

building Buildings with Care.

Caring Architecture | Material Honesty | Repair | Material use | Urban Territory | Ecology of Care

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Msc. 3 | Architectural Design Crossovers

To not see something is to not know it,
without knowing there is not even a possibility to care.

Linda Tegg in Repair 2016



Initiative of chef Adrián Rojas to convert his bar and grocery store in Malasaña
Madrid into a local soup kitchen feeding hundreds of people daily

El país, 2020

Problem statement

'Third heatwave of the summer will hit Madrid.'
'If no one Cares enough than I will to feed the hungry of Malasaña.'

Even tough these two headlines might seemingly point to two completely different issues; they are part of a similar problem. Up to this point we, as a society, are caring wrongly. We have put our own needs above anything else. This phenomenon quickly intervened with all parts of civilization, resulting in multiple issues visible in the built environment as well. Buildings lack resilience to these catastrophes and architects Care, but they are caring wrongly (Krazny, 2019). They care about what their client wants, what those in power envision with the building. This might explain why Architecture is written with a capital A, while Care is written with a small c. Architecture is a reflection of power, as Joan Tronto (2019) writes in Critical Care. She urges for a shift in thinking about architecture. As shift to no longer look at the building as a thing but view the building as a relationship - with ongoing environments, people, flora, and fauna- that exist through time and space. And care is a selective use of personal power to look after one and other. By connecting the notion of Care to the urban territory of Madrid I hope to create a design guide to 'Building Buildings with Care'. There is a lot written on Care as Concept and what Caring Architecture is, yet the roll of the Material with the building as an actor is undefined. Building Care is a puzzle-piece to the solution for the catastrophes the two headlines pointed at, socially and environmentally we need to change the way we look at the building. Therefore our attitude towards building buildings need to change. This means the architect has to Care about the site, the story, the people and therefore the design process.

Caring Architecture . Material Honesty. Repair.
Material Use .Urban Territory. Ecology of Care.

01. Introduction

Sparking interest
Key concepts
frameworks
important footnotes
diagram with key concepts
problem statement

Fascination

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Krasny & tronto
Theoretical frame of
reference

03. Methodology

Mixed research methods
anthropology
urban politics
architecture

Relevance

04. Reflection

....

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Fascination.

What kind of architect do I want to be?

One that cares about the people it is designing for. A designer taking care of the environments it is polluting. A creator that is caring for the cultural values it builds upon. One that gives serious attention to what is and what was. A storyteller that knows which stories are not told enough, and respects the ones everyone is able to hear.

The next best thing. The bigger the better... Sometimes the next is not the best. And the bigger is not always better.

An introduction to building with Care

Inspired by the work of radical care thinkers, critical capitalism and critical race studies, ecofeminism, feminist architecture historians and diverse economies scholars, I seek to advance the idea that in the twenty-first century, architecture overcoming the idea of Architecture can in fact be practiced. Such architecture is inclusive to many different forms of knowledge relevant to inhabiting the planet. And, such architecture is an urgently needed form of care necessary for planetary wellbeing and survival including the intersecting needs of humans, non-humans and their environment(Krasny, 2019).

Care has to unsettle the historic legacies and mitigate, repair, adapt, or evolve the building. Once the building cares for those it has a relationship with. The people who use it, those who live around it, and the site it is situated in will care more about the building.

This urgently needed form of care is hardly visible in our current cities. Up until this day, there is an extremely powerful architecture | care divide(Krasny, 2019). The planet is indicating it is exhausted, by the rate of catastrophes follow each other up. The climate crisis is one we can no longer ignore. The earth is about to reach a breaking point, waving too many red flags. By unsettling this architecture | care divide, architecture with a small a could provide a solution to this environmental crisis. On top of the environmental crisis there is this social catastrophe going on. We live in an era of redefining and radicalization, we are trying to verbalize genders, and groups of people we have wanted to forget in the past. These crisis call for action. Connectedness through Care can counteract what those legacies have been lacking(Krasny, 2019).

The field of architecture, even though still a profession dominated by men today, has managed to absorb and incorporate women practitioners without moving toward an ethics of care(Krasny, 2019).

The reason for this lack of Care in Architecture is our perception of what an Architect is. Historically we have placed the Architect on a

pedestal, the architect is linked to autonomy and the independent genius but should be linked to connectedness, dependency and social aspects. Yet the architect being a carer is seen as female, and the architect being an artist is seen as male, and therefore often ignored.

Architecture as a mean to Care.

In order to unsettle the historic legacies of the built environment, the building has to repair all of it's relationships. The urgency to care has everything to do with the signals we as a society are ignoring. The news papers keep reporting catastrophe after catastrophe. Even tough heatwaves, drought and heavy rainfall are becoming a daily news item individualization continues. The lack of knowledge, time, skill and recourses we invest in our environment is starting to show.

Applying the ethics of Care the field of Architecture could lead towards a solution to Repair and Re-pair our broken built environment. As Wright and Baracco (2018) write in their Essay on the Micro/Macro continuum a much greater abundance of sensitively built spaces is needed to embrace nature, inspire creativity, and facilitate social engagement, as well as provide comfort and healing. This abundance translates to buildings with care. Before the topic of building with care, is explored further a brief history of the concept of care in Architecture is necessary. This results in the main question being ; **What if notions of care, such as material honesty and repair, are prioritized in designing the built environment of Madrid considering the interplay of materials, aesthetics and the broader (social)context?**

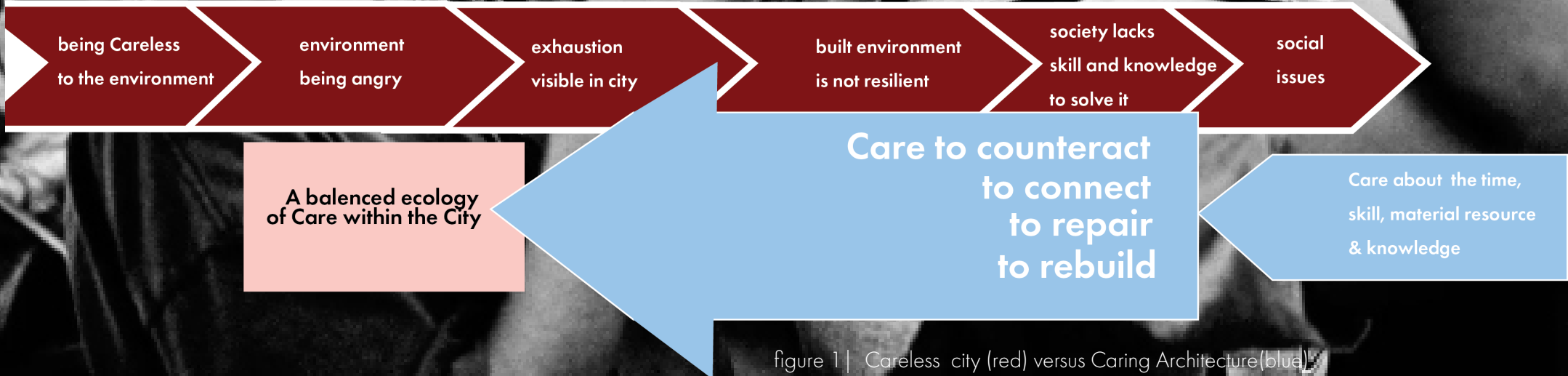


figure 1 | Careless city (red) versus Caring Architecture (blue)

figure 2 | Caring about is Caring for



The concept **Caring Architecture** builds upon the theory ‘ethics of care’ from the second wave of feminists, who redefined care. The term care originates from the 19th-century culture of domesticity. Historically Care is seen as secondary, taking place within the privacy of a home or hospital room, a duty given to prevent woman from competing in the public realm. Yet Fischer and Tronto (1990) saw Caring not just as a duty but as a right, and thus saw it as a power instead of a weakness. By conceptualizing Care, they broke down the boundary between public and private, between male and female. Accordingly Professor in political science Joan C. Tronto wrote this definition of Care.

Care is a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our world, so that we live in it as well as possible (Tronto & Fischer, 1990).

This short history lesson proves that I am not the first woman who sees the concept of Care broader than modes of Caring we are familiar with like motherhood, sisterhood and friendship. However architecture itself does not Care, the built environment

shows what those in power Cared about. The architect is in service of those powerful few, who control those who live in and around such structures. This does not mean that contemporary Architects are not Caring, but they are Caring wrongly. Architecture is not about the “thing” only, but about all who are engaged in contact through this thing. As Tronto(2019) said

Rather than thinking of buildings as things, thinking of them as relationships with ongoing environments, people, flora and fauna- that exist through time as well as in space- changes the approach fundamentally.

A building therefore is more than a shelter to protect people from the forces of nature. The building as not this thing, but a relationship. This change of concept bridges the gap between Care and Architecture. If the architect is **caring about** the building it is caring about **all the aspects it has a relationship with from caring for people to caring.**

What if notions of care, such as material honesty and repair, are prioritized in designing the built environment of Madrid considering the interplay of materials, aesthetics and the broader (social) context?

Research questions.

I. **What does the notion 'building with Care' mean?**

What does the notion 'care' mean?
What does the notion of (the) building mean?

II **Where does the idea of Caring architecture come from?**

III. **How does the notion of Care inform architectural design to generate other ways of caring for the building?**

What are the materials used?
Where are those notions of Care visible in Madrid?

IV. **How do notions of Care effect the design and building of buildings?**

figure 3 | research questions diagram



Unraveling Caring Architecture.

To protect and to maintain or to give serious attention to something, both are meanings of the word Care. Care is healthcare, Care is looking after something. Care could be a lot of things.

But what does it mean conceptually and how to connect it with architecture. There is a lot written on the concept of Care, in this chapter I provide a brief overview of the key points found in literature, see page 13 for the diagram of the theoretical framework.

care [/kAIR] *noun* 1. to maintain and protect
2. to give serious attention or consideration to something. (Baracco et al, 2019)

care [/kAIR] *verb* 1. to feel concern or interest

builiding [bild+ing] *verb* 1. construct (something) by putting parts or material together.
2. making stronger or more intense

builiding [bild+ing] *noun* 1. the action or trade of constructing something (Baracco et al, 2019)
2. a structure with a roof and walls, such as a house or factory

(Baracco et al, 2019)

figure 4 | etymology of Care and Building

Etymology of Care

To understand the connection between Architecture and care I needed to take a closer look into the terms. Beginning with care. Etymologically care comes from the old English *cerau* being burdens of mind or concern, which translates to the second meaning of the verb. Even though the word is similarly written as a noun and a verb, the meaning changes.

Looking at the first meaning of the noun Care in Figure4, **care is to maintain and protect**. With this in mind, one could say that Architecture is a form of Care. Since architecture shields and protects us from the forces of nature (Van der Tuin & Verhoeff, 2022). This thought comes from the beginning of architecture, back when architecture was a shelter. The shelter is used to protect the human against the forces of nature, by using natural resources. As Elke Krasny(2019) sets out in her essay on Architecture and Care, we no longer look at the shelter embedded in nature but have moved to the idea of the building embedded in Culture. Even though Krasny states that architecture learning from nature is key to survival, culturally we no longer see architecture to be embedded in nature and therefore this argument no longer stands.

| | |
|------------|---|
| noun | building critique cultural values marginalized ongoing relationships power structure process progress safe space trustworthy undeniable |
| verb | building care caring construct feminism process progress repair revitalise rebuild |
| adjectives | caring connectedness de-institutionalized feminist future proof kind marginalized private public powerful tenderness trustworthy undeniable |

space for the vulnerable
caring about cultural values
building relationships in kindness
care as a connection in a safe public space
voluntary kindness in a de-institutionalised setting
futureproof by caring for the territory

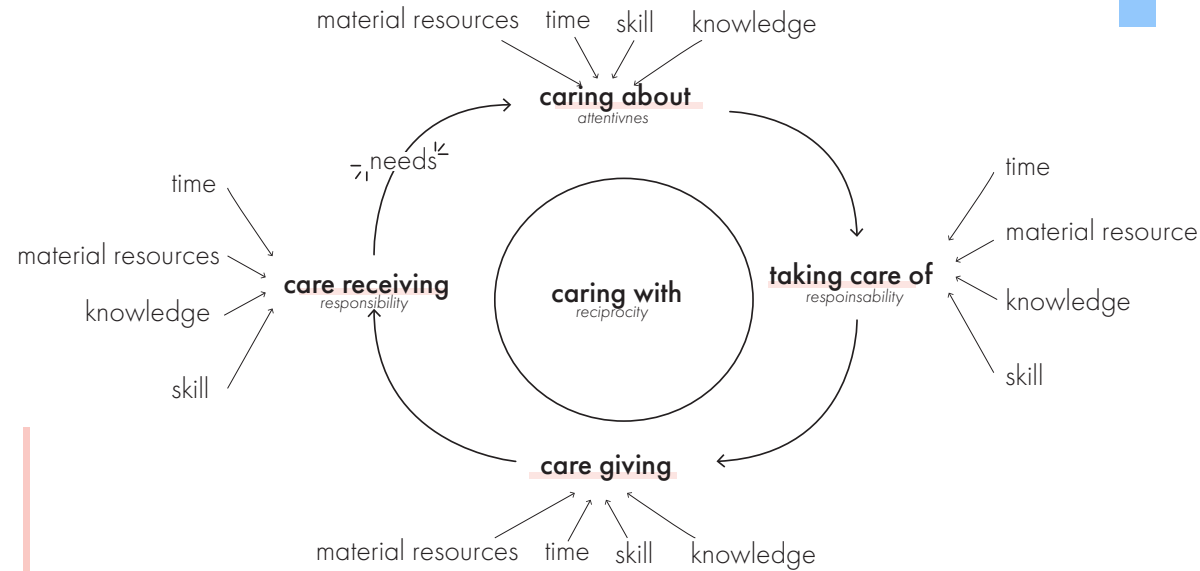


figure 5 | Model ethics of Care by Joan Tronto

Ethics of Care

Moving onto the second meaning of the noun care, where **care is to give serious attention or consideration to something**. This implies that when you care, you perform the act and indirectly, you show what you find important. This bridges the gap between the 'Ethics of Care' and Care as a concept since this meaning is part of the definition the feminists have given to care. In their essay Towards a feminist theory of Care, Tronto and Fischer(1990) conceptualize Care.

Historically seen, Care comes from a culture of domesticity. Where women were too emotionally and morally sensitive to do physical work. To give them a purpose, they were given the act of care. The duty and privilege of caring was one carried out within the private boundaries of the home, versus the right to compete which was played out in the public realm. Yet the second wave of feminists established care as an essential element of survival. Care should not be restricted to gender, race or culture. Care is a species activity, crucial for those species to survive or as Tronto & Fischer say;

Care is a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our world so that we live in it as well as possible (Tronto & Fischer, 1990)

These feminists took their expertise in Politics and Philosophy to develop a theory, currently known as the ethics of Care. This theory not only describes the historical process of Care but sets out different components and modes of caring. Beginning with the four components of caring shown in Figure 5, being **caring about**, **taking care of**, **care giving** and **care receiving**. The loop is closed by connecting the needs of those who are cared for and the attention the caregiver is giving. As each phase is executed, there are four ability actors; time, material resources, knowledge, and skill. Each of these components of caring can take place in the private or public sphere (Tronto & Fischer, 1990).

We need an architecture that shares responsibility for caring for our world. Meaning it is sensitive to values of repair, preservation, and maintaining life and the planet. How might we turn our power towards caring for our broken world? Architects and urban planners will surely provide a critical part of the answer to this question if they care enough to try (Tronto, 2019).



figure 5 | This is not Care

Architecture has the power to Care.

Even though these women were activists in their fields and the first to conceptualize Care. This theory has now spread to different fields, such as politics, bureaucracy, and Architecture. To understand Architecture as a form of Care a conceptual shift of what Architecture is, is necessary. Care and Architecture are two different forms of power. Architecture is a display of power. And **Caring is a selective use of personal power** to look after another.

Historically Architecture has displayed power. Since Architects work in service of the most Powerful. The powerful overawe control those who live in and around such structures, and determine together with the architects the resources that are deployed with the project (Tronto, 2019). This does not mean that all architects and urban planners are uncaring, but they are caring wrongly. As Joan C. Tronto writes in her essay on Caring Architecture Architects need to be willing to try and care in order to be a critical part of the answer

If the architect is willing to try and Care rightly the architect is required to participate in the ongoing relationships of those who are cared for by the building. Their power is in **Caring rightly**, since buildings may protect people from the elements, but as stated earlier by themselves buildings do not provide care. Rather than thinking of buildings as things, think of them as relationships with ongoing environments, people, flora, and fauna that exist through time as well as space. The start of Caring architecture as the right expression of power is not with Caring for the building as its object, but with caring for all that are in contact with this thing (Tronto, 2019). Therefore to **Care for** is to use power with all it has a relationship with, to **Architecturally Care is to use the architects' resources, time, knowledge, and skills of building to try and care**. By caring for the building is able to care about all. Meaning it is caring about the relationships it has with the environment, the people, the flora and fauna.

Embracing the need for an expanded and more fluid understanding of context, [...]I would offer two conceptions of territory that have driven our contemporary understanding of context—the “layered territory” and the “networked territory.” These two models correspond both to methods of analyzing and representing, but equally, to ways of conceptualizing territories. The layered territory stratifies its environment into a series of individuated layers and systems. It enables an in-depth examination of the systems—physical and natural—at work within a site, but with little focus on the interconnection or potential overlaps of these systems. (sheppard, 2013)

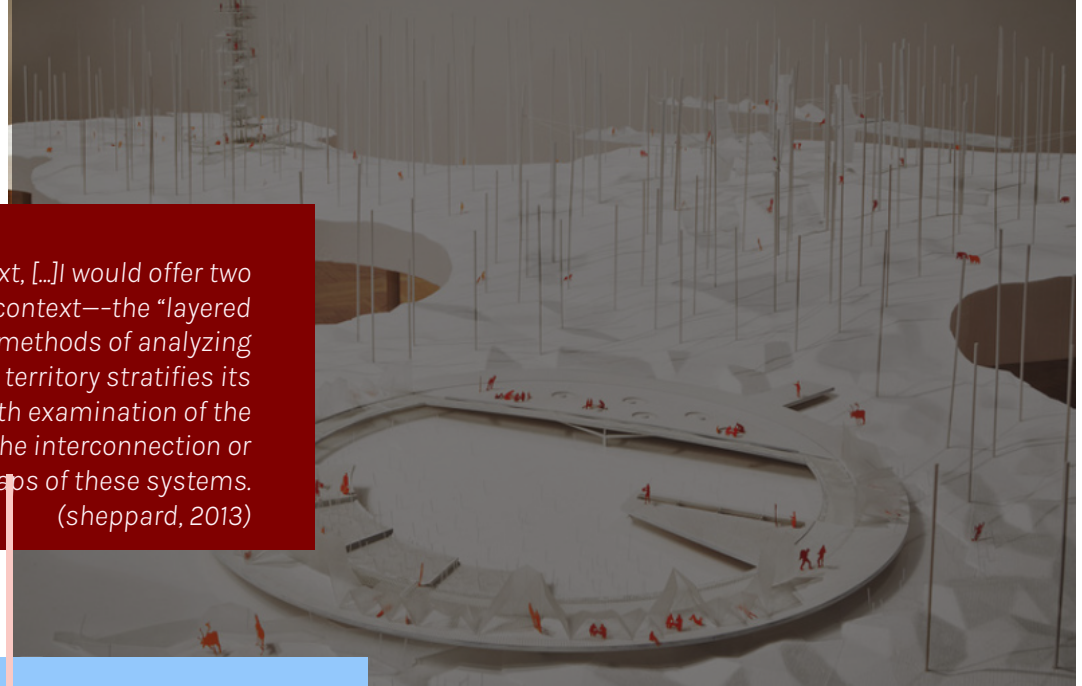


figure 5 | Lola sheppard on Architecture as a cultural act (Lateral office on archdaily, 2020)

Building, Care, Territory all in one network.

Since the building is more than a thing, the building has relationships with the environment, people, flora and fauna it is situated in. Therefore the building is part of an ecosystem, changing through space and time. This is in line with what Sheppard sees as layered territory. Continuing on the quote from Sheppard in her portfolio essay, it is important to explain the origin of the word Territory. It comes from *terra* which means land, earth, nourishment, sustenance. The building is located somewhere, that location is part of a bigger system. The system consist of different layers. by using cartography one is able to visualize all the layers embedded in the territory(Sheppard,2013).

In order to know what to care about, one needs to know what was. Because where there is Care, there has previously been a form of being Careless. In their essay in *Repair*(2016), Barracco, Tegg and Wright see careless as neglect. What is neglected has become invisible and thus became unknown. The act or Repair, is to make visible what was invisible. The first step in this is understanding the territory.

Human intentionality is surely an essential element of the public that is emerging around the issues of obesity, public health and food security, but it is not the only or even the key operator in it. Food—as a self-altering, dissipative materiality—is also a player. It enters into what we become. It is one of the many agencies operative when we engage in the questions of what to eat, how to get it, and when to stop(Jane Bennet, 2007).

In order to understand the role of the building in relation to Care, it is important to understand their role within the Actor Network of Materials. The way Bennet looks at food and the agentive ability of the non-human shows how to look at the two concepts in a larger network. The building plays a vital role in our lives, since it shelters or protects as. As stated earlier the building is more than that, it is a player. It enters our lives and the urban territory, it alters the materials it is housing and influences the interactions with both the human and non-human.

Ecology of Care

domesticity
(Dunin, 2019)
feminism
(Tronto, 2019; Krasny, 2019)

caring for
(Baracco et al., 2016)

- Disaster Relief
- Water and Land
- Public Space
- Skills
- Repair
- Local Production
- ...

Ethics of Care



care

[noun] 1. to maintain & protect 2. to give serious attention to something

[verb] 1. to feel concern or interest
(Baracco et al., 2016)

cura :
worry

curare:
to cure or to edit

curation:
care means attentiveness, conscientiousness
(Van der Tuin & Verhoeff, 2022)

caring wrongly

Lack of time, knowledge, material resource and skill
(Tronto, 2019)

neglect

to not know, is to not see
(Baracco et al., 2016)

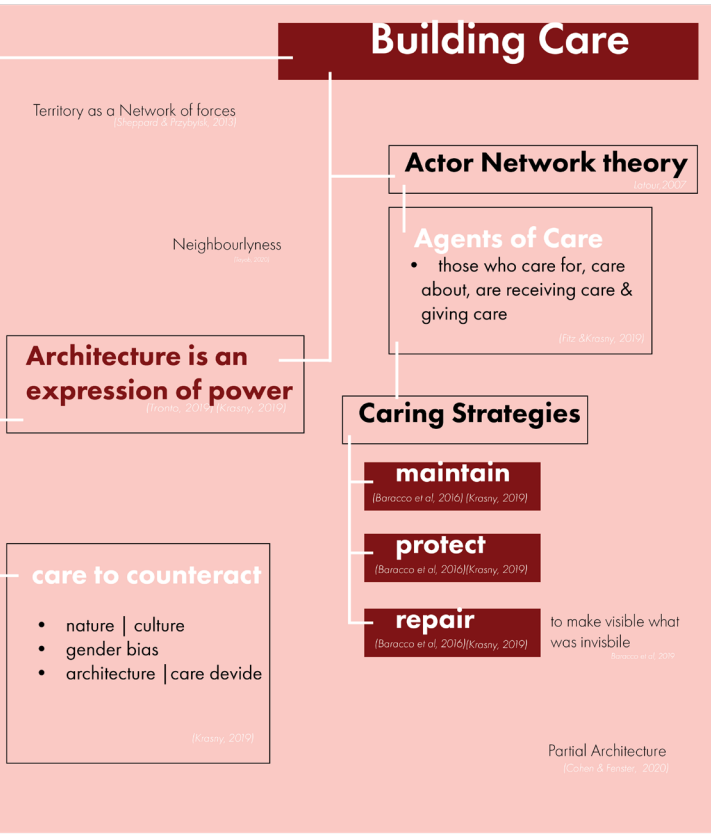


figure 6 | Theoretical Framework

A need to Architecturally Care

architecture with a small A should overcome Architecture with a capital A. Such architecture is inclusive of many different forms of knowledge relevant to inhabiting the planet. And such architecture is urgently needed. Connectedness through care can counteract the crisis we are in(Krasny, 2019).



There is a need to care properly, but what does it mean for architects to care? This is set out by the following two architects and a landscape architect who discuss the importance of caring for in the spatial sense. In the same book that published Tronto's previously mentioned essay, there is a discussion between Linda Tegg, Louise Wright, and Mauro Baracco are known for their work on the Australian pavilion 'Repair' at the 2016 biennial in Venice. In the pavilion, they showcased how one could repair the relationships the Australian built environment has with its flora, fauna, and people. To them to care for begins with caring about, meaning to make something usually invisible visible so that caring about and therefore caring for in Architectural processes could be possible (Baracco et al., 2019). Therefore care

means being able to see it, as a response to the idea that to not see something is to not know it.

To not see something is to not know it, without knowing there is not even a possibility to care. Linda Tegg in (Baracco et al., 2019).

This does not mean that everything that is done in the name of care is caring, any act has the potential to be careless(Baracco et al., 2019). As an Architect, actively caring for something requires that we take notice of who and what, that we understand what their needs are and to meet those needs(Baracco et al., 2019).

Method towards a building with Care. 18

To not see something is to not know it. Without knowing there is not even a possibility to care. Linda Tegg in Repair

Building means making stronger. To repair is to Care for, meaning taking responsibility for something. Yet this requires first to Care about, or to give serious attention to something, architecturally this translates to something usually invisible becoming visible(Baracco et al., 2019).

This implies that there is Architecture that Cares, and there for repairs it's relationships with both the human and non-human actors it interacts with. Up to the present time there are hardly any examples of Building(s) with Care. To change that, this research is a guide to Build with Care.

This rather social topic is as much architectural as socio-political and as spatial as it is anthropological. This interdisciplinary topic therefore requires a mixed-method research approach.

Beginning with a study to define 'Building with Care', which is the core framework of this research plan. To define the theoretical framework in the previous chapter, etymological research has been combined with a literature study. These diagrams, readings, and linguistic constructs form the theoretical framework visualized on page 14 and most of the answers to the first sub question. The site survey in Madrid will provide a more in depth answer of what notions of Care are in the Urban environment of Madrid.

Continuing with the ethical theory behind Care, Care in this context is about power structures and the power of architecture (Krasny, 2019). This asks for two possible methodologies, the first being symptomatology and the second methodology is Cartography. The latter is one commonly used in the spatial field and is useful in this research, and

in this case will be used to map all the building typologies, identities and materials of Care in Madrid. For the first methodology on the other hand it's usefulness depends on the approach. By building a catalogue of Places of Care it is possible to deduct certain cultural values behind the act of care, combined with spatial requirements.

Sometimes it is an expression of what one person in power wants instead of a cultural tendency. The effectiveness of this symptomatology is discussed in Art as Symptom by Tim Dean (2002), he analyses Žižek's methodology to use art as a symptom of certain cultural or social values and norms.

The tendency to treat aesthetic artifacts as symptoms of the culture in which were produced. (Dean, 2002).

By building a catalogue with places of Care in Madrid, familiar to any architectural methodology, this research combines the spatial and the socio-political aspects of the topic. With this catalogue I intend to look at the Materials of all the places of Care in Madrid.

Lastly Care as a species activity requires a study of the species. Therefore the why and who questions of this research called for an anthropological methodology, not in its purest form but in an architectural sense. This results in methods like eavesdropping, observing, and collecting narratives and photographs. This data will form an essential part of this research. These methods are used in both domains and help translate the phenomenon of care to the spatial realm. The combination of methods is further explained in the next chapter.

What kind of
building do I
want to be

I like to be
like the friend
that listens
like the neighbour
that always comes to help
like the child
that fills the room with laughter
like the grandma
that tells the best stories

If I could
Care about
I would

Have the guts
to speak up
stand for my values
pay attention to my surroundings
be aware of the stories that are told
and re-pair to connect

If walls could speak
I would know
what the building
wants to be

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