

IRWGS SPRING 2021 GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality invites all graduate students to participate in our upcoming day-long graduate conference on “**Radical Care**” to be held on **Friday, April 2nd, at 11am-3pm (final time TBD)**.

All abstracts for 12-15 minute papers are due February 28, 2021.

What is a politics of radical care ? Is care always labor? What new forms of care, mutual support, solidarity, and “survival work” have emerged in response to the current health crisis? The Covid-19 pandemic has forced into view the simultaneously vital and cruel forms of interdependence, whilst laying bare the stratifications, divisions and inequalities that structure society. In the words of the recently published *Care Manifesto* [1]: “carelessness reigns.” As such, this moment is one that demands that we radically rethink the ways in which care, as a life-saving resource and primary need, is provided and experienced transnationally. As the entire world has been observing in awe the daily exploits of the frontline workers we become prompted to further ponder the implications of disabilities, vulnerabilities, and comorbidities, as well as the risks and challenges of social distancing, isolation, and co-presence for diverse communities in general and our field immediately.

How should the field of Gender & Sexuality Studies engage in theorizing and practicing care in a post-pandemic future that we are currently trying to envision? We are looking for work that both engages, and pushes beyond, new scholarship in the field which has returned to the genealogy of care as a crucial, yet under-examined praxis of radical politics. This is an invitation to push against traditional cultural and social imaginaries of “care work”, that have long depended on a heterocisnormative investment in the family, and to instead recognize the forms of care that outstrip its providential reach [2]. Likewise we are looking for work that recognizes the need to imagine forms of public health that are not understood as synonymous with the health of the state and body politic, or that further entrench our desire for sovereign monopolies of power [3]. How do we separate our desire for the state from our need for collective health? And how might the potentialities of self-care be expanded despite its susceptibility to neoliberal co-optation?

We welcome conference proposals from graduate students in all disciplines whose work touches on the economies, possibilities, and ethics of care work. Possible topics may include any of the following:

- Health care access and bodily autonomy
- Logics of interdependence
- Race and inequality
- Disability activism
- The biopolitics of disability
- Health inequities and reproductive justice

Mutual aid
Solidarity and survival
Fictions or literature of care
Burnout and self-Care
Pedagogies of care or of radical care

[1] The Care Collective. *Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence*. Verso Books, 2020.

[2] Malatino, Hil. *Trans Care*. University of Minnesota Press, 2020.

[3] Toscano, Alberto. "Beyond the Plague State." Socialist Project.

Submission Guidelines:

Please send a 250-350 word abstract to Mia Florin-Sefton (mcf2180@columbia.edu) and Alex Pekov (ap3543@columbia.edu) by **February 28**.

All participants will be notified by **March 3**.