



The Department of Methods in the Social Sciences and the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology kindly invite to the Public Lecture by Dr. Rosie Read on:

Gendered Compassion: Women and Volunteering in the Czech Republic

January 16th 2013, 17:00 - 18:30

**Venue: University of Vienna, Department of Methods in the Social Sciences,
Landesgerichtsstraße 20, Room H10**

The reconfiguration of welfare arrangements across Europe is taking place in tandem with an increased policy focus on volunteering. Volunteering is often depicted as promoting all kinds of social 'goods', from expanding civil society, promoting social cohesion and a sense of community belonging, to providing new routes to employment and reviving public services (or at least, making them cheaper). In this paper, I explore the emergence of new discourses about volunteering in the Czech Republic in the 1990s. Non-governmental organisations and religious groups promoted volunteering as part of a broader critique of professional, institutionalised welfare provision. Volunteering was seen as a way of 'humanising' health care, for instance. These ideas about volunteering became embedded both at national and local levels. I argue that one important effect of these transformations is that they change and reproduce women's unpaid caring roles in society, and articulate older class inequalities in new ways.

Rosie Read is currently Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Anthropology at Bournemouth University, UK. She has conducted a number of research projects in the Czech Republic and the UK exploring issues of gender and care work, volunteering, welfare transformation and the state. Recent publications include: Read, Rosie. 2011. Humanising Healthcare: Volunteered Caring and the Free Gift in Czech Hospitals. *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 29 (1), pp. 50-59.