

Do You Have Time to Care?

An Exploration of Time and Routinization Within Contemporary Care Work

Joanna Wolton, Department of Sociology, THE UNIVERSITY of York

joanna.wolton@york.ac.uk

Concluding statement

As one of the fundamental components of care has been reduced or removed altogether then what will care become? Furthermore with the increasing emphasis on efficiency, it can be questioned if there will be time left to care?

Conclusion

- ◆ The findings comply with the assertions made by Aronson and Neysmith, the definition of care has been narrowed to prioritise physical needs over emotional needs
- ◆ As a consequence, care work has almost become depersonalised, as opposed to routinized, and there seems to be no time to partake in emotional labour.

Findings and Discussion

- ◆ Care workers feel the strain of attempting to balance both physical and emotional needs of their clients within the parameters of the care home routine...

'you're trying to help people in the morning but ... you're watching the clock because you've got so many to do...you're talking to people as you're going but it would be nice to sit down with...whoever and talk to them, because you haven't always got that time... and to me that's precious time...'

'each person's got the right to have as much time as it takes but you know if you took sometimes the time that somebody might want to take, you're gonna have no chance to do anything else... other residents are going to be missing out because you have to be even quicker with them...'

'...if a resident's just taking like five minutes extra to... pick a top you're thinking 'oh I've just lost that five minutes off somebody else' ... and then the residents starts to say 'don't rush me, don't rush me...'

- ◆ The physical component of care work is given precedence over the emotional part of care work.

'more carers on shift... just so we have time to do more activities and stuff rather than just basing it on their personal care...'

Aims

- ◆ This is part of a wider piece of work exploring the increasing privatisation of contemporary institutional care for the elderly from the perspectives of care workers
- ◆ This project explores how post-fordist ideals of increasing efficiency impacts on time management in the content of care work.



Background

An observable tension:

- ◆ between the 'mechanical' expectations of the private sector which is driven by profit, through increasing efficiency and reducing expenditure.

And,

- ◆ the 'organic' actualities of care work which is not amendable to clock time and routinization.

So...

- ◆ What effect does this have on care work?

Theoretical concepts.

- ◆ Care work as a concept requires both affective and instrumental work. In effect care workers are required to *'provide love as well as labour'* (Abel and Nelson: 1990:4).
- ◆ Industry is dominated by clock time (Adam: 1993: 164), but individuals and their bodies have their own processes that transpire in their own times. The body is not passive but reactionary, and more unpredictable as the body ages (Twigg: 2006: 128).
- ◆ Industry speed-up and the intensification of care work results as the care industry attempts to comply with clock time (Aronson and Neysmith: 1996: 60-62; Hochschild: 1983: 121-125).
- ◆ This routinization of care poses a danger of dehumanising service users and reducing them to manageable units (Diamond: 1992: 204).

Methods

- ◆ 3 case studies. formed the basis of comparison and contrast:
- ◆ HA- care home with a specialism in dementia, located in the East of England, catering for 57 residents, and part of a large chain.
- ◆ HB- care home with nursing services, located in the North East of England, catering for 37 residents, affiliated with a charity.
- ◆ HC- care home with nursing services, located in the North East of England, catering for 29 residents, and part of a family business
- ◆ 'Micro-ethnographic' methods utilised:
- ◆ 18 in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted, alongside 6 months of both participant and non-participant observations
- ◆ Introspection.
- ◆ Looking at the issues that arise in day to day working life of contemporary care workers, within the private sector.

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