

BOOK REVIEW/COMPTE RENDU

Nicola Yeates, *Globalizing Care Economies and Migrant Workers: Explorations in Global Care Chains*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, 256 pp. \$US 74.95 hardcover (978-0-230-00534-1)

In recent years, Nicola Yeates has contributed widely to scholarly writing on globalization, penning numerous articles and books — *Globalization and Public Policy* and *Understanding Global Social Policy* — and serving as co-editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Global Social Policy*. To date, much of her work has focused on the public face of globalization, illuminating key aspects of public policy, such as migration, trade and economic development, and state provision.

In *Globalizing Care Economies and Migrant Workers: Explorations in Global Care Chains*, Yeates turns her attention to the intersection of private and public, examining how care provision and the experiences of care giving are being transformed by processes of globalization, migration and transnationalism. At the heart of her study is the concept of the “global care chain” — a term first coined by Arlie Hochschild to describe the “series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid and unpaid work of caring” (Hochschild 2000, cited in Yeates, 40). Typically studied examples of global care chains (GCCs), Yeates notes, involve the flow of women from poorer countries (e.g., Philippines) to work as paid nannies or elder caregivers in wealthier European or North American nations (e.g., Canada, US, Britain). Many leave their own children behind to be raised by grandparents or extended family. Together these women form a crucial part of the growing paid caring labour force in Northern countries, while also providing essential revenues to their home countries through remittances sent to children and families.

To date, academic interest in GCCs has spawned many fascinating studies, such as Rhacel Salazar Parreñas’s compelling *Servants of Globalization*. Yet, Yeates operates with a much different vision, resisting well worn paths and narratives, and choosing instead to engage critically with, and extend, current thinking about the concept of GCC. Her analysis is complex and wide ranging, synthesizing new empirical details with equally valuable theoretical overviews. Following a brief introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides an extensive and thoughtful review of theoretical approaches to globalization and care, tracing interconnections be-

tween thinking about productive labour and reproductive labour, and key approaches on the latter (e.g. new international division of reproductive labour, transnational families, care regimes). Chapter 3 excavates the concept of the GCC, drawing links between literature on “commodity chains” and “care chains,” and suggesting ways to broaden current thinking. Central to Yeates’ critique is the need for pay greater attention to the *diversity* within GCCs — in particular, she urges researchers to move beyond the prototypical focus on nannies and domestics, to capture diverse skill sets, especially the growing numbers of highly skilled caregivers such as nurses. Studies should also address a broader range of care, in her view, as well as more diverse family backgrounds and motivations of global caregivers, and a far wider range of care settings (e.g., domestic/institutional, state/nonstate). Equally important, Yeates contends, is the need to historicize studies of global care giving to better illuminate the factors fuelling current patterns and transformations occurring over time. Moving beyond this critique, she proposes a useful analytical framework, as well as maps of potential agents involved in GCCs (pp. 59–65). Her discussion here is highly effective in pushing out the boundaries of the GCC concept, and sparking creative thinking about potential research sites and questions that could be fruitfully explored.

With this theoretical and conceptual background in place, Yeates proceeds in the second half of her book to present findings from her empirical research on less studied types of global care giving — in particular, global nursing care chains (GNCCs) and global religious care chains (GRCCs). Nursing forms the predominant focus of her analysis, with Chapter 4 examining global trends in nursing migration, illustrating how state policy operates in countries to produce nurses for export (e.g., Philippines, India, China, Korea), while operating elsewhere through neoliberal policy to creates shortages and vacancies for such workers (e.g., Canada, US, Australia). Issues of recruitment, accreditation, and licensing are all taken up, alongside the creation of globalized racialized labour markets and the regressive distributive effects for Southern countries of the global care trade. In Chapters 5 and 6, Yeates focuses more specifically on the case of Ireland, showing how Ireland has shifted from “exporter” to “importer” status as it increasingly draws nursing skills from India and the Philippines. Examining the subjective experiences of Indian and Filipino nurses, Yeates also explores women’s experiences of emigrating to Ireland, their working conditions and pay, their negotiation of race in the workplace, and their “mothering” work in maintaining their own family networks. In Chapter 7, Yeates shifts focus to global religious care chains (GRCCs), exploring female religious care workers, such as those working overseas through the Catholic Church. Tracing

historical patterns, Yeates shows the immense contribution of Irish religious and secular care workers in providing a wide range of spiritual, health, and social care to countries around the globe. Her analysis is both empirically and theoretically useful, as GRCCs run counter to dominant narratives of GCC by involving very different types of care (religious, spiritual, social), woman (unmarried and child-free), motivation (spiritual), and migratory flows (from developed to developing countries).

Globalizing Care is a valuable book, providing rich detail and thoughtful analysis of the global provision of care. Yeates excels in extending the conceptual terrain of the GCC concept; her critique is thoughtful and nuanced, and her suggestions for capturing diverse occupational groups, skill sets, care settings, and family situations are all well placed. Equally compelling is her commitment to a historically grounded analysis — as her empirical work clearly shows, transfers of care across households and geographical space are not necessarily a “new” phenomenon. Many countries have played a historical role in recruiting, or providing, caring labour, and current trends can only be understood within their own broad historical context. Her work on Irish nurses is a case in point, providing a powerful case study of the forces reshaping global care provision as a result of population aging in wealthy nations, neoliberal policy making, and the shortage of skilled care professionals worldwide. One wishes Yeates had delved further into the nursing example; her account of the subjective experiences of Indian and Filipino nurses is vivid and fascinating, revealing great skill as a recorder of human experience and bringing to life many critical issues around racialized labour markets, state policy, the economic status of im/migrant workers, and the complexities of managing transnational and immigrant family life. This is not to take away, however, from Yeates’ overall contribution, which more than succeeds in extending theoretical and empirical work on global care. Those teaching and doing research in the areas of globalization, care, family, and transnationalism will find much of value in this book. It offers broad theoretical grounding, innovative thinking, and creative conceptual tools that will further the analysis of the complexities of global care.

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