

Law and Order: Modes of Policing and Resistance in American History

Annual Conference of the Historians of the German
Association for American Studies (GAAS/DGfA)

May 8–10, 2026

Wilhelm von Humboldt-Saal

**Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin
Unter den Linden 8
10117 Berlin***

Organized by Helen Gibson and Sebastian Jobs, Freie Universität Berlin

*The conference venue includes several flights of stairs and is also easily accessible via elevator.

Friday

2:30–3:00 p.m. Opening Remarks

Helen Gibson, Sebastian Jobs, John Woitkowitz (Berlin)

3:00–5:30 p.m. Policing Gender and Sexuality

Chair: Nadja Klopprogge (Tübingen)

Nicole Sara Colaianni (Heidelberg)

No Checks and Balances: Corporate Policing of ‘Sexual Harassment’ after the Faragher and Ellerth Supreme Court Decisions

Mona Raeisian (Marburg)

From Welfare to Warfare: Legal Sterilization as Policing in Care and Reform Institutions

Ted Righthofen (Bonn)

Policing Gender: Bootleggers, Policewomen, Crossdressing, and the KKK during Alcohol Prohibition in Colorado

Andrew Wells (Kiel)

Cato’s Rape: Race and the Policing of Sex in Colonial New York City, 1664-1763

Break

6:30–8:00 p.m. Keynote

Chair: Helen Gibson (Berlin)

Mia Bay (Cambridge, UK)

The Streetcar Wars: Everyday Violence in Making American Segregation

Dinner

Saturday

9:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m. Roundtable: Precarious Archives – Accessibility, Erasure and Opportunities

Chair: Sebastian Jobs (Berlin)

John Woitkowitz (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin) and Kristen Iemma (Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Berlin)

Break

11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Early Career Scholars Forum

Panel 1 (Adolf von Harnack-Saal)

Chair: Andreas Etges (München)

Sujato Datta (Berlin)

Bombs, Bureaucracy and Business As Usual: The British Indian Agent-General in Washington and the Second World War

Richard Julius Lange (Heidelberg)

More than Paradise and Power? Accessing the Origins of Post-Cold War Transatlantic Differences

Anja Stopfer (Regensburg)

Of Pastors and Presidents, of Providence and Patriotism – The “Christian” and the “National” in American Christian Nationalism

Lesar Yurtsever (Berlin)

The Sound of Liberalism: Music and U.S. Turkish Relations from 1927 to 1960

Panel 2 (Wilhelm von Humboldt-Saal)

Chair: Jessica Gienow-Hecht (Berlin)

Katharina Isaak (Münster)

Caught between Revolution and Repression – The Russian-Language Press in the United States during the First Red Scare

Lisa Gersdorf (Erfurt)

Singing, Hiking and Politics: German Youth Movement in North America, 1920–1940

Caroline Bühler (München)

Women Making Money: Labor Unions and Feminized Professions in U.S. Economic Culture (1960–1990)

Alexander Brackebusch (München)

Morality Amendments: Interest Group Collaboration, Moral Panics and Conservative Backlash in the Second Half of the 20th Century

Panel 3 (Theodor Fontane-Saal)

Chair: Manfred Berg (Heidelberg)

Jana Huneke (Köln)

High School Bully, Boss Bitch, and Angry Black Woman: Figurations of Mean Femininity in the United States, 1950–1990

Iremsu Kul (Frankfurt)

The National Black United Front and the Struggle Against Racial Violence

Ylva Kreye (Mainz)

Whose Surveillance Is It Anyway? The Role of Migrant Knowledge and Visions of Autonomy in Progressive-Era Social Reform Efforts

Lea Kröner (Berlin)

Indigenous Missionaries and Colonial Power in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia

Lunch break

3:00–5:30 p.m. Policing Migration and Empire

Chair: Mischa Honeck (Kassel)

Grit Grigoleit-Richter (Passau)

Racialized Law and Order: Historicizing Border Enforcement at the Texas-Mexico Border

Layla Koch (Heidelberg)

(Un-)Lawful Fathers, Infant Nation: Paternalist Narratives of Law and Order in the 1830s Cherokee Deportation Crisis

Charlotte Lerg (München)

Orange Jump Suits and Sketchy Legality. The Trials before the Guantanamo Bay Military Commission in Visual Journalism

Silke Hackenesch (Köln)

Ideal Immigrant, Precarious Citizen: International Adoption and U.S. Immigration Policy in the Late 20th Century

Dinner

7:00–8:30 p.m. Business Meeting

Sunday

9:00–11:00 a.m. Concepts and Theories of Policing

Chair: Marlene Ritter (Berlin)

Anthony Obst (Berlin)

The Mythical Foundations of “Law and Order”: From Thomas Hobbes to John Adams

Felix Krämer (Erfurt)

Racial Capitalists’ Constitution? Whiteness as Property, the American Revolution and Beyond

Vanessa Vollmann (Passau)

Resisting the Allegation of “Wokeness” through Critical Race Theory Counter-Dialogue

Break

11:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Policing of Order

Chair: Silvan Niedermeier (Erfurt)

Nina Mackert (Hamburg)

Risk, Race and the Policing of Disease in Early 20th Century Public Health

Julian Windhöfel (Erfurt)

“Policing Black Labor for White Property” – Planter Class and Freedmen’s Bureau during early Reconstruction in Louisiana, 1864–1868