

FEMINA POLITICA

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Call for Papers

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Reproductive rights and the politics of reproduction (working title)

25 years ago, the idea of sexual and reproductive health and rights that center on individual dignity and human rights has been developed at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. In 1995, it was integrated into the fourth World Conference on Women's action platform and recognized as part of human rights under international law. While being controversial at that time, lively debates and political actions accompany the translation of these rights into national policies ever since: In contrast to many women's, human rights and health movements, powerful conservative and religious circles and right-wing populist parties mobilize against the introduction of such policies. Yet, from a historical perspective, bodily autonomy and women's reproductive self-determination had always been disputed and been object of (bio)political struggles, for example to regulate individual procreation and population development by means of pro- and anti-natalist policies, respectively.

However, the decoupling of sexuality and procreation is relatively new. Ever since the birth of Louise Brown in 1978, the first baby conceived with in vitro fertilization, biological reproduction disposed of its allegedly naturalness and was socialized. New reproductive technologies support family formation of couples who are unable to conceive children or to give birth – even in life phases beyond biological reproductivity (,social freezing'). Today, individuals negotiate procreation and reproduction, and ways of life including motherhood, fatherhood and parenthood are being negotiated socially, politically and legally. On the other hand, new market-driven bio-economic dynamics related to egg and semen donation, in vitro fertilization and surrogacy increasingly transcend national borders. Also, reproductive rights seem to be dependent upon economic factors. For example, by marketizing procreation, reproduction yields new inequalities and confirms old ones. Individuals are requested to (partly) pay for interventions such as medically supported abortion and assisted family formation, but not all families can afford this. On the other hand, egg and semen donations and surrogacy become a new source of income for others. This sheds new light on the ,quality' and the value of children.

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This potential conflict situation is framed by a changing demographic situation. Political attempts to increase fertility in the Western world or to limit population growth in other parts of the world increasingly touch political, ethical and legal boundaries, and often fail. However, (bio)political attempts by conservative and right-wing populist actors that aim at influencing and regulating individual procreation and population development seem to gain strength. As a consequence, protest movements against these activities begin to form. Furthermore, parenthood is being gradually redefined in society and politics, and the right to have a child is newly determined. This issue gains importance against the background of (neo-colonial) transnational exploitation („fertility tourism“).

Both these recent developments and historical perspectives are at the core of this themed issue. We welcome theoretical and/or theoretically informed empirical contributions that engage with reproductive rights and the politics of reproduction from a comparative, transnational or global point of view. The following questions are central, though not exhaustive:

- How can the implementation of reproductive rights and reproductive politics be evaluated with a feminist lens? What criticisms of the concept of reproductive rights are put forward?
- How do political actors, e.g. governments, parties, social movements, churches, try to re-define, expand or constrain reproductive rights? Who are their supporters, who are the opponents? Which forms of action are being used?
- How do pro- and antinatalistic policies influence population development on the national, transnational and international level? How are they justified, which instruments are used, how successful are they?
- Which impact do controversies about reproductive rights and the politics of reproduction have on the mobilization of local, glocal and global women's and human rights' movements? Which action and protest forms do they use? Are they successful?
- How can recent political activities and legal regulations such as those concerning assisted parenthood (including surrogacy) and abortion be assessed from feminist perspectives? What are their chances? Which problems do occur and which questions are not being addressed? How can reproductive rights increase the odds of self-determination? How do they establish new social inequalities? Which countries benefit in what way? How have legal regulations changed in recent years?
- In what way do attempts to re-define family and parenthood challenge the modern understanding of the state that is generally based on heterosexual and married couples with biological children? How do the states react? How could a new definition of stateness look like that takes up the idea of reproductive rights and adjusts the politics of reproduction in a gender-neutral way?

Abstracts and Contact

Heike Kahlert and Agnes Blome are the supporting editors for this issue. Abstracts of one or two pages should be sent to heike.kahlert@rub.de and

berlin.de or to redaktion@femina-politica.de by 30 November 2019. As a feminist journal promoting women inside and outside academia *Femina Politica* will prioritize qualified abstracts by women.

Submission Deadline for Contributions

The editors will select contributions from the abstracts and invite authors to submit full papers until **15 December 2020**. The deadline for manuscripts between 35,000 and 40,000 characters (including spaces, notes, and bibliography), prepared for anonymous review, is **15 March 2020**. Information concerning the author should only be given on the title page. All manuscripts will be reviewed by external reviewers and editors. The reviews will be returned by **15 May 2020**. The final submission deadline of revised manuscripts is **15 July 2020**.

Open Section *Forum*

In addition to the topic of Reproductive Rights and the Politics of Reproduction, this issue of *Femina Politica* provides the opportunity to publish original manuscripts from the field of gender-sensitive political science in the journal's section *Forum*. Articles should be between 20,000 and 25,000 characters (including spaces, notes, and biography) and should either provide access to important research findings or be involved around contemporary debates in feminist research. Abstracts of one or two pages should be sent to redaktion@femina-politica.de. The final selection will be based on the full-length paper.

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