Measuring ‘domestic work’: Who does it? Who benefits? And who cares?

The UN Rapporteur on extreme poverty has called unpaid domestic work a human rights violation (2013). Much feminist work has presented argued for the inclusion of domestic work in the national GDP as recognition of its importance to the global economy. And yet domestic work continues not to be recognized and measured, leaving those who engage in it (largely women) in a socially and politically vulnerable position. This workshop will address the importance of measuring domestic work seriously and raise questions about the methodology and politics of doing this seriously.

11.00-11.15 Coffee
11.15-12.30 Tracey Warren, Professor of Sociology, University of Nottingham
   Why measure unpaid domestic work? Domestic work practices and relationships
12.30-1.30 Lunch provided
1.30-2.45 Ruth Pearson, Emeritus Professor of International Development, University of Leeds
   Struggles over the reproductive bargain: economic and political implications
2.45-3.00 Tea
3.00-3.30 Discussion of future projects

Speakers

Tracey Warren is a leading scholar in the sociology of work. Her research interests lie in the sociologies of work and employment, and of social divisions. She has just completed a project on the ramifications of the economic crisis for gender and class inequalities in economic well-being in Britain. Other recent work considers issues in the measurement of unpaid domestic work. Her recent publications on the conceptualisation and measurement of unpaid and paid work include the 2011 article ‘Researching the gender division of unpaid domestic work: practices, relationships, negotiations, and meanings’, The Sociological Review, 59(1): 129-148 and in 2010, 'Gender equality in time: paid and unpaid work in the UK’, Feminist Economics, 16, 3: 193-219.

Ruth Pearson's extensive publications reflect research on a range of topics including women's employment; economic transition; gendered analysis of production and social reproduction; home-based work and workers’ organisations; migrant workers and identity. Her case studies include research on the UK, Burma/Thailand, Mexico, Cuba and Argentina. Her contributions to feminist economics, together with those of her co-author, of the path-breaking 1981 article ‘Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers’ have been celebrated in the recently published festschrift volume New Frontiers of Feminist Political Economy (2014), edited by Shirin Rai and Georgina Waylen. Ruth is a member of the Advisory Board of the Warwick GRP on International Development.

For catering purposes, please email that you plan to attend, to Janet.Smith@warwick.ac.uk by 4 February.