Cultures of Care: A Perspective on Family and Work

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**Class Time:**
Wednesdays, 2:00 to 4:00

**Class Location:**
225 Wheeler Hall

**Office Hours:**

*Thorne*
Wednesday: 11:30-1:45, (Women Studies, 3408 Dwinelle – phone: 642-2513)
Friday: 10:00-12:00 (480 Barrows – phone: 643-1073)

*Hochschild* (464 Barrows)
Tuesday: 4:00 - 6:00
Wednesday: 5:00 - 6:00
Thursday: 4:00 - 6:00

Most research on the family — and work — focuses on the individual's "roles" in institutional spheres. In this class, our focus shifts away from "roles" and "institutions" to the process of giving and receiving care, wherever and however that process occurs. Drawing from the study of political and feminist theory (Joan Tronto), the sociology of childhood (Barrie Thorne), the study of reciprocity (Marcel Mauss), social networks (Barry Wellman), the sociology of time and emotion (Arlie Hochschild) and psychoanalysis (Nancy Chodorow), we pose a series of questions about the cultures of care. What is care? Who gets to define what a "need" is? Who gives care? Who receives care? As state and economy divest from the citizenry, and families are stretched too thin to pick up the slack, what different kinds of culture of care arise? How do cultures vary by class, ethnicity, and socio-geographical context? By what processes are cultures of care made and unmade?

**Readings:**

In the introduction to Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the editors address the problem of how the same man could have written such very different books: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. They raise a larger question that is important for us: why do canonical texts lead
us to forget sentiments, empathy, and care, on the one hand, and remember self interest, utility-maximization, and the pursuit of wealth on the other?

This is not a course in social theory per se, but we plan to pursue theoretical questions drawn from a tradition of inquiry evoked in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and recently revisited by the feminist political scientist, Joan Tronto. We wish to articulate the situated beliefs, practices and feelings that emerge in relationships of care. More broadly, we'd like to understand the deep split between the tender and the tough in both social theory and contemporary life.

We draw heavily on works in the sociology of family, and intend the class as a basis for sociology of family orals exams. At the same time, this course differs from a regular 280F in two ways: a) It focuses on the family as a site for the exchange (or non exchange) of care, so we skimp on materials that bear on other aspects of the family; and b) The course focuses on sources of care outside the family as well as those inside it.

**Required Books:**

All are available in paperback at the ASUC Book Store. Jan Dizard and Howard Gadlin, *The Minimal Family* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1990)


*Sociology 280F Reader* (Available at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way, Berkeley)

**Requirements:**

In addition to your lively class participation, we require one term paper of about 25 typewritten double spaced pages, and encourage you to base it on an application of various readings about care to about five open-ended interviews and/or field work. (We will provide methodological guidance)

**Schedule of Classes:**

1. January 20  Introduction: What is Care and Where Is it in the Sociological Tradition?

2. January 27  Care in Social Theory
Reading:
Joan Tronto, Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care
Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6.

Selma Sevenhuisen, Citizenship and the Ethics of Care (NY: Routledge, 1998)
Chapter I (READER)

3. February 3       Market Winds and Care
Robert Kuttner, Chapter 2, "The Imperial Market" from Everything for Sale

4. February 10       Modernization and Shifting Relations of Families to Familism
Required Reading: Jan Dizard and Howard Gadlin, The Minimal Family (entire book)

Recommended: For a useful clarification of the multiple meanings associated with the
public/private dichotomy, see Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (eds) Public and

5. February 17       What is a Need? Structural and Historical Perspectives
Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, "A Genealogy of Dependency': Tracing a Keyword of

Sharon Stephens, "Children and The Politics of Culture in Late Capitalism" pp. 3-49 in

6. February 24       What is a Need? Do We See and Suppress Needs or Do We Construct
Them? Constructivist Perspectives
Required Reading: Marjorie Faulstich Orellana, Barrie Thorne, Wan Shun Eva Lam and
Ann Chee, "Transnational Childhoods: The Participation of Children in Processes of
Family Migration" unpublished paper, 1998 (READER)

Anne Solberg, "Negotiating Childhood: Changing Constructions of Age for Norwegian
Children," pp. 126-144 in Allison James and Alan Prout, eds., Constructing and
Reconstructing Childhood, 2nd edition (Falmer Press, 1997). (READER)

7. March 3       What is a Need? Do We see and Suppress, or Do We Construct Needs?
The Psychoanalytic View

Candace Clark, Misery and Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life (Chicago: University
of Chicago Press, 1997), Chapters 4 and 5, 'The Socioemotional Economy, Social Value
and Sympathy Margin" and "Sympathy Biography and the Rules of Sympathy Etiquette" (READER)

8. March 10       Who Gives What To Whom For How Long?


9. March 17       Surplus Caring and Deprivation: The Hidden Stratification of Care


SPRING BREAK (March 22-26)

10. March 31      Family Care: A Phenomenological View

Reading: Marjorie DeVault, Feeding the Family, pp. 1-163; 227-243.

11. April 7       Time and Care

Reading: Arlie P. Hochschild, The Time Bind, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 15, and 16.


12. April 14      Care Outside the Family


13. April 21      Race, Class and Gender in the Giving, Receiving, and Recognition of Care


14. April 28  Student Reports: Ideas from the Class: Experiences From the Field Students; Give In Class Reports

15. May 5  Drawing the Threads: A Care Perspective on Society