

## Care as Process: A Life-Course Perspective on the Ethics of Care in a Ramu River World (Papua New Guinea)

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### Abstract

My talk addresses care as a socially, culturally, historically, and politically constituted “process” and relates to ethnographic data gained during long-term anthropological fieldwork in Daiden, a place in the Lower Ramu River area of Papua New Guinea. It focuses in particular on the situation of elderly people as well as on intergenerational shifts, and it tackles pressing social welfare issues in contemporary Papua New Guinea in a more general way. Analytically, the four dimensions of care (caring about, taking care of, care-giving, care-receiving) and their related values (attentiveness, responsibility, competence, responsiveness), as developed within an “ethics of care” framework by feminist scholars, are applied in order to delineate the remaking of local ethics of care in the face of wider contemporary societal transformations. By means of a “life-course perspective,” my talk aims to shed light on the ways in which such a remaking has been perceived and evaluated in Daiden, thus augmenting the idea of care as a process rather than as a natural and/or atemporal disposition.

### Bio Blurb

Anita von Poser holds a DPhil in Anthropology from the University of Heidelberg. She worked at the MPI for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale before joining the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Freie Universität Berlin. Her major theoretical interests pertain to the field of psychological anthropology. She is the author of *Foodways and Empathy. Relatedness in a Ramu River Society, Papua New Guinea* (Berghahn, 2013), and she has been leading an anthropological-psychiatric project within the CRC 1171 *Affective Societies* (<http://www.sfb-affective-societies.de/en/teilprojekte/A/A02/index.html>), exploring the linkages between emotion, aging, and migration in Vietnamese life-worlds of Berlin.