



## *Ruined:*

### From Spectacle to Action

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*they declare themselves innocent of all events,  
those that have happened and those to come,  
everything  
they examine the evidence against themselves  
and suggest the victims cunning.*

(Dionne Brand, *Inventory*, p. 73)<sup>1</sup>

**European Premier (2010) at the Almeida Theatre London;  
directed by Indhu Rubasingham; written by Lynn Nottage (2009)**

This is not purely a commentary on *Ruined*; it is also a direct expression of our desire to 'declare' and 'examine' our complicity in the crimes against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo driven by the technology market, as well as to be agents for change. Having little prior knowledge of the history and politics of the Congo beyond the mass media, the structure of this article mirrors the way in which we encountered the play and the subsequent need to uncover what lies behind the story. Though we are both feminists, our social locations differ and our disciplines diverge; therefore, we self-consciously write across and against borders. We also acknowledge the inherent ironies of writing this article on a computer whose circuit boards may contain blood-soaked conflict minerals. The problem is not technology, but rather the violent means by which its components are sourced. Inspired by the play, we write this, not with the intention to speak for the women whose lives and deaths are represented in the play, but rather to add our voices to theirs in solidarity. This inward focus on ourselves as agents (or in concert with citizen groups), is not to dismiss the role of courageous activists on the ground in the Congo, the possibility of international peace-keeping/military intervention or sanctions against foreign companies who purchase conflict minerals, but rather to remain truthful to our affective state after bearing witness to the play, and cognizant of our own spheres of immediate influence. We begin with a review of the play, followed by a broader discussion of the context for social action.

**Review:**

*Ruined* (2009), by award-winning African American playwright Lynn Nottage, had its first European premier at the Almeida Theatre in London this year. The play's subject is the ongoing civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo that has become, amongst other things, a war over conflict minerals (tin, tungsten, tantalum and gold), which is now being fought on the bodies of women; rape in this context is a systematic tactic of warfare. The play gives voice to the stories of displaced Congolese rape victims in Uganda recorded by Nottage during her fieldwork. The play takes its formal inspiration from Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*, a piece of theatre that sought to caution Denmark about the dangers of remaining impartial in a foreseeable Second World War. Both plays stress the link between war and capitalism and seek to enlighten the audience and stimulate action. The crucial difference between these plays is the horrifying and all too immediate and real subject matter of *Ruined*, along with Nottage's ethical commitment to the women who inspired the play. Nottage's ethical commitment by necessity defies Brechtian techniques of 'epic' theatre – objectivity, detachment, evoking an intellectual active response – that for Brecht were crucial to prevent catharsis and emotional fatigue dispelling an active response.

The play is set in Mama Nadi's brothel in a small mining town on the outskirts of a rainforest. Mama Nadi (another powerful performance by award winning actress Jenny Jules), like Brecht's *Mother Courage*, financially profits from the war. She sells alcohol, cigarettes and sex to miners and soldiers on both sides of the conflict. Although she states that she is 'running a business not a mission', the brothel nonetheless functions as a refuge for rape victims who, as she says, are 'safer with [her] than in their own homes'.<sup>2</sup> The women, however, no longer have homes. Women are not safe due to the possibility of being raped, and once raped, like Mama Nadi's women, they are expelled from their homes and communities due to the associated shame and dishonour. It is important to note the association between the home and the female body; as Serbian psychotherapist Lepa Mladjenovic explains, rape makes a woman 'homeless in her own body'.<sup>3</sup> As women are not safe in their own bodies, and made homeless from their bodies once raped, Mama Nadi's brothel becomes not only a home, but also a symbolic extension of the female body. Mama Nadi controls this home/body and does not permit weapons to enter. This symbolic re-creation of the female body, however, as

the play demonstrates, is as vulnerable and penetrable as any other home in the country. Elaine Scarry's *The Body in Pain* is helpful for understanding this association. Scarry argues that a room is 'an enlargement of the body' whose 'walls put boundaries around the self preventing undifferentiated contact with the world', but at the same time 'its window and doors [...] enables the self to move out into the world and allows that world to enter'. Furthermore, she suggests, a room also simultaneously functions as 'a miniaturization of the world, of civilization'.<sup>4</sup> Both the content and the revolving set of *Ruined* is a striking illustration of this theory. The set is two sided. The play begins with the porch; therefore the audience is further back from the porch and is thus positioned in the conflict directly outside the brothel. The set turns and the audience, like the travelling salesman Christian and the soldiers, enter the bar. This symbolically associates the audience with both those who profit financially from the conflict (Christian) and those complicit in the conflict (soldiers). The women whose bodies by extension are the brothel never venture farther than the porch. The brothel walls, like the women's bodies, are penetrable, but the women are imprisoned within their bodies and the brothel.

The first scene introduces the audience to Mama Nadi, Christian and the two victims of rape that he has brought for Mama Nadi. Salima (Michelle Asante) is accepted, but Mama Nadi does not want the 'ruined' Sophie (Pippa Bennet-Warner), as she cannot sell 'damaged' goods. The audience, unprepared by advertisements and reviews, then learn the meaning of the play's title: to be 'ruined' means to have been mutilated by being raped with weapons and left with an unhealing wound. Through financial and emotional coercion, Christian (Lucian Msamati) persuades Mama Nadi that this educated woman who can sing can still be an asset to her business.

In a later bar scene, Salima is forced to 'entertain' an abusive violent rebel soldier who pays for her with coltan (tantalum) taken from a miner. Thus the mineral partially responsible for the war enters the brothel and pays for access *to* and *into* a woman's body. Through dialogue between Mama Nadi and Mr Harari (Silas Carson), a Lebanese diamond merchant, the audience learns that coltan is used in mobile phones (to make them vibrate). This helps to make explicit the connectedness between the violated female bodies and land, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the audience whose mobile phones sit within their pockets and bags.

In regards to 'western culture', Scarry suggests, 'whole rooms within a house attend to single facts about the body'.<sup>5</sup> In *Ruined*, the bedroom, used for sleep and sex, symbolizes the female psyche and womb. The set revolves from the bar back to the porch, but through the addition of a few props, the porch now functions as the women's bedroom. This visually collapses the boundaries separating inside/internal (sleep, rest, sex, psyche, womb) with outside/external (war, other people, that beyond the skin). In this space Salima and Sophie discuss their thoughts and feelings. Salima tells Sophie about sleeping with the soldier, who told her about taking the coltan from a miner and killing him: 'bragging like I should be congratulating him. And then he fucked me, and when he was finished he sat on the floor and wept. He wanted me to hold him. Comfort him' (p. 31). The soldier brings the horrors of war and his own trauma into the bedroom and into the woman's body. The actress, Kehinde Fadipe, who plays Josephine, helps to emphasize this to the audience later in the play when unscripted she outlines her vagina with her hands and says to a soldier: 'Let me show you something sweet and pretty. Come' (p. 72). For the traumatized soldiers, the female body acts as a refuge, a home. For the women, however, as Salima explains, sex with soldiers is far more violating and traumatic than sex with miners; the women become a receptacle to absorb this trauma and a home for the soldiers, but it intensifies their homelessness in their own bodies. In addition, Salima is now pregnant with a client's child. Sophie also explains to Salima the physical and psychological pain of being ruined: 'what those men did to me lives inside of my body. Every step I take I feel them in me. Punishing me. And it will be that way for the rest of my life' (p. 32). Both women physically and psychologically embody war: the war is symbolically and literally *in* them. It is also in this bedroom that Salima, after the interval, tells Sophie of being taken by the soldiers, her baby killed, and having being kept chained to a tree for four months to be raped by soldiers.

Thus far, the play has horrified the audience with stories; nothing, however, either in film or in the media prepares a Western audience for what happens next. Commander Osembenga (played by Steve Toussaint in a particularly menacing and compelling performance) takes an interest in Sophie. Up until this point, Mama Nadi has been able to substitute the soldiers' interest in Sophie for another girl and to prevent their knowledge of Sophie's condition. The audience watches in extreme tension and shock (expressed by loud gasps) the Commander's attempt to put his hand up Sophie's skirt to reach

her 'ruined' vagina. Mama Nadi attempts to intervene, but is rendered powerless in the situation and Sophie is forced to defend herself. She spits on his shoes and reveals her condition: 'I am dead! Fuck a corpse! What would that make you?' (p. 83). Mama Nadi attempts to calm the situation down and, contrary to expectations, the Commander still insists on sleeping with Sophie. As all their lives are now in danger, Mama Nadi, to the horror of the audience, forces Sophie to comply. The audience, like the characters, are stunned and powerless, expressed through a protracted silence, as though frozen. The usually teetotal Christian breaks this silence through asking for a drink. Mama Nadi's response is to justify her actions:

I didn't come here as Mama Nadi, I found her the same way miners find their wealth in the muck. I stumbled off of that road without two twigs to start a fire. I turned a basket of sweets and soggy biscuits into a business. I don't give a damn what any of you think. This is my place, Mama Nadi's (p. 86).

Jenny Jules (Mama Nadi) unscripted places her hands on her chest at 'my place,' rather than opening her arms to indicate the brothel, to emphasize the relationship between the brothel, the female body and the mines. Preserving the brothel for Mama Nadi is symbolic of self-preservation and self-ownership, just as the fight for minerals and the land are for the soldiers; the price for both, however, is the bodies of women.

The next scene complicates a direct parallel with Mama Nadi and Mother Courage, showing Mama Nadi in a selfless and compassionate light. Distant gunfire is heard during this scene to indicate the proximity of war. The Lebanese diamond merchant advises Mama Nadi that due to the increase in warfare in the area the sensible thing for a businessperson to do is to leave. Mama refuses to go, but asks him to take Sophie, offering a diamond for him to take her to a doctor who can perform an operation to heal her. Violence erupts outside the brothel, however, and he leaves with the diamond before Sophie can join him.

Salima's husband comes to the brothel to reclaim her, but Salima, now pregnant, knows that they cannot be reconciled even if he can accept the rape. During his vigilant wait outside, he witnesses the rebel soldiers frequenting the brothel and informs the Commander. The Commander and

soldiers enter the brothel and gunshots are simulated through sound and pyrotechnic effects. This produces a realistic effect of warfare entering both the brothel and the auditorium. Due to the shocking nature of previous scenes and the play refuting all expectations of what may be performed in a theatre, in this moment make-believe and reality become indistinguishable; the soldiers' attempted rape of the women on the bar tables becomes, for a Western audience, all too real. Both the sanctuary of Mama Nadi's brothel and the auditorium, places previously perceived as being impenetrable to war, are violated. The scene ends dramatically with Salima running in with blood emanating from her pregnant stomach, proclaiming: 'You will not fight your battles on my body any more' (p. 94). The audience, now by extension part of the crowd in the bar, cannot exempt itself from Salima's 'You'.

It is both significant and problematic that the play does not end at this point. The final scene takes place a few days later with Christian's proposal of marriage to Mama Nadi and his attempt to take her away to start a new business that does not involve prostitution. Mama Nadi resists his proposal, eventually in tears confessing that she too is ruined. This revelation helps explain her taking Sophie in, her willingness to pay for her surgery and her emphatic need to claim and re-create a space/body of her own (and Jenny Jules' gestures). Contrary to expectation, Christian responds: 'I'm sorry for it. I may be an idiot for saying so, but I think we, and I speak as a man, can do better' (p. 101). Mama eventually agrees and the play ends sentimentally with the pair dancing together. As this play has thus far been performed for a Western audience only and, presumably, was not written for a Congolese one, this easy ending that brings relief and closure is problematic. Were it to be performed for a Congolese audience, the message of love, hope and unity between man and woman would be understandable, but the intended message for a Western audience is confusing. The ending contravenes Brecht's techniques, as it is both cathartic and emotionally draining, thus dispelling affirmative action. One thing the ending does achieve, however, is to redeem a Western perception of Congolese men. Furthermore, a perceptive audience may realize that the future for the rest of the women (and future women) in the brothel is now hazardous, as they are left without any semblance of a home or refuge. The ending also fails to offer hope for healing Mama Nadi and Sophie's physical wounds, as neither of them can afford surgery. What the play may achieve, however, is an interest in the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is particularly important,

as an audience previously ignorant of the situation for women, the conflict over the land and the role of conflict minerals may only have understood the play's message about the situation for women. The confines of a theatrical performance, rather than a documentary or book, mean that the references to the conflict minerals and the political history of the country are not made explicit for those unaware of the situation. The Almeida's production helps remedy this problem somewhat through the extensive details provided by its programme and, contrary to custom, the free online programme on its web pages.

### **Context for Action:**

As the Almeida theatre's sponsor states, 'theatre doesn't just begin and end with the rise and fall of the curtain'.<sup>6</sup> In particular, the play resonates with audience members who may be concerned that a binary distinction between art and activism would ignore the harsh historical, political and economic realities behind the storyline, restricting the possibility of hope and shared humanity (beyond an empty rhetoric of sisterhood or solidarity). Therefore, this section 'scales up' the discussion from embodiment towards the ethics of geo-political space. To begin to discuss a Brechtian impulse towards ethical action is complicated, as our very consumption of technology fuels the evisceration of Congolese women. We are complicit, both as audience members and consumers. In addressing this concern, we not only pose the question 'what does the play ask of us?' but also reflect upon post-colonial humanitarian intentions given our location in 'the West'.

Dionne Brand's epigraph that begins this article is a forceful caveat that contemporary Western interventions in a temporal post-colonial space are not divorced from history. We emphasize, in other words, that the 'Congo in fact was not the heart of darkness until rich white interests made it so'.<sup>7</sup> Apart from the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the systematic relationship of the DR Congo to 'the West', and specifically to Western capitalism, began with Belgian King Leopold II's personal control over the vast territory, including 'ownership of the mines in 1888, all vacant lands in 1890, [and eventually a sweeping claim to all] the "fruits of the earth in 1891"'.<sup>8</sup> Over this period of direct rule, approximately half the population of the Congo Free State (10 million) were worked to death in the interests of accumulation of profits for the King.<sup>9</sup>



The Congo transitioned from a personal domain to a colony of the Belgian state in 1908, and liberation was achieved in 1960. However, like many former colonies, independence came at great cost. The brief tenure of the Congo's first democratically elected leader, Patrice Lumumba, ended in his assassination by agents loyal to Army Chief Joseph Mobutu, though the CIA and Belgian authorities were also culpable in his death. Mobutu renamed the Congo, Zaire, and ruled over it despotically for thirty years. Following neighbouring Rwanda's war in 1994, genocidal forces fled across the border into the Congo resulting in a 'proxy war'. Ugandan and Rwandan forces entered the Congo and, in the aftermath, Laurent Kabila came to power in 1997. In 1999 the Bishop of Bukavu, Emmanuel Katalikio, described Kabila's regime:

Foreign powers, with the collaboration of some of our Congolese brothers, organise wars with the resources of our country. These resources, which should be used for our development [...] serve only to kill us [...] All that has value is pillaged and taken to foreign countries or simply destroyed [...] This exploitation is supported by a regime of terror [...]<sup>10</sup>

The Bishop died shortly thereafter. Kabila was assassinated in 2001; his son Joseph succeeded him. And for the last fourteen years, armed conflict has been a constant fact of daily life (and death) in the Eastern Congo.

This brief and simplified historical synopsis serves to highlight the intricacies of violence and gross human rights violations within the Congo. Although militias fight to control mineral assets, the conflict also overlaps with genocidal ethnic violence (i.e. the mutilation of genitals destroys reproductive capacity). However, a word of caution from political scientist Mahmood Mamdani: most explanations of conflict in Africa are distilled to ethnic tensions as a result of artificial colonial borders (which created distinctions between indigenous and 'non-indigenous' residents). As Mamdani reminds us, however, 'all boundaries are more or less artificial'.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, the conflict is not solely reducible to ethnic divisions. Moreover, social scientists David Renton, David Seddon and Leo Zeilig argue that it is important to recognize that the instability in the Congo that followed the genocide in Rwanda was also fostered by US business and military interests.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, the road to becoming 'the most dangerous place

on earth for women', and the implied distance from 'Western' order that such a statement inescapably embodies, is rather more complex.

The dominance of capitalist ideology in our everyday lives may cloud processes of historical exploitation and sexual violence that undergird our lifestyles.<sup>13</sup> For example, in the Western gaze, the Congo was historically associated with impenetrable darkness. Thus, the spectre of a colonial quest for 'virginal land' to penetrate and pillage under the guise of ushering in modernity already prefigures the Congo along a spatially and temporally regressive axis, mired in racialized and sexualized overtones despite the Congo's integration into a globalized world.

Moreover, the issue of space, that is the way capital shapes the use of space to meet demand, continues to be relevant. Today, the Congo is ravaged by private enterprise, armed mercenaries and rebel forces, who trade in minerals intended for a global marketplace, and whose profits feed mass rape, torture, murder and even genocide. Thus, international spatial divisions of countries as sources of extraction, places of processing or sites of consumption, continue to bolster an inequitable world order. The vertical distribution of power and resources has become a supra-national organizing principle (or even justification) whereby the ravages or advantages of unchecked capital remain unevenly distributed.

Additionally, capitalism is a relational process, as citizens-consumers across nations are materially inter-connected and inter-dependent. The concept of citizenship is usually understood as a territorially-bounded pact that guarantees equal rights under the law in exchange for certain duties and obligations to the nation. As American historian Lizabeth Cohen argues, these duties and obligations of citizens are more than political, they are also economic.<sup>14</sup> Consumption has become a moral act that affirms free market ideology, wilfully ignorant of the regimes of exploitation that sustain an ever-expanding economy. Furthermore, the ideal of consuming is deeply linked to the dream of a better life in 'the West'. Inderpal Grewal suggests that a globalized consumer culture has produced 'other transnational identifications and subjects whose desires and fantasies crossed national borders but also remained tied to national imaginaries'.<sup>15</sup>

In *Ruined* the character of Commander Osembenga is an ideal illustration of

this concept. His arresting yellow Adidas-branded tracksuit distinguishes him from rank and file soldiers dressed in camouflage green, as well as projecting an image of community leadership (local), yet black-identified (global) power and success in the language of symbolism which circulates within hip hop culture. The message of his fashioned posturing is clear: exploiting minerals is a quick path to material success in the Congo as defined by dominant capitalist systems that emphasize economic imperatives above all.

His character also raises another important issue: how do we understand the intersecting role of race and gender in the conflict, and our relationship to it? The programme unambiguously states that the Congo is 'a conflict ignored'.<sup>16</sup> Christine Schuler Deschryver, a Congolese women's rights activist, ventures one step further to identify the reason behind a lack of international interest (until recently) in the long-term conflict, despite the horrifying scale and brutality of violence – namely racism.<sup>17</sup> Within the same article, she moves from a discussion of race and colonialism to gendered violence and commerce, asserting that:

The West has traditionally focused its attention on treating the consequences of sexual violence, but not the causes. My fellow activists and I have long tried to show that the mining industry here is driven by foreign demand, and will change only with international pressure for human rights and ethical business practices.<sup>18</sup>

In other words, she is advocating for a politicized role of the citizen-consumer, away from a neoliberal ideology that trusts multinational corporations to self-regulate, and towards a global citizenship where political and economic intersections and implications are acknowledged. Citizen-consumers have a role to play along personal, national and international vectors. In this instance, the human rights struggle is not only shared trans-nationally through the medium of technology (i.e. the internet), but also the consumption of technology (and its accompanying conceptual frame of progress) is at the heart of the struggle. Artists like Lynn Nottage and activists like Christine Schuler Deschryver ask us to recall from suppressed memories what we have collectively expunged – that dreams of progress and plenty come at a cost; Congolese lives remain expendable. This

is by no means to excuse the role of African militia groups responsible for brutality, but rather to focus attention on our role as citizens-consumers who purchase technology (our mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras, etc.) dependent on tantalum, tin and tungsten. Moreover, Nottage and Deschryver call for a role for activists beyond circumscribed 'women's issues' (seeing women as victims tied to their locational and gender status). As anti-racist feminist scholars advocating social change transcending borders, we are mindful that this message is a call for reflection upon our own connections to colonialism, racism and oppression – as a necessary starting point.

While this may seem too cerebral, given the urgency of the situation (1600 women are raped every week in the Kivu provinces alone),<sup>19</sup> it is vital that we do not further compound injustices by re-inscribing notions of women in the Congo as objects to be saved, rather than subjects capable of action (e.g. the figure of Mama Nadi). We must neither innocently position ourselves as operating outside of the de-politicized and racialized capitalist system in which we all live.

How then do we identify and navigate openings for social justice within these parameters? How can Western citizen-consumer groups with global and ethical concerns for the bodily security of women in the Congo begin to mobilize? Or simply, how do we move from theory to action? We take our cue from feminist activist Audre Lorde:

[T]he transformation of silence into language and action is an act of self-revelation [...] And where the words of women are crying to be heard, we must each of us recognize our responsibility to seek those words out, to read them and share them and examine them in their pertinence to our lives. That we not hide behind the mockeries of separations that have been imposed upon us and which so often we accept as our own.<sup>20</sup>

The conflict fought over women's bodies in the Congo as portrayed in *Ruined* is not merely dramatic spectacle, and the relevance of the story to us (the audience) is not limited by geographic boundaries. The interface between an audience in London and the women of the Congo is reflected in the everyday, every time we desire the latest, fastest, most fashionable or disposable technological gadget. We are not advocating paralysing guilt, but rather ask

that you join us in questioning these norms, changing our consumption patterns, and most importantly calling for transparency in the source of raw materials for new technology and the conditions under which they are purchased. At the very least, as consumer-citizens in a globalized world we recognize there are points where our self-interest (to own technology) and our morality (to end suffering) can overlap. We cannot afford to abdicate that responsibility to an unregulated marketplace, unmindful of the confluence of open wounds that brought us to this point.

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For examples of campaigns against conflict minerals see:

V-day's Campaign for the Democratic Republic of the Congo:

<http://drc.vday.org/>

Enough Project: <http://www.enoughproject.org/conflict-minerals>

Congo Now: <http://www.congonow.org/>

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<sup>1</sup> Dionne Brand, *Inventory* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2006), p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Lynn Nottage, *Ruined* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2009; reprinted London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), pp. 14 and 86. All further references to this text will be parenthetical within the article.

<sup>3</sup> Lepa Mladjenovic cited in Rhonda Copelon, 'Surfacing Gender: Reconceptualizing Crimes Against Women in Time of War', in *Violence: A Reader*, ed. by Catherine Besteman (New York: New York University Press, 2002), pp. 193-208 (p. 197).

<sup>4</sup> Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Scarry, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Morley, 'Coutts & Co', in Nottage, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Gerald Caplan, 'Canada and the DR Congo Conflict: A responsibility to atone', Pambazuka <<http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/64750>> [accessed 27.5.10]

<sup>8</sup> V.S. Naipaul, 'A New King for the Congo: Mobutu and the Nihilism of Africa', in *The Writer and the World* (London: Picador, 2002), p. 207.

<sup>9</sup> David Renton, David Seddon and Leo Zeilig, *The Congo: Plunder and Resistance* (London & New York: Zed Books, 2006), p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Renton et al., p. 172.

<sup>11</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, 'Preliminary Thoughts on the Congo Crisis', *Social Text*, 17.3 (1999), 53.

<sup>12</sup> Renton et al., pp. 178-184.

<sup>13</sup> Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham & London; Duke University Press, 2003), p. 139.

<sup>14</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The politics of mass consumption in postwar America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2005), p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Nottage, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> 'But in 1999 I started seeing more and more violence against women and children. And soon I started to realize that racism was to blame for the lack of global response to this humanitarian disaster. (It brought back memories from my childhood: my black, illiterate mother suffered for marrying the son of a rich, white Belgian colonialist.) In September 2000, after an 18-month-old baby, raped and with a broken body, died in my arms on our way to the hospital, I stopped believing in the promises of Western politicians and was convinced that mobilizing women might be the only way to change things.' Christine Schuler Deschryver, 'Hillary's Good Start', *Newsweek* (October 3, 2009) <http://www.newsweek.com/2009/10/02/hillary-s-good-start.html> [accessed 8.11.10]

<sup>18</sup> Deschryver

<sup>19</sup> Nottage, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> Audre Lorde, 'The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action', in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde* (Berkeley, California: Crossing Press, 2007), pp. 42-43.