Sociology 904  
Gender and Care Work  
Fall 2004  
Professor Cameron Macdonald

Tuesdays 4:00-6:00 PM  
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Course Description:

The subject of care work lies at the center of inquiries into the interplay between gender, work, and family. During the past decade, feminist scholars have produced a burgeoning literature on care work. As industrialized and developing nations face profound “care deficits” in meeting the needs of children, the sick, and the elderly, care work scholars ask the following critical questions: How do various societies define dependency? Who cares for dependents? In what contexts? At what costs to the caregivers? How are paid and unpaid care work divided according to gender, race, and nationality? We will explore these questions with an eye to how they intersect with the Sociology of Gender, Family, and Work, as well as how they operate on the levels of interactions, institutions, and nation-states. We will also seek to understand how the social, economic, and moral imperatives to meet the needs of those who cannot meet their own are socially and culturally constructed, and with what consequences.

Course Organization and Requirements:

Format: This seminar is based on the active participation and reading-based discussion of all members. Therefore, close reading of the texts prior to class is essential. The subject matter is broad, and students will need to be prepared to read feminist scholarship in a variety of disciplines in addition to Sociology, including Philosophy, Political Theory, Law, and Economics. Further, each of you will be expected to plan and move forward with a piece of independent research on a project related to this topic. Time will be allotted for discussion of your projects in-progress and for individual meetings with the instructor to help you shape your research question.

Course Requirements:

1. Active participation in every class discussion. Readings should be completed before the first class every week. Please note: this includes the first week of class. In addition, for any FIVE WEEKS, you will post a brief (500 words or less) reaction to that week’s readings by 5pm the Monday before that week’s readings are to be discussed. (30% of grade)
2. Planning and leading discussion. For any two weeks of the class you (and a partner) will post discussion questions on the web for the week’s readings and assist in leading the seminar. Discussion questions should be posted no later than 5pm the Friday before the Tuesday of your assigned week. (30% of grade)

3. Seminar Paper or Proposal. This is the primary requirement of the class. The paper should incorporate readings from the course as well as research focused on your specific topic. This project will be due in three phases: a topic proposal in which you briefly outline a preliminary research question (due on 10/5); a literature review of no less than ten double-spaced pages (due on 11/16); and a full paper, complete with proposed methodology and perhaps a pilot study (this will vary by student and topic in consultation with instructor, due on 12/21). (40% of Grade)

Required Readings:

All books have been ordered at A Room of One's Own Bookstore, 317 West Johnson St. (257-7888) and will be on reserve at the social science library. Articles marked with an asterisk are available on hard-copy reserve in the Social Science Library and on electronic reserve via MadCat.


Fineman, Martha. 1995. *The Neutered Mother, the Sexual Family, and Other 20th Century Tragedies*


Recommended Readings:

Abel and Nelson, eds. *Circles of Care*

Cancian, Francesca. *Caring and Gender*

Kittay, Eva and Ellen Feder. *The Subject of Care.*

Folbre, Nancy. *The Invisible Heart*
PART ONE: THEORIES OF CARE AND GENDER

Week One: Defining Dependency and Care
9/7


Week Two: Care as a Right or a Privilege
9/14


Week 3: Gender, Care, and Emotions
9/21

Week Four: Gender and the Care Penalty
9/28


Recommended:


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PART TWO: CARE WORK IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS – FAMILIES, HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES

Week 5: Care in the Family
10/5


Recommended:

**Sociology 904**  
**Gender and Care Work**


**Week Six:**  
**Motherhood: the Paradigm Case**

10/6


**Recommended:**


**Week Seven: Commodityng the Sacred: Paid Child Care**

10/19


Recommended:


Week Eight: Intersections of Family and Economy: Offloading Care
10/26


Week Nine: The Challenges of Care Work in Institutions: Nursing
11/2


Recommended:

Week Ten: Labor Market Segmentation, Segregation, and Queuing
11/9


Recommended:


Week Eleven: Taking the Care out of Care Work
11/16


Macdonald, Cameron, and David Merrill. 2002. "'It Shouldn't Have to be a Trade:' Recognition and Redistribution in Care Work Advocacy," *Hypatia* (17:2). Special issue on "Feminist Philosophies of Love and Work," Paula England and Julie Nelson, eds. *


Week Twelve: Individual Meetings with Instructor on Research Projects
TBA
PART THREE – MACRO-LEVEL QUESTIONS

Week Thirteen: The Globalization and Racialization of Care
11/30


*Recommended:*


Week Fourteen: Alternative Frameworks: Family Law and Theories of Dependency
11/30


Week Fourteen: Alternative Policy Frameworks: The Welfare State
12/7


Recommended:

