

SC 590 Carework & Inequality

Thursday 4:30-6:50

Carney Hall 009

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Course Overview

Carework is foundational to human survival and the social glue that keeps families and communities intact. But just how much do we, as a society, *value* care labor? Who should be responsible for family carework and the needs of children, the sick, frail elderly, and other vulnerable people? If this is love's labor, does that mean it has no monetary value?

In this course we will explore work & family conflicts as well as the tension between carework as private responsibility versus carework as a "public good," worthy of national investment. We begin the course by examining the "price" of caring, specifically the price of motherhood. What are the choices and trade-offs of raising a family in the US and who bears most of the cost? We will look at the social and economic consequences of child-raising, including those faced by low-income parents in a society that has moved away from the public provision of family welfare. We will continue to return to the question – does the larger society have responsibility to ensure its people get decent care?

The second part of the class will focus on purchased care and the position of paid careworkers, exploring the identity and role of this fastest-growing segment of the labor market. We will examine how access to family care is economically stratified, with large segments of the population care-impooverished. Throughout this course your personal reflections about career, family, and carework will be welcome in our class discussions.

Course Texts

Note: Books are available used online and in the BC Bookstore.

The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued (2001) Ann Crittenden. Owl Books

Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence. Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (2001) U. of California Press.

Global Women: Nannies, maids, and sex workers in the new economy. (2002) Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Hochschild. Henry Holt: New York.

All other readings are available through the library course reserve under my name.

Class 1

September 10 *What is carework?*

- Roster & introductions – Do you have any particular interest in carework in terms of your career and/or family aspirations?
- Overview of course, syllabus, expectations and assignments (see below)
- Lecture

We will end most classes with a 5-10 minute discussion revisiting some aspect of the questions; “What is care? What is carework? Who’s responsible to make sure it’s happening?”

Class 2

September 17 *Who pays the cost of taking care of families?*

We will begin to examine “gendered” care labor, motherhood and the cost of caring for other people.

1. Student care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- Abel. An Overview of Nineteenth-Century Caregiving
- *The Price of Motherhood*, Chapters 1-4, inclusive
- Budig & England. The Wage Penalty for Motherhood (Review paper focusing on findings and implications)

Pass out term paper information.

Ending discussion on “What is care?”

Class 3

September 24 *Gendered carework, continued.*

1. Care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- *The Price of Motherhood*, Chapters 5-8
- DeVault. Constructing the Family

Class activity: Break into pairs and interview each other, using hand out interview guide. You should each note down responses for class discussion.

Ending discussion on “What is care?”

Class 4

October 1 *Contrasting costs of motherhood in the US.*

1. Care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- *The Price of Motherhood*, (skip 9) Chapters 10-Conclusion
- Jones. "To get out of this land of 'suftring'"
- http://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/29/politics/29letter.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

Last half hour of class we will discuss your topics and approaches to the term paper.

Class 5

October 8 *Work and family conflicts in middle-class America*

1. Care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses
3. Class discussion exploring "opting out"

Class Activity on "Opting Out"

Readings:

- Galinsky. *Toward a New View of Work and Family*
- Stone. *Fast-Track Women and the "Choice" to Stay Home*
- Coltrane and Adams. *Men's Family Work*

Ending discussion on "What is care?"

Class 6

October 15 *The world of paid careworkers*

1. Student care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- Glenn. "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical continuities in the racial division of paid reproductive labor."
- *Domestica*: Chapter 1

Read these 2 accounts of a infamous "au pair" story, for discussion in small groups in class.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special_report/1998/woodward/107375.stm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise_Woodward_case

What is care?

Class 7

October 22 *Careworkers and the expectations of those who employ them.*

1. Care story
2. Student-led discussion

Readings:

- *Domestica*, Chapter 5
- Dodson & Zinbarg. "It's Like a Family": Caring Labor, Exploitation, and Race in Nursing Homes"
- *Global Woman*, "Maid to Order" page 85

"What is care?"

Class 8

October 29 *Paying for care and what's fair?*

1. Care story
2. Student-led discussion

Readings:

- Nelson. Of Markets and Martyrs
- Cancian. Paid Emotional Care
- *Global Woman*, "Invisible Labors" page 70

Class Activity - Across Classes: The Work and Family Divide

"What is care?"

Class 9 Pass in abstract of your term paper

November 5 *Immigrants: A growing source of carework*

1. Student care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- *Domestica*, Chapter 7
- *Global Woman*, "Love and Gold" page 15
- *Global Woman*, "America's Dirty Work" page 142

"What is care?"

Class 10

November 12 *Who cares for careworkers' families?*

1. Student care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- *Global Woman*, "The Care Crisis in the Philippines: Children and Transnational Families" page 39
- *Global Woman*, "Global Cities and Survival Circuits" page 254
- ? Case study, Dodson 2010

"What is care?"

Class 11

November 19 *Social policy for poor families in the US: The end of welfare and care needs of poor children*

1. Care story
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- Oliker. Examining care at welfare's end
- Dodson. "Don't Call Us Out of Name" – Chapters 3 and 4
- Roberts. Welfare's ban on poor motherhood.

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/wtw/ppp/success.cfm>

"What is care?"

Class 12

December 3 *Low-income work and family*

1. Care story
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings

- Dodson. "Wage Poor Mothers and Moral Economy."
- Williams. "One Sick Child Away from Getting Fired"

Class activity: Break into pairs and interview each other, using hand out interview guide. You should each note down responses for class discussion

Class 13 --

Term Paper is Due

December 10 *Care as a national value*

1. Student care stories
2. Discussion led by student reading responses

Readings:

- Kittay. “Relationships of Dependency and Equality” & “Vulnerability and the Moral Nature of Dependency Relations”
- England & Folbre. Care, Inequality and Policy.
- Glenn. Creating a Caring Society.

Course Requirements

Participation and attendance (30% of your grade)

1. Class attendance and participation in discussion is required. If you have a significant problem speaking in class, come see me on/by the first day of class.
2. Each student will be expected to contribute one “care story/history.” *These are informal.* No reading or other formal preparation is required, only forethought. I will start each class asking for a care story and you decide when you want to share one. This can be based on media accounts, a situation, or person you have known, heard or read about, or a personal experience. Examples: One care story I could tell is based upon interviewing eldercare workers and listening to their descriptions of what it takes to provide good care to the fragile elderly – all for \$10 an hour. Or, from another angle I have listened to professors talk about how, if they get involved in “caring too much” about students (and in the case of lawyers it is clients, or managers, the people they supervise) it distracts/detracts from success. In academia, I have been told, you get zero credit for being the kind of teacher who takes time to care about how students are doing. Let’s discuss.

Weekly readings: written comments and questions (35%)

Each week, students are required to send a response to the week’s readings, electronically, **by 7 PM** the day before class (**for 10 of the 13 weeks of class**). I will structure the class discussion based on these responses, thus your critical reading of the material is vital to the class discussion. I am looking one page (at most, 2) of analytical comments and thoughtful queries, written in narrative form – not just bullets – so that I know you have grappled with the material and are not simply repeating what you have read. I will keep a tally of your response papers for the term.

One (maximum 15-page) **paper** (35%): There are two possible approaches to the paper as we will discuss.