CARE THEORY:
Feminist, Queer, Anti-Racist
Fall 2020, GWS 720
Professor James McMaster
Class Time: 2:30-5:00pm
Class Location: Online.
Email Address: jmcmaster@wisc.edu
Office Hours (Digital): Tue, 1:00-2:00pm
Office Hours Sign-up: https://calendly.com/jmcmaster/officehours
Course URL: https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/215870

“Nothing holds together without relations of care.”
- Maria Puig de la Bellacasa

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Over the last few decades, in response to a worsening crisis of care, care theory has proliferated across academic disciplines worldwide. But what are we talking about exactly when we talk about care? What is care? What does it do? And what can the study of care teach us about navigating white supremacy, anti-blackness, heteropatriarchy, ableism, empire, settler colonialism, neoliberal capitalism, and other oppressive structures? This course will assist students in answering these questions by spending time with various schools of care theoretical thought. Respecting the fact that “nothing holds together without relations of care,” as the above epigraph asserts, our approach to care theory will weave from Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha to Michel Foucault, from psychoanalysis to scholarship in queer, feminist, Filipinx, Black, and disability studies. At bottom, the primary aims of this course are two fold. First, the course will forward care as a concept and activity that should be viewed as central to any theoretical, political, or social undertaking. Second, the course seeks to sharpen the tools available to students who wish not only to map care’s uneven distribution in the world but, also, to alter it for the betterment of all life.

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

3 Credit Units, Online (some classroom), Seminar Required, Counts toward 50% graduate coursework requirement.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
The following texts must be purchased for this course. You are strongly encouraged to order them from university press websites and A Room of One’s Own:

Christina Sharpe, *In The Wake: On Blackness and Being.*
Hil Malatino, *Trans Care.*
Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds.*
Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis.*

*All other readings are available as PDF downloads on our CANVAS course website unless otherwise indicated in the syllabus.

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**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Students will...

...demonstrate an understanding of concepts central to minoritarian care theory.
...analyze and historicize care and care theory’s relationship to categories such as race, gender, sexuality, disability, nation, empire, and capitalism.
...conduct interdisciplinary research on issues related to caring relations and responsibilities.
...cultivate the capacity to care better, more responsively and equitably, in themselves and others.

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

- This class meets for one 150-minute class period each week over the semester.

**PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE (30%)**

In the spirit of interdependence, participation will be graded collectively rather than individually. Not only must all students participate actively and thoughtfully, but all students should also participate collaboratively and generously, taking care of each other and each other’s ideas. You will all achieve the same grade and that grade will be measured against the level of care, dynamism, and intellectual rigor we achieve together in each session.

  - If you find yourself directly affected by COVID-19, please email the instructor as soon as possible to establish an accommodation plan.

**PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT (40% [20% each])**
Twice during the semester, during the last hour of a class session, students will deliver a 10-15 minute formal presentation. If the first portion of each class session is dedicated to critique, to building our collective understanding of an argument’s form and content, the latter part of each session will be dedicated to co-construction. Your presentation should focus on a case study that puts your assigned week’s readings to work. Maybe the theory illuminates something about your case study; maybe your case study illuminates something about the theory; maybe both. This is a great time to bring your own research objects and interests into the room for collective consideration. While your presentation should be thoughtful, practiced, and engaging, what you should not do is read verbatim from a polished script or paper. This is, in part, an exercise in public speaking and proto-pedagogy. As such, notes and PowerPoint slides are fair game.

The last hour or so of each session will thus involve us in two student presentations. Following the presentations (either after each or once all are finished) the entire class will discuss what was offered, provide feedback, and ask questions.

**FINAL PAPER/PROJECT (30%)**

Option 1: At the end of our time together students may complete and submit a conference length academic paper (15-20 minutes) that expands and formalizes in writing one of the presentations you will have given over the course of the semester. Your final paper should incorporate feedback received on your presentation from the instructor and the class, and it should also expand the works cited in your presentation to include care theoretical scholarship from across the semester.

Option 2: At the end of our time together, students, working individually or in groups approved by the instructor, may complete a public-facing care project whose aim is to intervene in the care inequalities that are everywhere evident in our world. This may draw on your presentations or it may not. Care projects may take many forms: you might publish a series of op-eds, assemble and distribute a zine, create and disseminate a number of infographics or propaganda videos, keep a theory-informed diary of your participation in a local mutual aid effort, work alongside local activists to formulate concrete alternatives to policing and imprisonment in Madison, etc. The possibilities are myriad. Whatever the case, your project must be legal, COVID-safe, made available to the instructor through digital means, and it must legibly draw on course materials to intervene in an actually existing distribution of care. Students who choose to complete option 2 are required to submit a 2-3 page rationale, with a complete works cited page, explaining how their project’s effort to make a difference in the world is informed by course materials.

*Due Date: 11:59pm, 12/13/2020
*Submit in CANVAS.
OPTIONAL SALONS

Twice during the early part of the semester (before it gets too cold) I will hold optional in-person salons, outdoors and in small groups. These hour and a half events are intended as opportunities for us to get to know one another. They're also a chance for students to talk informally about the class, about grad school, about current events, and anything else. Students should sign-up for a meeting at the link on the Canvas homepage. Students who are not currently in Madison, or who are uncomfortable with in-person contact at this time, are welcome to contact the instructor separately about setting up a digital alternative. Masks and social distancing are required.

Meeting 1: September 11, 11-12:30pm, Location TBD.

Meeting 2: September 18, 3-4:30, Location TBD.

**Grade Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Final Grade Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>92.5-100% = A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation Assignment (1)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>87.5-92.4% = AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation Assignment (2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>82.5-87.4% = B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper/Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>77.5-82.4% = BC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                             |            | 59.5-69.4% = D   |
|                             |            | 59.4% and below  = F |

**Final Grade Scale**

COURSE POLICIES

**Online Instruction:** Online sessions will be held synchronously Zoom. Attendance is required. I will post meeting links to individual sessions on Canvas a few minutes prior to the start of each class. During online sessions your video must be on at all times. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking and headphone use is strongly encouraged.

- If any element of online instruction poses a problem you must contact the instructor directly to seek accommodations.

**Office Hours:** Please sign up for office hours on Calendly. As grad students, you may sign up for up to two sessions at a time totaling 30 minutes. If office hours are scheduled at a bad time for you feel free to email the instructor to set up an appointment that works.
Email: Assume that I will respond to your e-mail within 24 hours. If I have not responded within that amount of time, feel free to e-mail me again. I generally do not respond to emails during weekends or breaks. Plan accordingly.

Honesty: Please read the university policy on academic integrity (https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/). All information borrowed from print sources or the web must be clearly identified and properly credited. Any instance of plagiarism or cheating on written assignments will result in an “F” grade for the assignment and the course.

Late Work: All assignments are due when the syllabus says they are due. Extensions should be requested at least a week in advance of the due date. Late assignments will be subject to grade penalties at the instructor’s discretion.

Accommodations: Any student who feels that they may need special accommodation due to a disability should contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center (http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/) at 608-263-2741 (phone); 263-6393 (TTY); 263-2998 (FAX); FrontDesk@mcb.wisc.edu to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Class Conduct: Racism, misogyny, heterosexism, ableism, transmisogyny, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, classism and other forms of oppressive speech or behavior will not be tolerated. We seek to understand these systems, not to reproduce them.

COURSE CALENDAR:

Week 1: 9/8: Introductions

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna Samarasinha, Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice.

Week 2: 9/15: Radical Care

Hi’ilei Julia Kawehipuaa’kaaopulani Hobart and Tamara Kneese, “Radical Care: Survival Strategies for Uncertain Times,” 1-16.
Kim Tallbear, “Caretaking Relations, Not American Dreaming,” 24-41.
Ren-yo Hwang, “Carceral Care: QTBIPOC Radical Relationalism as Mutual Aid against Carceral Care,” 559-578.
Jasbir Puar, “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot,” ix-xxv.

**Week 3: 9/22: Caring Democracy**


**Week 4: 9/29: Feminist Care Ethics**

Carol Gilligan, Selections from *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development,* 5-63.
Nel Noddings, Selections from *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education,* 28-94.
Eva Kittay, “The Ethics of Care, Dependence, and Disability,” 49-58.
Virginia Held, “Care and Justice, Still,” 19-36.

**Week 5: 10/6: Social Reproduction**

Nancy Fraser, “Crisis of Care?: On the Social-Reproductive Contradictions of Contemporary Capitalism,” 21-36.
Saidiya Hartman, On insurgent histories and the abolitionist imaginary.
Angela Davis, “Reflections on the Black Woman’s Role in the Community of Slaves,” 1-14.
Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Selections from *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America,* 1-42, 183-204.

**Week 6: 10/13: Care in Transnational Perspective**

Rhacel Parreñas, Selections from *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work,* 1-52.

**Week 7: 10/20: Performing Care**

Amanda Stuart Fisher and James Thompson, *Performing Care: New Perspectives on Socially Engaged Performance.*

**Week 8: 10/27: Spoiled Identity, Emotional Labor**

Arlie Hochschild, Selection from *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling,* 3-86.

**Week 9: 11/3: Psychic and Affective Care**

Lauren Berlant, “Introduction: Affect in the Present” and “Cruel Optimism” in *Cruel Optimism,* 1-50.
Eve Sedgwick, “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, Or, You’re So Paranoid You Probably Think This Essay is About You,” 123-151.

**Week 10: 11/10: Death Care, Care in Death**

Jill Casid, “Handle with Care,” 121-135.
Christina Sharpe, *In The Wake: On Blackness and Being.*

**Week 11: 11/17: The Care of the Self**

Michel Foucault, “Conclusion,” in *The History of Sexuality: Volume 3,* 235-240.
Michel Foucault, “The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom,” in *Ethics, Subjectivity, and Truth*, 281-302.
James McMaster, “Revolting Self-Care: Mark Aguhar’s Virtual Separatism,” 181-205.
Martin Manalansan, “Queering the Chain of Care Paradigm,” 1-7.

**Week 12: 11/24: Trans Care**

Hil Malatino, *Trans Care*.
Aren Aizura, “Communizing Care In The Left Hand of Darkness,”
Park McArthur and Constantina Zavitsanos, “Other Forms of Conviviality: The Best and Least of Which is Our Daily Care and the Host of Which is Our Collaborative Work,” 126-132.

**Week 13: 12/1: More Than Human Care**

Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds*.

**Week 14: 12/8: Mutual Aid and Transformative Justice**

Malcolm Harris, “Take Care.”
Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (And the Next).*
adrienne marie brown, Selections from *Emergent Strategy*.
Mariame Kaba, “Free Us All: Participatory Defense Campaigns as Abolitionist Organizing.”
Mia Mingus, “Pods and Pod Mapping Worksheet,”

* FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE: 12/13 @ 11:59pm.*