

The post-Fordist Care Regime

A workshop series organised by the Centre for Philosophy and Political Economy (CPPE), School of Management, University of Leicester, UK

Workshop 1: The Business of Care

Convened by Vanessa Beck, Steve Brown and Fabian Frenzel

Date: 10. December 2015, University of Leicester

Program

12.00-12.30: Lunch

12.30-13.15: Silke Roth **'Who cares? Self-realization, entitlement and empowerment'**

13.15-14.00: Carol Wolkowitz **'Flesh and Stone: The Body Work Economy of South Florida'**

14.00-14.30: Coffee/Tea/informal discussion

14.30-15.15: Paul Brooks, Bob Carter, Jo Grady, William Green, Xanthe Wittaker: **'Junior doctors, moral economy and the NHS crisis: commitment and values put to the test'**

15.15-16.00: Fabian Frenzel: **A Very Big Society: International Voluntary Care Provision**

16.00: Final Plenary

Please register to attend using the following link

<http://goo.gl/forms/jwbt5J9jQp>

Background:

Certain transformations in our political economic landscape can be distilled according to regimes of care. Fordist care was provided primarily by female 'free

labour' within the family context, while the state played a large role through institutions like schools, pensions, prisons and hospitals. By contrast the private sector role was rather limited although, of course regimes are uneven and varied across different countries and social sectors. The post-Fordist regime of care was triggered, in part, by a rebellion against the invisible and unvalued nature of female 'free labour' in the care domain, for example in housework or child care. Demands for more autonomous, neither market nor state based forms of care were made and realised in new social and urban movements that pursued attempts to create new forms of social reproduction and care in communes, housing co-ops or self organised childcare. Despite the progressive impetus of many of these initiatives, it is possible to see, with hindsight, how demands for autonomous care were subsumed within the general move away from state provision and towards privatisation as well as individualisation of care responsibility. In the post-Fordist regime the provision of care is increasingly organised around the needs of capitalist valorisation. This drive towards privatisation is ostensibly about efficiency and budgetary restraint, the underlying motives, however, may well be more diffuse, pointing to the opening of new sources of surplus value capture for a growing sector of market oriented care provision.

Yet as the State outsources care jobs (in prisons, health, schools, etc), the organisation of markets has taken on specific characteristics. This includes the internationalisation of the care regime with transnational businesses of care, a transnational labour force and the expanding mobilities of care receivers. A further aspect is the increasing financialisation of care, which includes the creation of ever-new financial vehicles, from Private-Public Partnerships to social impact bonds that aim at ensuring efficiency in the care sector but often do the exact opposite. Both nationally and internationally we witness the renewed mobilisation of 'free labour'. Unlike in the Fordist regime of care, this now aims at volunteers across age and gender groups and framings such as the 'big society' and 'international volunteering'. Beside this unremunerated work we see increasingly precarious conditions of labour in the care sector, often migrant labour, on zero hour contracts and minimum wages. The precise composition of this labour market is another area of interest. What novel forms of organisation are emerging in response to our present regime of care? And what resistance is emerging?

Finally, although price is often taken to be the primary concern of post-Fordist care provision, the quality of care cannot be ignored, though it is difficult to measure. Beyond a private industry of care provision we also find a new 'industry of measurement' that claims to assess the value and quality of privately administered care. The organisation of these new organisational patterns and industries of care are the subject of this workshop.