

Organizing local care

Co-operatives are not the only way in which community-driven systems of localized care can be organized. The Buurtzorg model of nursing care borrows some of the elements of co-operatives in the way it places the management of local care systems in the hands of small teams of nurses who take a holistic approach to home care. Its successes, both financially and in the quality of care that is provided, highlight the power of egalitarian and decentralized systems to provide higher standards of care, even when measured against the metrics of corporate, efficiency-based models of traditional care systems.

5.9 Watch “Healthcare: Humanity Above Bureaucracy.” (12:37)



de Blok, Jos. “Healthcare: Humanity Above Bureaucracy,” video, 12:37, posted by TEDx Talks to YouTube, May 22, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSoWtXvqsgg> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSoWtXvqsgg>)

Another dimension of social care that demands attention is its gender, race, and class characteristics—particularly as it relates to care workers. The vast majority of care workers are women. Picking up on the theme of gender exploitation in the care industry, this video shows how nannies organized to overcome the global supply chain that exploits women for the provision of child care to privileged elites the world over.

5.10 Watch “A Coop Story: Beyond Care Childcare Cooperative,” (7:24)

A Co-op Story: Beyond Care Childcare Cooperative



The Laura Flanders Show. “A Coop Story: Beyond Care Childcare Cooperative,” video, 7:24, posted by the creator to YouTube July, 22, 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VtDdeX1woQ> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VtDdeX1woQ>

5.11 Read “Democratizing Care,” (25 min.)

Brenner, Johanna. “Democratizing Care,” Blog Post, Verso Books, 15 December 2017.

<https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3538-democratizing-care>

Johanna Brenner’s essay “Democratizing Care” addresses the theme of gender inequality in social care and explores a number of ways in which expanding communitarian and co-operative forms of care empowers women and encourages greater gender equality. Her presentation of co-housing and its impact on social and gender relations is instructive and relates the values of commoning outlined in the earlier land and housing module to the democratic restructuring of social care.