Masculinities, Caregiving & Equality

'20 Years of Family Carer Research’

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Key Question:
How do men negotiate a position as caregivers within the feminised context of caring?

1. Caring Relations & Identity
2. Caring Relations & Inequality
3. Masculine Caregiving Relations
4. Gendered Caregiving Labours
5. Gendered Caring Ideologies
6. Gendered Welfare Regimes
7. Negotiating Contradictory Masculinities
Caring refers to both sets of feelings and a set of activities and resources, concerned with supportive relationships, ranging from close family members to strangers.

‘Caring for’ – practical caring activities
‘Caring about’ - other-centred caring disposition/feelings
Intersection of multiple inequalities

- Equality of condition for people to form meaningful & fulfilling relations of love, care & solidarity
- Equality in the benefits and the burdens of caring

- Economic
- Resources
- Respect and Recognition
- Representation
- Work and Education

- Cultural
- Love, Care & Solidarity

- Affective

- Political
Masculine Care Relations

- Contingent on individual, familial & life course circumstances
- Intimacy, duty, engagement shaped by cultural norms
- Meanings socially & historically constructed
- Complexity within categories (e.g. fathering, family diversities)
Gendered Caring Labours

- Diet & food
- Protection
- Intimate personal care
- Education
- Domestic work
- Engaging social life
- Companionship

Complexity of Total Division Household Labour including breadwinning
Work of caring + attributes of caregiver are feminised with low status + little recognition
Relations gendered more than job per se - masculinised areas
Gendered Caring Ideologies

- **Caring femininities** - moral imperative, historical cultural & social narrative within modernity, essentialism, oppositional, complementarity of gender difference—emphasised femininity

- **Carefree masculinities** - shifting ideals of hegemonic masculinity (conservative, liberal, neo-liberal, libertarian) but nonetheless carefree
Hegemonic Masculinities

- ‘Man in power, with power, and of power’
- Models/ideas for male domination that are highly valued among men and institutionalised within a given culture
- Relationship of ideological power – normalises masculine authority & domination
- Highly valued (idealised) masculinity that ensures subordination of women & non-hegemonic masculinities
- How particular groups of men monopolise positions of power and wealth, normalise positions & reproduce relationships of dominance
- Legitimates relationships of superiority /inferiority through ideological / discursive persuasion therefore creating consent, complicity and embodiment
Hierarchy of Masculinities

- Hegemonic
- Emphasised femininities
- Marginalised
- Subordinated
- Complicit masculinities
Gendered Welfare Regimes

Structure of Caring

- Healthcare
- Social Care
- Income Support
- Labour law
- Education
- Housing
- Social Work
- Child Care
Negotiating Contradictory Identities

- **Dissonance** - caring and hegemonic masculinity
- **Equality** - avoid burdens & denied benefits of caring relations
- **Feminization** - care and emotion work
- **Subordinated** and stigmatised status
- **Invisible** - loss of gender identity
- **Dependent** - dependency of care recipient disempowering, emasculating
- **Vulnerable** - contrary to hegemonic masculinity, – help seeking, self-reliance, self care, isolation, social networks
- **Masculine Care Capital** – flight from feminization, higher status, technical, managerialist, specialist
- **Critical Reflexivity** – confront, transform, reassess