

Call for Proposals

The Shadow Side of Gratitude

We are pleased to announce the forthcoming specialist conference, *'The Shadow Side of Gratitude'*, which will be held at the Max Weber Kolleg, Erfurt, Germany from 3th-5th July, 2019.

The aim of this interdisciplinary conference is to bring together experts from a range of fields to examine the potentially darker side of this everyday social emotion and valued human excellence. In recent years there has been growing academic interest in the topic of gratitude, in psychology, philosophy and education, amongst other fields. Psychologists have examined the role of gratitude in promoting wellbeing and fostering good social relationships. Philosophers have pondered the conceptual contours of gratitude and have debated whether gratitude is always a virtue, while educationalists have looked at whether and how gratitude should be fostered in the young.

While many experiences of gratitude are life-affirming, the concept may not be as straightforwardly positive as many people have assumed. It is not uncommon for gratitude to be experienced with mixed emotions, such as embarrassment, shame and guilt. Beneficiaries may be suspicious of benefactors' motivations in bestowing favours, gifts and compliments which could serve an ulterior purpose. It could be argued that gratitude to benefactors serves to keep marginalised groups in their place, and that cultivating gratitude makes a virtue out of an unwanted dependence on others. Therefore, in contrast to the predominant view of gratitude, this conference poses the questions of whether gratitude is always good, whether it can be used for illicit means, and if there is such a thing as too much gratitude.

We welcome proposals for 'The Shadow Side of Gratitude' across a range of academic disciplines. The conference theme is associated with a proposed special issue of the *Zeitschrift für Ethik und Moralphilosophie / Journal for Ethics and Moral Philosophy*.

(<https://www.springer.com/philosophy/ethics+and+moral+philosophy/journal/42048>)

Contributions for the special issue will be selected after the event has taken place.

Given the specialist topic, this will be an intimate conference with limited spaces available. Delegates will be chosen on the basis of the proposals submitted. These can be up to a maximum of 500 words and the focus should map closely onto the aims described above.

We are in a position to fund travel costs to the conference, accommodation, lunch and a conference dinner. More details will be provided once we have selected the speakers.

500 word proposals on the Shadow Side of Gratitude should be sent to gratitudeconference@gmail.com and must be received by **January 31st, 2019**. Speakers will be selected and informed no later than by the end of March 2019.

Organising team:

Dr. Blaire Morgan, University of Worcester, UK

Dr. Liz Gulliford, University of Northampton, UK

Dr. Martin Hähnel, Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany

Dr. Kathi Beier, Max-Weber-Kolleg, University of Erfurt, Germany