Watch the (care) gap: class differentials and the elusive quest for work-life balance

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Contemporary problems of work and family

- Wage work and familial responsibilities competing for time/energy
- Gendered division of labor
- Work-life balance is a struggle/challenge for many
Work-life harmony? What work-life harmony?: Class implications

- Work conditions: low wages, rigid schedules, little room for negotiations with employers
- Gendered Second Shift
- Help from friends/family limited because they too have heavy responsibilities
- Childcare centres do not adequately address needs: no space nearby, hours don't match work schedule
- No access to paid workers for housework or childcare needs
Recent policies: positive developments

- Slightly more concern for men’s roles as caregivers
- More attention to supporting low-income households through subsidies for childcare/kindergarten/student care
Watch the (care) gap

- Rethink employment requirement for aid
- Address quality of wage work
Expanding our lenses

• Similar needs/aspirations, but vastly different conditions

• “Work-life harmony” should not be class privilege