

Claire Ungerson and Sue Yeandle (eds)

*Cash-for-Care in Developed Welfare States*

Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2007, 232 pp., £50.00 (hbk), ISBN 978140395526

Caroline Glendenning and Peter A. Kemp (eds)

*Cash and Care: Policy Challenges in the Welfare State*

Bristol, The Policy Press, 2006, 336 pp., £60.00 (hbk), ISBN 9781861348579

These two edited collections focus on important new trends in care provision and explore their effects in cross-national perspective. Ungerson and Yeandle's comparison of seven countries illustrates the growing phenomenon of national policies turning to market solutions by distributing cash as a solution to care needs, in this case specifically care needs of the elderly. Glendenning and Kemp's book covers a wide range of household care cases and cash policies, analysing these through the various lenses of different household and care needs, gender, new social risks and welfare states. Both books are at the cutting edge of research on care and policy developments in this increasingly important field of welfare state activity. Both offer the opportunity to examine the relationship between care and cash up close, and to assess whether cash-for-care policies represent a viable attempt to address the care crisis, or are instead 'wolves in sheep's clothing'.

Ungerson and Yeandle's *Cash-for-Care in Developed Welfare States* sets out to provide a framework for understanding cross-national variations in cash for care arrangements, and to question the sustainability of these fledgling schemes. Seven countries and their programmes are evaluated: Austria, France, the Netherlands, Italy, the UK, Germany and the USA. The authors of individual country chapters – August Österle and Elisabeth Hammer (Austria), Claude Martin and Blanche Le Bihan (France), Ulrike Schneider and Carlos Reyes (Germany), Christiano Gori and Barbara Da Roit (Italy), Marja Pijl and Claire Ramakers (Netherlands), Sharon M. Keigher (USA), and Sue Yeandle and Bernadette Stiell (UK) – answer the following questions: How are different countries' cash-for-care policies pursuing objectives for cost-containment while attempting to solve care needs, as well as promoting consumer empowerment? Most of the cash-for-care schemes analysed were developed in the 1990s, with a rhetoric of modernization, empowered consumerism, preferences, choice, and autonomy dominating policy-making discussions. Many of the country studies reveal tensions around addressing the issues of care quality professional monitoring, as well as the diametrically opposed move-

ment towards managed care. Tensions arise especially around the quality issue and debates abound as to whether relatives of dependants should be paid for the provision of care. The state management of risk through accreditation and professionalization of care workers is very much about gender (more than 90% of carers in this area are women), poverty and the devaluation of professions (for example, even well-educated professionals – especially migrants – are underpaid). Some of the findings will be shocking for the reader; for example, in Italy, care users take cash-for-care payments to reduce their own poverty, while in the USA the poor are increasingly being cared for by the poor, with both groups highly vulnerable to social and health risks.

The chapters on France, Italy and Germany are especially strong in terms of explaining the political agenda and processes of the countries. Martin and Le Bihan describe interesting reversals of French policy decisions, from top-down to bottom-up, and show that policies resulted more in job insecurity than in job creation. Schneider and Reyes (Germany) and Gori and Da Roit (Italy) address specific gender issues that are consequential in the country-specific cash-for-care programmes, while the German case discusses the effects of informal workers in families and the employment decisions women carers face. Some of the other chapters in the book are a little heavy on details of cash for care programmes and light on political explanation. The overarching conclusion, though, is that cash-for-care programmes fulfil certain key objectives of modern welfare states, including both consumer empowerment and some degree of cost-containment. Problems which still need to be resolved are the short-sightedness of responses to immediate care crises which do not involve long-term fiscal and revenue planning, as well as the often conflicting objectives (e.g. in providing cheap care solutions or in combating the illegal market) of different parts of government interested in this policy field. The book illustrates the issues well, and the concluding chapter is an especially well thought-through reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of cash-for-care measures. The book raises many interesting questions – and provides a certain number of answers – on issues related to quality, risk management, professionalization, and how a 'grey market' is sustained in such policy measures.

Caroline Glendenning and Peter Kemp's book, *Cash and Care: Policy Challenges in the Welfare State*, opens up a new and fresh perspective on the aspects of money and the household. All the contributions of this book are well written and well researched. It starts out with an Introduction by the editors and three contributions on the background and conceptual underpinning of care and gender (Jane Lewis), cash and care developments (Kari Wærness), and knowledge in cash and care policy (Eithne McLaughlin). Lewis discusses latest developments in care-work recognition in both UK and EU policy. Wærness

develops an innovative analysis of professionalization and 'good quality care', advocating a 'feminist ethics of care' approach which emphasizes issues of the self and citizenship within care relationships, and discusses the devaluation of rational action, reason and feelings in newer developments of policies dealing with care. McLaughlin explores the problems of presenting knowledge and evidence in policy making. The chapters in Part III of the book present excellent perspectives on a range of specific issues relating to caring households and forms of disadvantage: on the costs of caring for a disabled child (Jan Pahl); on disability, poverty and living standards in Australia (Peter Saunders); on consumption patterns and citizenship among low-income families in Sweden and Denmark (Pernille Hohnen); on provision of credit for low-income households (Sharon Collard); and on the risks of carers in employment (Hillary Arksey and Peter Kemp). Part IV of the book concentrates on families and care work. Caroline Glendenning evaluates different models of paying family caregivers; Margareta Kreimer discusses Austrian care arrangements, the costs and choices provided by the state and problems of equality; Jef Breda et al. focus on Personal Assistance Budgets and issues of paid informal care in Belgium; Jane Millar presents the insecurity of employed lone mothers in the UK; Christine Skinner and Naomi Finch look at lone parents' families and issues of reciprocity within informal caring arrangements; and Tess Ridge illustrates children's considerable responsibilities and contributions in low-income lone-mother families. Part V, the last in the book, concentrates on care dependants active in the policy-making process. Karen Postle and Peter Beresford describe the supports of new forms of engagement by marginalized groups; Jenny Morris illuminates the role of the disability movement in the UK government; and Hilary Land explores the development of active and independent citizenship for the elderly.

The individual contributions are all strong, and the articles have been picked with care to cover a wide spectrum of specific issues within the cash and care debates. Though there is a strong focus on the UK this is supplemented with many international comparisons, and the reader comes away with a deeper understanding of household care and cash issues as a whole. The conclusion considers how the various issues interlock, although a stronger common thread within the articles, or a unified theoretical framework, would have been helpful in giving the reader a reference point throughout the book and in creating the conditions for a better dialogue between the different chapters. As a whole, however, this book does a good job of exposing the issues around care and cash in their rich diversity, and in presenting the many issues and approaches which should be considered.

Both books point to a paradox in the marketization of care services; care responsibilities are 'going public' but in effect the market is throwing these responsibilities back

into the private sphere of the family. The risk is that 'carers' might be swallowed up in the market, in very much the way that Little Red Riding Hood was eaten up by the wolf. Care recipients, like grandmothers, also end up becoming 'consumers of care' and must increasingly act as 'employers'. It could follow that the grandmother in this fairy tale will end up being eaten by the wolf too, if she is overwhelmed by transaction costs of hiring and firing and of gathering information of services to fit her needs with little real knowledge of her care choices. As both these books point out, political scientists and economists still have their work cut out in terms of redistributing risk and in finding a happy ending for care solutions.

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Steffen Ganghof

*The Politics of Income Taxation: a Comparative Analysis*

Colchester, ECPR Press, 2007, 200 pp., £22.00 (pbk), ISBN 9780954796686

Tax policy is one of those areas which most political scientists would agree is in need of more attention than has been given hitherto but which nevertheless is mostly left unattended by the community. Steffen Ganghof's new book on the politics of income taxation from the 1980s to the present day is therefore a very timely contribution, which is likely to create a great deal of interest because it sheds light on a complicated issue in an accessible and convincing way.

Most of the existing literature on taxation has been centred on the impact of international tax competition on domestic tax policies. The simplified argument has been that, especially since the 1986 US tax reform, a great process of convergence has taken place towards the bottom; not least regarding corporate tax rates, where the preferences of domestic political actors have been pushed aside. Ganghof's important contribution is to nuance this widespread belief.

The starting point for Ganghof is that the tax system at the beginning of the period studied (the 1980s) was in 'a horrible mess', originating in an extremely pervasive regulation of the area. This policy failure led to fairly dramatic cuts in marginal tax rates and a broadening of the tax base. Although Ganghof agrees with the literature (e.g. Sven Steinmo and collaborators) at this general level, he adds considerable refinement to the existing theories when explaining why it had to be this policy that became dominant and not the alternatives.

Ganghof's argument can be summarized in four points. First, and in accordance with the conventional tax compe-