

IK

Heike Drotbohm (Mainz)

Das ifeas stellt sich vor: Care beyond Repair (AG Drotbohm)

To care about and for others – i.e. other people, collectivities, plants, and animals – is a mundane and ubiquitous act. At some point in life, almost every human being needs to be cared for, encounters care and, eventually, provides care. In anthropology, the critical notion of care provides an analytic tool for seriously considering life's contingencies and for understanding the ways people ascribe meaning to different kind of acts, attitudes and values. In our talk we will problematize the fact that the concept's normative dimension forms part of a cultural binarism that hierarchizes the world according to differently valued spheres of existence. Concentrating on this normativity as inherent to the notion, the chapter distinguishes three complementary empirical fields: care as (globalized) social reproduction, care as institutionalized asymmetry and care beyond human exceptionalism. It becomes clear that care oscillates between two different perspectives, producing a particular tension: On the one hand, the care concept features a protective and conservative dimension that is congruent with the past. On the other hand, the concept incorporates a transformational dimension through its notions of development, progress and improvement. To move beyond our own (potentially or inevitably) academic, Eurocentric or human-centric understanding of the notion, it seems recommendable first to ask what role research plays in this differentiating ethics and then to identify perspectives and positionalities that, at first glance, appear indistinct or inarticulate and, hence, do not confirm already familiar categories of evaluation and distinction.

Heike Drotbohm is professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Department of Anthropology and African Studies in Mainz. In this week's session she will present her work together with several PhD and MA students, who work on topics related to hers.

Institutskolloquium Wintersemester 2021/22 (Leitung: Markus Verne)

Wann? Dienstag, 23. November 2021, 18:15–19:45 Uhr

Wo? HS 13 (in Präsenz, 3G)

Weitere Informationen: www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de

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