HC 268 Culture and Politics of Carework
Winter 2017,
Alternating Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4:15

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Meetings: Alternating Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
1/7, 1/21, 2/4, 2/18, 3/4

Location: Loop campus

Mechthild Hart taught and mentored at SNL for 27 years and is now professor emeritus at DePaul University. Her classes, publications, and grassroots political activities have always centered on the various forms of social and political inequalities rooted in class-based, racialized, and gendered divisions of labor. For more than a decade she has been participating in the growing national and international movement of gaining dignity and respect for “work that makes all other work possible,” and has been involved in local efforts of organizing household workers in Chicago, and in passing the Illinois Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights.

Course Description
In this class we will discuss the different meanings of “carework,” how our society values it, and how such valuing results in unjust or exploitative labor conditions. We will examine how the responsibilities regarding carework are unevenly distributed over different social populations, and how gender, race, nationality, or immigration status influence the valuing of carework and related labor conditions. By imagining a society that values carework, and that is founded on an ethic of care and justice we will also look at different forms of political or civic engagement. In particular, we will examine the different strategies and objectives of political movements, labor advocacy groups, and people working on policy changes. Class meetings will be taught in the form of a learning circle where we practice principles of restorative justice and engage in collaborative learning processes.
Competencies Offered:
L-3: Can assess the social and personal value of civic engagement for achieving change.
H-5: Can analyze issues and problems from a global perspective
A-4: Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems
H-3-X: Can describe how personal engagement in bringing about social change affects personal values and perspectives.

Learning Outcomes
- Understands the social-political history and labor conditions of ‘domestic work,’ ‘household labor,’ and ‘care work’;
- Articulates ‘justice,’ ‘rights,’ and ‘care’ within corresponding ethical frameworks;
- Relates these ethical frameworks to local, national, and international movement-building;
- Links personal knowledge and experience to social responsibility and action for social change.

Learning Strategies
Throughout this course we will create a learning circle by communicating according to the principles of ‘peace-making circles.’ By following this mode we will practice ‘right relationship,’ a key component of civic engagement.

Other learning activities include short individual lectures, reading and writing, class discussions, group work, conversations with guest speakers, watching videos, or investigating documents related to movement building or policy change. (More details in the Course Schedule)

Reading Requirements
Home Economics: The Invisible and Unregulated World of Domestic Work. This report is the result of a national survey conducted by the National Domestic Workers Alliance in 2012. It describes the current conditions of employed domestic workers. Available at http://www.domesticworkers.org/homeeconomics/

Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America, by Evelyn Nakano Glenn (2010)

Other required or related readings will be made available via D2L.

Attendance and Class Participation
Interpersonal interaction and communication are of primary importance in this course. Our class meetings allow us to practice building a learning community. It is therefore extremely important that you attend each class session.

Learning Deliverables
COMPETENCE 1
A4, H5, H3X (no L3)

- 2 Response Papers (2 pages each) to the assigned readings, with the assistance of Reading Guides
- 9 Interview Questions, 3 each for a worker, a political organizer, and a workers’ rights advocate.
- 2 Summary Papers of material presented in class

COMPETENCE 2
A4, H5, H3X, L3

- A panel presentation (part of a group project)
- Summary Write-up of panel presentation (4 pages)
- Evaluation of team work

Grading Percentages by Competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For both competences</th>
<th>Competence 1</th>
<th>Competence 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance: 30%</td>
<td>Average of individual grade for 2 response papers, interview questions, 2 summary papers: 70%</td>
<td>Group presentation: 35%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summary Write-up of group presentation and Evaluation of team work: 35%</td>
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Assessment Criteria

Participation

Participation in in-class meetings will be assessed by
1) your attendance,
2) your active involvement in the topics addressed, and
3) your ability to make connections to assigned readings.
4) Making meaningful comments on the material presented,
5) Giving a thoughtful response to contributions of your co-learners.

- A = Excellence in all five areas combined
- B = Excellence in 4 or 5
- C = Average contribution in all 5 areas
- D = Minimal contribution in all 5 areas

Response Papers

A well-written Response Paper is primarily dependent on
1) clearly addressing the questions provided in the Reading Guide,
2) presenting your response to the questions in the form of a coherent, well-written essay,
3) giving a brief personal response at the end of the essay that convincingly argues with a point made in the readings
   - A = Excellence in areas 1, 2, and 3
   - B = Does well in 1 and 3
   - C = Does not provide a coherent essay but only answers individual questions; provides a personal reaction to the readings but does not convincingly argue in response to specific points made in readings.
   - D = Minimal contribution in all 3 areas

**Interview Questions**
The Interview Questions have 3 components:
1) 9 different questions, 3 each for a labor organizer, a policy maker, and a worker
2) Description of how these questions relate to the assigned readings
3) Statement of the rationale behind each question.
   - A = Excellent list of questions connected to the background readings and supported by a convincing rational
   - B = Excellent demonstration of learning in 2 of the 3 areas
   - C = Some demonstration of learning in 1 and 3
   - D = Minimal contribution in all 3 areas

**Summary Papers**
In these summary papers you describe what you learned from material presented in class (video, websites)
Each summary will be assessed in terms of
1) Application of Guiding Questions
2) Evidence of careful attention, note-taking or further investigation of the material presented in class
3) Demonstration of understanding of the bigger picture represented by particular points
   - A = Excellent understanding of material addressed in class
   - B = Careful attention to material presented and appropriate selection of particular points
   - C = Some attention to relevant points

**Group Presentation**
All group presentations will address a particular aspect of a “Just and Caring Society,” the umbrella theme for all group projects,

You will be working together with 2 or 3 of your classmates, and your group can decide to give a presentation in form of
- a panel where people present different perspectives on a particular issue,
- a visual group presentation, such as a poster presentation, graphic images that make a particular point, or an art collage,
- a theatrical skit or performance.

The **Group Presentation** will be assessed in terms of
  1) Cohesiveness (all pieces relate to each other)
  2) Thoughtful and informative contribution that convincingly argues for or illustrates characteristics of a just and caring society.

- **A = Excellence in both areas**
- **B = Presentation or performance that makes a convincing argument or point about a particular characteristic of a just and caring society**
- **C = Presentations or performance that does address certain issues but without much depth or persuasiveness.**
- **D = Minimal contribution or performance**

The **Summary Write-up** of your individual contribution (4 pages, including list of resources) to your group presentation will be assessed in terms of
  1) Purpose and relevance of your contribution to the overall theme of the group presentation.
  2) Scope and depth of your contribution, including resources consulted.

- **A = Excellence in both areas**
- **B = Contribution that makes a convincing argument or point about a particular characteristic of a just and caring society**
- **C = Contribution that does address certain issues but without much depth or persuasiveness.**
- **D = Minimal scope and depth**

**Team Evaluation.** Your evaluation of your team will not be graded but will count positively towards your Summary Write-Up.

**Course Schedule**

**SESSION 1, January 7**

**A.M. Carework and Caring about Change**

**Objectives:** The objectives of the morning session are to review the structure of the course, and how we can practice caring relations by forming a community of learners. We will probe into the complexities of ‘care’, how ‘care work’ can come in many different forms, and how history of European colonialism and slavery have shaped this work. We will also discuss the implications of organizing for the purpose of transforming our society into a caring democracy.

**ACTIVITIES:**
General overview of class (syllabus, assignments, class structure, relationship to competencies offered)

- What is a ‘Learning Circle,’ and how does it relate to the class theme
- Practicing our first circle meeting
- Social rankings of different aspects of carework (physical – emotional, menial- spiritual) and of careworkers
- The history of domestic work (European capitalism, colonialism, slavery, neoliberalism)
- Civic engagement as engagement in social change

P.M. Justice in the Home and Domestic Worker Organizing

**Objectives:** The focus of our afternoon session will be on domestic worker organizing. We will listen to a panel of experts called “Domestic Worker Organizing: Historical Context and Current Strategies” in the fields of domestic work and labor organizing. This panel was part of a conference at Barnard College, NY (October 2014) that brought together workers, labor organizers, and academics in order to explore the issue of creating Justice in the Home. The panelists share their analysis, ideas, and practical experiences regarding grassroots, worker-led organizing, the roles of allies and labor organizers, and their participation in bringing about legislative change.

**ACTIVITIES:**
- We will look at the “Guiding Questions to Domestic Worker Organizing” before viewing the panel. These questions are to assist you in taking notes while watching [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lv9n7BDc6aM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lv9n7BDc6aM)
- We will have a brief discussion.
- Closing circle

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1) **Response Paper 1, due January 21**

   Please read the following assignments while following READING GUIDE 1 (on D2L), and write a 2-page paper:
   - Tronto, chapter 1 (D2L)
   - Glenn, chapter 2

2) **Summary of what you learned from the panelists, due January 14**

   Go over the notes you took in class, and write a one-page summary of what you think are the most important lessons you learned about the challenges or opportunities of different kinds of organizing strategies.

SESSION 2, January 21

**A.M. Ethics of Justice, Ethics of Care**

**Objectives:** The main objective of this session is to articulate the ethical implications of valuing or devaluing care work, and how different ethical frameworks weave together personal values with social responsibilities.
ACTIVITIES:
- Discussion of the notion of “transformative organizing” in terms of power, social inequality, and injustice.
- Circle meeting
- How issues of social justice are implied in questions such as “whom do I care about,” and “whom do I care for.”
- How all these issues are addressed by an “ethics of justice and care.”
- What are our individual and collective social responsibilities, and what kinds of ‘power’ do we need to ethically act on these responsibilities.

P.M. Transnational Organizing

Objectives: The main objective of this session is to recognize careworkers’ general lack of rights on a national as well as international level, and how international organizations coordinate national and local efforts to affect change.

ACTIVITIES:
- We will look at “Guiding Questions to Transnational Organizing.” They will provide you with some tools for taking notes while browsing different websites.
- We will look at the National Domestic Workers’ Alliance (NDWA) and International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) websites.
  http://domesticworkers.org; http://www.idwfed.org/en

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Response Paper 2, due February 4
   Please read the following assignments while following READING GUIDE 2 (on D2L), and write a 2-page paper:
   - Glenn ch. 6
   - Kittay, “The Moral Harm of Migrant Carework” (D2L)
   - Parreñas, “The Reproductive Labor of Migrant Workers” (D2L)

2) Summary of notes, due January 28. Look at the notes you took during class, and write a 1-page summary of what you learned regarding domestic workers and international human and labor rights

SESSION 3, February 4

A.M. Servants of Globalization

Objectives: The main objective of this session is to investigate how the current stage of neoliberalism continues the history of colonialism and slavery, and how the “global care chain” is inserted in the overall lack of labor and human rights. We will also discuss how democratic relations can be grounded in the value of care, and how each of us can contribute to such relations.

ACTIVITIES:
Circle meeting on issue of civic engagement and social responsibility
- The global care chain
- Human rights and the right to care and be cared for
- Formation of teams and (tentative) topics
- Our umbrella theme and how it relates to group topics and individual presentations

**P.M. Advocating Legislative Change**

**Objectives:** In this session we will look at a variety of documents that describe the organizational as well as legislative processes involved in policy change. In particular, we will look at the Illinois Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights campaign. The main objective of this session is to give you insights into the challenges of making legislative change, and into the contributions of grassroots organizing.

**ACTIVITIES:**
- We will look at the material in the folder **Making Legislative Change** (on D2L). This material provides both general guidelines as well as information as well as examples from the Illinois Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights.
- We will discuss some of the biggest challenges, and what you consider important steps to take when engaging in advocating for legislative change.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**
- **Assignment # 3, due February 18:** Developing and articulating support for 9 questions, 3 per reading

  **The readings are:**
  - Glenn Ch. 7 from *Forced to Care*, “Creating a Caring Society”
  - Nadasen Ch. 5 from *Household Workers Unite*, “Space, place, and new models of labor organizing” (D2L)

  When reading each of the these texts please develop 3 different questions per individual reading:
  - One for a domestic worker (per reading)
  - One for a labor organizer (per reading)
  - One for a policy maker or legislator (per reading)

  In your write-up please note the title of the particular reading under which you list your three questions, and also describe what particular section motivated you to ask that particular question (including page no.) and why you think this question is important.

**SESSION 4, February 18**

**A.M. Bringing about Change, Humanizing Care**
Objectives: The main objective of this session is to look at concrete examples of different kinds and forms of civic engagement, and the different roles and activities involved in them.

ACTIVITIES:
- We will have several guest speakers (labor organizer, workers involved in the domestic workers’ movement, a person working on legislative change).
- In a circle meeting we will probe into the different meanings of ‘change’ (social, legislative, personal, interpersonal)
- We will focus on the goal or purpose of these changes, who are the agents, and how these changes relate to a caring society or democracy.

P.M. Group Project Planning
Objectives: The focus of the afternoon session is on assisting you and your team members in preparing your panel presentations or performance.

ACTIVITIES
- We will finalize forming groups as well as discuss ways of communicating among group members.
- We will discuss each team’s proposed topic, how individual topics relate to it, and how all fit under the umbrella theme of “A Just and Caring Society.”

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Prepare for your Group Project
   - Remember that the focus of your Group Project needs to fit under the umbrella theme of “A Just and Caring Society”
   - Discuss with your team what particular topic you want to set for your group project, and how your individual contribution would fit in.
   - Look at the general Bibliography as well as the readings on E-Reserve (D2L) and check which ones would be useful for your group or individual theme.
   - Start doing related background research.
2) Communicate with your team, and clarify group theme and individual topics.

SESSION 5, March 4

A.M. and P.M. A Caring Society, a Caring Democracy
The objective of this session is to review what we learned, whether we arrived at a shared understanding of the value of care and care work, and how we envision individual and collective contributions to the creation of a just and caring society.

ACTIVITIES:
- We will summarize what we learned about the culture, structures, and politics of a caring democracy, and discuss our place in creating and sustaining it.
Groups will present their project
We will have a Closing Circle

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Written Summary of Individual Contribution to and Evaluation of Group Presentation, due March 12
   Please describe your particular contribution in terms of preparation and involvement as well as resources consulted; 4-5 pages, including a list of resources.

2) Finalizing Assignments

***ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY MARCH 18***

Course Policies
   Attendance and Class Participation
   Interpersonal interaction and communication are of primary importance in this course. Our in-class meetings allow us to practice building a learning community directly onsite. It is therefore extremely important that you attend each class session.

   Incompletes
   In this class the instructor will only give an Incomplete when she has at least received a first draft of missing assignments. If you wish to receive the grade of IN you must formally request in writing that the instructor issue the grade, and this before the end of the quarter.

   SNL and University Policies
   This course includes and adheres to SNL university policies described in the links below:

   Academic Integrity Policy
   Incomplete Policy
   Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences
   Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability

   Course Resources

   University Center for Writing-based Learning
   SNL Writing Guide
   Dean of Students Office