

## **CfP: Blurring Boundaries: Rethinking Gender and Care**

**University of Augsburg, Augsburg, Germany, March 13-15, 2019**

At present, Western societies are undergoing multiple processes of profound change. Globalization, economization and neo-liberalism transform formerly nationally organized industrial societies into markets within a highly interdependent global economy. A transformation or dismantling of the Western welfare state can be observed. Simultaneously, a growing individualization of lifestyles and an increasing privatization of responsibilities entail an ongoing erosion of traditional (and often invisible) care networks. New employment patterns, pluralized family forms, changing gender roles, altered conceptions of maternity and paternity, changed family care networks and the professionalization of hitherto rather privately organized care practices make it necessary to rethink care and its social organization.

Such dynamics challenge the (traditional, but still influential) gendered respectively feminized nature and notion of care. Today, care is not a female "labor of love" any more, invisibly done in the private sphere of the family. Care has become a subject of struggle – not only in everyday life (when families and other care networks desperately try to meet the care receivers' existential human needs) but also in the political sphere (where solutions for the "care crisis" are urgently sought) and finally in public discourse (where shortcomings in the field of care are increasingly addressed).

In sum, care can be regarded as the focal point of many (allegedly) controversial social processes whose color spectrum and gender implications shall be illuminated by the conference.

The following aspects are of particular interest:

- 1) Private care arrangements between family care and new caring communities  
*How do traditional care networks change and which new care networks have emerged within the private sphere? Does this imply that traditional gender roles erode?*
- 2) Professional care work between professionalization, precarity, and voluntary work  
*What does professionalization of care work actually mean? Which kind of care expertise is generated, valued, paid for? Does professionalization necessarily imply delegating care work to other underprivileged groups (like female migrants)? How do professionals and volunteers cooperate in the field of care?*
- 3) Care between discourse and everyday practices  
*Which aspects of care work are publicly discussed and which aspects actually matter in everyday care work? To which extent do discourse and empirical practices overlap?*
- 4) Care and economy  
*To which extent can care work follow a market logic? And how does care affect our current working world? How far has caring management been implemented?*
- 5) Care and temporality  
*To which extent is the time dimension of care considered? Is care reflected as a long-term process that connects care experiences of the past with preventative measures for the future? How did care work and the notion of care change historically?*
- 6) Care by humans and care by technologies  
*To which extent can machines and artificial intelligence support and change care? Which ethical questions emerge in this growing field?*
- 7) Struggling for care  
*How do invisible work and hidden burdens become visible in the field of care? Which groups have capacities for political and social articulation? Which factors might encourage or prevent a "care revolution"?*

8) Care and ethics

*How is care valued in specific contexts (as burden, duty, loving, fulfillment, reciprocity, etc.)? How is care conceptualized in terms of inter-personal relations, caring for the world, the living, one self, etc.? Is care necessarily orientated towards 'autonomy' or would a broader notion of care include 'dependency' and 'vulnerability' as necessary aspects of the living? How can care ethics be put to work in care markets and professions?*

9) Transforming care systems

*How does the transformation or dismantling of welfare states affect care systems and gender conceptions? To which extend does the restructuring of the welfare state show national specificities? Or which repetitive patterns can be observed by internationally comparative research?*

Papers and interactive posters (including an impulse statement) on topics that relate to these areas of inquiry will be presented on the conference.

We invite authors to submit abstracts via [conference\(at\)forgendercare.de](mailto:conference(at)forgendercare.de) by **August 31, 2018**. The maximal length of abstracts is 2,500 characters with spaces. Submitters will be notified of acceptance/rejection and format of presentation by November 1, 2018. Travel and accommodation costs as well as the conference fee cannot be covered by the organizers.

The conference is organized by the interdisciplinary Bavarian Research Association ForGenderCare - "Gender and Care. Dynamics of care in the context of institutions, practices, technology, and media in Bavaria." ForGenderCare is supported by the Bavarian State Ministry of Science and the Arts (2015-2019).

[www.forgendercare.de](http://www.forgendercare.de)

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