



Les spatialités du *care*

Une autre géographie des espaces naturels dits « protégés »

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Abstract: The spatiality of care. Another geography of « protected » natural areas. Field research undertaken with managers of natural areas shows that it is not possible to take care of them if they are apprehended in isolation. This is because their borders are porous and the plans that seek to protect them are constantly changing. Natural areas exist through other places (for meetings, negotiations, work, communication and so on). Approaching the management of natural areas via theories of care makes possible the integration of nature, social practices, and politics. In this article we focus on actions that are entitled as “caring” for natural areas. Care, in this context, is an inclusive activity that occurs on a variety of levels. It involves different stakeholders in a very complex process whose outcomes are not easy to predict. In political discourse, it appears as a societal project, a global ethics that is always illustrated with reference to specific places. Caring relationships embody a more situational ethics that aims, more widely, at “changing the world”. Dialogue occurs between different levels, and different situations feed into each other. Objects participate in sewing together these scales and actions. Looking at protected areas through the prism of theories of care leads us to explore a relational geography in which these places are caught in the relational networks that maintain them. After all, natural areas are only the emergent, or visible, part of the caring process. The chain of responsibility that participates in preserving them

goes from the very local to the very global and back again.

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