

WHAT WE COUNT, WHO WE VALUE

Organizing at the Margins for
Economic Justice



INVISIBLE LABOR

INVISIBILITY & HARM

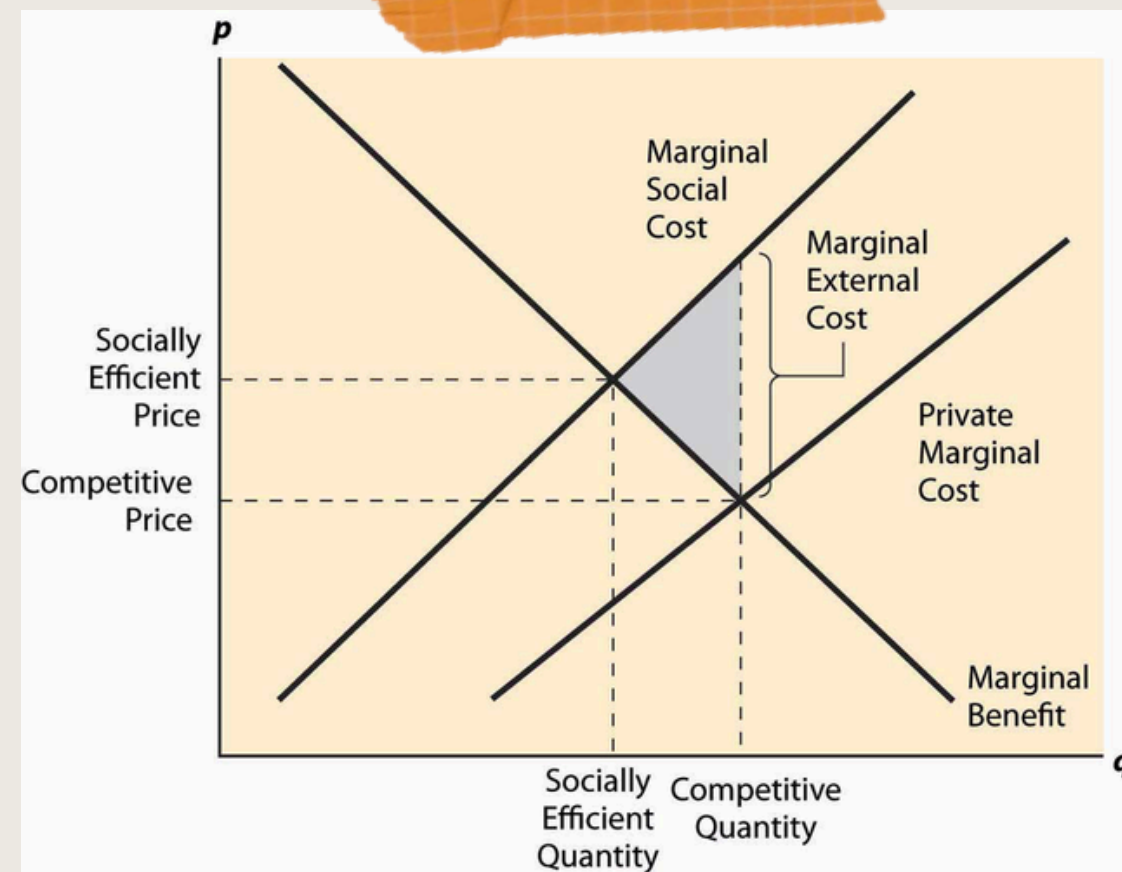
1. MISSING DATA IN INFORMAL LABOR

2. LESSONS FROM MIGRANT WORKER ORGANIZING

3. WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK, BASIC INCOME, A.I.

EXTERNALITY

A COST OR BENEFIT CAUSED BY AN ECONOMIC ACTOR THAT IS NOT
SUFFERED OR ENJOYED BY THAT SAME ACTOR.

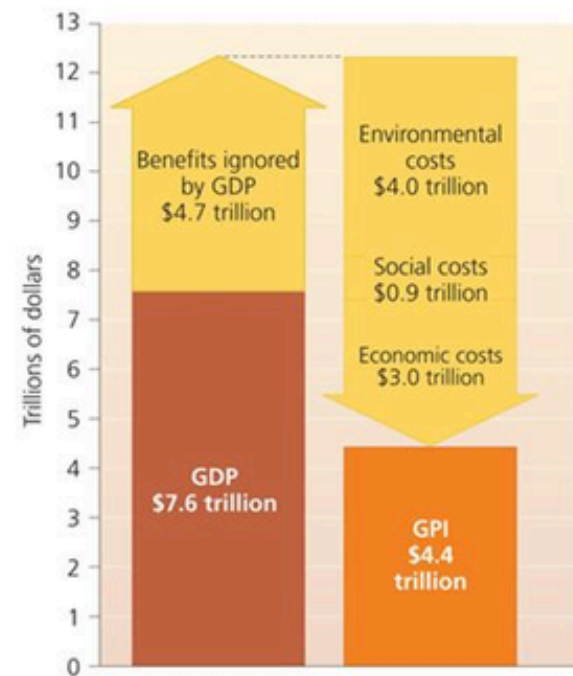


Negative Externalities

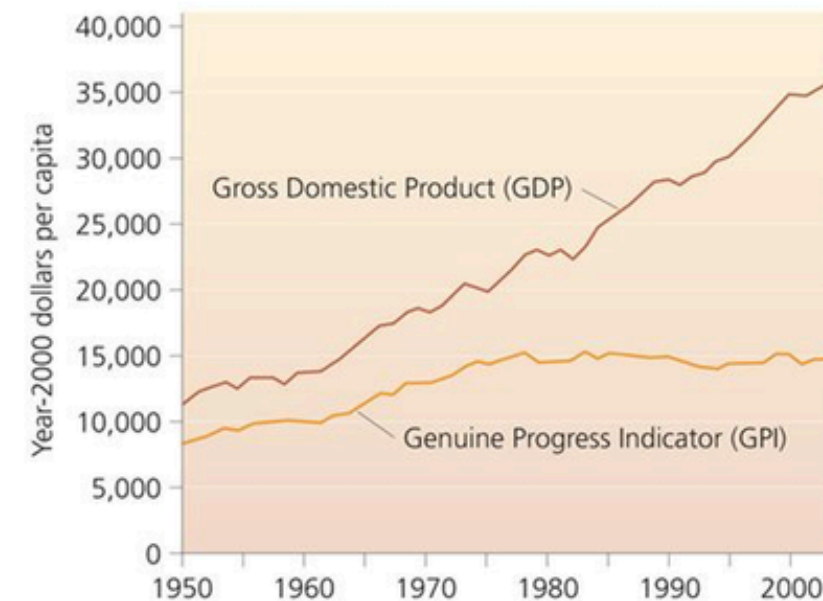
Environmental pollution
Health of workers
Public resource extraction
Displacement of communities
Unpaid caregiving

"EXTERNALITY"

\$16-24 TRILLION MISSING YEARLY IN GLOBAL ECONOMIC DATA



(a) Components of GPI



(b) Change in U.S. GDP vs. GPI

Invisibilised Labor

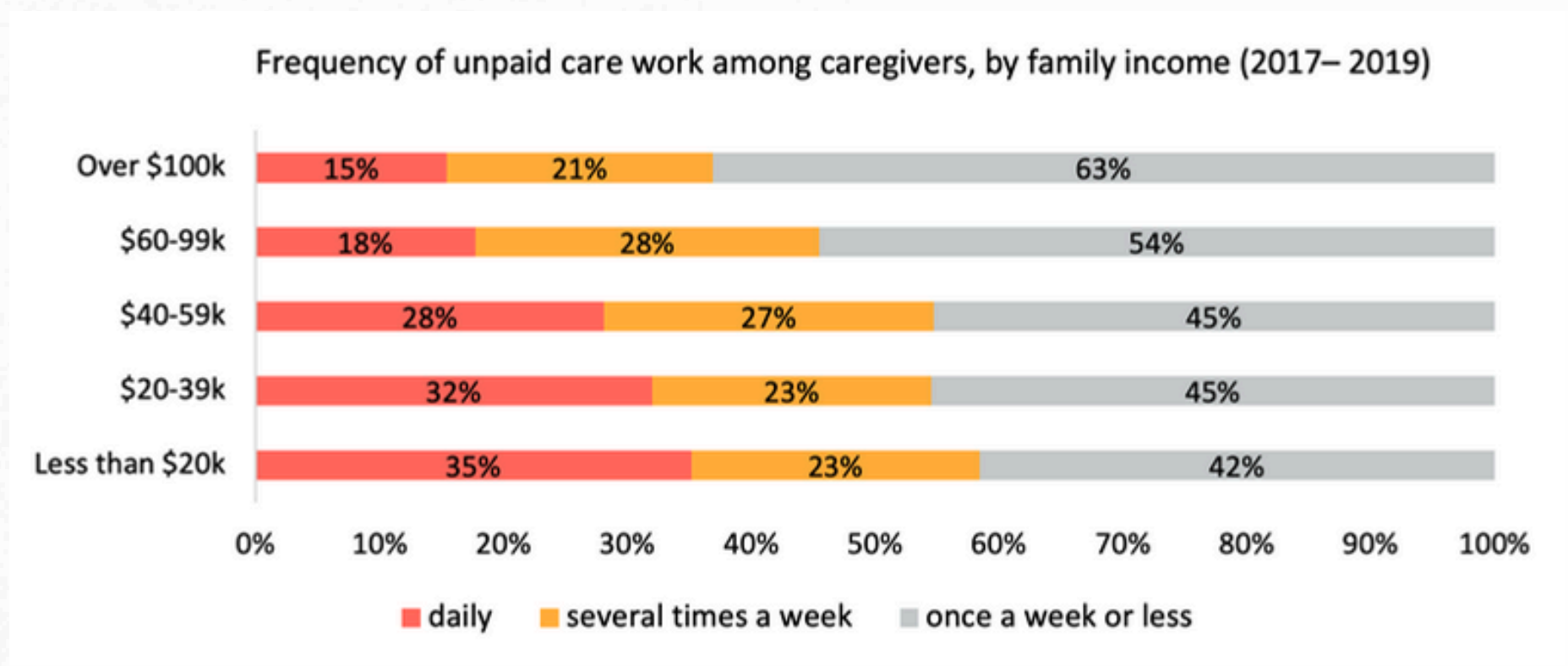
If unpaid **household labor** were included, the U.S. GDP would be 26-39% higher - *Bureau of Economic Analysis*

Global **unpaid labor** is estimated to be 15% of GDP (on par with manufacturing), or 27% of GDP with opportunity costs - *OECD*

Informal employment accounts for 15% out of GDP in advanced economies, and 35% in low and middle-income countries. - *IMF*

CARE WORK

IN THE U.S., **37.1 MILLION** PEOPLE PROVIDED UNPAID ELDER CARE IN 2021-22, VALUED AT APPROXIMATELY **\$600 BILLION** PER YEAR — EQUIVALENT TO THE ENTIRE AUTO-PARTS SECTOR

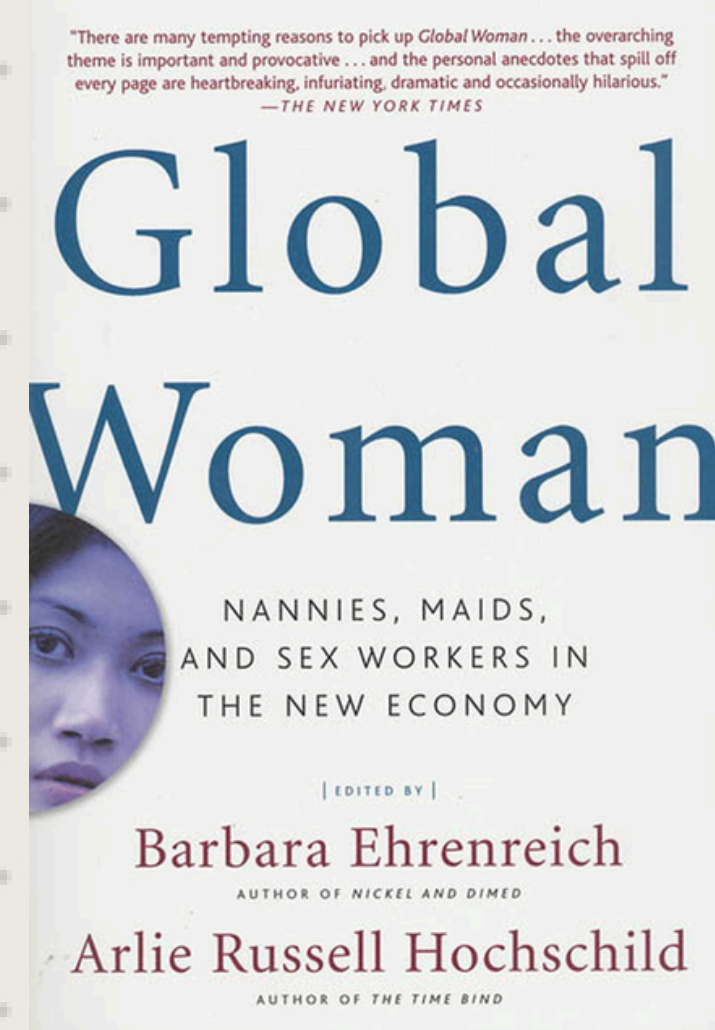
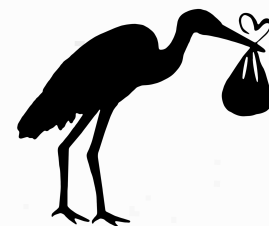


CARE WORK



"The globalization of motherhood is a world-historic shift: poor women from the global South are now doing the reproductive labor once done by wealthier women in their own countries."

— Barbara Ehrenreich & Arlie Russell
Hochschild, *Global Woman* (2002)



ONE OF THE MOST VULNERABLE MIGRANT
WORKER GROUPS ARE DOMESTIC WORKERS,
WHO ARE OVERWHELMINGLY WOMEN



MIGRANT WORKERS
44.3% WOMEN



DOMESTIC WORKERS
80.1% WOMEN



MIGRANT DOMESTIC
WORKERS
73.4% WOMEN



57 PER CENT
OF DOMESTIC
WORKERS HAVE
NO LIMITATIONS ON
THEIR WORKING
HOURS.



What happens

when the

labor that sustains us

is left out of

our **data,**

our **policies,**

and our **imagination?**

INFORMAL WORK

NEARLY 2 BILLION PEOPLE – ABOUT 58% OF THE
WORLD'S WORKERS – ARE INFORMALLY EMPLOYED

In low-income countries, **89%** of workers
are informal; in upper-middle income
countries, **50%**; and even in high-income
countries, it's still **16%**

ROUGHLY **30–35%** OF GLOBAL GDP

DOMESTIC WORKERS

76 million

HOME-BASED WORKERS

260 million

WASTE PICKERS

15–20 million

"MICROWORKERS"/ GIG ECONOMY

?



CRIMINALIZED WORK

[MISSING DATA]

STREET VENDORS

DAY LABORERS

FARM WORKERS

FOOD SERVICE WORKERS

SEX WORKERS



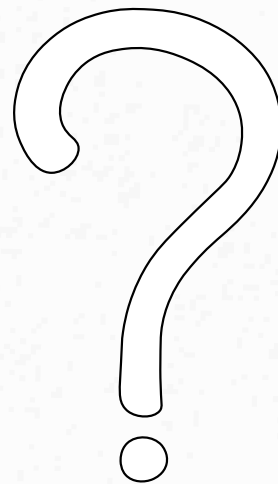
UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANT LABOR

42-56 million migrant workers
without status, or 15-20% of all
migrant workers globally

(United Nations Department of Economic and
Social Affairs 2021)

ROUGHLY \$5-20 TRILLION PER YEAR?
(OECD 2021)

Global GDP: \$105 trillion (IMF 2024)



WHO COUNTS?

If women counted...

"What we don't count, doesn't count. And what we don't count gets abused."

– Marilyn Waring,
feminist economist,
*If Women Counted: A New
Feminist Economics* (1988)

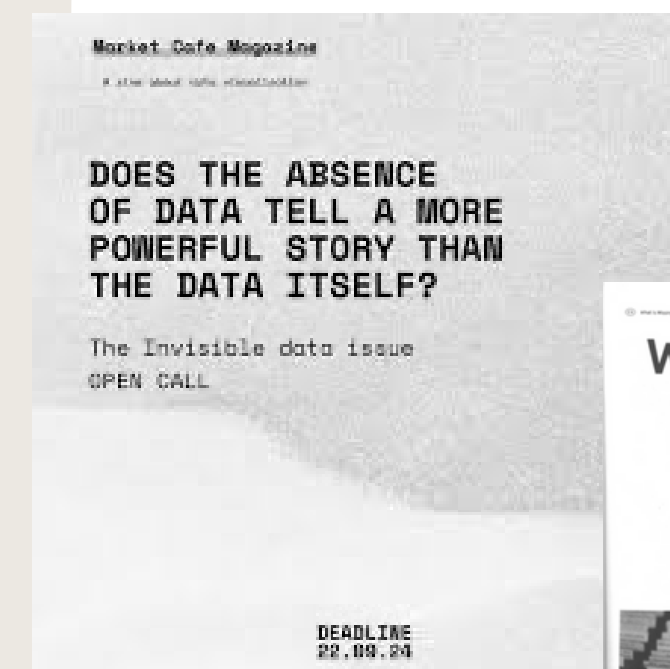
Policy orphans

"Invisible workers are policy orphans: vulnerable to exploitation, dispossession and neglect."

– Bina Agarwal,
feminist economist &
development scholar,
*Rural Women, Poverty and
Natural Resources* (1989)

Missing Data

The **metrics** we choose to define our economy become the blueprint for who gets protected – and who gets exploited and abused.



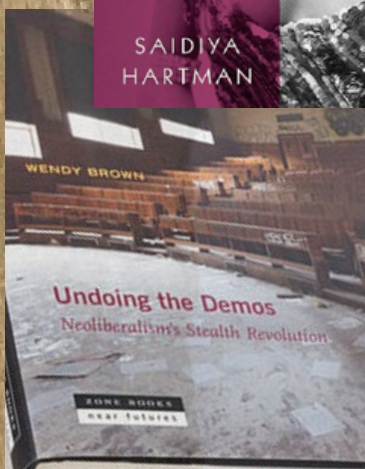
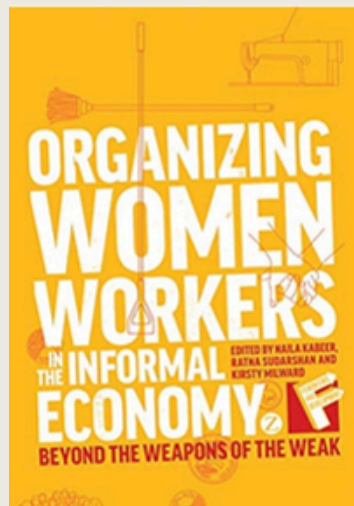
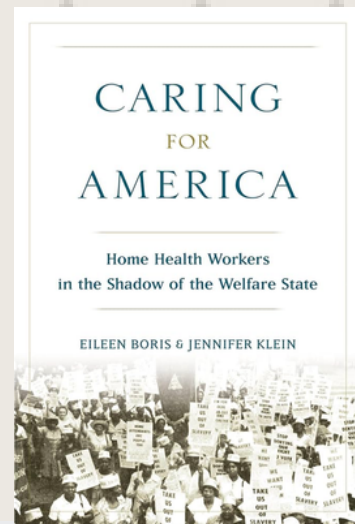
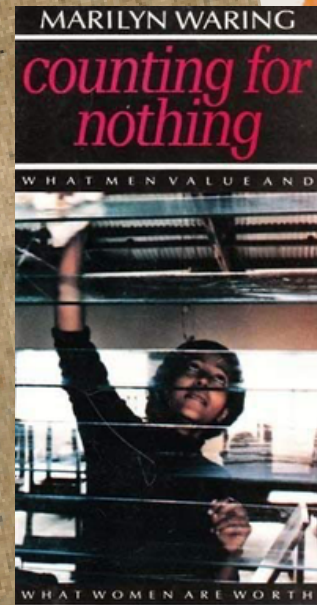
Mimi Onuoha,
The Library of
Missing Data Sets



My Organizing Journey

FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS

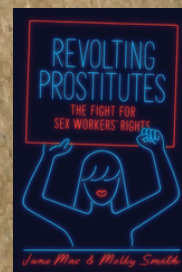
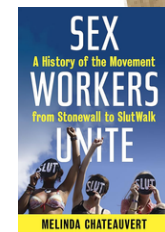
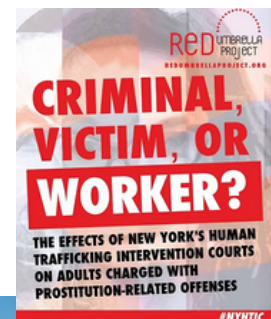
School



Community Organizing



Policy Research



My Organizing Journey

FROM TRAUMA TO LAW



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The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com> • 2019/05/31 • nyregion • pr...

Could Prostitution Be Next to Be Decriminalized?

May 31, 2019 — Kate Zen, right, leads a group of women into a meeting in Albany to discuss efforts to introduce a bill that would make prostitution legal.



Lessons from Organizing

1. Base-building is the art of friendship. It takes years of door-knocking and meal-sharing to build trust. Consistency is everything.
2. Coalition-building across labor, immigrant rights, LGBTQ, healthcare, criminal justice reform, and women's rights movements is key for strategizing campaigns that win.
3. Build your theory on organizing. Don't put theory before organizing - or you will split up into ideological factions. Solidarity across differences is how you pass legislation. Work with your enemies.
4. Leadership development means passing the torch to other organizers, to support bringing the most marginalized voices to the policy table. You don't have to personally fight every fight. Commitment to the greater movement also means letting go.
5. Societal change happens slowly, with great sacrifice. But it does come. Keep fighting. There is power in people, over money and elite capture. We can win. We have a duty to win.

Zohran's Socialist Pragmatism

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA



Zohran Mamdani won a grassroots mayoral primary by organizing **50,000+ volunteers**, knocking on over 1 million doors, and making 2 million+ phone calls.

People, not money, fueled the victory.

Platform of Affordability

- Rent freeze on stabilized units
- Fare-free city buses
- Universal public childcare
- \$30 minimum wage by 2030
- City-run grocery stores - "public option for food"
- Corporate tax raised to 11.5% (NJ level), 2% income surtax on incomes over \$1 million



WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

Launched in 1972 by Selma James, Silvia Federici, Mariarosa Dalla Costa, and Leopoldina Fortunati

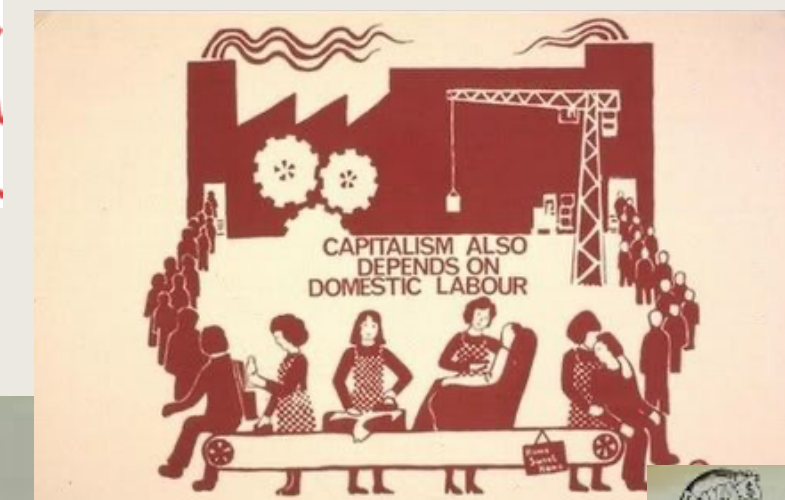
Housework is work

- not a natural expression of womanhood

Capitalism depends on unpaid labor

- to sustain the wage-earning workforce

State payment for reproductive labor



NEW YORK PROSTITUTES' COLLECTIVE
U.S. PROSTITUTES' COLLECTIVE
c/o WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK CAMPAIGN
P.O. BOX 830
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11202

August 21, 1980

THE NEW YORK PROSTITUTES' COLLECTIVE
P.O. BOX 830
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11202

FOR LOVE AND BETTER, THE NEW YORK PROSTITUTES' COLLECTIVE

As a press conference will be held on Friday, August 21st at 3:00 pm, prostitutes and their supporters will accuse the city government of "prostitution for the purpose of prostitution" - in other words, making "Mayor Koch has forgotten that his privilege should be" - said a spokesman. Commenting from being in reference to the fact that the city is not aware of the existence of prostitutes over the last few years.

"Prostitution and their supporters wouldn't agree more," said Margaret Brown-Roberts, spokeswoman for the New York Prostitutes' Collective. "As we in Third World and other communities, from hospital discharge and out-of-home and university programs (e.g., the S.I.U.P. program in C.I.V.I.L. public schools, shelters and other family services, the more women are recruited, the further the city already spends each year, turning prostitution in and out of cash. Each get federal money to include the arrests of prostitutes during the KKK period. This is the price of a man who not only has forgotten his prostitute and who dare to take a position against women of the world who, at the recently held United Nations High-Level Conference on Women in Copenhagen, unanimously passed an amendment to the resolution on prostitution that states:

"Further reminds governments that women and children prostitution have the right to legal protection against prostitution in order to ensure the safety of the women."

BASIC INCOME

Silvia Federici and **Selma James** argued for basic income for reproductive labor.

Wages for Housework challenged wage-labor system as sole measure of value.

They support UBI if it recognizes reproductive labor, not erases it. It should not replace public services, but complement welfare systems.



Finland UBI Pilot (2017-2018)

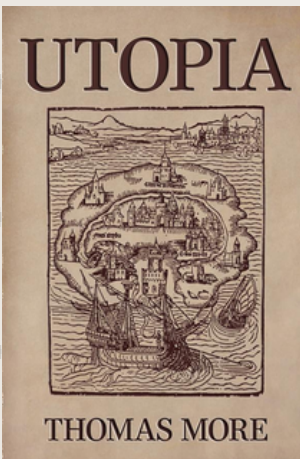
2000 unemployed people, €560/month for 2 years

Not open to full-time caregivers. Mirrors market-centric model equating “productive” work with waged formal employment.

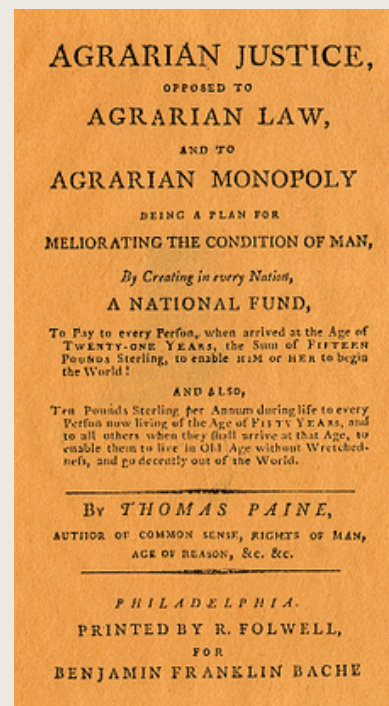
Evaluated **labor market outcomes**, not **time-use patterns**.

Universal Basic Income in Historical Perspective

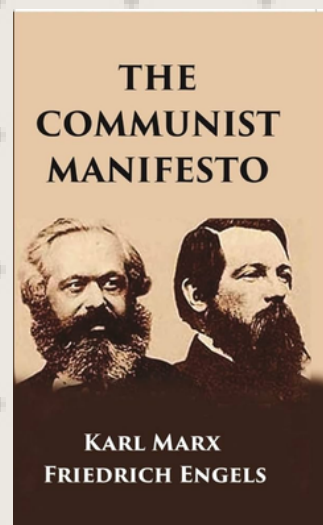
Edited by
Peter Sloman
Daniel Zamora Vargas
Pedro Ramos Pinto



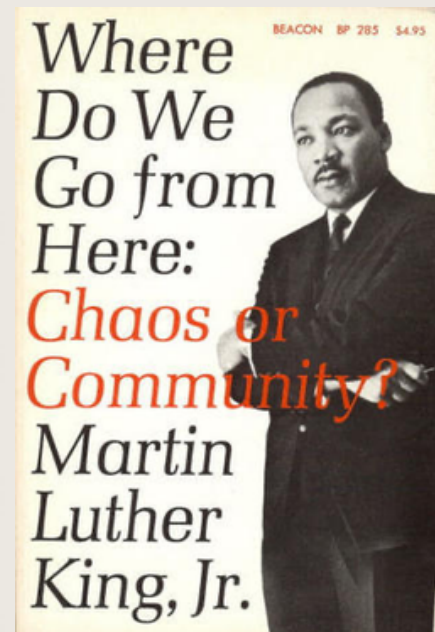
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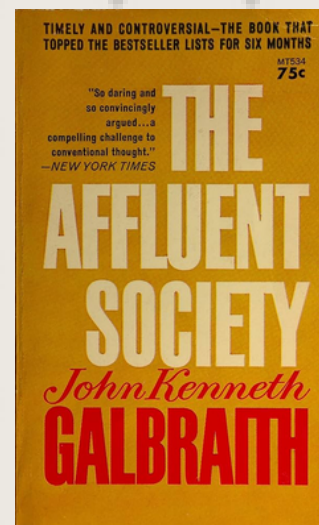
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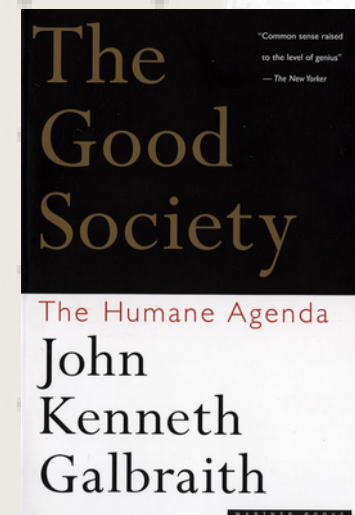
1848



1967



1958



1996

UBI PILOTS



1970s - **Mincome** experiment in Manitoba, Canada. Negative Income Tax pilots in U.S.

1982-today - **Alaska Permanent Fund** - redistributed oil revenues

2000s-2010s - Brazil's **Bolsa Familia**, Mexico's **Programa de Bienestar**, Ecuador's **Buen Vivir**

2011-2016 - India's UBI pilot for rural women with **SEWA** (Self Employed Women's Association)

2016 - Switzerland's referendum on UBI (rejected but sparked debate).
Netherlands and Finland launched UBI-style pilots for the unemployed.

2020-present - **COVID-19 emergency cash programs**, stimulus checks
and Child Tax Credit revived global interest in UBI.
Spain and Korea rolled out partial basic incomes.

Mayors for a Guaranteed Income (U.S.) - Coalition of over 100 cities testing local
UBI pilots, spearheaded by former Stockton mayor Michael Tubbs.

Tech & UBI - Andrew Yang, Sam Altman, and Elon Musk advocate for UBI as a response to
AI-driven job loss. Critics argue this "Silicon Valley UBI" avoids addressing
exploitation or corporate taxation.



A.I. & BASIC INCOME

A NON-REPRODUCTIVE LABOR FORCE?

Environmental cost

Job displacement & Widening inequality

Mass surveillance expansion

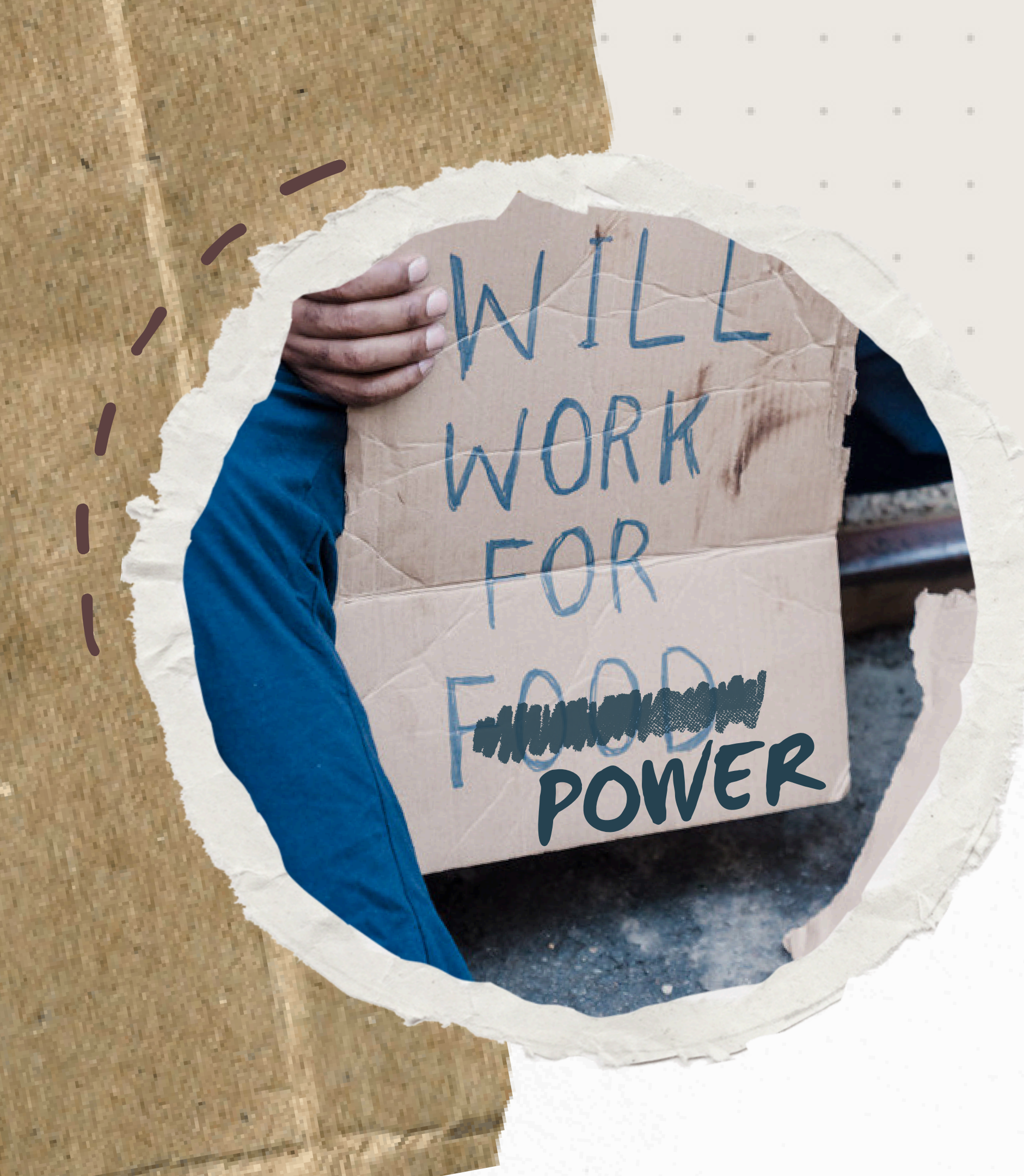
Misuse by malicious actors

Uncontrollable existential risk (Geoffrey Hinton)

Invisible labor behind AI: clickwork, content moderation, data labeling - often undocumented, unprotected, and global

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- Can UBI offer a floor if markets fail to provide employment?
- Could it liberate care work from market pressure if paired with policies that value human reproductive labor?
- Will AI-generated wealth be shared - or concentrated?
- Is UBI enough if AI is also used to surveil and displace?
If its power-hungry creators also evoke the logic of eugenics?



WILL
WORK
FOR
FOOD
POWER