

RECENSIONI
BOOK REVIEWS

Care professions and globalization. Theoretical and practical perspectives

ANA MARTA GONZÁLEZ, CRAIG IFFLAND

Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2014

This book is a comprehensive perspective of care professions nowadays and their thought and urgent challenges. First of all this work emphasizes the relevance of understanding *care nature*, in a society that does not know exactly what it implies neither values care. Theoretically, it may help to explore ways of solving possible tensions between care, emotions, and professionalization, which require a good deal of accurately thinking and discerning. Practically, care is often understood as an action derived from the mere impersonal routine of “having to solve” other people’s needs. There are certainly several kinds of deficiencies to be cared for, but beyond basic shortages such as health, food, shelter, education, work, even social recognition, there is an increasing need of particular and professional care that is a sign of our times, as the authors accurately state. The different chapters provide an interdisciplinary perspective to give light on the importance of care and its professionalization.

Also, the book states an increasingly problematic situation of dependency from many human groups, such as the elderly, the terminally ill, people who have chronic illness or have to face long periods of dependency or vulnerability, are growing dramatically and the resources are diminishing, i.e. human and material resources to properly attend them. Care that used to be solved within family environment is actually almost lost, even in developed countries. Many cases of Parkinson, Alzheimer and senile dementia have become a big problem. The authors state there is an immediate need to articulate responsible work in order to address familiar,

social and political human needs in the best way possible, it happens mainly in the institutions where professionals, provide specialized care: nurses, physicians, UCI attendants, palliative care teams and specially, domestic work employees. There must be an increasing consciousness of the need to overcome the devaluation of domestic work, as a non-human activity. Focusing at the developing of creativity and virtues to perform it with perfection, facilitating all others human and cultural activities, while having main necessities solved: food, shelter, clothes, a pleasant place to rest, medications, etcetera.

The main aim is to situate care as something more inspiring and profound than merely solving momentary problems. This means to conceive care in the sense that Heidegger argues: a dimension that marks us as human beings. It is not plausible for anybody not to depend in some moment of our lives of others. Therefore, we need to understand care as an attitude of concern – caring about – centering individually on the wellbeing of each person who is cared for. Another point the reader must pay attention to, is the ethics of care “double irony”. Professional caregivers are being judged by the norms of ethics of care, meaning intimate relations. On the other hand, the practice of informal caregiving is also judged by theorists, using the same norms of professional caregivers.

From the practical perspective, the authors also do worthy reflection on some concrete matters such as finding ways of solving tensions between care and emotions. Caregivers’ emotions may become a threat, given the interdependency of our emotions and our identities as moral persons.

It is of thorough importance what the book proposes about three relations all human beings go through, which affect our personality: natural, practical and social, each of them give rise to a cluster of emotions. The balance we make internally between these emotional inputs defines what we really care about, and mostly the act of caring itself. The

Indirizzo per la corrispondenza
Address for correspondence

Luz María Guadalupe Pichardo García
Instituto Panamericano de Jurisprudencia. Facultad de Derecho
Universidad Panamericana
Augusto Rodin 498, Insurgentes Mixcoac 03920, México, D.F.
e-mail: lpichard@up.edu.mx

achievement of personal self is dependent on one's ultimate objects of care and concern. These ideas clarify in great extent the nature of care in every human activity and open a field to develop strategies to understand and control the emotional, personal, social and cultural structures to implement a comprehensive, nonreductionist approach to the serious study and implementation of effective ways to control tension, for instance in a UCI, focusing in attending the patient with kindness and expertise; giving nursing a fundamental role in health care, giving respect a primary part, as an essential ethical attitude.

It is remarkable to discover some light on the roles which different actors may play in the caring process. They refer to three main actors: familiar, social and political. Each one

with their specific responsibilities, that is not easy to articulate, but must be address immediately.

One solution most authors propose in this work, each one in their own field, is to increase consciousness concerning the value of the human being who receives any form of care, as the utmost relevant part of their professionalism. Beyond doubt, the topicality of the themes treated in this book and its projection for a fresh vision of care professions may help to better comprehend new practical paradigms, which solve actual drawbacks such as lack of competent personal who understand care as an active attitude of worrying for somebody's needs (caring about), and acting with responsibility to fulfill those needs (caring for), which enrich mostly the care giver.