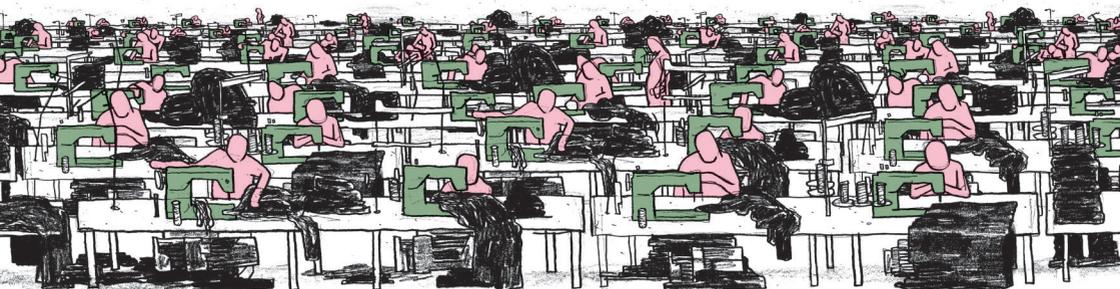


NFO x VU:

MORAL MARKETS



FILOSOFIE OP DE VU

De Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam heeft een kleinschalige, hoogwaardige en door studenten zeer gewaardeerde filosofie-opleiding (die recentelijk herhaaldelijk is aangewezen als ‘topopleiding’ in de Keuzegids Universiteiten). Kenmerkend voor onze opleiding:

- **We filosoferen midden in de samenleving.** We staan midden in de samenleving en nogal wat stafleden mengen zich in het publieke debat over allerlei thema’s en (grote) ontwikkelingen: populisme, globalisering, marktwerking, de rol van religie, digitalisering, etc. Die houding en die vaardigheid willen we ook stimuleren bij onze studenten: gefundeerde, goed beargumenteerde en vernieuwende opinies ontwikkelen in een snel veranderende samenleving.
- **We hanteren een brede opvatting van filosofie: continentaal, analytisch, intercultureel.** Filosofie is niet voor één gat te vangen. Elke filosofische traditie brengt een heel eigen reservoir aan inzichten en vaardigheden met zich mee. Daarom is filosofie op de VU niet eenkennig maar leer je op heel verschillende manieren filosofie te doen. We geven zowel

aandacht aan de continentale filosofie met haar nadruk op de grote existentiële vragen en lange termijn ontwikkelingen in cultuur en samenleving als ook aan de Angelsaksische filosofie met haar grote aandacht voor scherp en zuiver redeneren. Ook is er aandacht voor het gesprek met levensbeschouwelijke en religieuze tradities en geven we in toenemende mate aandacht aan niet-westerse filosofie.

- **We hechten aan een gedegen kennis van de hele filosofische traditie:** we hechten grote waarde aan een goede kennis van de grote filosofische traditie, van Plato tot gisteren, met oog voor de denkers van morgen.
- **We geven veel aandacht aan analytische en retorische vaardigheden.** Filosofie is leren denken, en dat betekent ook, leren spreken en schrijven, leren onderzoeken en ‘out of the box’ vragen stellen. Dat stimuleren we in al ons onderwijs, en zelfs in aparte ‘vaardigheidsblokken’.
- **We zijn betrokken bij de nieuwste wetenschappelijke ontwikkelingen.** Aan de VU krijgen alle studenten een blok filosofie in hun opleiding, meestal gegeven door de leden van de

afdeling filosofie. Op die manier zijn we als filosofiedocenten volop betrokken bij nieuwe ontwikkelingen in allerlei andere vakgebieden en kunnen we die ervaring ook voor de full time filosofiestudenten volop inzetten: van neurowetenschap tot economie, van taalwetenschap tot fysica, van sociologie tot bewegingswetenschappen. Allerlei vragen en thema's die daarbij opkomen, pakken we op in onderwijs en onderzoek: 'zijn wij ons brein?', 'markt en moraal', 'de rol van intellectuele karaktervorming in de universiteit', enzovoort.

– **We bieden een interessant palet aan 2-jarige interdisciplinaire masterprogramma's.**

Filosofie Masteropleidingen aan de VU zijn 2-jarig en combineren filosofie met een ander wetenschapsveld. Engelstalig zijn *Philosophy of Bioethics and Health*, *Philosophy of Neuroscience*, *Philosophy of Law and Governance*, een Nederlandstalig meer cultuurfilosofisch gericht programma is *Filosofie van Cultuur en Bestuur*.

– **Veel interdisciplinair en samenlevingsgericht onderzoek.**

Wat gezegd werd over ons onderwijs, geldt ook voor ons onderzoek.

Veel onderzoek richt zich op filosofische en ethische reflectie op ontwikkelingen in de universiteit, de diverse wetenschappen en de samenleving. Daarnaast is ook steeds de geschiedenis van de filosofie een belangrijk onderzoeksterrein.

Per 2018 is de Bachelor-opleiding tweetalig, waarbij we zowel aan Nederlandse als aan Engelse taalbeheersing veel aandacht besteden.

Onze studenten gaan na hun afstuderen aan de slag in allerlei sectoren, waar ze met hun filosofische achtergrond creatieve inzichten inbrengen en als echte 'out of the box'-denkers bij allerlei organisaties belangrijke bijdragen leveren. Ook zijn er afgestudeerden die als schrijver, journalist, opiniemaker of als debatedacteur bij debatcentra mede de maatschappelijke agenda bepalen.

PROGRAMMA

vrijdag 20 maart 2020	
Aankomst en ontvangst	16:00
Welkomstwoord door prof. dr. Han van Ruler (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam)	17:00
Uitleg over het programma door Floris Velema MA (voorzitter van de Nederlandse Filosofie Olympiade)	17:15
Introductie van het thema en informatie over de Bacheloropleiding Filosofie aan de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam door prof. dr. Govert Buijs	17:30
Diner	18:00
Openingslezing door prof. dr. Joan Tronto (University of Minnesota)	19:30
Discussie	20:30
Borrel	21:30

VRIJDAG 20 MAART 2020

OPENINGSLEZING

ENDING WEALTHCARE: A DEMOCRATIC, CARING ALTERNATIVE

Prof. dr. Joan Tronto
University of Minnesota

The current 'neopopulist' threats to democracy are a reaction, it is often claimed, to 'going too far' in the direction of pluralism and 'identity politics'. I shall offer a different view of the nature of the present reactionary threat to democracy and the action required to counteract it. 'Neopopulism' is a childish response to the sense of precarity created by neoliberal policies. Horizontal aggression against the people who are also in precarious situations meets certain tribalistic needs, but it does not eliminate the real danger. The real dangers are the remarkably unequal distribution of resources in society and the market-based mindset that justifies it. This mindset is the ideological assumption that only more growth and more wealth can solve our problems by making a larger pie to share.

If humans think instead about real needs, the needs for care of people, the biosphere, and the planet, it is possible to imagine an alternative society. Such a society would displace 'wealth-care' and revalue all humans as caring beings. The first step to such an alternative is to notice how little our current approach to life provides for care, and how, if hierarchies of privileges are eliminated, another future is possible. It could be a genuinely democratic form of governance, based on freedom and equality to care justly for all of our world.

Zaterdag 21 maart 2020 – scholieren	
Ontbijt	07:30 – 08:15
Uitchecken	08:15 – 08.30
Deelnemers installeren hun laptop en nemen plaats	08:30 – 09:00
Schrijven van de essays	09:00 – 12:00
Lunch	12:00 – 13:00
Workshop ronde 1	14:00 – 15:00
Workshop ronde 2	15:30 – 16:30
Bekendmaking van de winnaars	17:00
Afsluiting NFO 2020	17:30

Zaterdag 21 maart 2020 – docenten	
Ontbijt	07:30 – 08:15
Uitchecken	08:15 – 08.30
Jury instructie door Floris Velema	09:15 – 09:45
Workshop ronde 1	09:45 – 10:45
Workshop ronde 2	11:00 – 12:00
Lunch	12:00
Essay evaluatie	13:00 – 16:30
Bekendmaking van de winnaars	17:00
Afsluiting NFO 2020	17:30

ZATERDAG 21 MAART 2020

Workshops voor docenten			Workshopleider	Titel
9:45 - 10:45	Men- nicke	Work- shop 1.1	Prof. dr. Joan Tronto	Enacting caring democracy: a school-focused workshop
9:45 - 10:45	Agora	Work- shop 1.2	Prof. dr. Govert Buijs	Bruno Latour's Ecologische Gaia-filosofie
11:00 - 12:00	Men- nicke	Work- shop 2.1	Dr. Ad Verbrugge	De actuali- teit van Hegels begrip van de erkenning
11:00 - 12:00	Agora	Work- shop 2.2	Dr. Annemie Halsema	Van politiek tot arbeidend dier: Hannah Arendt over menselijke activiteit
12:00 - 13:00		Lunch		

Workshops voor scholieren			Workshopleider	Titel
14:00 - 15:00	Men- nicke	Work- shop 3.1	Prof. dr. Joan Tronto	Enacting caring democracy: a school-focused workshop
	Agora	Work- shop 3.2	Prof. dr. Govert Buijs	'De toekomst van het kapi- talisme' - het nieuwe debat
	Reiman	Work- shop 3.3	Dr. ir. Emanuel Rutten	Het einde van het materialis- me, fysicalis- me, naturalisme en nog wat 'ismen'
15:30 - 16:30	Men- nicke	Work- shop 4.1	Dr. Ad Verbrugge	De actualite- it van Hegels begrip van de erkenning
	Agora	Work- shop 4.2	Dr. Annemie Halsema	Wat is gender?
	Reiman	Work- shop 4.3	Dr. ir. Emanuel Rutten	Is het 'niet' een deel van het zijn?

WORKSHOPBESCHRIJVINGEN

ENACTING CARING DEMOCRACY: A SCHOOL-FOCUSED WORKSHOP

Prof. dr. Joan Tronto
University of Minnesota

The goal of this workshop is to allow students, working from a familiar care setting, to develop a sense of the complexity of negotiating around caring needs, to recognize the variety of needs and ways that people will think about them. Nevertheless, working from the standpoint of care makes it possible for see issues differently and to propose solutions to problems.



Lees vooraf:

Joan Tronto, *Caring Democracy*. Part III: Imagining democratic caring practices and caring democracies; chapter 6: Democratic Caring; 'A Little Utopian Thinking', p. 160-164.

BRUNO LATOUR'S ECO-LOGISCHE GAIA-FILOSOFIE

Prof. dr. Govert Buijs
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Bruno Latour is een van de meest invloedrijke eco-filosofen van dit moment. Aanvankelijk was hij vooral bekend als wetenschapsfilosoof maar in de laatste jaren heeft hij een fundamentele kritiek ontwikkeld op het Westerse mechanische wereldbeeld waarin het 'subject-object'-denken heel dominant is. Dat wereldbeeld ligt aan de wortel van ons denken over de natuur als een manipuleerbaar ding buiten ons. Volgens Latour is dat denken in feite een ideologie maar kunnen we ons, strikt op basis van de alledaagse ervaring, een ander werkelijkheidsbeeld eigen maken, waarin subject en object, de wereld binnen ons en de wereld buiten ons, verbonden zijn in één groot, bijna levend netwerk.



Lees vooraf:

Ad Verbrugge, Govert Buijs & Jelle van Baardewijk, *Het goede leven en de vrije markt*, hoofdstuk 10, § 6 en 7.

DE ACTUALITEIT VAN HEGELS BEGRIJ VAN DE ERKENNING

Dr. Ad Verbrugge
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Meer dan ooit leven we in een tijd waarin allerlei bevolkingsgroepen en minderheden zich miskend voelen en 'erkenning' opeisen. Maar wat moeten we eigenlijk onder erkenning verstaan en waarom speelt het zo'n belangrijke rol in het hedendaagse maatschappelijke debat? Zonder twijfel is 'Anerkennung' een van de centrale begrippen in Hegels filosofie van de geest. Zijn begrip daarvan vormt nog steeds een inspiratiebron voor hedendaagse denkers als Francis Fukuyama en Axel Honneth. Toch bestaan er nogal wat misvattingen over dit begrip. In deze workshop zullen we aan de hand van de *Phänomenologie des Geistes en de Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* een interpretatie ontwikkelen van Hegels begrip van de erkenning als de verwerkelijking van vrijheid. Mede op basis daarvan zullen we stil staan bij het breed gevoelde maatschappelijke onbehagen en een aantal maatschappelijke verschijnselen die verband houden met erkenningsproblematiek.



Lees vooraf:

Ad Verbrugge, Govert Buijs & Jelle

van Baardewijk, *Het goede leven en de vrije markt*, hoofdstuk 7, 8 & 9.

VAN POLITIEK TOT ARBEIDEND DIER: HANNAH ARENDT OVER MENSELIJKE ACTIVITEIT

Dr. Annemie Halsema
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Het menselijk leven wordt gekenmerkt door verschillende soorten van activiteiten: we onderhouden ons lichaam, we produceren goederen en ideeën en we discussiëren over hoe de samenleving in te richten. Politiek filosoof Hannah Arendt onderscheidt deze activiteiten onder de noemers van respectievelijk arbeid, werk en handelen en stelt dat in de loop der tijd het accent verschuift. Was in de Oudheid handelen – ofwel de sfeer van het politieke – nog verbonden met vrijheid en geluk, in de moderne tijd zijn wij eerst producerende en vervolgens arbeidende dieren geworden, en heeft de sfeer van het sociale die van het politieke verdronen. We bespreken Arendt's these aan de hand van een tekstfragment uit *The Human Condition* (1958) en analyseren de actualiteit ervan.

**Lees vooraf:**

Hannah Hannah Arendt,
De menselijke conditie,
hoofdstuk 1, §1-3.

'DE TOEKOMST VAN
HET KAPITALISME' –
HET NIEUWE DEBAT

Prof. dr. Govert Buijs
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Nog niet zo lang geleden vierde het Westen de overwinning van het kapitalisme. De organisatie van de economie op basis van vrije markten waarin de actoren gedreven worden door de calculatie van maximale winsten op ter beschikking gesteld investeringskapitaal, leek veruit de beste manier om permanente innovatie en economische groei te realiseren. Hoe langer hoe meer dringt de vraag zich echter op of dit systeem wel houdbaar is. Ooit leverde Karl Marx een fundamentele kritiek op het kapitalisme, maar die leek grotendeels verstomd. Inmiddels tekenen zich de contouren af van een nieuw fundamenteel debat over de toekomst van het kapitalisme. In deze vooral exploratieve workshop verkennen we enkele van de belangrijkste nieuwe kritieken en kijken we in hoeverre die filosofisch houdbaar en overtuigend zijn.

**Lees vooraf:**

Ad Verbrugge, Govert Buijs & Jelle van Baardewijk, *Het goede leven en de vrije markt*, hoofdstuk 6, § 3 en 4.

HET EINDE VAN HET
MATERIALISME, FYSICALISME,
NATURALISME EN NOG WAT
'ISMEN'

Dr. ir. Emanuel Rutten
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

In zijn traktaat *Over de kosmos* verklaart Aristoteles dat de natuur een voorliefde heeft voor tegendelen of opposities. En Cicero stelt in zijn *Het bestaan van de goden* dat volgens Epicurus de natuur zo in elkaar zit dat alles zijn tegendeel heeft. Dit noemde Epicurus volgens hem *isonomia*. Nu komen we inderdaad overal in de natuur tegendelen tegen. Er is geen licht zonder donker, geen warmte zonder koude, geen liefde zonder haat, geen zwart zonder wit, enzovoort. De lijst van opposities in de wereld lijkt welhaast eindeloos.

Maar waarom is dit zo? Waarom houdt de natuur van tegendelen? Tijdens deze workshop presenteert filosoof Emanuel Rutten een

verrassend strikt filosofisch argument voor de stelling dat er geen universele eigenschappen bestaan. Voor iedere eigenschap is er altijd wel een object te vinden die die eigenschap niet bezit. Kortom, geen enkele uitspraak van de vorm '*Alles is x*' is waar. De werkelijkheid is radicaal pluriform oftewel rijkgeschakeerd en daarom zien wij overal contrasten. Zo beantwoordt Rutten de vraag waar die voorliefde vandaan komt.

Voor zijn argument combineert hij op geheel vernieuwende wijze twee filosofische disciplines die normaal gesproken elkaar (relatief) ongemoeid laten, namelijk de metafysica en de taal filosofie. Op het eerste gezicht lijkt Ruttens conclusie dat er geen universele eigenschappen bestaan niet heel erg opzienbarend. *So what?* zul je misschien denken. Rutten zal echter laten zien dat niets minder waar is. Zijn argument heeft, indien succesvol, buitengewoon verstrekkende consequenties. Om alvast een klein tipje van de sluier op te lichten: Als er inderdaad geen universele eigenschappen bestaan, dan is bijvoorbeeld de eigenschap 'materieel zijn' niet universeel. Maar dan moeten er materiële oftewel onstoffelijke objecten in de wereld zijn. Materialisme als wereldbeeld faalt dan. En zo zijn er nog veel meer 'ismen' die omvallen.

Tijdens deze bijeenkomst zal filosoof Emanuel Rutten zijn argument – door

hem *het semantisch argument* genoemd – en de belangrijkste gevolgen ervan uiteenzetten.

**Lees vooraf:**

Emanuel Rutten, Het einde van het materialisme, fysicalisme, naturalisme, en nog wat 'ismen'.
https://www.gjerutten.nl/EindeMaterialisme_ERutten.pdf

WAT IS GENDER?

Dr. Annemie Halsema
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

In het hedendaagse debat over gender wordt een onderscheid gemaakt tussen sekse (het biologische geslacht, sex) en gender (sociaal-culturele invullingen van geslacht). Hoe zinvol is het om zo'n natuur-cultuur onderscheid te maken? In deze workshop maak je kennis met twee filosofen die een verschillende opvatting hebben over de verhouding van natuur en cultuur: Luce Irigaray's filosofie van seksuele differentie en Judith Butler's filosofie van performativiteit van gender. Na een korte uiteenzetting over beider denkbeelden, bespreken we de voor- en nadelen ervan en pogen tot een eigen omschrijving te komen van gender.

IS HET 'NIET' EEN DEEL VAN HET ZIJN?

Dr. ir. Emanuel Rutten
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Wij kunnen als mensen niet om het gebruik van het woord 'niet' heen. In onze alledaagse en wetenschappelijke beschrijvingen van de wereld en onderlinge gesprekken erover maken wij er onophoudelijk gebruik van. De mens is dan ook een ontkenkend wezen. Zo zijn wij in onze antagonistische dialogen aanhoudend bezig om elkaar *reductio ad absurdum* te voeren en daarvoor moet uiteraard volop gebruik gemaakt worden van het woord 'niet'.

Bovendien zijn wij als mensen geestelijke wezens. Wij zijn subjecten en geen objecten. En het kunnen ontkennen behoort ontegenzeggelijk tot de vermogens van de geest. Niet voor niets laat Hegel in zijn *Fenomenologie van de geest* zijn historische dialectiek van negaties uiteindelijk culmineren in de absolute geest. In zijn hoofdwerk *Het zijn en het niet* noemt Sartre de negatie constitutief voor de menselijke geestelijke zijnswijze. Onze geest wordt gekarakteriseerd door zijn vermogen tot negatie. Het 'niet' is precies daarom intiem en onlosmakelijk met onze geest en ons denken verbonden.

Maar hoe zit het dan met het woord 'niet'? Is negatie alleen maar een epistemisch construct of bestaat het ook daadwerkelijk ontologisch?



Lees vooraf:

Emanuel Rutten, Waarheidsmakers van ware negaties: Is het 'niet' een deel van het zijn?

https://www.gjerutten.nl/NegatieEnZijn_ERutten.pdf

DEELNEMERSLIJST

School	Plaats	Naam
Ashram College	Alphen aan den Rijn	Lidewij Wolthers
		Anouk Koster
Atheneum College Hageveld	Heemstede	Noah van Krugten
		Laura Mastwijk
Berlage Lyceum	Amsterdam	Rina Engel
		Maura Meijer
		Roos Wijker
Coornhert Gymnasium	Gouda	Astrid Hill
		Sofie de Bruijn
CSG Comenius	Leeuwarden	Julia Kool
		Iris Kool
		Maico Zon
CSG Reggesteyn	Nijverdal	Niek Juurlink
		Isa Wijsbeek
		Sanne Rutterkamp
Deltion Sprint Lyceum (VAVO)	Zwolle	Misa Molema
		Rosa de Jong
		Niels van Ginkel

Gemeentelijk Gymnasium Hilversum	Hilversum	Marguerite van Woerkom
		Fien Steur
		Vera van den Hil
Gerrit van der Veen College	Amsterdam	Isa Lucchi
		Jordi de Theye
GSG Leo Vroman	Gouda	Dennis Lappee
		Rixt de Laat
Gymnasium Amersfoort Johan van Oldenbarnevelt	Amersfoort	Filip Boucher
		Eline Osinga
		Nikki Elverding
Gymnasium Coleanum	Zwolle	Ilse Frelink
		Kirsten van der Meer
		Anna van Hoffen
Gymnasium Felisenum	Velsen-Zuid	Amelia Veldhuis
		Myrthe van der Jagt
Helen Parkhurst	Almere	Tess Steehouwer
		Alyssa Dragt
		Esmée Zoer
Hermann Wesselink College	Amstelveen	Yrsa Rademaker
		Anne Mille Broekman
		Hagar Fridman Rahim
Het 4e gymnasium	Amsterdam	Amelie Pelleg

		Janna Prins
Het Schoter	Haarlem	Roos Veltmeijer
		Sofie van der Linden
Katholieke Scholengemeenschap Etten-Leur	Etten-Leur	Ilse Verberg
		Kelsey Schrik
Lyceum De Grundel	Hengelo	Danique Poppe
Melanchthon Bergschenhoek	Berkel en Rodenrijs	Laurens Zwaagstra
		Gijs van Dorp
		Pieter Meijer
Melanchthon Schiebroek	Rotterdam	Feline Ediabonya
		Eleni Voigt
		Jenny van Rijn
Nova College	Haarlem	Lisanne Snoei
		Lize-lot Kolder
		Quinty Cornelius
OSG West-Friesland	Hoorn	Jasmin van Vliet
		Larson Beemster
		Freya van Apeldoorn
Pleysier College Westerbeek	Den Haag	Twan Knoester
		Luuk Grippeling
		Tristan van den Heuvel

SG Huizermaat	Huizen	Chamee Giezenaar
		Merelijne Hazewinkel
		Sophie Hoek
Sint-Janslyceum	's-Hertogenbosch	Laura Carré
St. Odulphuslyceum	Tilburg	Lone de Chene
		Sifra Klijs
		Gijs Walker
Stedelijk Gymnasium Haarlem	Haarlem	Fenne Bijtenhoorn
		Emma Nielen
Stedelijk Gymnasium Leiden	Leiden	Annabelle Jung
		Andrea Fortuin
		Meike Holtz
Stedelijk Gymnasium Nijmegen	Nijmegen	Franka de Bruin
		Wiki Wagemans
		Daan Boekhoorn
Theresialyceum	Tilburg	Sam Pollé
		Emke de Jong
Thorbecke scholengemeenschap	Zwolle	Wouter Wink
		Pershant Meyer
Trinitas College	Heerhugowaard	Luuk Sloopweg
		Roy de Langen

		Julia Knot
VAVO Rijnmond College	Rotterdam	Yentl Schuffelers
		Jesse de Groot
		Lara Visser
Walburg College	Zwijndrecht	Quinten van Eijdsen
		Beau van de Graaf
Wolfert Tweetalig	Rotterdam	Finn van Cappelle
		Levin Akgul
		Ibrahim Abid

ENDING WEALTH-CARE: A DEMOCRATIC CARING ALTERNATIVE

Joan Tronto

A paper prepared for presentation at the Nederlandse Filosofie Olympiade, 20 March 2020. Please do not quote without permission.

How can we act ethically and justly in the world in which we find ourselves? Nearly 40 years ago, the American philosopher Harry Frankfurt argued, in an essay called “The Importance of What We Care About” (Frankfurt 1988) that no existing ethical theory— not Aristotelian virtue nor Kantian deontology nor contemporary utilitarianism, could adequately account for the importance of what we care about. For most of my academic career, I have started from this question: what does care mean, and what would happen if, instead of placing it on the margins of our lives, we made it central to how we live? Suppose we actually cared about care? And, since we live in democratic societies, suppose we actually cared

about democracy? How would those two questions change the way we approach the world and get our bearings about how to act, how to flourish, how to be just?

These are hard times for democrats. Whether we focus on the environmental cataclysm that is already engulfing the planet (including the global pandemic in which we now find ourselves), the ongoing reckoning with five centuries of colonialism, the violence against women endemic in most societies, or the growth of a political right wing that threatens to undo the progress of the past half-century—progress that has led towards inclusion and greater equality—we seem stuck rather than certain about how to move forward. Political scientists have pessimistically begun to talk about “democratic deconsolidation,” that is, that people in democracies no longer seem so deeply committed to democracy itself (Foa and Mounk 2017). Right-wing populisms blame migrants and “others” for the problems created by economic dislocation and cultural change (e.g., (Norris and Inglehart 2019). No one wants to take responsibility for environmental disasters at the same time most of the people recognize their urgency. And, I shall

argue, the economic commitment to “growth” and the “free market” makes it difficult to discuss what “responsibility” for these crises might mean.

In this paper, I employ the tools of a political theorist. Political theory is not identical to political philosophy, for it puts the emphasis, as the origins of the word “theory” suggests, on *vision*. To see an alternative vision for the future is a central task of the political theorist (Wolin 1969, 2004). And to achieve such an alternative vision requires offering a description of the reality one seeks to change, an analysis of how it became this way, an alternative vision, and a strategy to move from here to there (Bunch 1983). In this paper, then, we start with an alternative vision, that of a caring democracy. We shall then reflect upon the current world from an achievable alternative.

Here, then, in short, is the large claim of this project: We need to rethink the nature of democracy, of freedom, justice, and equality. We need to redefine democracy as the *allocation of caring responsibilities in a political community and the process of giving equal voice to all members of the community in making these allocations* (Tronto 2013). By care, I use the long-standing conceptualization that Berenice Fisher and I devised in 1990: On the most general level, we suggest that caring be viewed as *a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain,*

continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web. (Fisher and Tronto 1990): 40).

A full political theory of care is beyond the scope of a short paper. Indeed, even offering a full description of care, itself so broad, is a difficult undertaking. A care description requires that we think about a number of issues: what forms of caring relationships now exist, what caring work is done, and not done? Who cares for whom, how, and with what resources? It requires that we think as well about the nature of responsibilities in caring relationships, and about the fact that responsibility requires power. Indeed, all care relations involve power. Finally, we also need to think about the normative questions of whether care is good or bad care, and who judges whether care is good or bad? So in this paper, rather than try to answer all of these questions, let us focus on the central question that Harry Frankfurt proposed: what do we care about? and why is that important?

So, to preview the argument, I shall argue that we live in a society that puts the most care into its concerns about *wealth*. In contrast, our answer to the question what do we care about? should be: we care about ourselves,

each other, the planet, and the democratic means to achieve this care. This shift is quite large, but it is not an impossibility. On the contrary, I shall argue, the truly utopian project is the one to create a “free market” and the pursuit of it has allowed us to fall victim to a world that allows the concerns of wealth to rule, and to force out of our central concerns the needs of care for everyone and everything.

Part I. What’s Wrong with Wealth-Care?

Although neologisms are not always welcome, I describe our current political economy as a system of “*wealth-care*” rather than as a “free market”. “Free market” is a false way to characterize the current economic order, as the political theorist Eric McGillvray warned:

182: “the very language that we use to talk about questions of political economy—the language of the ‘free’ market—predisposes us to respond to those questions in a certain way, even when there is reason to think that this may not be the best response either in economic or in human terms.” (McGillvray 2011)(p. 182) As Karl Polanyi observed in his remarkable book, *The Great Transformation*, the growth of the free market was never a result of “freedom” but of enormous state coercion. A “self-regulating market” is, in his mind, a “utopian experiment.”

At present, the shape of the self-regulating market is often described as “neo-liberal,” to distinguish it from the historical era of liberalism that ended in the 1930s. I have also used that term to mean the economic system in which government expenditures are limited, the market is viewed as the preferred method for allocating all social resources, the protection of private property is taken to be the first principle of government, and social programs are limited to being a thin “safety net.”

Using a lens of care, though, it makes sense to label this “neoliberal” framework as wealth-care. As I have argued elsewhere, neoliberals define care in terms of a private self and private family (recall Margaret Thatcher’s famous comment that there is no such thing as society). But every society cares most about something, and a society in the thrall of neoliberal economics cares about wealth and its accumulation.

Wealth-care has well defined ways to care for and to protect itself. As Jeffrey Winters argued in his book *Oligarchy* (Winters 2010), in addition to the people who live off of wealth itself, many well-to-do members of modern societies work in what he called “The Income Defense Industry,” protecting wealth through the manipulation and construction of tax codes, banking regulations, etc. Ideologically, wealth-care protects itself through an ongoing

attack an all forms of public institutions, as Nancy MacLean has demonstrated in her book on the history of public-choice economics, *Democracy in Chains* (MacLean 2017). There she quotes Pierre Lemieux, an historian of their movement, “The public choice revolution rings the death knell of the political ‘we’” ([ix]).

If we start from a care perspective, then, we will want to describe the current economy as one committed to wealth-care. There is another advantage of using this label; wealth-care better describes the ideology of the present economy than does neoliberalism. Neoliberalism’s ideological commitment to the “watchman state” does not fit well with the realities of how the wealthy currently use the state to their own advantage. The wealthy receive subsidies for industries that are “too big to fail,” apply pressure to pay less tax, and use the state to enrich themselves, by creating new opportunities for wealth-creation in prisons, schools, hospitals, and other public institutions.

Wealth-care does, however, continue to present itself as neo-liberal in an important regard, that is, based on *individual activity* that somehow all harmonizes. As Polanyi pointed out, though, one consequence of such a world-view is that it makes it impossible to hold people responsible. As a result, in this frame it is impossible to

think of the kinds of responsibility that the “political we” might accept. Here it is worth quoting him at length:

“The radical illusion was fostered that there is nothing in human society that is not derived from the volition of individuals and that could not, therefore, be removed again by their volition. Vision was limited by the market which ‘fragmentated’ life into the producers’ sector that ended when his product reached the market, and the sector of the consumer for whom all goods sprang from the market. The one derived his income ‘freely’ from the market, the other spent it ‘freely’ there. Society as a whole remained invisible. The power of the state was of no account, since the less its power, the smoother the market mechanism would function. Neither voters, nor owners, neither producers, nor consumers could be held responsible for such brutal restrictions of freedom as were involved in the occurrence of unemployment and destitution. Any decent individual could imagine himself free from all responsibility for acts of compulsion on the part of a state which he, personally, rejected; or for economic suffering in society from which he, personally, had not benefitted. He was ‘paying his way,’ was ‘in nobody’s debt,’ and was unentangled in the evil of power and economic value. His lack of responsibility for

them seemed so evident that he denied their reality in the name of his freedom.” (Polanyi 2001, 266)

If the advocates of wealth-care allows individuals to assume they have no responsibility, how do they describe how care should function? They first believe that care is an individual responsibility, or a family responsibility. Beyond that, care can be allocated through the market. The end result is that this process “invisibilizes” the process of shifting care responsibilities increasingly back on individuals. For example, in the US, “school choice” makes *parents* to blame if their children attend poor schools, even though they may not have any better schools within their reach, rendering their “choice” meaningless (see Tronto 2013, 130-136). Furthermore, when wealthier people are asked to share their wealth, their usual response is to blame the poor for their poverty, thereby denying any responsibility they might have had in constructing structural forms of inequality.

So strong is the force of corporate economic power that, in 2008 Sheldon Wolin called this system “inverted totalitarianism,” a form of “managed democracy” in which individuals, feeling themselves powerless, also feel themselves without any responsibility for what happens. With the destruction of what Tocqueville had called “intermediate institutions,” individuals are reduced from citizens to spectators who

are occasionally called upon to vote for political office holders in the same way that they make choices in consumer products or entertainers. The end result is greater strength for the state and the corporations who are enriched by its activities (Wolin 2008). This is a grim picture, but it describes well what happens when what we care about is wealth. Wealth-care protects wealth and the wealthy who hold it. While many wealthy people also spend great amounts of their wealth to help others through charitable organizations, note that with charity, the decisions made about what kind of care to provide to whom are being made by the givers, not the receivers. Once again, the “needy” are treated as incapable of providing care for themselves, or even knowing what their caring needs are. Even if the care that people receive is exemplary, it is surely not democratic.

So I have described the system of wealth-care as caring most about wealth, to the detriment of the caring needs of others, and more importantly, to the detriment of allowing people in society to make judgments about who should bear which responsibilities. So how might we reconceive of care in a better way?

Part II. Democratic Care

The feminist revolution in thinking about care as fundamental to human

life has gone forward for about a generation. We follow Carol Gilligan (Gilligan 1982) in calling this approach “care ethics.” Among the ideas that make the emerging account of care different from liberal accounts of society are ontological, epistemological, ethical, and political differences (Tronto 2011). Ontologically, care ethics conceives of relationships as fundamental to defining who we are as people (as opposed to think first and foremost of autonomy), as all being vulnerable and in need of care throughout their lives, and as all humans as both givers and receivers of care. Thus, people are ethically in relationships of dependency and care with others. This leads to an epistemological starting point in which people think of moral theory in naturalistic terms where each owes others an attempt to determine their responsibilities vis-à-vis others (Walker 1998). Thus, “An ethics of responsibility as a normative moral view would try to put people and responsibilities in the right places with respect to each other.” (Walker 1998: 84). Politically, to be committed to setting responsibilities in the right places with respect to each other obviously requires, in a democratic society, that everyone be involved in a fair process of deciding what those responsibilities would look like.

Every society has an account of care; some of these are bad and deplorable forms of care. Slave-holding socie-

ties believe slaves should care. Uma Narayan pointed out that colonialism in Great Britain was sold to the home population as an exercise in care through civilizing and Christianizing others (Narayan 1995). In a democratic society, if we think democracy is one of the central things that we care about, then we should arrange care to be congruent with the central values of democracy. Among those values, obvious ones are being involved in decision-making and having equal voice to determine what responsibilities are just and fair. As the disability rights movement so eloquently puts it, “nothing about us without us.” Without democratic institutions, there is no way to ensure that everyone and everybody is cared for well, and that everyone is doing their fair share of care. Of course, such a shift in levels of responsibility, from the attitude Polanyi described of thinking one has no responsibility for others, to this level of responsibility, is a grave and huge shift. We cannot forget the warning of Hannah Arendt here, that “Tribalism and racism are the very realistic, if very destructive, ways of escaping this predicament of common responsibility” (Arendt 2004) (236).

Under what conditions will people be willing to accept such common responsibility? Only when it looks as if society has, in the first place, provided for their care or at least made it possible for them to obtain the care they

and made it possible for them to care well for those around them. This requires a fundamental rethinking of our priorities. It does not mean that there is no value to the pursuit of wealth or growth, but that the single-minded pursuit of these ends is not a responsible way to live together in a democratic society.

Part III. Making Change: How to Care Democratically

If caring democratically requires reorganizing care responsibilities, it is first essential to say a bit more about the nature about responsibility and care responsibilities. Responsibility, as the etymology of the word makes clear, grows out of *response*: it is, therefore, necessarily relational. Furthermore, responsibility requires an *ability* or *power* to accomplish the ends to be achieved. While people often think of responsibility in terms of fixing blame, in fact responsibility is oriented as much towards the future as the past. In care terms, one can only assume responsibility having recognized a need for care and having some capacity to address the problem. Responsibility is not only, even primarily, *personal*; institutions such as families, unions, churches, clubs, schools, can have responsibilities as well.

From this point, though, it becomes clear what some of the complexities of responsible caring require. People do

have common experiences of responsibility, either accepting it or shirking it. But care requires concrete judgments about needs in particular ways. It requires a thick understanding of the situation of others. It requires, to use the phrase that Danielle Allen identifies as the heart of democracy, “talking to strangers” (Allen 2004). People can share stories of care with others relatively easily; this is a starting intuition of what caring together democratically would require. But beyond individual stories, there has to be a *political discourse* that builds upon these experiences. This is what caring democracy attempts to do.

This political discourse will seem both familiar and strange. Obviously, people can draw upon their own care experiences to recognize that responsibilities, and how well they they are met, have consequences for others. The politics of accepting, denying, changing, and judging responsibilities occur in everyone’s everyday life. Second, accepting responsibility for democracy itself also requires that we try to act more democratically, by reducing hierarchy, widening power bases, and including everyone.

So there are two steps required for a strategy of moving to more caring, democratic, politics.

The first step is to mitigate wealth-care as the problem. This requires that the

realities of where the harms of wealth care originate are exposed. People need to be more attentive to the levels of inequality in the world. Those who perpetuate wealth inequality need to recognize how their wealth provides them with care advantages that others do not have, and to take responsibility for the injustice that these advantages may represent. It would be worthwhile to start with political agendas to promote living wages, or indeed, basic incomes. But those only bring those on the bottom up, they do not really confront the fact that some are advantaged by wealth and being able to buy more. Should some get more health care because they are wealthy? More or better education because they have more money?

The second step is to try to enact caring democracy. Societies need to try to envision ways that public policies and institutions can strengthen, rather than weaken, ways to care for people and the environment (including plants, animals, the atmosphere, the oceans, the physical world). While I cannot fully spell out what such changed policies would look like, let me draw upon what others and I have been arguing to suggest some ways in which caring democracies would move forward. Indeed, no democratic theorist should really try to suggest what “the” solutions to problems should look like, that should be the task of democrats themselves. But here are some starting

points for thought and action:

1. Care fundamentally requires time. Time is one of the most important elements of care—to care well requires relationship and relationships build over time (Adam 1990; Tronto 2003). Attempts to make care more “efficient” by changing time to care is often disastrous. Scholars thinking about time and care have made important public policy changes, especially in Latin America, by insisting that unpaid care work time be counted. These time-use studies have been the first step in recognizing gendered and class-ed arrangements in care and in seeking to make care more responsible (Esquivel and Kaufmann 2017). Jennifer Nedelsy and Tom Malleson argue, in their forthcoming book, that fairness in care requires *Part Time For All*, so that everyone has sufficient time both for work and for care.

2. Economic transformation. Especially in Europe, scholars have begun to argue for an economic transformation that would make care as well as environmental issues more central. The German organization “Care Revolution” offers policy suggestions along these lines. The Turkish economist Ipek Ilkcaracan argues for a “purple economy” to advance the “green economy” to notice care work and caring (Ilkcaracan 2016). Spanish authors have described care as the backbone as a new political economy (Carrasco Bengoa 2013).

3. Govern with care in mind. Just as most governments now require an “environmental impact statement” before they allow public works to go forward, so too it would be possible to require “care impact statements” before changing public policies. One example might suffice here: suppose changes to work schedules had to be coordinated with school schedules before they could take effect (and vice versa)?

4. Embrace pluralism in all of its forms. If people recognize this fact—not all of us want to be cared for, or to give care, in the same way—then we have begun to provide a concrete and tangible way for people to embrace plurality of religion, cultures, genders, and other forms of diversity. There are many examples where the care effects of such leaps of faith to care for others have produced dramatic effects. In a small German town where there were not enough children to fill the kindergarten class, the mayor bravely invited Syrian refugee families to live in the town. The end result: a kindergarten, new neighbors, enriched Octoberfest (Bennhold 2019).

If people begin to think about how society might more fairly organize itself to care better, these preliminary ideas, which might look quite radical, will appear to be minor. But there is one last question to consider: does a democratic rethinking of care require that people take on *too much responsibility*?

It surely feels so at first, reorganizing school and work schedules, to take one example, changes what we take as normal. All change chafes at first. Carrying one’s own bag instead of getting a new disposable plastic one at each store requires an adjustment. But that adjustment is small compared to its benefits. Within a short time, people can make the adjustment.

But there is another important answer to this question: taking on responsibility for allocating care in a democracy is more responsibility, but it also returns to people the power to organize their lives. We can live in caring democracies when people understand that they have agreed to take on, or to renegotiate, responsibilities. If some seem too burdened, then the democratic process requires rethinking those responsibilities. There will always be conflicts about the right balance of responsibilities, that is in the nature of democracy. Freedom emerges from living within and with one’s responsibilities and being assured that since others are doing so as well, then there will be some fairness to this allocation.

It is easy to make this sound too easy: many issues of responsibility to care lurk beyond the daily activities of taking care of ourselves, and as people being to become more adept at seeing caring needs, they will also see new needs. How should people in any democracy include the responsibilities

to people who live beyond their national borders? How should societies think about the responsibilities that their actions in the past may have created through the relationships established in the colonial past? How should each of us think about our relationships to those whom we may have slighted, or excluded, or treated with contempt or hatred?

While there is nothing easy about a caring democracy, then, it will nonetheless empower people to take up the questions of responsibility and justice for themselves. Rather than living in a world where people devote so much time and energy to taking care of wealth, suffering through time squeezes and economic fears, losing every day the capacity even to ask themselves if they are happy, an alternative is possible.

ENACTING CARING DEMOCRACY: A SCHOOL-FOCUSED WORKSHOP

Joan Tronto

The goal of this workshop is to allow students, working from a familiar care setting, to develop

a sense of the complexity of negotiating around caring needs, to recognize the variety of needs and ways that people will think about them. Nevertheless, working from the standpoint of care makes it possible for see issues differently and to propose solutions to problems.

The Workshop Conditions:

Time: 1 hour

Number of participants: 18—25 (or so)

Preliminary Reading: Section from *Caring Democracy*, “*A Little Utopian Thinking*,” pp. 160—164.

Part I. Setting Up the Exercise (10 minutes):

1. How to think about care more democratically

A “thick account” of caring well includes these elements:

- No one’s social opportunities would be limited
- People are free to choose with whom and for whom to care
- Personal service work is well paid
- Social institutions and practices are organized so that vulnerable people can be accommodated
- People think about others’ need
- Do caring work in a rewarding way
- No one has to do only care work

Caring democratically also requires democratic processes to arrive at decisions

2. Concretely, these are the questions to be addressed:

1. What *needs for care* are currently unaddressed, or addressed badly, in the ways that schools are organized?
 - What are the needs?
 - How are they currently addressed or not addressed?
2. Who/what is responsible for this situation?
3. If responsibilities were to be re-allocated, who would do what?
4. How would we know if caring were improved?

Part II. The Exercise (20 minutes)

– Students are divided into small groups to work through these four questions (20 minutes)

1. What is the need you see?
2. How is it currently cared for?
3. What changes are necessary? Who should be more/less responsible?
4. What effect will these changes have, and how will we know?

Part III. Sharing Results (15 minutes)

Each group takes a few minutes to re-

port the results of their work

Part IV. Students React to The Experience, Analyze Results, See if Conclusions Emerge (15 minutes)

Among possible results:

Students may have very different/similar ideas about the needs.

Some possible needs: curricular, social, temporal (too much homework?!), social issues such as equal access to schools, etc.

Their description of how care is currently organized:

It will be interesting to hear how they think schools operate. Issues to raise include budget, planning, etc., if they do not mention these concerns.

What changes are necessary?
Who should be responsible?

It will follow from the discussion, but try to avoid letting them escape with an answer such as “we’re all responsible...”

What effect will these changes have, and how will we know?

The main reason for asking this question is to get students to think about how caring is an ongoing process and

to see how difficult it is to answer this question.

CARING DEMOCRACY

Joan Tronto

Part III: Imagining democratic caring practices and caring democracies. Chapter 6: Democratic Caring, p. 160-164.

A Little Utopian Thinking

Although utopian thinking cannot be the end point for any analysis, it is often a good starting point. One place to start is to ask: What kind of care would each person wish for him- or herself? Such care would probably include some of these elements. First, we would want those who were caring for us to be happy about the fact that they were giving us care. They would find care rewarding, on both personal and, if necessary, economic grounds (either by the amount they were paid, or by some alternative means of economic provision so that they were not concerned about the “opportunity cost” of caring). Second, we would not want to be cared for according to some set model of standardization. That is, we would want care to rest

upon a thick model of our own sensibilities (for example, respectful of our senses of physical modesty, propriety, spiritual life, etc.), and our real needs. Third, we would want some way to acknowledge both the pleasures and the frustrations of receiving both good and bad care, and we would want to share our judgments with people who would understand them.

As simple as these premises seem, they could entail a somewhat thick account of conditions for caring in a good society. First, no one’s social opportunities or “life chances” would be constrained by gender, sexual orientation, race, or imposed creed. Such a view incorporates the wishes of the goals of inclusive citizenship and social cohesion. Second, people would be free to live with and to affiliate with others in intimate arrangements of their own choosing (at least beyond a minimal age; Marge Piercy suggested in her utopian *Woman on the Edge of Time* [1976] that children at thirteen be permitted to choose their own names and mothers). Some of the caring work in society would be organized so that intimates could share such arrangements, but other possible arrangements would also exist. Tamar Metz (2010a, 2010b) has recently called for the creation of “intimate caregiving units” to replace families. While the name is not elegant, the point she makes—that families are not the only institutions that can provide intimate care—is an accurate one. Third, all per-

sonal service work would be well paid, so that no class distinctions marked the necessity to do caring work or the privilege of receiving it (cf. Waerness 1990). Fourth, social institutions and practices would be organized so that vulnerable people, as well as able-bodied, strong, healthy, normative adults, can be accommodated. People think about the needs of others, but everyone also has the capacity to state what their own needs are (Fraser 1989). There are multiple ways to meet needs; in a good society, people would have choices about which way their needs would be met. Further, people would want the caring work that they did to have these same qualities of being rewarding, fulfilling, and well received, and they would want the chance to share their judgments and experiences with others. Finally, no one should be asked to do so much caring work that there was no space in that person's life outside of the circles of care.

Incomplete as this list is, it does make clear that it is both possible and crucial to articulate the ends of care. Along with care, other values need to be included. In democratic societies, these other values would include such concerns as freedom (understood, as discussed earlier, as freedom from domination) and genuine equality. In pluralistic democratic societies, citizens need to think about freedom and equality in ways that "engage across differences" (Hancock 2011, 22).

If it is possible to articulate what caring institutions should take as their purposes, it is also possible to assess institutions based on how well they achieve these ends. It is possible to create responsive institutions that are staffed by people who are themselves attentive, responsible, competent, and responsive.

Absent such a change in institutions, those who engage in caring often face what Nancy Folbre (2001) calls the "Nice Person's Dilemma." This nice person is someone who makes a contribution to caring for others, but whose sacrifices are never reciprocated. As a result of this treatment, the nice person ends up having been cheated, or deciding not to be "nice" in the future. That many thinkers are conceiving of care in terms of dilemmas suggests that "dilemma" captures some essential problem with the way care is organized. Sometimes the care dilemmas are intensely personal, sometimes they directly reflect larger social and political choices.

Caring Institutions: Some Practical Moral/Political Criteria

Although I usually describe attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness as moral aspects of the ethic of caring (Tronto 1993, 1995), they—and a fifth standard, solidarity and trust—are also criteria by which we can judge care itself. The complication is that in institutions of care, there

are many sets and levels of needs. This possibility of conflicting ends within institutions is a long-established problem with viewing institutions as single-purposed and single-minded. Just as all individuals have many ends, so too organizations and the individuals within them have many different ends.

Furthermore, "needs" change (cf. Fraser 1989). They change over time for particular individuals; they change as techniques of medical intervention change; they change as societies expand their sense of what should be cared for; they change as groups make new, expanded or diminished demands on the political order. The demands placed upon institutions change. As the particular individuals within the institution change, they have different needs. Workers within institutions have their own needs. Scholars have considered how elaborate are the processes by which professionals create and assess needs (Culpitt 1992). Determining needs is complicated.

The process of determining needs is one of the foremost political struggles of any account of care (cf. Fraser 1989), and the key point of democratic caring practices will be to embrace this struggle as an intrinsic part of democratic life. Needs-talk is rarely taken as seriously as rights-talk. Michael Ignatieff (1984), for example, argued against replacing rights with needs, though his argument pre-

sumes that it is easy to discern the meaning of rights in specific situations. Needs, which are much more contested and unclear conceptually, raise many questions (Reader 2007). Who should determine the needs of those who "need" care? On one level, we expect people to be able to determine their own needs. On another level, though, professional expertise may be necessary to make certain determinations of needs. Sometimes experts disagree with each other and with care receivers about how to proceed in caring. Further, sometimes professionals might have their own agendas in determining others' needs. Who then should be entrusted with such determinations? How can these different assessments of needs be resolved? Can there be "impartial observers" in these situations?

The question of trying to define and to specify "needs" is a difficult problem, both politically and philosophically. Others have tried to articulate another approach that avoids "needs" and focuses instead on "basic human capabilities." Philosophers Martha Nussbaum (Nussbaum 2000, 2004) and Amartya Sen (2009) have relied upon a notion of "basic human capabilities" in order to begin the discussion about the nature of needs and justice. Whatever approach is taken, however, a democratic practice of revisiting this question will be a key part of a democratic caring practice.

A number of feminist authors have supported some version of a “communicative ethics” to guarantee that such needs interpretations will go on well (Sevenhuijsen 1998). Nevertheless, even such a commitment is no guarantee that the process will be workable (Bickford 1996). Further, the “needs” expressed by less-advantaged people may be manipulated or distorted (Crujkshank 1994). So, the task of thinking about and reassessing needs is an ongoing and complicated process.

No caring institution in a democratic society can function well without an explicit locus for the needs-interpretation struggle—that is, without a “rhetorical space” (Code 1995), a “moral space” (Walker 1998), or a political space within which this essential part of caring can occur. Thus, some important criteria for investigating institutions are: How does the institution come to understand its needs? How does it negotiate needs within itself? Which needs are taken as legitimate? How are responsibilities within the organization allocated? Who actually gives the care? How is the reception and effectiveness of care work evaluated?

One danger is that all caring institutions will be marked as undemocratic because they concern dependency. In the minds of most people, care is a concern for those who are vulnerable (Goodin 1985) or dependent. In truth, all human beings require care, all the

time. Some are able to care better for themselves. Some are able to command the caring labor of others as “personal service” so while they could clean up after themselves, for example, they hire others to do that work for them so that they can do something less tedious (cf. Waerness 1990). As long as the image of the “autonomous career man” (Walker 1999) continues to exist, then those who are perceived as needing care are marginalized. It is, as many have observed (Knijn and Kremer 1997), quite remarkable that this image of “man” so dominates the way that we conceive of citizens because it so obviously does not describe how humans live their lives.

Another danger for caring in a democratic society is that market-like criteria may come to inform care. Ungerson (1997) has written extensively about the problem of the commodification of care, which is usually associated with a certain degree of dissatisfaction with the way that care is provided. Here, as in the classic Marxist framework, the problem with commodification is that it is alienating. However, there is an analytical difference between providing cash within care relationships and the problem of alienation, though Ungerson is probably correct that the danger of alienation is great when money is introduced in the framework of a capitalist society. Nevertheless, it is possible to imagine a system in which alienation

does not occur even though money has entered the equation. Diemut Bubeck’s (1995) work describing care in terms of exploitation points to some of the ways that care is different from other commodities.

There is a greater danger, though, in thinking of care as a commodity, as purchased services, rather than as a process. Talking about care in terms of commodification begins to slip into thinking of the concomitant notion of scarcity (Xenos 1989). The usual view that arises from thinking of care as a commodity is to see any increase in caring time as a cut in time for another activity. If activities such as paid work can be arranged flexibly, then it may be possible to increase both care and other activities. But to do so requires flexibility, creative thinking, and going beyond the zero-sum model.

The complexity of care requires political space within which to make such decisions. Everywhere men and women have to be willing to take on caring responsibilities and to discuss the resolution of these problems. The most pressing political discussions for us to have require us to surrender the “model of man” as a robust, autonomous, self-contained actor. But having come to some resolution about our own views of care requires the greatest courageous act of solidarity: to treat others with respect in their choices as people. Any system of care that avoids

the plurality of people will probably be inadequate. Hierarchies pose a threat to care: they divide up the process of responsibility and separate it from the actual work and response to care. Thus, democratic caring will try as much as possible to flatten out hierarchies. Being interdependent does not deny people freedom, though being dependent may do so, and being inside a hierarchical order may do so as well. And once again, the demand is that everyone must be able to participate in such discussions. When we have arrived at such values, when institutions are flexible enough to have several ways to meet people’s needs, when no one acts out of neglect or abuse, then we will be able to say that we live in a caring society.

NOTITIES

NOTITIES

COLOFON

Facebook

www.facebook.com/filosofieolympiade

Twitter

www.twitter.com/filolympiade

Instagram

www.instagram.com/filosofieolympiade

Web

www.filosofieolympiade.nl

ISVW

Dodeweg 8

3832 RD Leusden

Telefoon: 033 - 465 07 00

De boeken die zullen worden uitgereikt aan de winnaars van de Nederlandse Filosofie Olympiade 2020 zijn ter beschikking gesteld door **Uitgeverij Athenaeum, Boom uitgevers** en **Lemniscaat**.

Om de vlucht van Joan Tronto te compenseren heeft de NFO de emissierechten voor 4 ton CO² gekocht en vernietigd via carbonkiller.org (transaction ID: EU537617).

Grafisch ontwerp: **Jet van Zwieten** | Illustratie omslag: **Gijs Kast**



Nederlandse
Filosofie
Olympiade



