Book Review Symposium for Valeria Graziano, Marcell Mars, and Tomislav Medak (2025). *Pirate Care: Acts Against the Criminalization of Solidarity*. London: Pluto Press. 166 pp. ISBN: 9780745349800 (Paperback)

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> We wrote this book to help those of us who care, defiantly, to consider our conditions together. As we navigate the uncharted waters of this profound crisis of care, we take courage from the etymology of the verb 'consider': to look at the stars together. (Graziano et al. 2025: 31)

Figure 1: Keep Looking Up! © Kevin Caplicki and Laurel Bell 2024 (see justseeds.org, accessed 27 November 2025), reproduced with permission

Introduction (Ioana Cerasella Chis)

Part of Pluto Press' Vagabonds series[1], *Pirate Care: Acts Against the Criminalization of Solidarity* (Graziano et al. 2025) offers an impressive account of resistance, defiance, prefiguration, and solidarity through different social domains and contexts. The book is the result of a project whose resources, including collectively produced syllabi, can be accessed freely online. From the project's website, we learn that *care* means 'a political and collective capacity of society' (Pirate Care n.d.). For Graziano, Mars, and Medak (2025: 24), *pirate care* is 'a radically feminist proposition … an ecology of practices where the figure of the carer is also the cared-for, and where interdependence is a core tenet'. Such practices, however small in scale, reveal the carceral logic of the state and its use of violence to repress and criminalise dissent. An early example provided in the book is that of the Italian Prime Minister portraying activists' efforts to save migrants' lives at sea as an 'act of war' (Graziano et al. 2025: 1).

The use of pirate care as a prism for structuring this book allows the authors to emphasise the commonality between seemingly disparate campaigns and acts of defiance and disobedience. In the current times that are often marked by despair, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) comes as a welcome tool for counteracting defeatism. Against the lamentations that arise when militant and collective initiatives come to an end, this book makes space for celebrating these efforts for their prefigurative and educational value. The book demonstrates how, in whatever circumstances and contexts we find ourselves living, there are always creative ways of enacting collective dissent and counteracting the market, state, and family unit-based frameworks imposed on us.

While coordinating the activities of this book review symposium, there was no shortage of ongoing examples of how governments and policing systems were criminalising and silencing acts of pirate care. Some of the UK-based stories that were attracting public attention at the time included the government criminalising musical bands such as Kneecap and Bob Vylan for expressing solidarity with Palestinian people (see Al Jazeera 2025a) and proscribing activist groups which oppose the genocide (Liberty 2025). Meanwhile, the UK government was continuing its active role in the still ongoing genocide in Palestine by sending military aid to Israel (Oxfam 2025). Reading the book amidst these events acted as a reminder that collective infrastructures of care are made possible through the 'illegal' acts of solidarity of those who dare to 'look at the stars together' (Graziano et al. 2025: 31). JustSeeds Artist Cooperative's Kevin Caplicki and Laurel Bell (2024) brilliantly conveyed this very approach through their *Keep Looking Up!* artwork (Figure 1).

Through its discussion of the meanings and manifestations of pirate care across the world, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) regards the dismantling of old and new forms of imperialism as paramount for the possibility of a liberated present and future. In the authors' words (2025: 7), 'Empire was born in colonialism, slavery, and enclosure and matured into an unequal and exploitative system of nation-states. The twenty-first-century global Empire emerges out of the withering-away of twentieth-century socialist, anti-colonial, and non-aligned revolutionary worldmaking projects'. Throughout this article, we use the concept of Empire in the sense presented in the book.

Upon reading *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025), the list of activists and scholars whom I thought would also be interested in exploring its ideas was endless. This is unsurprising, given the masterful way in which Graziano, Mars, and Medak curated key stories from different domains of everyday life and demonstrated their shared political underpinnings of struggling against repression and Empire. The ten reviews found in the sections below reflect the contributors' wide range of experiences of activism and research in areas of care and racialisation, disability and welfare struggles, work refusal and employment struggles, housing and territorialisation, and migrant organising (to name but a few). We are grateful to the *Pirate*

[1] See https://www.plutobooks.com/product-category/series/vagabonds/. Accessed 12 November 2025.

Care authors, Valeria Graziano, Marcell Mars, and Tomislav Medak (2025), for providing a response to our reflections and questions.

A Call to Care Dangerously (Aria Danaparamita)

Pirate Care (Graziano et al. 2025) is a thrilling voyage, and it begins with one: the 2019 Sea-Watch 3 mission defiantly breaking the law to rescue people crossing the Mediterranean. As if by fate, I began reading these pages as another sea mission, the Madleen, sailed across the Mediterranean in June 2025 to deliver food, water, and medicine to Gaza. Nearing its destination, the ship and crew were abducted by the Zionists. Gaza remains besieged, and the Mediterranean remains a watery grave.

It is with the interminable grief and rage that accompany witnessing a genocide, and organising to end it, that I came to *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025): a rousing if self-reflectively limited collage of the various experiments through which those of us fighting our oppression - and others who stand in solidarity - have collectively attempted to build our own ships, gather our own crews, and sail to liberate ourselves. The book does not offer an authoritative perspective, nor take on the impossible task of representing *all* forms of community resistance. But its analytical framework of care piracy is compelling and inspiring.

The authors' central premise is that to care is to resist, and to resist is to care – a core tenet in anarchist and other socialist praxis (Meter 2012, Fraser 2017, Federici and Jones 2020, Hobart and Kneese 2020, Spade 2020a). 'Pirate care', Graziano et al. (2025: 8) write, 'is the revolutionary practice of the plebeian multitude against Empire' because 'not letting others suffer and die is revolutionary' (22). However, pirate care differs from individual acts of caring or charity. These experiments in collective care and liberation are political. As the authors write, when Empire exploits, 'pirate care practices challenge this order fundamentally, demonstrating that another world of care is possible' (10) — the kind of care that 'grows not from compliance to protocols, but from tender, rebellious acts of collective survival' (25).

There is no one way to be a pirate carer. Pirates, Graziano et al. (2025: 25) write, 'always navigate the enemy's waters with extemporaneous maps', noting the importance of 'multiplicity, plasticity, opacity, and capacity to adapt to local conditions, contexts, and opportunities' (23). In this, the authors demystify pirate caring as not just the terrain of courageous activists taking on the high seas but also of coders commoning intellectual property into shadow libraries, or community scientists tinkering with open-source pharmaceuticals.

The authors' protopian approach shows that even imperfect attempts to cultivate care against capitalism are life-affirming. I particularly appreciate the authors acknowledging that this work is messy and emotionally draining (Graziano et al. 2025: 25). Projects emerge and dissolve, collectives break up, and bridges are burned at varying temperatures. It is important that these are not seen as failures, but as part of our ongoing collective learning and refining - underscoring the importance of collective care *within* organising groups to build resilience (on this, see, for example, a practical toolkit by The Jane Addams Collective 2018).

However, given the diversity of caring resistance throughout history, the book's most limiting flaw is its admitted self-confinement within mostly urban Global North contexts. The couple of nods to indigenous movements, such as the Standing Rock uprising, refer to projects in the Global North, largely leaving out rich tapestries of community resistance in geographies that have remained outside the reach of colonial and neo-imperial projects. Indigenous cultures that have retained control over their resources, arming themselves with indigenous knowledges and techniques to resist capitalist encroachment, certainly deserve at least some recognition - if not substantive discussion - regardless of whether they identify with the political terminologies the authors associate with piracy (see, for example, Scott 2009; Ramnath 2019; Usufruct Collective 2025).

Despite these limitations, the book offers an inspirational call for mutiny. Drawing from anarchist thought and praxis, in which various insurrectionary acts collectively challenge hegemonic power structures, Graziano et al. (2025: 38) call forth 'a future where these scattered

acts of solidarity could federate into a movement, where care becomes a practice of joyous mutual becoming'. There is no single pathway to this 'federation' but the invitation is to try — however small. As Mitchell Cowen Verter (2013: 9) writes with reference to anarchist Peter Kropotkin's standpoint ([1892/2017), 'the problem of satisfying needs is the most essential problem of all revolutionary problems, and the question of how we nurture each other is the most important of all revolutionary questions'.

Indeed, perhaps the most uplifting —if also most challenging— message is that anyone can be a pirate carer (yes, even you!). Pirate resistance emerges 'from ordinary individuals pushing back against a system that leaves them no other choice' (Graziano et al. 2025: 48) – whether by communities that are structurally abandoned, excluded, or illegalised, or as collective acts of solidarity. Echoing the book's hopeful final note: as I finished reading it, a whole new fleet of ships was preparing to pull anchor to again sail towards Gaza (Global Sumud Flotilla 2025). While that kind of action might feel impossibly brave, we can all take a swig of pirate courage. All we have to do is give ourselves permission to care.

Pirate Care and Its Contributions (Panos Theodoropoulos)

Pirate Care (Graziano et al. 2025) is an immersion into explosions of autonomy and an invitation to think about how these explosions could be generalised, politicised, and organised. This short, accessible text synthesises dozens of disparate radical experiments of community care across the globe; crucially, it adeptly connects the realms of structure and subjectivity and those of production and reproduction while drawing its conceptual conclusions. The book is a resource by organisers for organisers. The authors' militancy and commitment constantly shine through its pages, positioning it not as an abstract literary exercise but as a tool in the long process of our collective emancipation.

The book's most impressive attribute is that it consistently made me *move*. Almost every page would introduce me to a gripping but hitherto unknown case of pirate care, catapulting me into a rabbit hole of research. I think that this was the authors' intention – cheers for the ride! The compulsion to move didn't stop there: I am employed as a lecturer in social sciences, and reading *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) made me yearn for the chance to discuss it with students. I also imagined – again, I think that triggering our imaginations was the authors' intention – collective, open events about pirate care. The essence of the book screams to be unleashed across our communities, and I would like to help organise public discussions about the ideas and methods contained in it. The book made me think about how to integrate some of its ideas with the structure I am most active in, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).[2]

While *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is inspiring, it is also conscious of the stifling barriers that disrupt generalising and expanding the examples of autonomous care initiatives. It never neglects the foundational violences that saturate our existence and directly charges private property as detrimental to our collective survival. While the authors talk eloquently about the liberatory potential of radical kinship practices and affective approaches to collective life, they always foreground the materiality of such relations. In short, they make clear that escape is impossible without a wider collective rupture with the existing capitalist system – and that the ways in which we organise care and collective nurture are umbilical (pun intended) components of this rupture. The book thus connects two realms that are frequently – and erroneously – separated: those of revolutionary action and care. Rather than reproducing the assumption that revolution unfolds 'in the streets' while care lives behind closed doors, the authors foreground the co-constitutive and interpenetrative nature of both, while adding the critical dimension of digital spaces to the equation. This alone is a crucial contribution to our arsenal of knowledge for resistance.

[2] See Industrial Workers of the World, https://iww.org.uk/. Accessed 14 November 2025.

In its collection of such a vast array of grassroots initiatives spanning the realms of (1) autonomous care institutions; (2) innovative approaches to collective ownership (commons); (3) emancipatory uses of technology; (4) radical pedagogical experiments, and (5) anti-patriarchal kinship affinities, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) makes another potent contribution: it demonstrates that liberatory ways of organising our collective existence are not only feasible, but also less daunting than they seem. The book's pages are full of cases of people doing the best they can with the limited resources at their disposal and going beyond performative 'activism' to institute substantial interventions in public life. I have previously argued (Theodoropoulos 2025) that movements must cultivate a 'socialisation of solidarity' – an almost instinctual set of dispositions that emanate from our common positionalities in opposition to the dominant pressures towards individualisation, competition, and reliance on the state, family, and market. *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) offers compelling examples of the institutional forms that could support the emergence of such an emancipatory sociality.

The book ends with a call for establishing federations of pirate care, moving beyond isolated incidents towards broader, socially embedded formations. In my work with the IWW, a grass-roots, member-led trade union, I see the intersection of labour and care daily: in the desert of precarity, workers endure Dickensian conditions in order to care for their loved ones; and, in the absence of institutions of care that they and those they love can fall back on, they are reluctant to risk losing their jobs in order to participate in labour struggles. This means that the labour movement will have to expand beyond the shop floor and seriously address issues of care as part of its organising.

Recognising the interconnectedness of the 'formal' realms of labour and its 'backwoods', in June 2025 the Industrial Workers of the World (2025) launched our Claimants' Union, organising all workers on any form of state benefit, whether in or out of work. This is a strong starting point, but it is obviously not enough in isolation. Could a structure like this become formally connected with the institutions of pirate care that, we can be sure, exist in various forms all around us? Could the federation advocated for in *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025), whenever it materialises and whatever it may look like, assume a form that incorporates structures like the Claimants' Union, thereby further connecting the realms of labour–unemployment–care–community? What conversations must be had, what connections need to be drawn, and do we as a wider movement have the maturity to carry out these processes?

The fact alone that *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) encourages us to think about these connections, and imagine ways of realising them, is testament to this little book's beauty.

Mapping Pirate Carers' Treasure Trove (Esther Planas Balduz)

Pirate Care (Graziano et al. 2025) thoroughly exposes the bio-necro-political strategies of repression at work in the aspects of our society that relate to systems of care. It also highlights the dissolution of social empathy and solidarity in our present capitalist and neoliberal conjuncture. In its educative function, the book maps for us the many forms of resistance that the extractivist and eugenicist neoliberal project has increasingly provoked. *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) also delivers a whole cartography of a grassroots *topos* formed by myriads of rebelling collective initiatives representing what the authors define as pirate care. This book is therefore a 'pirate treasure trove' of many examples of possible tactics to resist and overcome the capitalist anarcholibertarian neoliberal fascist iron cage of our present heteronomy. As suggested by the authors, we are living in an 'uncaring Empire' which 'does not simply ignore care [but] seeks to monopolize it and divide it between the state, the market, and the family' (Graziano et al. 2025: 10).

While this cartography illustrates so many of the great aspects of pirate care activism, I am particularly touched by the chapter 'Learning Together Under Fire' (Graziano et al. 2025: Chap 4). In it, the authors discuss the way in which rebel pirate epistemologies have been archived and collected in order to build up a syllabus of (pirate) care. This takes us directly to

the case of the intense persecution via lawsuits that heroes such as Aaron Swartz and other campaigners for opening access to academic resources have been subjected to (Graziano et al. 2025: 106). The pirate carer praxis of building up a free access syllabus online is by default an act of resistance in its own right against fierce legal enclosures. The *Pirate Care* authors' (Graziano et al. 2025) activism shows us that it is possible and necessary to maintain these efforts.

Another aspect of the project which I am especially grateful for is that it involves an opening of consciousness about how ableism can be found even in the most well-intended revolutionary imaginaries - including those represented by the 'youthful radical militancy we inherit from the 1960s and 1970s, with its optimism, joy, and rage' (Graziano et al. 2025: 24). As a disabled person who is forever exhausted, anxious, and melancholic, I fully identify with this new ethos of the pirate revolutionary subject of resistance - a melancholic activist. My personal frustration at not being able to sustain, deliver, engage, and be 'active' when attempting to be involved with activist groups had led me to believe getting involved was a hopeless endeavour.

The statements in the authors' manifesto indicate a change in activist consciousness, which is greatly represented in what they propose: one can give, and they can be part of resistance, even if their active involvement is reduced or fragmented, slow or discontinuous. This also brings forth the possibility of virtual activities: of writing and studying, of thought and thinking as resistance, of gatherings and working in virtual spaces. Graziano et al. (2025) show how the Internet makes possible the materialisation of so many projects that take shape in the physical world, on the frontlines of resistance.

What I have also found laudable is the way in which the authors warn us to beware the recuperating and coopting nature of our capitalist totality. In the context of the notion of care and its significance, the authors show that care' has been integrated and recuperated into much of the capitalist liberal discourse. As they point out,

> [w]e are troubled by the fact that expressing 'care' has become a mere form of obligatory virtue signalling in polite society. Rather than serving as a catalyst for a fundamental reexamination of Empire's Pirate Care institutions, the language of care increasingly runs the risk of reducing care to superficial 'moral' or sentimental realms, where symbolic gestures of 'togetherness' overshadow substantive action. (Graziano et al. 2025: 32)

Hence, the authors offer great insight into how capitalist ideology operates through the sphere of 'care'. In this sense, the book is both a map of resistances and a map of the trappings that the 'Uncaring Empire' keeps placing at our every step.

It has also been inspiring to find that the research includes reflections on projects from Catalonia, like 'the GynePunk collective [which] emerged within the unique setting of Calafou, a post-capitalist, eco-industrial community' (Graziano et al. 2025: 68) and the Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH). This shows the strong connection between pirate care and 'Catalonia's long tradition of anarchism, characterised by collective ownership and communal living, with deep roots predating the Spanish Civil War' (86). In the last decade, the people of Barcelona have been intensely politicised through various fronts of resistance. One of the most representative examples of such resistance is that of *El Sindicat of Llogaters'* self-defence and campaigns for renters' rights. Likewise, with a coalition of more than 120 collectives, the *Asamblea de Barrios por el Decrecimiento Turístico* (ABDT) organised a popular protest against gentrification the invasive and neo-colonial impact of mass tourism on Barcelona's residents. Just as I am writing this review, the third Freedom Flotilla -an ongoing courageous pirate caring project featured in the book (Graziano et al. 2025)- has sailed from Barcelona's port (Al Jazeera 2025b) and taken a life-risking route towards the Israeli blockade of the seaside

access to Palestine. Those gathered at the Flotilla's departure from Barcelona saluted, cheered, and bided farewell to the mission - illustrating a spirit of collective resistance.

The core proposal of the book and the associated self-educational activities work as antidotes to our *de facto* subjected situation under 'Uncaring Empire'. It infuses our present time with prospects of a will for a revolutionary praxis to subvert and crack the prison-like situation we find ourselves in today – and, ultimately, to free ourselves from it by *caring*. *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is a treasure trove of inspiring references and case studies of what forms 'another world of care' (10). These examples are much needed tools for resistance.

Organising For Welfare and Disability Justice as Pirate Care (Arianna Introna)

On 18 March 2025, the UK Government published a Green Paper titled 'Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working' (Department for Work and Pensions 2025). Since then, it has been pushing through welfare reforms aimed at withdrawing support from those of us who are 'financially dependent on the state' because of ill-health or disability. This has culminated in the rough passing of the Universal Credit Bill on 9 July 2025, which legislates for claimants of the health component of Universal Credit to have their payments halved and frozen from 2026 onwards. My response to *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) will explore some of the ways in which the book is essential both for locating the attack on disability benefits within Empire's matrix of care, and for appreciating the resonances between pirate care and disabled people's organising for welfare and disability justice.

Disability justice refers to a framework and movement developed by black disability activists in the US which holds that 'able-bodied supremacy has been formed in relation to other systems of domination and exploitation' and that, therefore, to tackle ableism we need to address its 'connections to heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism' (Sins Invalid 2019). Disabled people's organising for welfare justice *as* disability justice locates itself at one of such points of interconnection. It also manifests the politics of the struggle against Empire's 'matrix of care', which is central to the horizons of solidarity central to *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025). Both here and in the rest of my contribution I use the term 'Empire' in Graziano et al.'s (2025) sense. Empire's matrix of care is responsible for enforcing 'the enclosure of care' by the 'oppressive triumvirate of the state, the market, and the family' (Graziano et al. 2025: 8), and for leaving those who 'don't fit into its categories (citizen, worker, consumer, spouse, heir)' to die (9). In discussing the ways in which Empire's matrix of care scaffolds specific forms of violence, Graziano, Mars, and Medak register a 'toxic mutation of welfare infrastructures' (19) into oppressive systems) Their account is validated by the cuts to disability benefits aforementioned.

At the same time, disabled people's anti-cuts resistance resonates with another important concept: that of pirate care itself. For Graziano et al. (2025: 6-7), 'pirate care' indicates a practice of grassroots solidarity that defies 'unjust laws and norms ... to sustain the life of those to whom care is denied under an uncaring Empire'. The practices that the concept of 'pirate care' refers to are conducted 'from a position of deep asymmetry' which also brings into being 'a space of political possibility' (8). In what follows, I will unpack how organising for disability and welfare justice can be read as being animated by forms of pirate care with the potential to generate crip(ed) spaces of collective survival.

Organising for welfare and disability justice, both through protests and through support in claiming benefits, displays traits centrally associated by Graziano et al. (2025) with pirate care. First, it bears similarities to how pirate care is implicated in disobeying unfair 'rules conspicuously to draw attention to the injustice of the system' (21). Disabled people's organisations have denounced the eugenicist rationale underpinning the cuts to disability benefits - while, also in the spirit of pirate care, seeking to autonomously 'organize care for those to whom care is denied and intervene where care is no longer legal' (21). Within the space of movements for welfare and disability justice, this takes the form of helping claimants get benefit support against the odds set by rules tasked to deprive them of it.

Central to organising for welfare and disability justice is the principle of crip mutual aid, which aligns with the ethics of pirate care. For Graziano et al. (2025: 7), pirate care operates 'within, outside, and across Empire's enclosures and institutions' by acknowledging the extent to which 'we depend on the support of others to sustain ourselves' (22). Similarly, in the 'crip-centric liberated zones' that Shayda Kafai identifies at the intersection between crip kinship and disability justice, mutual aid unfolds 'as a non-hierarchal and anti-capitalist structure of giving, of tenderness, and of cripped care' (2021: 54).

Organising for welfare and disability justice as pirate care brings forth the possibility to alleviate what Shirin M. Rai (2024: 3) calls the 'depletion' of caring energy. Depletion derives from an 'unequal system of social reproduction' which harms 'those who care' as much as those who are cared for in profoundly gendered ways. This system resonates with the 'mesh of institutions, actors, and logics' through which Empire's matrix of care functions (Graziano et al. 2025: 21). Both retain the family as a central pillar. By infusing the 'emerging archipelago of militant care practices that are rising from the wreckage left of Empire's failing institutional matrix' (35), crip pirate care nourishes 'different forms of living together' (18) that hold the potential to powerfully contrast the depleting effects of Empire's matrix of care.

For Graziano et al. (2025: 23), it is by 'federating together various forms of disobedient care' that 'we can build our capacity to break free of Empire's failing care regimes and grow autonomy in social and ecological reproduction'. Organising for welfare and disability justice contributes to this effort a form of pirate care that is *crip* because it takes the lead from disabled people, and that is politically cripped to ensure survival and avoid depletion for all.

Territorialities of Pirate Care (Joseph Davison)

The recently published *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is a powerful reaffirmation of dissident solidarity in the transformation of everyday life. The *pirate,* for the authors, represents both figure and general practice. Piracy takes place in the Mediterranean Sea and in the daily acts of refusal, defiance, and communality that typify militant life under capital. *Pirate Care* rejects the fetishising approach of charity, or liberal appeals to the welfare state's remnants. Instead, it instead proposes a solidarity of ruins: using the tools of the master's house in a revolt against 'the state, the market, and the family' (Graziano et al. 2025: 9). While the figure of the pirate as outlaw communard might not stand up to historical scrutiny, the practice of criminalised solidarity in tenants' unions (Rosenthal and Vilchis 2024), mutual aid networks (Spade 2020a, b), migrant defence (King 2016), or squatting (Vasudevan 2017), is a defining feature of class struggle from below. These practices of criminalised solidarity pose territorial questions —housing and home, movement across borders, domains of social reproduction, the right to stay put— that structure the rhythms of everyday life.

Pirate care is defined against privatisation, by alternative ways of living, organising, and acting together. Chapter Three, 'Fighting Imperial Property' (Graziano et al. 2025), builds upon this definition in a case study of Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (Platform for People Affected by Mortgages) (PAH). PAH exemplifies urban struggle from below*:* open assemblies serve as sites of inclusion and generalisation, rotating roles guard against professionalisation and bureaucratisation, and communal living moulds the self-organisation of care according to collective needs. Through a diversity of community-based and criminalised tactics, PAH represents an 'immanent act of rebellion against property' (Graziano et al. 2025: 82), which cleaves towards a propertyless world of remade social relations. Piracy on the housing terrain involves a dual refusal: towards capital and imperial power, and towards the institutionalisation of social movements. The piracy of the PAH, just like the recent uprising against deportations in Los Angeles, shows the necessity of refusing these more respectable, institutionalised forms of politics, which are ultimately the politics of property.

Housing struggle is often phrased in terms of resistance – but it is defence, and not defeatist practices of resistance, that animates the theory of pirate care. Instead of a juridical right to the city, pirate care demands that we return to the defence of community. And it is

defensive acts that the authors emphasise, but these are defensive acts that nevertheless take particularly territorial forms: whether a Freedom Flotilla or housing struggle in the privatised city, pirate care represents a return to the militancy of territory. Pop-culture piracy might imply nomadicity, but pirate care appropriates the power of territory against its social clearance and productivist enclosure. Pirates are like Zone à Défendre paysans; they struggle to defend their communities, and thereby 'reconfigure the terrain of struggles altogether' (Graziano et al. 2025: 146). There is something of Kristin Ross' (2024: 63) commune form at work here; a land-based form of struggle which is 'at once a political movement and a shared territory, a tactic and a community-in-the-making'.

Like Ross' (2024) commune form, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) can be read as an anarchism-inflected expression of the turn towards place- and land-based struggles in the composition of social antagonism. Beyond the disciplinary formalism of the academy, Chapter Three reads as something of a territorial inquiry (Gray 2019), co-researched and critically immanent to the movements and practices in question. *Pirate Care*'s (Graziano et al. 2025) more programmatically-inclined proposals, such as autonomous zones, open-source knowledges, and federated networks, exemplify this physical and epistemic territoriality.

The practical turn towards territory has always contained a kernel of utopianism, but this is a prefigurative utopianism, which in practice is no more utopian than the creation of new forms of living and acting together in the here and now. Pirate practices open up this 'space of possibility' (Graziano et al. 2025: 8) for the reterritorialisation of solidarity and care, unleashing the territorialities of struggles under capital and imperial power. These territorialities — spaces and settings of governance and contestation — are central for pirates and critical social theorists alike.

Solidarity Is Care for The Collective (Lena Wånggren)

Solidarity is care for the collective. That is how my friend Maddie put it, many years ago, and I keep that definition with me. We had been talking about the importance of a feminist ethics of care in work and political organising, and about the invisibilised, unpaid, gendered, and racialised character of care - think Wages for Housework (Callaci 2025). We had also discussed the crushing feeling that can hit you out of nowhere when capitalism seems overwhelming, when precarity and money and violence and pain weigh so heavy, when we are exhausted and scared.

I cherish this idea of solidarity as care for the collective, and of collective organising of and through care. Maddie's words come to me strongly when I read *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025), with its call for a collective disobedient care to challenge imperialist capitalist violences. As the authors note, alongside disobedient acts of collective care, such as seafaring voyages done by reproductive rights sheroes and life-saving comrades (Graziano et al. 2025: Chap 1), neoliberal capitalism simultaneously dismounts the social systems of care that we have fought to build - while calling for individuals to 'care' in an individualised, self-interested, profit-creating way. We see examples of this in our neoliberal workplaces, where bosses tell us to do mediation during our non-existent lunch break, and to take the stairs instead of the elevator in order to alleviate stress, while firing our colleagues, increasing our workloads, and refusing to employ us on secure contracts. ('Employed on a zero-hours contract? Do some mindfulness!')

Pirate Care (Graziano et al. 2025) speaks as part of a tradition of highlighting the unpaid and invisibilised aspect of care, and its gendered and racialised nature. For myself, and many comrades, trade unions are crucial in fighting with and for collective care; my friend Muireann Crowley wrote years ago that working in trade unions was a kind of care for the community (Crowley 2017; cf. Wånggren 2018). Or, as Christie McDove puts it in her conversation with Maddie Breeze (the same Maddie, by the way!): 'I support strike action because I care about working conditions.' (Breeze and McDove 2023) While the authors of *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) describe the criminalisation of collective care in fights for

refugee, reproductive, and trans rights, a similar criminalisation of care exists in right-wing government legislation that bans sympathy strikes and political work refusal, and polices and punishes disobedient worker action in other ways (see e.g. Gilbey 2018; Global Employment News Insights and Events 2023; Reuters 2024; Ziadah and Fox-Hodess 2025).

While *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is an interesting and inspiring book, I have two reservations. Firstly, the image of the pirate is used in a romanticised and ahistorical way, despite the authors' intention. There is no mention of modern-day twentieth- and twenty-first century pirates, e.g. in the Caribbean and off the West African coast. Workers often turn to piracy due to financial hardships and neocolonial corruption bound up with multinational neoliberal exploitation (e.g. United Nations 2015; Rohwerder 2016). Using the figure of the pirate as a symbol of anti-imperialist disobedience is not that straightforward, and I think we can work for a collectively caring world without such imagery.

Secondly, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) does focus on the present, and that is laudable - but I miss even a reference to the germinal work of Selma James and the international Wages for Housework campaign, or the Black Panther Party's community work in food, housing, and education, as historical examples. While we have seen a 'turn to care' since the increased dismantling of the welfare state in many countries, coupled with the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. Care Collective 2020; Hobart and Kneese 2020), that emphasises the radical potential of care and nurturing interdependencies, this account is not new. There are rich histories of demanding wages for unpaid gendered and racialised labour, and collective historical movements to learn from, in providing self-organised care for the community. I think many of us already know the value of care as well as its invisibilisation - at least those of us who are women, disabled, minoritised. Discussing *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) with a comrade, we agreed that our mums, grandmothers, our disabled comrades, our female friends and comrades, could also attest to this. Ask your mum!

While caring has always been done, and invisibilised, the organised character of disobedient care is what I find inspiring. Similarly, Johanna Hedva in their *Sick Woman Theory* (2022[2016]) describes the revolutionary potential of collective caring:

> The most anti-capitalist protest is to care for another and to care for yourself. To take on the historically feminized and therefore invisible practice of nursing, nurturing, caring. To take seriously each other's vulnerability and fragility and precarity, and to support it, honor it, empower it. To protect each other, to enact and practice a community of support. A radical kinship, an interdependent sociality, a politics of care. … [P]erhaps then, finally, capitalism will screech to its much needed, long-overdue, and motherfucking glorious halt. (Hedva 2022[2016])

As many of us are tired, scared, and exhausted, trade unionist Rebecca Winson's (2015) words echo in my mind: 'Be kind to your comrades, who'll get as tired and as angry as you.' We need a strategy that includes collective, organised care. Take care of each other!

(And for the men: please do the dishes, take the meeting minutes, do that childcare.)

On The Complicated Meanings and Practices of Care (Ioana Cerasella Chis)

In *Pirate Care,* Graziano, Mars, and Medak (2025) distinguish between acts of 'care' along left/right and top-down/bottom-up lines, while attempting to reclaim its meaning and praxis away from its co-optation by the state, markets, and patriarchal domination. Through their distinction between 'authoritarian' care and 'pirate' care, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) speaks to DuFord's *Solidarity in Conflict* (2022) – a book that illustrates the way in which solidarity takes place also within spaces that are conditional, divisive, selective, and exclusionary of other groups. In so doing, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) offers an important warning against uncritical accounts of 'care', as we should continuously question

activities that are sometimes portrayed as such. Indeed, 'uncaring Empire does not simply ignore care. It seeks to monopolise it' (Graziano et al. 2025: 10). With this in mind, given that 'care' can be both authoritarian and revolutionary, the question of what does not qualify as care - or what sits outside of care - remains open for further exploration.

In opposition to authoritarian care, Graziano et al. (2025: 33) make the case for a 'horizon for care beyond the state, the market, and the family', as practised by various social actors. Through this book, we understand pirate care not as a voluntaristic, NGO-ised provision of a service in a top-down manner and within the confines of capitalism. Rather, pirate care is about instituting new possibilities, frameworks, technologies, and infrastructures for new social relations. To this end, the book speaks to calls for an orientation towards an 'organising model of care' from below, as opposed to the 'service' model (Chis 2024) that is violent and hierarchical.

Relatedly, the authors are explicit about the meaning and attributes of a carer and those of a pirate. For them, pirate care brings the strengths of each role/typology together, with the note that 'we need to activate the carer in the pirate' (Graziano et al. 2025: 28). Whilst references to and different iterations of 'the figure of the pirate carer' (19) throughout the book seem to indicate that pirate carer is a form of identity, the authors seek to avoid essentialism. They argue that 'pirate carer' is 'not an identity' because 'one becomes a pirate carer by refusing the impositions of artificially produced scarcity and the systemic denial of care' (29). In that respect, then, it is helpful to consider how the processes of caring piracy / pirate care arise from anyone's active engagement with an abolitionist politics against-and-beyond the state, the market, and the family (Holloway 2016).

A key tension within the book arises from its conceptualisation of care itself, which Graziano et al. (2025) explore especially in the 'Beyond Carewashing' section (Chap 1). They are right to emphasise interdependence in the social relations of care, as they state that 'oppression operates in part by defining who is a caregiver and who is to be cared for' (46-47). They also recognise that due to the state, the market, and the family's co-optation of care, its meaning has been 'diluted' and reduced to a 'buzzword'. However, they indicate that they remain committed to the concept of 'care' due to the feminist movement's influence on their political project as well as the currency that the term has in the vocabulary of 'care workers' who use it 'with pride' (32). However, while many care workers are underpaid, over-exploited, and subjected to various forms of oppression and exploitation to a greater extent than other waged and unwaged workers, their position vis-à-vis those considered to be 'cared-for' is not straightforward. It is, itself, embedded within capitalist social relations.

From the perspective of disability politics - which, among other matters, is concerned with how disabled people are often assumed to be 'cared for' -, longstanding feminist articulations of care have been critiqued for their underlying disablism (Morris 1991, 1993). Vic Finkelstein, in turn, revealed how *care* (as a service) in the lives of disabled people in the UK emerged at the expense of community and familial *support*. Thus, care has been underpinned by a rise in the professionalisation and medicalisation of assistance (of which support and care are constitutive parts) from the perspective of 'deliverers' (Finkelstein 1998: 15).

This has also contributed to enforced deprivation of autonomy and control in disabled people's lives. While individual care workers might be well-intentioned and can, at times, reject managerial and other pressures that could further the dehumanisation of those to whom they 'provide care', their job roles' function is to identify and manage the presumed 'needs' of disabled people (Finkelstein 1998: 11-14). This approach inadvertently silences the desires, yearnings, aspirations, and agency of those portrayed as passive recipients of care (Chis 2024).

As early as in the late 1990s, Finkelstein (1998: 26) identified the rise of 'disability culture' as a challenge to 'the hegemony of the caring culture' and argued for a reinvigoration of the principle of 'support' to transform state- and professionals-determined frameworks of care. Engagement with literature that builds on the social model/understanding of disability (its

original 1970s iterations, in particular) could take *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) in a direction that decentres the claims to 'care' made by those assumed to be selfless providers of a unidirectional or transactional *service*. The perspectives of those with whom pirate carers claim or aim to act in solidarity ought to be forefronted in future accounts of pirate care. An embeddedness within a framework that critiques structural disablement would also help clarify how the principle of interdependence, which the authors support, acts as a core tenet of care (if the concept of 'care' is to be preserved).

An Urgently Needed Political Form (Wilson Sherwin)

Indifferent to subject or method, what unites the disparate projects presented in Graziano, Mars, and Medak's book under the moniker of pirate care is an impatience with the political forms through which we have long been told we must channel our hope and need for change. *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) troubles borders (geographic and conceptual); defies property regimes; refuses the reckless cop logic of legality. Pirate care does not rely on tools of compromise, or anointed legitimacy to remedy highly unjust asymmetries of power. Pirate care is brash and defiant. Pirate care makes an oh-so-deserved mockery of respectability and careerism. Pirate care does not need highfalutin theoretical obscurantism to know what's what. Pirate care recognizes we need abortions, hormones, food, shelter (and so many other versions of aid) whether governments declare them legal or not. Pirate care does not insist on an allegiance to institution-building or electing politicians before we act. Pirate care recognizes those institutions and avenues have often been at best insufficient, at worst complicit. *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) reminds us: the courage to disobey is not a given, but must be forged, nurtured, celebrated.

One critique of *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is that it gives short shrift to the OG (Original Gangster) pirates. I read the authors to argue that they take the challenge to Empire and tolerance for illegalism from pirates, but caution that they hold pirates as no moral authority, therefore necessitating the addition of the contrasting term care. But perhaps, like the term democratic socialism, which concedes far too much to our enemy's propaganda, articulating pirate as a separate, even cheeky contradiction to care strikes me as unjust to the generous brilliance of the pirates we have been encouraged by all means to forget. As Marcus Rediker (2014) reminds us, pirate vessels were historically sites of remarkable innovations in international, democratic working-class solidarity and care. Those outlaw vessels were sites where decisions, mundane and profound alike, were made collectively. They were sites where, unlike in the rest of society, disabled comrades, Black people, women, and people of no (many!) nations, were held in great esteem, and yes, care. Pirates were, after all, originators of some of our first known social welfare systems, paying out a portion of earnings to elderly or injured pirates. Must we turn our back on the care historically embedded in piracy to make the point that we insist on the tender with the tough?

Thankfully, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is a necessarily unfinished book. Both the historic examples and those to come, remain for us to respectively excavate and co-create. Palestine, for example, is officially featured woefully little in this text, but its presence resounds as the example *par excellence* of nearly every single insight this book offers. The creeping criminalization of not just acts of care, but nearly all expressions of solidarity with the Palestinian liberation struggle, urgently requires us to confront the limitations of our tired and old repertories of contention, and behooves us to identify our caring pirate comrades at the forefront of the pivotal struggle of our time. Sure, it is thrilling to see the largest crowds ever for Palestine in London, New York, and Paris. But it is Sanaa that should guide us; bombed, starved, sanctioned, Yemeni pirates in solidarity with Gaza have been successfully blockading Israeli affiliated ships in the Red Sea, causing massive disruption to global trade, asserting that they will continue to do so until the genocide ceases (Al Jazeera 2024).

In Yemen, millions flood cities each week, crowded together defiantly and chanting 'We do not care! We do not care! Make it a world war!' Claiming 'we don't care' is clearly a

slogan of the most profound courage and care. (We must learn to listen to the care beneath what the state would have us believe are expressions of violence, and conversely, to hear the outright violence in their proposals for care.) Far from just slogans, Yemen demonstrates willingness to stake everything on the profundity of solidarity and love of our beloved Palestinian siblings. Like Sana'a chants, so should we declare: 'We will continue!', 'You are not alone!', 'A million salutes to Gaza!' – the pirate care way.

Re-Politicizing Care for Social Change (Birgan Gokmenoglu)

Care, at least in the Global North, is understood as self-care, which is itself understood as navel-gazing. The neoliberal individual is calculating their protein intake while their government is spiralling into fascism and burning down the world. These customers of the commercialized (self-)care industry are too wrapped up in their skin-care routine to concern themselves about the genocide in Palestine, the profit-driven climate crisis, or the vast populations of the Global Majority who face racism, poverty, statelessness, and premature death. *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) aims to remedy today's popular, self-absorbed understanding of care, following in the footsteps of feminist, queer, and Indigenous activists.

The pirate carers in the book – hackers, squatters, 'othermothers', repairers, shadow librarians, and many others– engage in illegal acts or at least bend unjust laws. They practise a radical kind of care that requires transgressing rules, liberating one another, and putting life before profit. They differ from the humanitarians who deliver aid without doing much to end the systemic atrocities that create the need for aid in the first place, or the charities that function as a crutch to the 'uncaring' state (Care Collective 2020). They also differ from institutions that divide people into deserving and undeserving, or necessary and surplus groups (Adler-Bolton and Vierkant 2022) based on class, race, gender, immigration status, and their voting preferences. Instead, pirate carers know that radical care liberates the carer as much as the cared, and that we are all both carers and cared for during our lives.

Pirate Care (Graziano et al. 2025) emphasizes the collective nature of our struggles and wellbeing. Care work, in this conception of care, is 'political warfare' against 'organized abandonment by capital and the state', as Audre Lorde (1988) and Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2007) respectively put it. Counter to individualizing (pseudo-)solutions to structural problems, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) thus reclaims and re-politicizes care as the radical defiance of interlinked systems of oppression and their radical transformation.

Such a politicized praxis of care might offer the missing link in the debate on how to organize for social change, even though the book does not explicitly engage with the question of political organization. Care has been a major component of feminist movements and writing (Nadasen 2015; Sarican and Dirik 2022; Segal 2023), but it rarely comes up in discussions about organizational forms or culture. As activists, we see the necessity of forming alliances and seeing our collective struggles as an 'organizational ecology' (Nunes 2021) where political parties and informal initiatives, elections and direct action, centralized and decentralized organizations co-exist. But we do not think nearly enough about what holds all these movements together, whether internally within an activist group or externally in our struggles' interconnectedness. The conversation usually revolves around our goals, ideology, strategy, and tactics, or a mixture thereof.

Incorporating (radical) pirate care as a movement ethos can provide a durable basis for solidarity and cross-movement alliances that are fundamental for strengthening global movements for social justice. An ethos of care – whereby political struggles are understood as acts of care towards humans, non-human living beings, and the planet – allows viewing each social movement as having a place within a larger constellation of interdependent struggles. It also encourages structural flexibility, moving beyond formal/informal, centralized/decentralized, political party/grassroots movement, and similar binaries. This suggests not so much a re-organization of movements per se, but a reframing of how we think about our collective work towards social transformation.

Similarly, a care-full movement culture can ease internal tensions by centring on an underlying common vision that is beyond any immediate goal. Seemingly incompatible goals or actions will thus be seen as each making their own contributions to the larger movement, rather than being categorised as right-or-wrong decisions. Moving beyond the merely strategic alliances to build genuine communities of care, both within and across movements, is what solidarity looks like. And choosing solidarity when it has been criminalized, marginalized, and made near-impossible by capitalist relations holds the potential to be revolutionary. Only a politicized conception of care can offer us the anti-hierarchical, transformative ecology of political organizations that dare to envision liberated futures.

I cherish this book an act of care and solidarity in its own right. By bringing all these pirate carers from around the world to our attention, the authors draw us into a worldwide grid of activists, connecting us to the manifold struggles for justice and rekindling much needed hope.

Insurgent Care Against Institutionalised Cruelty (Kirsten Forkert)

This is an inspiring and original book that speaks well to the current political moment. As the authors observe, care and solidarity are effectively being criminalised. Right wing populist governments (and their fellow travellers within centrist governments) restrict welfare provision to populations who fit narrow conceptions of citizenship and undermine the rights of those who do not fit conservative social norms. Simultaneously, the very idea of empathy and compassion is being undermined within public discourse: justifying foreign aid cuts as wasting money on undeserving populations; and within the US religious right, arguing that compassion is no longer part of Christian theology (see, for example, Rigney 2025). Some charities and public services have fallen in line with these developments, and others already complied long ago, with homeless shelters reporting asylum seekers to the authorities; health services charging irregular migrants extortionate amounts for treatment; and women's shelters refusing those fleeing abusive relationships because they do not fit predetermined criteria (Day and McBean 2022).

Within these conditions, the coming-together of piracy and care has particular significance and urgency in relation to how we might resist the criminalisation and stigmatisation of solidarity. The pirate has no illusions that state institutions serve communities' interests, at times recognising that one must break the law in order to act in solidarity and to care for those who are being abandoned by the state. In this book, the metaphor of the pirate seems possibly more closely aligned with software piracy and hacking than seventeenth century buccaneers, particularly given the role of the latter within early capitalism. Care is also central to both contemporary capitalism and the neoliberal state, through a long-term reliance on unpaid reproductive labour. More recently, norms of the heterosexual, cisgender nuclear family have been used to limit the boundaries of who we should care for (and the discussion within the book of kinning and othermothers within LGBT+ communities serves as an important counter).

The inspiring range of examples which shows how pirate care is practised, includes those saving lives in the Mediterranean; patient activism; shadow librarians; queer kinship; and environmental defenders. The activists, artists, and communities who practise pirate care offer inspiring examples of prefigurative politics and a resource of hope for dark times. The book weaves together accounts from different conditions to a hopeful narrative of resistance. We do not have to wait for the revolution or a Left political party to take power to be pirate carers. We can start now - and this is also our challenge to act.

While the range of examples is inspiring, many of them are quite small-scale - necessarily so under current conditions, as the authors acknowledge. They propose federating these efforts - to connect them in a way that is bottom-up rather than top-down. This then leads to the question of organisation. I am still left wondering how pirate care might be expanded beyond those who are already part of artistic communities or activist networks, thus including

those who may already practise pirate care without identifying it as such. Given the authors' claims to take a decolonial approach, there could be inclusion of activities within the Global South, although the book does include Indigenous perspectives. Reference to the genocide in Palestine is a notable absence, given Western states' criminalisation of aid flotillas and other forms of solidarity.

One of the most interesting sections of the book focuses on DIY medicine. The critique of intellectual property is powerful, examining how pharmaceutical companies price medications outside of the reach of low-income patients within privatised medical systems. Institutionalised cruelty is also an important theme, as states deny gender-affirming hormone treatments to trans people. However, I would have liked to see further discussion about how to distinguish between these efforts (which are motivated by progressive politics) and those on the Right who co-opt distrust of the medical establishment and peddle alternative medicines under the banner of 'conspirituality' (Beres et al. 2023). Where do pirate carers stand in relation to science and medicine, given their imbrication within legacies of injustice, but also the current challenges of a post-truth media environment?

However, the very power of the concept of pirate care is that it revives insurgency on the Left at a time when Right populists and conspiracy theorists try to co-opt insurgent energies and an embattled centre-Left defends the status quo. It is a welcome intervention.

Authors' Response (Valeria Graziano, Marcell Mars, Tomislav Medak)

We are deeply grateful to the authors who responded to Petar Jandrić's invitation and have engaged with our book with such depth and curiosity. Each of these interventions reminded us that critique, at its best, is a form of companionship that helps thought grow through relation. It is especially meaningful that many reviewers write from within their own care ecologies and organizing practices, in unions, classrooms, and streets, since these are the laboratories where pirate care is continually reconfigured.

Aria Danaparamita, Panos Theodoropoulos, and Esther Planas Balduz help us revisit the project as a living tool of pedagogy that can support and sharpen collective organizing in this increasingly violent historical moment. Birgan Gokmenoglu and Kirsten Forkert help us centre our response on politicization amid the current moment of the fascistic forces in power. Arianna Introna and Joseph Davison help us see how the gestures the book traced – mutual aid, squatting, illegal healing – are already material practices of inhabiting exhaustion otherwise, of reweaving autonomy. Lena Wånggren, Ioana Cerasella Chis, and Wilson Sherwin's readings invite us to attune to the stakes of figuration itself. Their comments clarify how the book's main figure – part pirate, part carer, part disabled militant, part rogue expert, part partisan shapeshifter – operates as a feminist technology of relation rather than representation. It does its best work precisely in its capacity to keep open the tensions and fissures between each of these companion standpoints.

When presenting our book, we often note that the period of our thinking with and learning from pirate care practices - from the writing of a collective syllabus to the recent gathering at the Casino of Social Medicine and AGIT in Berlin – feels strangely easy to date: we launched the syllabus just before the pandemic in 2020, and our book appeared a few days after the second Trump inauguration in 2025. These two symbolic dates convey the atmosphere, urgencies, and political textures that shaped our research.

Yet, within those five years, much has changed. As Alberto Toscano (2023) proposes in his reading of Angela Davis and Ruth Wilson Gilmore, liberal democracies have devolved from harbouring fascism at their margins, through the prison, workfare, and border regimes, to placing fascism in their political centre. As we write, paramilitaries are conducting manhunts in urban centers, people are being imprisoned or fired for protesting genocide, and parties invoking mass deportations and the suppression of trans people are polling at 20-30%. Compared from when we started, therefore, organising in and against the institutions of

weaponised negligence is becoming all the more urgent. Amid the rise of fascism, new practices of pirate care are proliferating and becoming indistinguishable from daily life.

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The most devastating development since started writing *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is the brutal escalation of Israeli violence in Palestine into an unrelenting genocide. What continues to happen since late 2023 reshapes fundamental terrains in which we think and act. As United Nations Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese (2025) has shown, more than sixty states are not merely complicit, but actively uphold and participate in the genocide. In this conjuncture, international law is fraying, exposing the hollowness of the (neo)liberal order on which so much of the international political vocabulary once relied – such as rights, humanity, freedom. We wrote *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) drawing largely on earlier collaborations with protagonists of pirate care, before these events unfolded.

Having said that, Palestine was never absent: Toufic Haddad spoke on pirate care in Palestine at our 2019 conference (Haddad 2019); the history of the solidarity flotillas is one of the book's opening examples. The dynamics we once identified as emerging symptoms (censorship, algorithmic bias, the personal targeting of activists, and the illegal activities of state actors, to name a few) have since hardened into more generalised conditions. The asymmetry of impunity on the side of Israel and its allies and on the side of the solidarity movement is extreme. All forms of direct action in solidarity with Palestine get easily qualified as terrorism and repressed quickly. These acts of solidarity include armed struggle by non-state actors (even when tactical and precision-targeted at war-sustaining trade such as that by Ansar Allah[3]); a disruption of operations of an Israeli arms producer in the UK, or sailing towards Gazan territorial waters to bring aid.

This is the new reality of the criminalization of solidarity. The genocide in Palestine has made visible what was latent: that care, disobedience, and legality are now entangled in a global structure of sanctioned annihilation, an omnicide that targets the very conditions of life. The foundational aim of such war is not only the annihilation of others, but also the annihilation of objective and subjective grounds of the lives of others. It is about cutting others loose from all metabolic and social ties that make their lives possible and meaningful. This makes the Palestinian practice of *sumud*, or steadfastness, such a powerful and enduring form of resistance. It resists the breaking of interdependence, restoring connections to places and their bioregenerative capacities. Yet, survival under the extreme conditions of destruction, genocide, and ethnic cleansing levelled against Gazans opens entirely new dimensions of self-organizing that can only be accounted for by protagonists - and that work of witnessing is now being done by them and will eventually have to be learned from by others.

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Pirate Care (Graziano et al. 2025) speaks most directly from the contexts we inhabit: European urban terrains shaped by racism, patriarchy, resurgent conservativism, and now a process of remilitarization of social life. The project is shaped by the networks of practitioners and archives accessible to us. Yet, we recognise that practices of pirate care long predate and exceed the Western European and North American experience. This partiality is not an oversight but a condition of authorship. Our imagined interlocutor was, in a sense, a collective self-engaged in the same questions. Our aim was to describe a process of becoming political that might resonate with those seeking forms of militancy capable of making a difference in comparable settings.

We do not assume this is the priority everywhere, but we do recognise that the violences of Empire - its regimes of extraction, repression, and abandonment – are patterned globally, if unevenly. In that sense, *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025) is internationalist in its intentions, but not universalist in its claims. It offers a situated cartography, a vocabulary that might resonate across differences, to be translated, contradicted, or reinvented by those navigating

[3] See Jacobin https://jacobin.com/2025/05/yemen-houthis-us-bombing-ports. Accessed 19 November 2025.

other seas. Moreover, we can only encounter Indigenous knowledges and forms of resistance from the standpoint of pirate carers, as subjects striving to free themselves from reproducing imperial harms, enacting their own mutinies.

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In the book, we examine care through the lens of labour, noting the asymmetry in how those who provide care often cannot expect to receive it in return ('deliverers'). Likewise, we examine care through the lens of imperial property, noting the asymmetry in how private property breaks the rapports of interdependence, isolating private benefits that accrue to the owner from the damages it causes to others. However, we have only briefly addressed how the very framing of care as a relation between a giver and a receiver is challenged in disobedient care settings. There is a specific asymmetry where amid medicalisation and professionalization of care-provision, care-receivers are stripped of their autonomy. The abolitionist approach that we rely on emphasizes the experience of deinstitutionalization movements that emerged in the 1970s. These movements did not simply seek greater autonomy for patients or care receivers. Instead, they sought to dissolve the giver/receiver dyad into a multitude of care ecologies.

At the centre of deinstitutionalization struggles was a conflict around political determinants of health. The specific trajectory of capitalist industrialization, focused on maximising ability and extracting productivity from labour power, resulted in a fundamentally disabling social formation based on heteronormative nuclear family and paternalistic welfare system, where health was individualized and institutionalized. Repoliticization of those conditions as causing and not resolving harm formed the basis for instituting community-based care differently.

The deinstitutionalization struggles, bearing many resonances with struggles for independent living, at times devolved into narrow, condition-oriented support systems. That narrow focus then tended to take the edge out of the broad-tent disability justice organizing. Despite being one of the largest minority constituencies across societies, disabled people today are too often dispersed into fragmented niches of struggle, each tethered to specific forms of support and separated from broader movements for social justice. People with congenital impairments thus inhabit an institutional reality distinct from those whose impairments result from years of labour; the neurodiverse from the chronically ill. In this fragmentation, the shared political conditions of disablement, the structures that produce dependence, scarcity, and isolation, have been pushed to the margins of collective imagination. In many places, there are more accessibility options and there is more support for self-determined living than ten, twenty, or forty years back, but when cuts are imposed, such as the reduction of Universal Credit to force disabled people into workfare, the disability justice movement struggles to come together and resist.

How to overcome that separation? Drawing on the lived experience of one of us who is disabled, we believe the disability justice movement would be energized by looking outwards and situate itself within a larger terrain of solidarity and federation of struggles. Those others who are denied care are those who need solidarity from the disability community, just as the disability community needs solidarity from other social justice movements. The safety of groups targeted by the fascist politics today is essential to the repoliticization of our own struggle. At the heart of those federated struggles is the contestation around how we are governed, put to work, surplussed, and disposed of by an imperial system. All of that defines the political determinants of our health too.

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We appreciate the critiques regarding the figure of the pirate, both those that warn against its romanticisation and those that ask us to engage more fully with its historical realities. In truth, we do both. The book wishes to extend a reflection departing from actual historical pirate collectivities, *metalotage*, the fugitive experiments along the Malagasy coast that David Graeber (2023) traced, and the pirate ship as a proto-mutual-aid institution in which disabled

comrades were sustained through systems of mutual support. Yet our interest lies not in the pirate as a historical identity but as a figure**,** and this distinction, for us, is decisive.

A figure is not an identity, a character or a model to emulate, but a node of relational possibility, something that helps us imagine and think otherwise. Our understanding of the figure draws from the feminist conception of figuration, which Donna Haraway (1997: 179) describes as 'a condensed map of contestable worlds'. For Haraway, figures are not representations but worlding practices*,* performative and partial tools for thinking with others in the thick of power. In her dialogue with Chela Sandoval, whose *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2013) develops the notion of differential consciousness, we can find a blueprint of figuration as a technology for surviving domination, a mode of consciousness that moves across and within contradictory positions. In this sense, figurations are tactics for inhabiting and transforming worlds rather than illustrating them. Our figure of the pirate carer offers its contribution at the conjunction of two different modes of committing in the midst of systemic violence.

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We are grateful that several reviewers drew attention to the threads of law and private property running through *Pirate Care* (Graziano et al. 2025), reading them as openings rather than conclusions. Their reflections have helped us see how these questions require further study and experimentation wherever acts of commoning and disobedience are forced to confront legality head-on.

Echoing debates in Italy's commons milieu and Latin American movement theories, we align with the view that law is a terrain, not a *telos*: use it where it opens space, desert it where it closes life. Federation means cultivating power outside the docket while forcing legal recognitions that secure common spaces. When specific executive orders are made to stand in for the law itself, contesting them is framed as an attack on order rather than an attack on particular statutes; a confusion that enables the suspension of due process. When the state illegalizes solidarity, the lesson is not compliance but counter-juridical organizing that defends and creates autonomy.

The private property of knowledge and resources maps tightly onto obscene levels of private wealth. A narrow billionaire and corporate class concentrates control over information infrastructures, scientific labour, land, and data – the very tools through which we learn, act, and sustain ourselves. They dream of a world where automation has rendered us surplussed, pacified by biometric surveillance, and exhausted by regimes of workfare and extreme precarity. Pirate carers haunt that dream: reappropriating technologies, organising solidarities, repairing interdependences. They pull at the seams of this architecture, exposing its unnecessity and perversity, reminding us that stolen tools of reproduction can always be commoned back.

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