

sically altruistic character: it involves the carer donating resources to the cared-for, regardless of return, and doing so precisely because the cared-for lacks the necessary resources. This is particularly vivid in unpaid care relationships, such as family relationships. But even when care is paid labor, it has this kind of altruistic element. In most cases, the caregiver is paid by someone other than the cared-for person, either another caregiver or an institutional source of care. And psychologically, paid caregivers often feel altruism toward the people they care for, and indeed this is a source of meaning and satisfaction. These features of care make it very different from the kind of standard social and economic transactional relationships, such as those between employers and employees, buyers and sellers, or cooperative partners, that can be characterized in terms of a social contract between two equivalent autonomous agents. They also differentiate care from power relationships, which involve similar asymmetries between those with more resources and those with less, but assume that the consequence of such asymmetries is that the less powerful agent will serve the interests of the more powerful one. These distinctive features of care may indeed have contributed to the neglect of these relationships in standard economic and political accounts.

Other features of care are more variable but nevertheless seem to be important in many cases. Care often seems to involve local attachments, whether these are the classic emotional bonds of attachment theory or more abstract relationships between members of a particular community, such as the Black institutions discussed by Maisha T. Winn and Nim Tottenham in their essay, or even the relationships we have with those who are no longer alive, as Phil Ford, Jacob G. Foster, and J. F. Martel describe in their contribution to this volume.⁴ On the other hand, care can also take on a kind of universality in religious or philosophical contexts, as Zachary Ugolnik and Eric Schwitzgebel discuss in their respective essays. Similarly, there are interesting ques-

We have organized these essays into roughly three groups: one that focuses on biological and psychological perspectives, another that addresses more abstract philosophical and sociological themes, and a third that is concerned with policy questions. The first set of essays examines the psychological and social underpinnings of care both for children and elders. Ashley J. Thomas, Christina M. Steele, Alison Gopnik, and Rebecca R. Saxe consider how infants themselves understand and identify caregivers, with empirical results that suggest that even surprisingly young infants make inferences about care.⁵ Seth Pollak and Megan Gunnar review the substantial literature on the crucial effects of early care and nurturance on later development, an area where there has been extensive empirical work, and discuss its broader implications.⁶ Monica E. Ellwood-Lowe, Gabriel Reyes, Meriah L. DeJoseph, and Willem E. Frankenhuis explore the particular issues that arise in low-income families and discuss the ways that different environments might shape caregiving practices, while preserving the basic structure of care.⁷ Winn and Tottenham look to Independent Black Institutions (IBIs) established in the late 1960s as sources of insight.⁸ They explain how three pillars of Black education across IBIs (Identity, Purpose, and Direction) map onto beneficial practices identified in the psychological and neuroscience literature on care and development, such as exposing children to caregivers beyond simply their parents and teachers by including elders, school employees, and other alloparents. Toni Schmader and Katharina Block consider the question of why people might choose to take on or fail to take on the role of carers, with men as a particularly striking example, showing that paradoxically, cultures with more gender equality may make it more difficult for men to take on such roles.⁹

The essay by Claire M. Growney, Caitlin Zaloom, and Laura L. Carstensen and the one by Elizabeth Fetterolf, Andrew Elder, Margaret Levi, and Ranak B. Trivedi argue for a new model of care for the elderly in which the need for autonomy and usefulness of the cared-for has equal standing with their need for assistance.¹⁰ For Growney, Zaloom, and Carstensen, changes in real estate markets, zoning, and planning are essential to create and sustain age-diverse neighborhoods that enable elders to help in the care of younger people, and the young to aid the old in turn. Fetterolf, Elder, Levi, and Trivedi focus on the necessary, if stressful, negotiations between the person in need of care, their family members, the in-home carers, the health experts, and those who pay the bills. The introduction of technology into these relationships can ease some of the human burdens of care but can also introduce conflicts. The authors document both.

The second set of essays looks at more abstract aspects of care. These essays focus on the interrelated issues concerning the care of others, the divine, the dead, and AI agents.¹¹ They also explore how these approaches can inform our daily life and offer insights into what we value in human care. Notably, these authors provide different types of care that are meaningful in their particularity and, at once,

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Dædalus 154 (1)(2025)251, p/w