

**The World  
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## **Introduction to Social Reproduction**

### **Overview:**

“Social reproduction theory reveals the essence-category of capitalism, its animating force, to be human labor and not commodities. In doing so, it exposes to critical scrutiny the superficiality of what we commonly understand to be “economic” processes and restores to the economic process its messy, sensuous, gendered, raced, and unruly component: living human beings, capable of following orders as well as of flouting them.” – Tithi Bhattacharya

“They say it is love. We say it is unwaged work.” - Silvia Federici

We know workers’ labour produces the wealth of society, but what about the labour that produces the worker?

Social Reproduction Theory (SRT) argues that the reproduction of workers is central to every economic and political system. Given that ‘life-making’ is often considered a woman’s ‘natural duty’, SRT emphasizes how capitalism is built upon the devaluation of women’s work.

The following resources show how the production of goods and the production of life are part of an integrated process. They bring to light the relationship between exploitation and oppression, and put forward strategies that force capital to organise more favourable social relations.

**Have a look at LBC’s guide to organising your own reading group to find out how to do your own.**

### **Questions for your discussion**

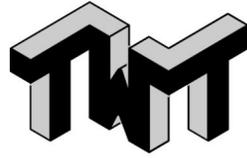
- What sorts of activities are feminists referring to when they talk about the sphere of social reproduction?
- How do these ‘life-making’ activities generate value in society?
- Do you agree with the premises of the Wages for Housework campaign?
- How does social reproduction relate to the issue of the commons?

### **Key Resources to discuss:**

‘What the f\*\*\* is social reproduction? An introduction by Plan C’ (Video): <https://bit.ly/33LmMSy>

‘Mapping Social Reproduction Theory’ by Tithi Bhattacharya (Article): <https://bit.ly/2KG8eMi>

‘Silvia Federici Reflects on Wages for Housework’ (Article): <https://bit.ly/2Z0Pxf9>



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**Optional:**

'Sex, race and class' by Selma James (Pamphlet): <https://bit.ly/2Ze3Agt>

'Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto' by Cinzia Arruzza, Tithi Bhattacharya, and Nancy Fraser (Book): <https://bit.ly/2F0E4Rb>

'Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle' by Silvia Federici (Book): <https://bit.ly/2z7Phvu>

'Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour' by Maria Mies (Book): <https://bit.ly/2HaYirR>

'The power of women and the subversion of the community' by Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James (Pamphlet): <https://bit.ly/1g60Wsr>

'Wages for Housework: A History of an International Feminist Movement, 1972-77' by Louise Toupin (Book): <https://bit.ly/30d6P5a>

'Social reproduction theory: History, issues and present challenges' by Silvia Federici (Article): <https://bit.ly/2KGPOLB>