



Care Work and Class: Domestic Workers' Struggle for Equal Rights in Latin America

Merike Blofield

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Despite constitutions that enshrine equality, until recently every state in Latin America permitted longer working hours (in some cases more than double the hours) and lower benefits for domestic workers than other workers. This has, in effect, subsidized a cheap labor force for middle- and upper-class families and enabled well-to-do women to enter professional labor markets without having to negotiate household and care work with their male partners. While elite resistance to reform has been widespread, during the past fifteen years a handful of countries have instituted equal rights. In *Care Work and Class*, Merike Blofield examines how domestic workers' mobilization, strategic alliances, and political windows of opportunity, mostly linked to left-wing executive and legislative allies, can lead to improved rights even in a region as unequal as Latin America. Blofield also examines the conditions that lead to better enforcement of rights.

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