



CARING ABOUT FOOD:

RETHINKING THE UK'S APPROACH TO THE RIGHT TO FOOD THROUGH TRONTO'S POLITICAL THEORY OF CARE

THE PROBLEM:

- The UK is under a legal obligation to realise the right to food (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Article 11)
- Yet, in September 2022, **18.4% of UK households experienced food insecurity** (Food Foundation, 2022)
- There is currently no right to food within UK law and has been reduced to an interpretative principle by the UK government as opposed to a legal entitlement

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION:

Using the UK as an example, how may Tronto's political theory of care transform state policies governing the right to food to improve household food security?

METHODOLOGY:

This research adopts an **interdisciplinary approach** by applying an ethics of care framework to the right to food to address food insecurity.

Primary sources include the ICESCR, the General Comments of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the UN treaties protecting specific groups (e.g. the Convention on the Rights of the Child) which clarify the substance of the right to food.

Reports produced by the UK Government and devolved institutions as well as non-governmental organisations and policy groups (Food Foundation, Sustain, Just Fair) are used to assess the realisation of the right against the state's obligations.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

- Human rights-based approaches are criticised for their failure to achieve a fairer distribution of resources (Neier, 2006)
- There is a need to consider how the right to food can be enhanced by drawing upon alternative philosophies which place a greater emphasis on distribution, such as Tronto's political theory of care
- The potential utility of a care ethics framework has been explored in the context of food production (Biggs, 2012; Furst, 2019) and consumption patterns (Manners Bucolo, 2014), however there has yet to be a comprehensive application to the right to food.

COMPONENTS OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD:

- ✓ **AVAILABILITY:** food must be available, either directly from the land or through market systems
- ✓ **ACCESSIBILITY:**
 1. Economic accessibility: food must be affordable without having to compromise other basic needs e.g. rent
 2. Physical accessibility: food must be accessible to everyone, including vulnerable groups
- ✓ **ACCEPTABILITY:** food must satisfy dietary needs. It must be free from adverse substances and take into account non-nutrient, cultural requirements.

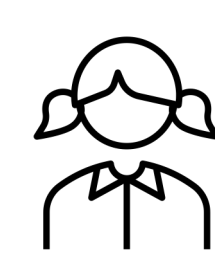
WHY TRONTO'S FRAMEWORK?

CARE = POLITICAL:

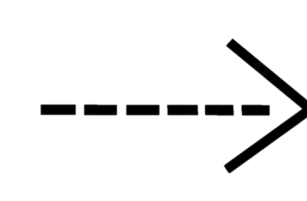
- ✓ Transforms care ethics from a 'woman's morality' (Gilligan) to a fully-fledged moral and political theory
- ✓ Builds in safeguards against paternalism, most notably the notion of a 'caring democracy' whereby all citizens are empowered to shape caring processes
- ✓ Acts as a tool to consider how caring relations may be improved on a national level, including the actions of the state, and thus may be reconciled with the rights regime
- ✓ Emphasis on the political process required to conduct change which the right to food has failed to deliver thus far

PROPOSALS

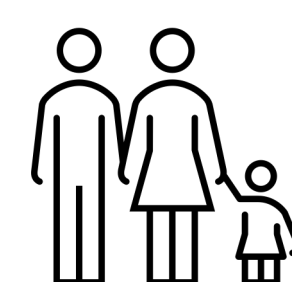
CARE + RIGHT TO FOOD =



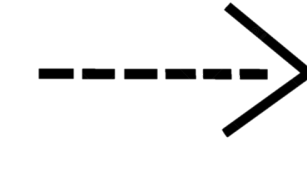
UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS



REMOVE STIGMA, IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE



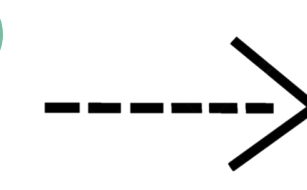
UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME +



TIERED TO ERADICATE EXISTING INEQUALITIES



CRITICAL FOOD LITERACY



FOSTERING HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES FOR ALL

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