The Political Economy of Household Services in Europe

Edited By Clément Carbonnier and Nathalie Morel

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“This is a wonderfully illuminating book presenting a new incisive analysis of the political economy of household services. [...] A major contribution to understanding the contradictions of neo-liberal welfare policies.” - Fiona Williams, University of Leeds, UK

"Nathalie Morel and Clément Carbonnier have assembled a truly impressive array of experts [...] The cross-disciplinary approach bringing together, among others, political scientists, economists and sociologists provides a rich array of lenses with which to view reliance on tax credits as a replacement for more familiar policy instruments in order to achieve market-making policy effects.” - Jane Jenson, Université de Montréal, Canada

About the book
Over the past two decades, countries in Continental and Northern Europe have set up specific policies to promote the development of household services. This edited volume analyses the aims pursued with these policies, and the ways in which the issues have been framed. It examines the resultant labour market outcomes, focusing on the forms and quality of employment in the household services sector, and highlighting both the symbolic and economic effects of the construction of domestic and care services as low-skilled, low-value work. The authors demonstrate how these policies have actively contributed to the structuring of dualisms within the labour market, reinforcing social, gendered and ethnic divides. They also shed light on the distributive effects of these policies, which essentially benefit affluent households, and question their efficiency, not least with regard to their employment objectives.

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