

Call for Papers

Symposium

Why Care?

5-6 July 2018

ICI Berlin

In English

Organized by Birkan Taş and Benjamin Lewis Robinson

From care for the environment to care for the young and elderly, from mental health care to humanitarian care, from care understood as an obligation, as a gift, or as an affect, from the intimacy of care among loved ones, to the work of care giving in institutional settings, to the responsibility to care for those one does not know, the notion of ‘care’ encompasses a proliferating field of diverse relations. The question of care presents a central ethical and political challenge that is bound up with the increasing regulation and management of care relations by governmental institutions as well as its privatization, quantification, and commodification on the global market. As a result, certain kinds of care – for certain people, animals, things, or the environment – are dismissed or ignored in the name of ostensibly more urgent, more practical, and often more profitable concerns.

To ask: *Why care?* is an attempt to critically explore the massive mobilization of care in modern life. It interrogates the biopolitical ambivalences of the modern institutionalization of care as well as the prevailing economies and economics of care regarding what counts as care, the value of care, and its differential allocation. *Why care?* also provides occasion to attend to alternative or ignored forms of care – and to reflect on how these might be made explicit by means of new forms of critique and intersectional analysis based on diverse alternative notions of community and interdependence. Rather than idealize certain kinds of care, the symposium considers care as an affective and communal practice in more than human worlds, in which relations of inclusion and exclusion, empowerment and debilitation, autonomy and dependence, tenderness and terrorization are not only constituted but also contested.

Why care? solicits a transdisciplinary analysis across critical disability studies, crip, queer, feminist theories, political theory, and literary studies. It invites papers that help understand prevailing regimes of care and/or explore under-represented or unacknowledged practices of care in the past and present. It welcomes in particular contributions that reflect on the practical and critical possibilities afforded by literary and artistic treatments.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Ethics of care
- Temporalities of care
- Economies of care – its privatization and commodification; social reproduction
- Institutions/institutionalization of care
- Care giving as a gendered, classed, racialized, sexualized, and affective work
- Generational care; disability; familial-/community-/state-care; charity; humanitarianism
- Ecologies of care – care for the non-/more-than-human
- Technologies of care
- Neglect, abandonment, discrimination, indifference
- Aesthetics of care; literary, filmic, artistic treatments of care
- Care in relation to theories of vulnerability, precarity, debilitation, exploitation; also biopolitics, governmentality, security

Participants are welcome to submit formal academic-style papers or to experiment with the form of presentation. Participants are asked to pre-circulate a short piece of writing (8-10 pages) among participants, which will then form the basis of discussion at the symposium. Please email an abstract (300 words max.) and a short bio-bibliographical profile (100 words max.) to [why.care@ici-berlin.org] by 30 March 2018.

ICI Berlin
Institute for Cultural Inquiry
Christinenstr. 18/19, Haus 8
D - 10119 Berlin
www.ici-berlin.org