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Biopolitical Genealogies of Caring Bodies: Inhuman, non-human, anti-human?

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Why does the 'problem of care' persist? To answer this question, this paper focuses on the novel case of unpaid, voluntary HIV/AIDS care work during South Africa's democratic transition - a highly feminized, debilitating form of care work - to demonstrate how the need for care and the proliferation of 'new' caring bodies is a product of the neoliberal milieu which operationalizes care as biopolitical governance. This biopolitical transformation from the individual to the population, and subsequently, from the human to the technological, requires a reconfiguration of conventional feminist theories, and ethics, of care. Using postcolonial feminist science and technology studies, as well as frameworks from the history and philosophy of science, I reorient feminist theories of care towards an analysis of 'transnational biopolitical assemblages of care' emergent at the intersection of care ethics, political theory, neoliberal economy, global public health policy, and public health crises. Then, through Gilles Deleuze's machinic ethics (as applied to assemblages) and Rosi Braidotti's post-human, nomadic ethics (2006; 2016) I attempt to think about these "new caring bodies" as "bodies without organs" to reorient feminist theories of care from individual practice, to population management, to emergent questions constellating around the construction and deployment of "care robots" (DeFalco, 2017).