



JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY
IN KRAKOW

Principles of exchange, redistribution and reciprocity, and provisioning of care

Anna Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz

Outline of presentation

Main concepts

Reciprocity, redistribution and exchange in contemporary economies

Care, reciprocity and exchange

Main concepts

Modes of transfer – also could be referred to as patterns of integration of economic activity, systems of allocation or principles applying to exchange – reciprocity, redistribution and exchange

Exchange is dependant on the market pattern and is conducted trough prices and interaction between supply and demand.

Redistribution consists of a political central power deciding allocation of goods and services.

Reciprocity is a set of interrelated givings.

Main concepts

Gift-giving is a transfer of a good, or a service, an action that intends to benefit someone else and is in some way costly for the giver.

Reciprocity is an in-kind response to beneficial and harmful acts.

Care could be broadly defined as work that involves looking after the physical, social, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more persons.

The concept of care labour describes a type of work that relational – it entails the performance of physical tasks, and development of a relationship.

Reciprocity and exchange in contemporary economies

Nonmonetary aspects of the economy seem to become more and more subordinate to the market – markets appear in new areas, the ones that used to be dominated by non-monetary relations.

Dominance of the market in contemporary economies creates certain consequences – if value is measured in money, the lack of such measure implies the lack of value.

Reciprocity, exchange and care

Features of care work – it is done because of affection and responsibility for others, without expectation of immediate monetary rewards - make it distinct from the market and closer to a gift.

Care labour is regulated mostly by ideological and normative mechanisms, and a value is assigned to it only if its substitutes could be found in the market.

Using monetary values for care work imposes omission of personal and relational aspects of care. In consequence care in some degree is invisible.

Conclusions

Reciprocity is one of modes of transfer and it consists of gift-giving (and returning gifts).

Care is provided not for immediate reward but rather for the expectation of the reciprocal activity to be performed in future.

Because of the domination of exchange relations in contemporary economies, gifts transferred outside of the market are undervalued both by the market itself, and by members of society.

It is a case of care givers, whose work is undervalued and not respected.