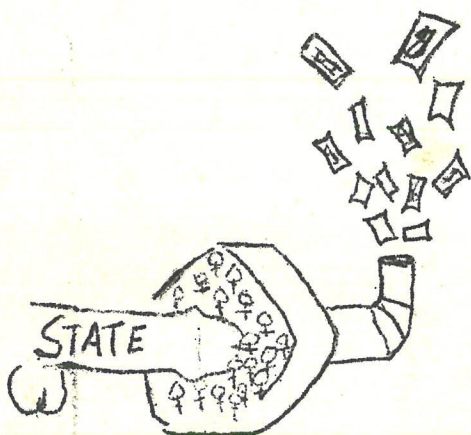


THE
WAGES DUE COLLECTIVE

Introduction
Fucking is Work
Wages Due Song



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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WAGES DUE COLLECTIVE

We are the Wages Due Collective from Toronto, Ontario, Our group has been meeting for four months. We are all lesbian feminists and have worked in the women's movement.

We have been meeting once a week and in the past two months we have also been meeting weekly with the Toronto Wages for Housework Collective. We were involved as individuals in planning a public meeting about Wages for Housework on the 31st of January. The Wages Due Collective and the Toronto Wages for Housework Collective are sponsoring a public meeting on the 26th of February at which women from the P.O.W. will be speaking. At the lesbian conference in Montreal this January, we held a Wages for Housework workshop. A fine time was had by all.

At this point our focus is on understanding and developing the Wages for Housework perspective. We have collectively written a paper on lesbians and the Wages for Housework perspective. It is called "Fucking is Work" and will be presented for the first time ever at this conference,

Eventually we plan to organize women in both waged and unwaged situations.

We have written a song about the wages due to women, which we will share with you later (the song, not the wages!).

We believe that by the next conference groups should have papers and positions on nationalist struggles for liberation, and how they fit in to the International Network. We would be happy to discuss this question with anyone who is interested.

And now, here is our statement:

FUCKING IS WORK

Wages for Housework recognizes that doing cleaning, raising children, taking care of men, is not women's biological destiny. Lesbianism recognizes that heterosexual love and marriage is not women's biological destiny. Both are definitions of women's roles by the state and for the advantage of the state.

Wages for Housework says that to fight against our roles is to fight against our work is to fight against the state. This doesn't mean that if we merely readjust our roles, without recognizing the work contained within them that we are fighting the state. In fact the state often readjusts our roles for us. But it does mean that whenever women deviate from roles set out for us by the state, it creates the possibility within the class of women to see the roles and the work as they really are: serving the state.

We do not think that lesbians are special cases. We think that all women are special cases in the definitions of the state. This is what keeps us divided. We recognize that all women are houseworkers, and as lesbians we can clarify certain forms that this work takes, and therefore define certain struggles that we can take against our work, against the state. By uniting our struggle as lesbians with the struggle of all women, we can win.

Capitalism has institutionalized relationships between men and women in the form of heterosexuality. And the only legitimate expression of this form is marriage. In marriage the woman supports the man to work harder, to buy a bigger house a car etc., and to subjugate her needs to these needs, which are capital's. Marriage is also the institution for the socialization of children to be good workers for capitalism, and this too is the work of women. Further we are brought up to believe that our work in marriage is our biological nature and therefore unchangeable.

All women are socialized to be heterosexual and to get married. Women who are called lesbians and women who are called straight are all existing for the same purpose in the eyes of the state - to serve capital through serving men. This is what we mean when we say all women are straight. Being a lesbian does not free us from our roles as houseworkers.

One of the services that women perform for men and the state is fucking. Our job as cunts is separated from loving or having children. Having children is a separate job which only happens to require fucking as a prerequisite. Loving is something we do in spite of capitalism, not because of it. Loving only serves the state when and if it is a prerequisite for fuckingmen. Fucking gives men pleasure and a feeling of power that they need to continue working for capitalism. The state convinces us that fucking is a labour of love in the same way that it convinces us that making breakfast and raising the kids is a labour of love. We may enjoy cooking eggs and we may love our children, but those facts don't change the fact of our work as long as this work serves the needs of capital.

It is the existence of lesbianism that makes fucking visible as labour. Also a woman who refuses to fuck is refusing part of her work as a woman, and is therefore waging a fight against the state whether she recognizes it as such or not. A woman who demands money for fucking is also waging a battle against this work whether she recognizes it or not. Both lesbians and prostitutes challenge the state by their mere existence. Both lesbians and prostitutes build the power of women by their existence. We can see how threatening prostitution and lesbianism are by how much money the state saves in free fucks.

The state tries to co-opt this struggle against fucking by either making it illegal or institutionalizing it. Prostitution is either illegal or state-run. Lesbianism is illegal if we are under twenty-one, we cannot work as civil servants, we cannot legally cross borders, we cannot legally have our children, we cannot legally defend our right to work for wages or rent a place to live.

At this point in time the state uses heterosexuality to serve its own purposes. Unless we make our struggles against the institutions of heterosexual love and marriage in a clear class context then the state will be able to co-opt them. Up until now the general struggle against marriage has taken the form of the free love movement and open marriage. Neither of these forms, because they are led by men, understand that fucking is work, and that liberation for women does not come through more and easier access to fucking. Hippies and the revolutionary youth movement have isolated themselves by thinking that they have created something which gives them more freedom, In fact they have created something that gives women more work.

Wages for Housework must take up this struggle, recognizing that lesbians, celibate and 'frigid' women and prostitutes are waging a battle against fucking and therefore against the state.

Lesbianism is women loving women, It is a form of social relationship between people of equal power. It strengthens the power of the class by being a gut expression of class solidarity. It is a form that we can use and work from in learning how to struggle with each other as women. In this way it serves all women. It is an expression of self-love and confidence in women. This is what we mean when we say all women are lesbians.

As lesbians we know that we can survive without the approval and recognition of a husband, because we have already survived illegally and underground for centuries. The danger for us lies in what we do with this knowledge. Lesbians can serve the state by saying that we want to be responsible citizens with just a few more civil liberties (like the gay liberation movement is doing). Or we can set out to prove that we can be truck drivers and executives (like the status of women groups do), as if we didn't already know that we can do anything we want. Or we can isolate ourselves in groovy lesbian ghettos and die slowly because of it (like lesbian separatists are doing). All these things do is give more power to the state by focussing lesbianism on individuals and trying to find individual solutions rather than taking our power and strengthening it and that of all women by using it to attack the state.

Sexuality is used to divide women. Straight women think that by associating with lesbians they are losing power. They act this out by

hating, fearing or ignoring lesbians. Lesbians think that by associating with straight women we are losing our identity. We act this out by refusing to struggle with straight women. But as long as any of us react to our powerlessness as women by refusing to unite with women we are losing our only potential power and serving the interests of capitalism.

Lesbians are used as a threat to all women to keep us in line. We must take this threat and turn it around against the state. We must take the definitions of lesbian, dyke, queer that they lay on us, and define them for ourselves. This is why it is important for women who are lesbians to be visible within the Wages for Housework movement.

As lesbians become visible we are able to point out to all women that there are alternatives even now, under capitalism, to our role as men's fucks. This gives us the possibility of more choices, which gives us the strength to fight our work even at the level of relationships with individual men. Men are threatened by the possibility of 'their woman' becoming a lesbian. We can use that threat by never denying the possibility. We are not saying that all women should come out. When the power of women's liberation made it possible for lots of lesbians to come out, it wasn't the coming out as lesbians that was the main point, it was the power that made it possible that made it important.

Another thing- We do not think that the definition of bisexual is useful to any of us. It is no threat to the state. In fact the state is encouraging it these days in an attempt to weaken the power of lesbians. Because of this, defining oneself as bisexual erodes the power of lesbianism. This system has divided men and women to such an extent that loving both equally (which also assumes equality between men and women, which isn't true), can only be an extremely unsettling and schizophrenic position for any woman to be in.

In conclusion then, we feel very strongly that as lesbians we have something to contribute to the building of our power as women. First, we can contribute the definition of fucking as work. Second, we contribute the power of loving women. In return, we gain from the increase in the general power of the class, and hopefully the support and understanding of our straight sisters, which we need to break down the isolation that the state imposes on us. This paper is an attempt to start some dialogue on this subject. We cannot afford to ignore it, because we are lesbians.

The Wages Due Collective, Toronto.

THE WAGES DUE SONG

G C
If women were paid for all we do
D G
I'll tell ya one thing that's true as true
G C
We wouldn't be free, but I'm telling you
D G
There'd be a lot of wages due

D C G
Well, there'd be a lot of wages due for every time we smiled
D C G
Just in order to get a tip or two to make it almost worthwhile
D C G
There'd be a lot of wages due for every time we've been raped
D C D G
And there'd be a lot of wages due for each time we've escaped
G C
Now what do ya think would happen, if we women went on strike
D G
There's be no breakfast in the morning. There'd be no screw at night.
G
There'd be no nurses treatin you
C
There'd be no waitresses serving you
D G
There's be no typists typing you ooooo It'd be all right
G
There'd be no mothers nursing you
C
There'd be no wives waiting on you
D G
There'd be no daughters pleasing you ooooo It'd be all right

G C
If women were paid for all we do
D G
Just think what it'd mean to me and you
G C
We'd have some money and power too
D
Well ain't it amazing
C D G
What wages do ooooo.