



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Amerikastudien

55th Annual Convention of the
German Association for American Studies

The American Presidency and Political Leadership

May 15–18, 2008, Heidelberg



Ruprecht-Karls-Universität
Heidelberg, est. 1386



The American Presidency
and Political Leadership

HCA
Heidelberg Center
for American Studies



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and Political Leadership

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Program

www.dgfa-2008.uni-hd.de



Impressum

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www.dgfa.de

Conference Organization HCA

Sonja Döring, Detlef Junker, Wilfried Mausbach,
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www.hca.uni-hd.de

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Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

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Daniel Sommer

Welcome

The American Presidency has been regarded as the pinnacle of political power, the symbol of the American polity, and a cultural myth. All these representations have circulated widely in the United States and all around the world. Scholars have time and again sought to capture this unique constitutional arrangement with their choice of concepts ranging from the “imperial presidency” in the aftermath of the New Deal to the “imperiled presidency” in the post-Watergate period.

In this year of presidential elections, which—as many pundits argue—will determine the future course of American politics, the German Association for American Studies has chosen “The American Presidency and Political Leadership” as the overall topic of its annual convention.

The convention is hosted by the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg and the Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA), a central academic institution at Germany’s oldest university that is at the same time constituted as a public-private partnership.

The German Association for American Studies welcomes members and guests to what promises to be exciting discussions between American and German scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds.

Rüdiger Kunow

President, German Association for American Studies





Thursday, May 15, 2008

10:00

Editorial Board Meeting (not open to the public)
(HCA, Third Floor)

12:30

DGfA/GAAS Board Lunch (not open to the public)
(ArtHotel, Restaurant Romer, Grabengasse 7)

Afterwards

DGfA/GAAS Board Meeting (not open to the public)
(HCA, Bel Etage)

17:00

Conference Opening and Welcoming Addresses

(Aula der Alten Universität/Old Assembly Hall)

Rüdiger Kunow, President of the DGfA/GAAS

Vera Nünning, Vice Rector for International Relations, University of Heidelberg

Jo Ellen Powell, U.S. Consul General, Frankfurt

Detlef Junker, HCA Founding Director

Featured Lecture

(Aula der Alten Universität/Old Assembly Hall)

Dana D. Nelson (Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of English,
Vanderbilt University, Nashville):

"Democracy – Presidentialism – War"

Reception of the DGfA and the University of Heidelberg

(HCA, Bel Etage)

Friday, May 16, 2008

9:00

Featured Lecture

(Neue Universität, Aula)

Michael A. Genovese (Director, Institute for Leadership Studies,
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles):

“Presidential Power in an Age of Terrorism: Full Circle?”

10:45

Featured Lecture

(Neue Universität, Aula)

Andreas Falke (Erlangen-Nürnberg):

“Is the Presidency Prone to Failure? Some Comparative Reflections”

14:00

Workshops

Workshop 1

(Neue Universität, HS 3)

**“Ranking and Rating Presidencies:
Presidential Achievement and Failure in Historical Perspective”**

Chair:

Manfred Berg (Heidelberg)

Participants:

Britta Waldschmitt-Nelson (LMU München):

“Race and the Presidency: A Ranking of Democratic Presidents
in the 20th Century”

Klaus Schwabe (Aachen):

“Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush: Religion and Politics. A Comparison”

Manfred Berg (Heidelberg):

“Failed Presidencies: A Historian’s Perspective”



The American Presidency
and Political Leadership



Friday, May 16, 2008

Workshop 2

(Neue Universität, HS 9)

"Portraying Leadership, Narrating Crisis: Representations of the Presidency in American Literature and the Visual Arts"

Chair:

Carmen Birkle (Mainz), Birgit Däwes (Würzburg)

Participants:

Volker Depkat (Regensburg):

"George Washington and the Visual Invention of the American Presidency"

Karsten Fitz (Passau):

"The Construction of George Washington as Cincinnatus / Soldier-Farmer in Antebellum Visual Culture"

Kerstin Schmidt (München):

"'Doin' the Lincoln': African-American Transformations of a Presidency"

Sabrina Hüttner (Würzburg):

"The Cowboy of the Western World:

Representations of the Bush Administration in Contemporary Drama"

Pia Wiegink (Siegen):

"The Billionaires for Bush: Activist Counterpublics and Parodic Performances"

Anne-Marie Scholz (Bremen):

"Presidential Representations, Crisis, and the 'New Documentary':

Errol Morris' *The Fog of War* and Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*"

Workshop 3:

(Neue Universität, HS 10)

"The American Presidency and American Leadership in Historical and Political Teaching of English as a Second Language"

Chair:

Laurenz Volkmann (Jena), Martina Wolff (Köln)

Participants:

Klaus-Dieter Groß (Regensburg):

"Teaching Philip Roth's Novel *The Plot Against America*"

Martina Wolff / Florian Radvan (Köln):

"Teaching the (Next?) President: Clinton vs. Obama (a Classroom Project for 10th Grade)"

Laurenz Volkmann / Nancy Grimm (Jena):

"Washington goes to Hollywood: Presidents on Film"

Christine Gottstein-Strobl (Eichstätt-Ingolstadt):

"'Wiggum for President' and the Springfield Primary Election 2008 – What Kids Watch, Teachers Should Discuss"

Friday, May 16, 2008

Workshop 4:

(Neue Universität, Senatssaal)

“Reel Presidents: The Cultural and Aesthetic Work of Filming the President”

Chair:

Michael Butter (Freiburg), Carsten Schinko (Stuttgart)

Participants:

Timothy Kaposy (Bonn):

“Dubious Epochs and Reagan Figures in Contemporary Film”

Stefan Butter (Tübingen):

“‘He knows how to fight’: Der kämpfende Präsident als Führer der (freien) Welt in Independence Day (1996) und Air Force One (1997)”

Antje Dallmann/Philipp Kneis (Berlin):

“Communicating Democracy: Entering the American Republic Through The West Wing or the Commander in Chief”

Michael Butter (Freiburg)/Carsten Schinko (Stuttgart):

“Response”

17:30

Information Session

(Neue Universität, HS 13)

“Online-Informationsressourcen für Amerikastudien” / “American Studies Online Resources”

Chair:

Holger Kersten (Magdeburg)

17:30

Women’s Caucus Meeting

(HCA, Bel Etage)

19:00

Reception of the City of Heidelberg

(Rathaussaal, City Hall of Heidelberg)

Welcoming Address

Deputy Mayor Dr. Joachim Gerner, Heidelberg



The American Presidency
and Political Leadership



Saturday, May 17, 2008

9:00

Featured Lecture

(Neue Universität, Aula)

H.W. Brands (Dickson Allen Anderson Professor of History,
University of Texas at Austin):

"The Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt"

10:30

GAAS Business Meeting / DGfA Mitgliederversammlung

(Neue Universität, Aula)

13:00

Lunch Buffet (courtesy of Universitätsverlag WINTER, Heidelberg)

(Neue Universität, Vestibule Aula)

PGF Lunch

(Essighaus, Plöck 97)

15:00

Workshops

Workshop 5

(Neue Universität, HS 6)

"The Imperial Presidency Revisited"

Chair:

Jochen Hils (Kaiserslautern), Jürgen Wilzewski (Kaiserslautern)

Participants:

Frank Austermühl (Auckland):

"Presidential Discourse and the Imperial Presidency"

Martin Thunert (Heidelberg)

„Jenseits der imperialen Präsidentschaft: Exekutivmacht und ihre Grenzen
während der Präsidentschaft George W. Bushs“

Saturday, May 17, 2008

Workshop 6

(Neue Universität, HS 7)

“Poetry and the Presidency: Inaugurations, Commemorations, Declarations, Refusals”

Chair:

Catrin Gersdorf (Berlin), Andrew Gross (Berlin)

Participants:

Margit Peterfy (Mainz):

“Longfellow and Lincoln: The Ship of State, Statesmanship, and the Role of Sentiment in 19th-Century American Political Rhetoric”

Christine Gerhardt (Dortmund):

“The Natural Presidency: Composting Abraham Lincoln”

Andrew Gross (Berlin):

“Personification as a Poetic and Political Principle: The Case of Ezra Pound”

Catrin Gersdorf (Berlin):

“Voice Counter Voice: The Presidents of Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, and Adrienne Rich”

Sabine Sielke (Bonn):

“The Aesthetics of Political Poetry and the Poetics of Presidency, or: Lyrics and Leadership”



The American Presidency
and Political Leadership



Saturday, May 17, 2008

Workshop 7

(Neue Universität, HS 8)

"Family Values: The Politics of Private Representation"

Chair:

Vanessa Künnemann (Hannover), Mary Ann Snyder-Körber (Berlin)

Participants:

Hannah Spahn (Berlin):

"'To live more in a family way': Domesticity and Politics in Jefferson's Presidency"

Stefan Brandt (Siegen):

"'The finest type of existing marriage': Family and Statehood in Writings by Grover Cleveland and Theodore Roosevelt"

Birgit Michaelis (Berlin):

"'The Great Cookie Scandal of 1992' or Recipes for a Presidential Campaign"

Birte Christ (Freiburg):

"Hillary Clinton's 'Municipal Housekeeping': It Takes a Village (1996) as a Claim to Female Public (Presidential?) Office"

Amy Foster Parish (Heidelberg):

"Madam President and the First Family: The Private Public Lives of Fictional Female Presidents in American Popular Culture"

PGF-Workshop

(Neue Universität, Senatssaal)

Chair:

Alexandra Ganser (Erlangen), Katharina Gerund (Bremen/Erlangen)

Participants:

Beate Eisner (Potsdam) on Dana D. Nelson

Stefanie Schäfer (Heidelberg) on Michael A. Genovese

Sebastian Honert (Erlangen-Nürnberg) on H. W. Brands

Saturday, May 17, 2008

20:00

(Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut, Sofienstr. 12)

Annie Proulx reads: FINE JUST THE WAY IT IS

(In cooperation with the U.S. Embassy)

Welcome Remarks

Jakob J. Köllhofer, Director, German-American Institute, Heidelberg

Peter R. Claussen, Cultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy, Berlin

Afterwards:

Reception

(courtesy of the Society for the Promotion of the Schurman Library for American History at the University of Heidelberg)

Conference Party

Cash Bar

Sunday, May 18, 2008

10:00

Forum

(Neue Universität, Aula)

"The American Presidency: Mission Impossible?"

Chair:

Stefan Kornelius, Süddeutsche Zeitung

Participants:

Manfred Berg, Curt Engelhorn Professor of American History,
University of Heidelberg

H.W. Brands, Dickson Allen Anderson Professor of History,
University of Texas at Austin

Katja Gelinsky, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

Michael A. Genovese, Director, Institute for Leadership Studies,
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles

Dana D. Nelson, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of English,
Vanderbilt University, Nashville

12:30

End of Conference



The American Presidency
and Political Leadership



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Hours:

Thu 13:00 p.m. - 17:00 p.m.

Fri 8.30 a.m. - 16.00 p.m.

Sat 8.30 a.m. - 16.00 p.m.

Sun 9.00 a.m. - 10.00 p.m

For directions, please also check:

www.uni-heidelberg.de/univ/besucher/anfahrt.html



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Heidelberg City Map



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