

Diversity Roundtable Symposium “Care and Neglect in German American Studies”

February 7-8, 2025

Call for Papers:

“How would we organize and move our communities if we shifted to focus on what we long for and love rather than what we are negatively reacting to?” (brown 23), adrienne marie brown asks in the introduction to her essay collection *Pleasure Activism* (2019). Besides being pertinent to social justice work, this question is crucial to the contemporary focus on deconstructing (hierarchies of power, structures of oppression) rather than constructing (new frameworks and politics of self-care). At the heart of brown’s question lie assumptions and actualities of how care and neglect impact our everyday ways of co-existing and engaging with one another.

The 2025 Diversity Roundtable digital symposium aims to explore the many roles and functions of care and neglect in academia. We aim to create a symposium that allows for different forms of engagement with multiple perspectives on practices of care and neglect as they transpire in German American Studies and academia more generally. What are our own ways of relating to one another, as academics and as peers? How do academic hierarchies open the door to the (ab)use of care and neglect with regard to our academic work, interpersonal relationships, and well-being? How might academic structures change if they were geared toward caring collaborations more than neoliberal practices of individualized professionalism? As individuals evolving within German academia, what do we do to take care of ourselves, and what can we do to do it better? How may our institutions and those higher up in the academic hierarchy contribute to practices and structures of care?

These are a few of the many questions that came to mind when discussing the role of care and neglect in academia. In “The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power” (1978), Audre Lorde speaks of “the necessity for reassessing the quality of all the aspects of our lives and of our work, and of how we move toward and through them” (Audre Lorde, in *PA*, 30). In this spirit, we do not want to limit our symposium to local or individual experiences of academia but invite all contributions that examine the ways in which academia, as an institution of knowledge production, may be transformed through different forms of care and neglect. German academic institutions continue to marginalize identity groups as to their race, gender, dis/ability,

citizenship, and language, among others. By discussing the role of care and neglect within our academic practices, we hope to contribute to the conversation on how to address, deconstruct, and dismantle the structures of power operating in and beyond academic institutions and to create spaces of open care within German American Studies.

We welcome any contributions – academic papers, creative performances, workshops – relevant to the topic at hand. We hope to create a digital space in which we can safely and respectfully discuss practices of care and neglect pertaining to systematic forms of marginalization and networks of collective empowerment. We invite contributions on topics including but not limited to:

- theories and practices of care and neglect
- active and passive forms of care and neglect
- politics of care and neglect
- queer practices of care and neglect
- carework and in/equality
- care, neglect, and dis/ability
- intersectional perspectives on care and neglect
- post/decolonial practices on care and neglect
- poetics of care and neglect
- care and neglect in the anthropocene

We welcome all contributions that engage with these and other questions related to care and neglect (max. 20 minutes). While accepting traditional academic formats (e.g., papers, posters, roundtables, workshops), we particularly welcome knowledge-sharing formats that have been neglected by academic institutions (e.g., song, film, performance, collage, slam, etc.). Please send your proposal (250-300 words) and a short bio (100 words) to diversity_roundtable@dgfa.de by December 15, 2024.