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Transnational Families

Opportunities and Constraints for Caring Across Borders

Dr Majella Kilkey
Reader in Social Policy
Co-Director, Migration Research Group
University of Sheffield, UK

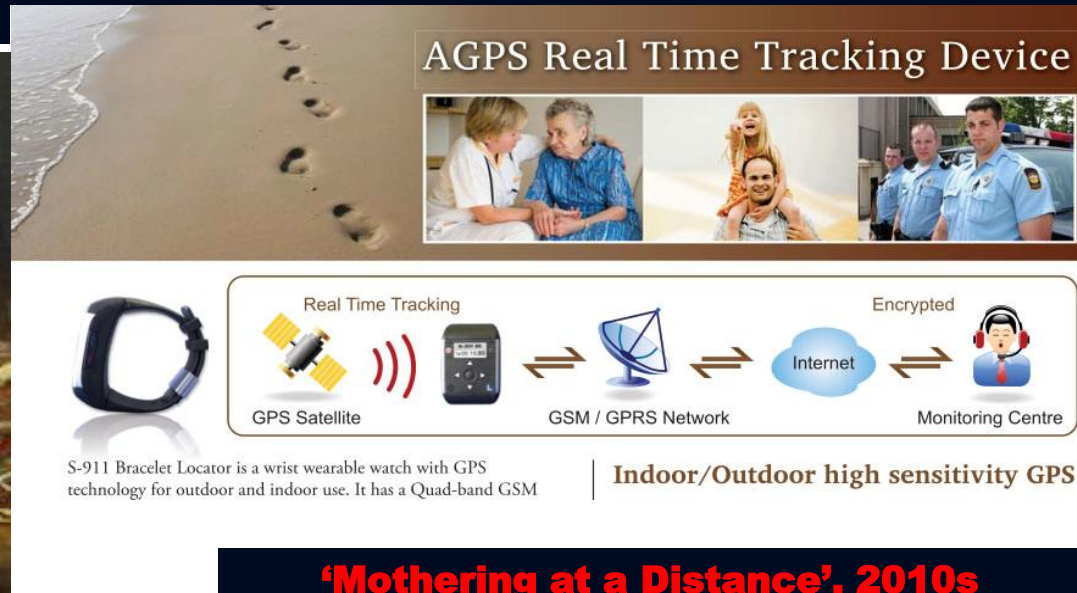
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Virtual care in transnational families

A Lady Reading a Letter
Gerrit ter Borch, 1660s



Distant Monitoring, 2010s



Virtual kiss, 2010s



Telenoid, 2013
Telecommunication Avatar



'Mothering at a Distance', 2010s



Presentation's main point of departure...

- *Proximate care matters* too for transnational families:
 - Why, when, for what and for whom?
 - Proximity rests on mobility
 - Mobility / immobility constituted at intersection of a range of institutional arrangements
 - Intersection between migration policies and welfare policies particularly important
 - Policy developments point to increasingly restrictive opportunities for proximate care
 - Reinforcing existing and creating new patterns of stratification in transnational families



Proximity in transnational-family care relations

- Dynamic perspective on life-, family- and migration-cycles:
 - Significant life events – births, marriages & divorce, deaths
 - Family crises
 - Care-intensive points in life course
 - Completion of the migration journey
- Cultural expectations:
 - Intergenerational solidarity
 - Preference for proximate familial hands-on care
- Multiple family actors:
 - Generational
 - Gender
- Multidirectional flows of care
- Simultaneity in receiving & giving of care

Proximity rests on mobility

A typology of proximate care-giving arrangements in transnational families

Spatial & temporal configuration	Kin category
Short-term visits	<i>'Reappearers' / 'Visitors'</i>
Circulation within family network	<i>'Flying kin'</i>
Long-term re/unification	<i>'Returners' or 'Relocaters'</i>

Mobility matters



Adapted from Kilkey, M. & Merla, L. (2014) 'Situating transnational families' care-giving arrangements: the role of institutional contexts', *Global Networks*, 14: 2, 210-29.

(Im)Mobility and institutional arrangements

- Migration regimes:
 - Exit/entry/residency rights
 - Incorporation in labour market & welfare systems
 - Migration cultures
- Welfare regimes:
 - Quality of social entitlements
 - Portability rules
- Gendered care regimes:
 - Rights to time to care
 - Rights to receive care
 - Gendered care cultures
- Working-time regimes:
 - Regulations of working-time
- Transport policies

Conditions of category, circumstance and conduct at intersection between migration and welfare regimes, *organise, condition and set limits on proximate care opportunities in transnational families:*

- Determining the ‘family of choice’ – who ‘counts’ as family and for which migrant categories
- Distribution of economic risk between states and families for living a ‘family of choice’

Kilkey, M. (2017) ‘Conditioning Family-life at the Intersection of Migration and Welfare: The Implications for ‘Brexit Families’, *Journal of Social Policy*, 46: 4, 797-814.

Policy developments: Brexit & EU citizen migrants in the UK (1)

- Brexit illuminates importance of European Freedom of Movement rights (entry, residency and equal treatment) in facilitating mobile caring practices for EU citizen migrants in UK with family back home
- In UK's hierarchical mobility regime, EU citizen migrants have faced least restrictions in forming their family of choice and the risk is not individualised:
 - Broad definition of 'family'
 - All can bring family members for up to 3 months; and those who 'qualify' can bring family members to reside indefinitely
 - Equal treatment in access to services and benefits
 - Free movement back to country of origin and return to UK
- Opportunities for proximate care-giving:
 - Short-term visits
 - Circulation
 - Reunification

Post-Brexit policy options (1) - align with UK citizens / settled persons

- Narrower definition of 'family'
- Family rights are highly conditional - on income, self-reliance, level of care needs, integration & language tests - with classed, gendered, aged and geographical effects - e.g.s
 - Adult dependent route 'all but closed' (APPGM 2013)
 - 41% of UK citizens in work in 2015 did not earn enough to meet income test for spousal reunion
- Visa required for family members to visit
- Returnees face 'habitual residency test' in accessing welfare

Post-Brexit policy options (2) - align with Third Country Nationals

- Even narrower definition of 'family'
- Maintenance requirement, healthcare surcharge, self-sufficiency rule - economic responsibility for living a proximate family-life, is individualised, with classed effects:
 - 2011 - 2015, for every visa granted to main applicants, 2.2 dependant visas for Tier 1, 0.7 for Tier 2 and 0.04 for Tier 5 (Blinder, 2016)
- Settlement conditional on passing integration and language tests and enduring relationship with main applicant:
 - Enforces high levels of dependency in non-EU migrant families, rendering women in particular vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, and conditioning their ability to live their family of choice
- Irregular migration status constrains mobility of care

Conclusions

- Contestation of family rights which facilitate proximate care for migrants is a generalised trend
 - In Europe, for third country nationals
 - In some EU Member States, for EU citizen migrants (Cameron's pre-Brexit deal)
 - Internationally ('Crossroads data base' – Boucher & Gest)
- Highly utilitarian migration policies
- Commodification of migrants
- 'Crisis of social reproduction' (Fraser) more generally
- Proximate care opportunities in transnational families a casualty