Love* Alma Gotby writes:

Emotional reproduction creates a feeling of investment in the world as it is. We have emotional attachments to a particular notion of the good life – a normative way of life which seems to promise comfort and happiness. Our lives under capitalism are in many ways disappointing and continually create negative feelings such as stress, resentment, depression and loneliness. But we all have an attachment to particular ideas of what a good life should look like – one that often includes the very sources of harm. We often continue to aspire to these ideals of a good life, even when they continually let us down.

12. It is a phrase hooks used plenty of times.

She talks about how and why very clearly.

You can find an interview here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUpY8PZlgV8>

title of the video: *bell hooks on interlocking systems of domination*  
(it takes about 4 minutes)

13. This is drawn from the interview Federici gave in the book *Revolutionary Feminisms* (Bhandar and Ziadah)

14. Veena Das. From the introduction to *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. From the section ‘Voice and the Everyday’ (p. 6-7):

[...] the question is not about knowing (at least in the picture of knowing that much of modern philosophy has propagated with its underlying assumption about being able to solve the problem of what it is to know), but of acknowledging. My acknowledgment of the other is not something that I can do once and then be done with it. The suspicion of the ordinary seems to me to be rooted in the fact that relationships require a repeated attention to the most ordinary of objects and events, but our theoretical impulse is often to think of

agency in terms of escaping the ordinary rather than as descent into it.

15. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. Again from an interview in the book *Revolutionary Feminisms* (Bhandar and Ziadah). Leanne Betasamosake Simpson is an indigenous (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg) artist, writer and scholar. Here she describes a concept of freedom rooted in Nishnaabeg intelligence, knowledge and practice. A sort of “relational or grounded freedom”. (I find grounded a very good term. )

A sort of freedom that is an individual and collective practice, designed to promote the well-being and self-determination of both the individual and the communal as interlocking projects.

16. *Life and Words*, Veena Das, phrase used near the end of the section “voice and the everyday”.

17. Ruth Wilson Gilmore in *Revolutionary Feminisms* (Bhandar and Ziadah):

So, consciousness, and conscience-isation, which is to say, to translate that word from Portuguese to English: awareness is not just a matter of information; it’s not a matter of facts, but of developing and pursuing things through a sensibility that shows a different possibility can emerge.

These were the notes.  
Thanks for reading!

**Colophon**

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