

The Politics of Intimacy: Exploring the Intersections of Policies and Emotions

25 May 2016, 17:00

IIR, Nerudova 3, Prague 1

The Institute of International Relations Prague and the journal *New Perspectives* would like to cordially invite you to a seminar with **Dr. Anna Durnová**. In her research, **Dr. Durnová** explores how emotions inform particular arguments or narratives leading to policies. The lenses of emotions reach beyond explanation through cultural or ethical/ideological imprints and offer a novel understanding of governing processes in the context of world politics, which has put in place novel power orders for Western liberal democracies. The talk will be broadly based on the forthcoming book by **Dr. Durnová** *The Politics of Intimacy: Rethinking the End-of-Life Controversy*.

16:30 – 17:00 Registration

17:00 – 18:30 **The Politics of Intimacy: Exploring the Intersections
of Policies and Emotions**

Dr. Anna Durnová, Senior Research Fellow, University of Vienna

Discussant: **Jakub Eberle**, Research Fellow, Institute of International Relations

Chair: **Dr. Benjamin Tallis**, Research Fellow & Editor in Chief of *New Perspectives*,
Institute of International Relations



Dr. Anna Durnová is a political scientist and a language theorist by training. She researches the role of emotions and language in policy process. Since October 2012 Anna coordinates the project [“Negotiating Truth: Semmelweis, Discourse on Hand Hygiene and the Politics of Emotions”](#) in the Hertha Firnberg Programme (FWF). She is also a lecturer at the Department of Political Science at the University of Vienna. In 2012, she was a visiting professor at Masaryk University of Brno. From 2009 to 2010 she was a Lecturer and Researcher at the University of Lyon. She has also been a

visiting research fellow at institutions in Essex (2012), Paris (2007), and Prague (2009). She is also the Forum Editor of *Critical Policy Studies*. Beyond her academic activities, she is an external collaborator of the Czech daily *Hospodářské Noviny*.

RSVP: registrace@iir.cz, 24 May 2016.

Dr. Durnová *The Politics of Intimacy: Rethinking the End-of-Life Controversy*

Debates on the end-of-life controversy have become highly complex in recent decades as they operate increasingly across various national and cultural traditions. Whereas previous analyses have focused on the cultural and ideological grounds of these discussions, this book turns to the intimacy of dying and discloses it as a site where policies are formulated, negotiated and implemented. Intimacy comprises the individual emotional experience of the end of life and the way it is acknowledged, or not acknowledged, by institutions. The process of acknowledging this experience explains that the end-of-life controversy relies upon the conflicting relationship between the individual and institutions, a relationship that seemed to be the unquestionable cornerstone of Western liberal democracies.

The move toward intimacy is both necessary and problematic. Through interviews with mourners, stakeholders and medical professionals, as well as through an extensive examination of media debates, policy papers, and speeches in France and the Czech Republic, the book describes that liberal democratic institutions, while trying to accommodate and acknowledge the emotional experience with the end of life, ultimately fail in this respect and enter a dynamic of deadlock. The book describes this deadlock as the “politics of intimacy,” showing that political institutions deploy power through the collective acknowledgement of individual emotional experience but also fail to maintain this recognition because of this very same experience.