

Female Solidarity as Uncommodified Value: Lucy Beech's *Cannibals* and Rehana Zaman's *Some Women, Other Women and all the Bittermen*.

I am my own enterprise, if Fordism integrated consumption into the cycle of capitalism, post-Fordism integrates reproduction and communication...subjectivity is the raw material for immaterial labour.<sup>1</sup>

Lucy Beech's *Cannibals*, 2013, and Rehana Zaman's *Some Women, Other Women and all the Bittermen*, 2014, are two recent British video art works that speak to the material conditions of women's immaterial labour in post-Fordist global capitalism. Whereas Fordism consolidated an economic and physical separation between the reproductive sphere of women's labour and the productive sphere of industrial labour, while exploiting them both, in post-Fordism, this separation blurs somewhat with attributes of the reproductive sphere such as emotional training, care and communication becoming newly ripe for exploitation in a post-industrial economy that extracts monetary value from them. In addressing aspects of this economy, both video works feature all-female groups and deploy hybrid forms of performed documentary, though their content is very different: Beech's video is a fictional adaptation of pyramid investment schemes which ostensibly empower women; Zaman's juxtaposes a soap drama based on the 1990s international takeover of Tetley brewery and documentary footage of workshops with the self-organised group, *Justice for Domestic Workers (Leeds)*. However, I want to frame an interchange between them introduced by the conjunction of terms in the above cited film title from Maria Ruido's video *Real Time*, 2003. In this interchange, my intention is not to unite the two videos under one rubric, but rather to explore what their focus

on female groups of 'labourers' under post-Fordism might tell us about desire, needs and resistance to being subsumed under capitalist exploitation.

Firstly, in aligning post-Fordism with labour which (re)produces 'immaterial goods such as a service, a cultural product, knowledge or communication',<sup>2</sup> I want to insist from the outset that this emphasis on cognitive and affective skills in immaterial labour does not mean that material labour disappears. It continues both in the Global North's outsourcing of assembly-line Fordism to so-called less developed countries and in the employment of cheap migrant labour. However, the fact that all forms of labour in post-Fordist capitalism are increasingly dependent on the immaterial attributes of communication and emotion has expanded the areas of life available for the extraction of capital value.<sup>3</sup> As opposed to Marxist analyses of Fordist industrial labour where maintenance of the sphere of production was relegated to an unsalaried, largely female, invisible 'workforce' in the home, in a post-Fordist economy, while maintenance of the reproductive sphere of the home is still an issue, its affective ecology of care and free labour has transmuted into a new source of capital to be extracted from a whole spectrum of workers from call centre operatives to freelance creatives. However, precarious workers are not equally exploited, i.e. freelance creatives have certain privileges and choices unavailable to those in the service and care industries, yet many theorists argue that these new conditions of exploitation also harness new political subjectivities which might be capable of releasing 'a social potential for transformation, largely attributable to [their] affective dimensions and the opportunities for human contact and interaction',<sup>4</sup> an idea I shall go on to develop in this essay. While the political ramifications of precarity and social transformation is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is worth noting that there are echoes here of the conflictual

debates in 1970s feminist discourse in Italy, the UK, and the US about the value of reproductive labour to capitalism in the Wages For Housework campaign.<sup>5</sup> For founding member Silvia Federici, the campaign for reproductive labour to be salaried was not simply to put housework on a par with male industrial labour but part of a move to 'reorganise it as creative'.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the campaign's goal was not simply for recognition of a new working-class of women, but for a reconsideration of capitalist conditions of exploitation and oppression in general. In this sense, (and perhaps one of the reasons why there has been recent interest in this historical campaign), housework takes on a status of a materialist aesthetics encapsulating economic and utopian potential for a redistribution of labour in society. While Federici remains critical of theorists of immaterial labour such as Hardt and Negri for not recognizing the power relations at work in the 'feminist analysis of the function of the sexual division of labor',<sup>7</sup> the blurring of the boundaries between salaried and free labour in post-Fordism underpins my interest in thinking Beech's and Zaman's films together, as, within the exploitative conditions they image, they both envision the potentiality of female group solidarity as an uncommodified pleasure and value that might provide momentary glimpses of transformation.

Beech's *Cannibals* features a group of white, lower middle to middle-class, women, who belong to a do-it-yourself pyramid investment scheme, loosely based the real-life online pyramid community 'Women Empowering Women' (WEW), which was one of many schemes of this ilk popular in the 1990s. The pyramids comprised of groups of eight women who would each be recruited to invest £3000 in the scheme. Once the group was complete, the leader would then gain £24,000 and move on to allow the recruits below her in the pyramid to complete their own groups, the goal being that each investor would recoup and make a huge

profit from their initial investment. The UK government tried to put a ban on these groups in 2001 as, of course, while a few women succeeded, many, unable to recruit their own groups, simply lost their investment. Beech's 15 minute video features six women congregating in group leader Helen's garden-flat for a 'feast' to which they bring the dishes that represent their place in the pyramid, for example, newcomers bring starters, the leader, the dessert. During the course of the meeting, the women perform a series of ritualistic, ostensibly therapeutic, behaviours in the hope of exorcising inhibiting memories and rising higher in the triangle. As Beech intends, and this was certainly my experience of viewing the video, *Cannibals* can be read as an allegory of female immaterial labour under global capitalism in which women are encouraged to be their own entrepreneurs, to be aspirational and self-improving as well as responsible for their own well-being.<sup>8</sup> Zaman's video by contrast can be seen as making an intervention in the lack of literature addressing 'the specific case of bodies marked by gender and race'<sup>9</sup> in the discourse on immaterial labour in the art world. *Some Women, Other Women and all the Bittermen*, commissioned by The Tetley in Leeds, was the outcome of Zaman's residency there which involved a 12-month process of doing research in The Tetley archive, interviewing ex-Tetley Brewery workers, as well as co-running workshops with women from the recently formed Leeds branch of *Justice for Domestic Workers* (J4DW).<sup>10</sup> The 49 minute film was initially exhibited as a multi-screen installation, each monitor featuring one of the six episodes of a soap drama set around the Tetley brewery takeover by Carlsberg in the 1990s.<sup>11</sup> Each episode is intercut by documentary footage of the workshops with J4DW (Leeds). While it may seem trite to juxtapose the 'real' conditions of oppression that the largely Asian domestic workers operate under<sup>12</sup> with the fictional women in Beech's film who have the leisure to self-

exploit, it is my contention that the conditions of immaterial labour in which the cognitive and emotional capacities of subjectivity are mined as 'raw material' has multifarious effects which need to be thought in conjunction with one another.

There is an obvious level on which the plight of foreign domestic workers in the UK is interlinked with the immaterial labour of an aspirational middle-class female workforce. As Amy Charlesworth, citing art historian Angela Dimitrakaki, says: 'women's increased presence in the paid workforce has not been facilitated by a redistribution of task or through state support in the sphere of social reproduction, but rather the site of exploitation has shifted to (largely) female migrant workers'.<sup>13</sup> Rather than further exploring the social inequality that underpins this, it is my contention that the 'neoliberal theatre' of post-Fordism in which, according to Sven Lütticken, 'it became imperative to present oneself not so much as an interchangeable supplier of labour-power – which is the commodity most people sell – but to perform oneself as a unique commodity-person' is not exclusive to a white lower-middle to middle-class.<sup>14</sup> In this case, Donna Haraway's *Simians, cyborgs and women: the reinvention of nature* published in 1991 is today newly resonant in its articulation of how all workers under global capitalism are subject to vexed social relations between women and machines, labour and care. Haraway's prescient situating of women of colour, white socialist feminism, and technological capitalism on a continuum acts as a corrective to the current largely ungendered discourses of immaterial labour. She says:

The actual situation of women is their integration/exploitation into a world system of production/reproduction and communication called the informatics of domination. The home, workplace, market, public arena, the body itself – all can

be dispersed and interfaced in nearly infinite, polymorphous ways, with large consequences for women and others – consequences that themselves are very different for different people and which make potent positional interrelational movements *difficult to imagine* and *essential for survival* (my emphasis).<sup>15</sup>

To begin the difficult task of imagining the possibility of such alliances, it is necessary to think across the multiple material effects of post-Fordist labour without of course blurring the distinctions between them. In one sense, Zaman's video, by juxtaposing a soap drama about the Tetley takeover with the documentary present of the domestic workers, begins to do this. The soap features a British male working-class soon to be disposed of in a corporate takeover and focuses on the main female protagonist, Sue, an ambitious secretary, who repeatedly comes up against sexism. The brewery manager Colin refuses to promote her to management until he realizes he has to get rid of 'dead weight' in preparation for the takeover. Sue's supposedly 'feminine' reproductive attributes of being caring and empathetic are then seen as a valued asset. Inserting the documentary footage into the soap episodes, the film contrasts the erosion of white, male, industrial labour in a globalized market with a labour force comprised of women of colour, two groups who are now no longer geographically separated as they were in the 1990s when Haraway was writing about the production of a 'new world-wide working class, as well as new sexualities and ethnicities'.<sup>16</sup> *Some Women, Other Women and all the Bittermen* could be said to juxtapose the precarious solidarity of J4DW as a new UK working-class with the historical solidarity of the British union movement which was largely eradicated during Margaret Thatcher's reign as Prime Minister. In conversation with Zaman, writer Laura Guy situates the Tetley narrative as part of the aftermath of Thatcher's Conservative government policies: 'The sell off and resultant restructuring of Tetley came after most UK industrial centres

had been decimated by the Conservative government that Margaret Thatcher led during the 1980s, which also facilitated the breaking of the British union movement'.<sup>17</sup> In the final episodes of the soap, the Tetley workers strike in protest against the lay-offs that ensue from the amalgamation of draymen and drivers jobs into one, but their resistance is ineffectual. Management outsources the work that needs doing in preparation for the takeover.

In the 1990s too, there was a shift in Western feminist discourse from an emphasis on activism to one on cultural critique in which the pleasures of soap opera audiences, largely female homemakers, were revalued as worthy of academic attention.<sup>18</sup> In this regard, Charlotte Brunsdon's 1981 essay 'Crossroads: Notes on Soap Opera' is a key reference for Zaman. As opposed to dismissing soap operas as a form of working class entertainment that contrasts to the supposedly superior viewing of high art, Brunsdon reread the pleasures of soap opera in terms of a latent critique of patriarchy. Portraying strong female characters and constituting largely female audiences as expert interpreters of their moral universes, soaps could be seen as being as important a testing ground for emotional intelligence as any Brechtian *Lehrstücke* (learning-plays). At the time of Brunsdon's writing, soaps were scheduled to coincide with tea-time, their episodic, fragmentary nature making them conducive to combining the execution of household chores with viewing. This connection to the sphere of reproduction and immaterial labour made the form especially attractive to Zaman as a means of addressing the paternalistic ethos of the sphere of production which traditionally took place in industries in which men had jobs for life regardless often of how efficient they were.

While the pleasures of cultural critique offered by the soap opera might pale before 'real' issues, Zaman's video, in oscillating between activism and cultural critique, performs a

complex understanding of the pleasures of solidarity that resonates with Beech's *Cannibals*. Whereas the real-life context of the pyramid community 'Women Empowering Women' was explicitly bound up in the acquisition of money, *Cannibals* adapts its ethos of being an all-female support group and gears it towards effecting psychological rather than solely financial change. This collapsing of the psychological into the financial is played out in the rituals undergone by the six women in the marquee in group leader Helen's garden. Sitting in a circle, the women, at Helen's admonishment, engage in a mini-psychodrama to exorcise inhibiting memories and reinforce positive thought in the present. (SEE FIG.1) Helen refers to this ritual as 'emotional circuit training', 'a marinating process', which softens and breaks down connective tissue, loosening the body to make it ready to receive the benefits of the pyramid. To enable this process, three of the women place electrodes on their bodies, Helen makes a salt gargle and another woman lights up a cigarette while Dorothy, the skeptical counterfoil to Helen's enthusiasm, is given the speaker's mat. Dorothy recounts a fear of ascending the upper floors of a building. She wants the money to buy a bungalow, but also fears climbing up in case of a crash. The allusion to a 'crash' is suggestive of either a financial or an emotional risk, her monologue here pointing to how in the context of post-Fordist neoliberalism, the two go hand in hand. As Catherine Rottenberg, citing Wendy Brown, says: '[o]ne of the hallmarks of our neoliberal age is precisely the casting of every human endeavor and activity in entrepreneurial terms'.<sup>19</sup> As the economic and the emotional coalesce in Dorothy's monologue, the group members engage in a collective paroxysm of hysterical trembling as if incorporating Dorothy's fears and ejecting them from the inside. Helen gargles the salt water, the other woman exhales cigarette smoke, salting and smoking both actions associated with 'curing' flesh, curing in this



context a pun on healing. Dorothy's voiceover, the only one in the film, begins when she takes up the role of cigarette smoker, a ritual usually considered damaging but here the smoke is considered transformative, the poisonous toxins effecting a curative purging from deep within the body. As Dorothy ruminates on this inverse healing, the woman now on the speaker's mat confesses her addiction to online poker, another form of financial and psychological risk. The psychodramatic role-playing in which the group are encouraged to see themselves objectively as characters to gain a perspective on their problems and desires, culminates in a 'feast' loosely inspired by Bakhtin's carnivalesque, a concept of festival in which hierarchies are overturned. Identifying with the foodstuffs that represent their place in the pyramid – they are by turns garlic bread, prawn dumplings and a blini – the women metaphorically consume themselves, as if the process of ingesting this food will free them from the internal constraints that prevent their success. Beech refers to this as an allegory of capitalism, stating that the work is 'a microcosm of a capitalist system, mirroring an image of unsustainable growth'.<sup>20</sup> The women's desire to self-improve and succeed incorporates them more thoroughly in an endless cycle of self-exploitation that can only escalate until it implodes. In the real-life phenomenon, this would occur with some of the women on the bottom losing all their money, while the leader creams off the rewards. Unlike the real-life 'WEW' gatherings at which money would be present, in *Cannibals*, the implosion occurs from within. As Dorothy observes with insight 'we are consuming ourselves'. Rather than merely a microcosm of the capitalist system at large, this can be specifically related to the condition of the feminist neoliberal subject under contemporary capitalism in which many of the demands of previous generations of feminists for equality and autonomy in economic and social life are sold back to us as personal, rather

than social, imperatives and forms of governance. As Rottenberg diagnoses, the neoliberal feminist subject 'accepts full responsibility for her own well-being and self-care', thereby disavowing the social, cultural and economic forces that produce inequality.<sup>21</sup> While on the one hand, *Cannibals* might be said to align with such a view, the video also affords a glimpse of the potential of female solidarity.

Initially Dorothy's skepticism seems like a foil to Helen's optimism, but at the end of the film, it too becomes fully incorporated into the capitalist microcosmic structure, as we learn that Dorothy is going to be promoted from a starter to a main course. However, during the course of Dorothy's role-play, she seems to experience a moment of liberation beyond the ostensible group fantasy of self-advancement. This occurs when the camera focuses in on her upper torso and face as she lies on the grass looking upwards. (SEE FIG.2) Her voiceover ruminates on her desire for change. The film awkwardly cuts to a counter shot of the sky, as if it can't quite believe in the clichéd nature of this shot sequence, but, in lingering on it, hesitantly suggests that things could go in another direction. This is also one of the sequences in which the documentary-like gaze of Beech's camera to record the staged performances is made extremely palpable to the viewer. In the reverse shot, Dorothy's face bleeds into an image of her plate of blinis, while her internal monologue rapidly recites a speech which is a cut-up of statements from a 'WEW' website and quotes from Bakhtin's *Rabelais and his World*.<sup>22</sup> Honing in on the 'feast', the camera lingers on the food going into the women's mouths, its being chewed and swallowed in a grotesque inverse of the 'food porn' quality of contemporary supermarket advertising. Reversing the seductive luxuriating over close-ups of expensive convenience food in such advertising, the self-devouring in the 'feast' shows the entropy at

work in consumption and drags this profit-motivated aspirational labour into the realm of the reproductive, i.e. that which needs to be done all over again. Beech has said that '[t]he therapeutic potential of the group's haptic communication is negated by the meetings' internal hierarchies that mirror a capitalist model', but I would say that the psycho-dramatic potential of what she refers to as 'performing as an agent for someone else's experience', and which occurred during the 'therapeutic' rituals, is still held open in this penultimate shot sequence.<sup>23</sup> While the belief that you alone are responsible for your own well-being wins out in the end – and it is noteworthy here that the final sequence shows Helen putting her *intact* pavlova back in the freezer - an alternative energy and collective solidarity is suggested between the women through their transpersonal capacities to feel one another's emotions from the inside. In this way, *Cannibals* proposes the relationality of the psycho-physiological body that exceeds the calculating, self-regulating, hierarchical structure of the capitalist triangle and squanders its surplus in a foolish, perhaps joyous, act of collective self-consumption.

This hyperbolic fictional depiction of self-exploitation is very different to the depiction of exploitation in *Some Women, Other Women and all the Bittermen*, especially its documentary footage of the workshops. In relation to the latter, Zaman's video can be seen in the context of the historical reception of The Berwick Street Film Collective's *Nightcleaners*, 1972-75, a documentary film about the campaign led by activist and night cleaner May Hobbs to set up a grassroots organization to unionize the immigrant and working-class women who performed this invisible labour. Many feminists and activists criticized *Nightcleaners* for its aesthetic formalism.<sup>24</sup> It was considered a political failure due to the way its use of formal techniques slowed down the forwards temporality of political consciousness. The film's use of reprocessing

techniques to underscore the materiality of film, such as the use of montage and black leader, made the sequence of events seem confusing, while evacuating the emotionalism of activism. Similarly, Zaman's video does not simply advocate on behalf of the domestic workers' situation, but uses elliptical documentary footage of the workshop meetings with J4DW both to question her own, and subsequent viewers, identification and distance from the domestic workers, as well as to interrupt the future propulsion of the soap narrative.<sup>25</sup> Whether moving between the six monitors in its initial installation or, as in my case, following the sequentiality of the single screen version of the film, the viewer can only access the domestic workers' issues in a piecemeal fashion, as much of the footage is shot out of focus and the discussions are sometimes muffled. Much of this has to do with necessity and practicality. For example, some of the footage was shot by the domestic workers who had never used a film camera and point-of-view shots were not always possible as remaining invisible allows some of these women to continue working in the UK. However, Zaman deliberately included these elliptical fly-on-the-wall sequences in her edit 'to downplay the potential didacticism of the more overtly activist content' and to protect against positing the domestic workers as 'other or victim'.<sup>26</sup> What began as necessity becomes the formal aesthetics that keeps the video from being a campaign document in aid of the domestic workers cause.<sup>27</sup>

A dance sequence in episode four in which the women perform in front of their campaign banners to Shakira's *Waka Waka (This Time for Africa)*, 2010, is also important for complicating how the women are presented, avoiding the danger in representations of subaltern women whereby their alliances can function 'as a point of revolution for an exhausted West'.<sup>28</sup> Zaman, referring to the importance of the dance sequence for her own

viewing of the women as subjects of pleasure rather than purely exploited workers, says: 'The scene provides a fuller picture of J4DW where women come together to experience joy communally as well as campaign and struggle to seek an end to modern slavery.'<sup>29</sup> [SEE FIG. 3]

As in the oscillation in *Cannibals* between the 'therapeutic potential of the groups' haptic experience' and how female empowerment is co-opted by neoliberalism, Zaman's video also oscillates between exposing exploitative commodified values and an uncommodified therapeutic pleasure in group experience. This also occurs in the sequence that shows the women learning animation techniques at the Leeds Animation Workshop. Again, although, the absence of close-up fixed point-of-view shots make it difficult to ascertain what is precisely going on, what emerges from this sequence is the collective energy of being immersed in creative group activity without a singular product in mind. These scenes also reference the history of radical filmmaking as exemplified by the Leeds Animation Workshop, thereby further alluding to the uncommodified value of another type of collective 'labour'.

The question of uncommodified value is also raised for me in the compelling sequences in the video in which the women's hands are framed in close-up as they continually rearrange the order of a series of post-it notes on the workshop table. On the post-it notes are written the words: home, faith, job, friends, security, and politics – all terms loosely adapted from Abraham Maslow's theory of the 'hierarchy of needs' as proposed in his 1943 paper 'A Theory of Human Motivation'. This theory is usually visualised as a pyramidal diagram in which the more 'physiological' needs of food and shelter lie on the bottom with the individual attaining 'safety', 'belongingness' and 'love' as they move up the pyramid, before reaching the final achievements of 'Esteem', 'self-actualization' and 'self-transcendence'. Both in the women's

adaptation and constant rearranging of these terms in the workshop discussions, which we overhear but cannot clearly determine, the items on the post-its are transformed from hierarchical developmental needs to becoming co-dependent, horizontally distributive needs for *actualizing*, rather than merely sustaining, life. [SEE FIG. 4]

The horizontal reorganization of the post-it notes in Zaman's video can be read in relation to Michel Feher's concept of 'self-appreciation' as discussed in his essay 'Self-Appreciation: Or, The Aspirations of Human Capital' in which he contrasts the free laborer of Fordism, i.e. the subject of unionized employment, and the new subjectivity of human capital.<sup>30</sup> Rather than harking back to the liberal idea of unionized employment, premised as it is on an unsustainable model of world resources, Feher advises embracing the neoliberal condition to 'allow it to express aspirations and demands that its neoliberal promoters had neither intended nor foreseen'.<sup>31</sup> While much of his argument is dependent on subjects who, unlike the domestic workers under current UK visa legislation, are free to move,<sup>32</sup> it offers a thought-provoking way of thinking about the possibilities of uncommodified values suggested in both Beech's and Zaman's videos. For Feher, while human capital eradicates the separation between the spheres of production and reproduction that existed in Fordist industrial labour to extract value from the latter, this does not mean that it commodifies everything.<sup>33</sup> For example, while the pleasures of group activity in *Cannibals*, both the collective exorcism of debilitating psychological behaviours and the cannibalistic entropic transformation of the carnivalesque 'feast', are recuperated, they need not be. They could instead be seen as investments in human capital, not in terms of the accrument of monetary profit, but in terms of collective well-being. Likewise the list of needs on the post-it notes in *Some Women, Other Women and all the*

*Bittermen* propose a rethinking of the 'required means for self-appreciation'.<sup>34</sup> This was further brought home to me by Marissa Begonia, co-ordinator of J4DW who features in Zaman's video, at a panel event, 'On Social Reproduction', at the ICA, London, in December 2015.<sup>35</sup> As well as discussing the campaign, Begonia also spoke about self-esteem and the pride she takes as the emotional and moral trainer for the child in her care as well as the pleasure and importance of dressing well when going to meet with MPs or attending public events on behalf of J4DW. Of course, domestic workers need a living wage and the right to move employer, but, equally, their 'transcendence' and 'joy' need recognition in order to avoid situating them as victims in need of saving by art workers and activists in the Global North.

In both videos, therefore, the transpersonal therapeutic and empathic relations between female bodies are made palpable. Neoliberalism engenders subjects who are supposed to be responsible for their own well-being, a subjectivity which is shown in *Cannibals* to walk a fine line between self-exploitative greed and potential liberation in solidarity. J4DW are self-organizing through necessity. They need legislation in order to enhance their capital so that they can live well despite the forced economic choices they have had to make in leaving their own families. Explored together, the videos underscore that we are unequally subjected to the same conditions of precarity that characterize forms of labour in post-Fordist neoliberalism, yet the pleasures of group solidarity is a value that escapes commodification. Its visualization in film complements political actions that might take place elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup>Maria Ruido in Amy Charlesworth, 'Caught Between the Factory and the Home', *Third Text*, vol. 29, no. 1–2 (2015): 89.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 290.

<sup>3</sup> See Bojana Kunst's *Artist at Work, Proximity of Art and Capitalism* (Winchester, UK; Washington, USA: Zero Books, 2015), especially chapter 5 for an expansion of this point.



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<sup>4</sup>Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt, 'In the Social Factory? Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and Cultural Work', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25, no. 7–8 (2008): 8.

<sup>5</sup> Initially founded in 1972 in Italy by a group of women including Silvia Federici, the International Wages For Housework Campaign was linked to Italian workerism or *operaismo*, proponents of which include philosopher Antonio Negri. Federici went on to found Wages For Housework in 1973 in New York. It is worth noting that this campaign influenced film collective projects on Britain such as *Women of the Rhondda* (dir. Mary Capps and Mary Kelly, 1973) and The Berwick Street Film Collective's *Nightcleaners*, 1972-75. See Hana Janečková's web project <http://artycok.tv/en/26980/novy-feminismus-nektere-zeny-jine-zeny-a-vsichni-ti-zahorkli-pivarinew-feminism-some-women-other-women-and-all-the-bittermen> accessed 21 October 2015, for a connection between Zaman's film and the campaign.

<sup>6</sup> Federici in Marina Vishmidt, 'PERMANENT REPRODUCTIVE CRISIS: AN INTERVIEW WITH SILVIA FEDERICI', *Mute*, 7 March 2013, <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/permanent-reproductive-crisis-interview-silvia-federici#sdfnote1anc> accessed 30 December 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Federici, 'Precarious Labor: A Feminist Viewpoint', 2006, <http://inthemiddleofthewhirlwind.wordpress.com/precarious-labor-a-feminist-viewpoint/> accessed 30 December 2017.

<sup>8</sup> See Catherine Rottenberg's 'The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism', *Cultural Studies* 28, no. 3 (2014): 418-437 for an account of this feminist subject.

<sup>9</sup> Charlesworth, "Caught Between the Factory and the Home," 89.

<sup>10</sup> The workshops were supported by curator and writer Amy Charlesworth, J4DW (London), Gill Park, Director of visual arts organisation Pavilion, and artists Jo Dunn and Terry Wragg from Leeds Animation Workshop. In some of the workshops, Zaman used improvisational techniques derived from theatre which is a characteristic method of her filmmaking practice.

<sup>11</sup> The soap is a collaboration with screenwriter Joe Hepworth.

<sup>12</sup> Aside from unregulated work conditions, they are subject to the UK government's rescinding of their visa rights in 2012 making it impossible for them to change employer. This is the key issue that is discussed in the workshops.

<sup>13</sup> Charlesworth, 'Caught Between the Factory and the Home', 91.

<sup>14</sup> Sven Lütticken, "An Arena in Which to Reenact," in *Life, Once More: Forms of Reenactment in Contemporary Art* (Netherlands: Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, 2005), pp. 16-60, 17.

<sup>15</sup> Donna Jeanne. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991), 163.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>17</sup> Laura Guy in Rehana Zaman and Laura Guy, *Mindless Culture, Unskilled Labour: A Conversation*, April 2015, <http://whereslefty.tumblr.com/post/121107183546/mindless-culture-unskilled-labour-a-conversation>, accessed 14 October 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Charlotte Brunson, 'Crossroads: Notes on Soap Opera', *Screen* (1981), 22 (4): 32-37. doi:10.1093/screen/22.4.32. Also see Rosalind Gill, 'Culture and subjectivity in neoliberal and postfeminist times', *Subjectivity*, 25, (2008), pp. 432-45.

<sup>19</sup> Rottenberg, 'The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism', 412.

<sup>20</sup> Beech in Sinead Nunes, "In Conversation with Selected 5 Artist Lucy Beech," n.d., <http://www.fact.co.uk/news-articles/2015/06/in-conversation-with-selected-5-artist-lucy-beech.aspx>.

<sup>21</sup> Rottenberg, 'The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism', 420.

<sup>22</sup> The phrase 'comic crownings and uncrownings' in particular.

<sup>23</sup> Beech in Nunes.

<sup>24</sup> See pp. 25-27 of Siona Wilson's *Art Labor, Sex Politics: Feminist Effects in 1970s British Art and Performance* (Minneapolis, Minnesota, London, England: University of Minnesota Press, 2015). Wilson presents the argument between art historians Judith Mastai, who considered the film an 'alienating formal experiment' and Griselda Pollock, who claimed the film's 'avant-garde poetics' as a mark of avant-garde success. According to feminist social historian Sheila Rowbotham, campaign activist May Hobbs 'was exasperated because instead of the short campaign film she had expected, the film was long, many-layered and far from celebratory', Rowbotham, 'Jolting

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Memory: *Nightcleaners Recalled*', in Ruido, Maria (ed.), *Plan Rosebud: On Images, Sites And Politics Of Memory*. CGAC, Santiago de Compostela, 2008, p.13. Thanks to Rehana Zaman for sending me this text.

<sup>25</sup> In this regard, Zaman has highlighted the following sentence from Rowbotham's article: 'The effort to communicate across the gulf of class and political aspiration appears in the relationship between the cleaners and the leafletters and between the women and the film-makers', p.14.

<sup>26</sup>Zaman and Guy, Laura, *Mindless Culture, Unskilled Labour: A Conversation*.

<sup>27</sup>Terry Wragg and Jo Dunn from the Leeds Animation Workshop later made an animation campaign film in consultation with the domestic workers called *They Call Us Maids: The Domestic Workers' Story* (2015).

<sup>28</sup>Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (London: Macmillan, 1988), 24–28.

<sup>29</sup>Zaman and Guy, Laura, *Mindless Culture, Unskilled Labour: A Conversation*.

<sup>30</sup>Michel Feher, 'Self-Appreciation: Or, The Aspirations of Human Capital', *Public Culture* 21, no. 1 (2015): pp 22.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>32</sup> Feher's only example of turning neoliberalism's imperative of self-reliance from something exploitative into something collectively productive is the Scandinavian labour unions who, rather than rejecting workfare programmes, work through them by deploying a concept of 'flexsecurity'.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>35</sup> This panel was part of the curatorial programme 'Now You Can Go' which was developed by participants from the Feminist Duration Reading Group coordinated by Helena Reckitt with Dimitra Gkitsa and including Angelica Bollettenari, Giulia Casalini, Diana Georgiou, Laura Guy, Irene Revell and Amy Tobin.