

8.00 am Breakfast (Check-out by 8.45 am)

Panel 4: Fraudulent Businesses

9.00 am **Malingers and Ambulance Chasers: Challenging Medico-Legal Authorities at the Turn-of-the-Century**
Alexander Obermüller
 University of Erfurt

“Body Snatchers”, “Cut Throaters”, and “Undertaker Trusts”: Controversies around the U.S. Deathcare Industry in the 20th Century

Jan Logemann
 University of Göttingen

Chair:
Silvan Niedermeier
 University of Erfurt

10.20 am Break

Panel 5: Health and Medical Fraud

10.40 am **Anti-Aging Fraud: Rejuvenation Hucksters in the Early-Twentieth Century United States**
Mischa Honeck
 University of Kassel

Hope, Hype, and Fraud: Integrity Challenges in Early Stem Cell Science
Axel Jansen
 German Historical Institute
 Washington, D.C.

Chair:
Nina Mackert
 University of Leipzig

12.00 pm Lunch, End of Conference

Conference organisers

Michael Mayer
 Akademie für Politische Bildung

Philipp Gassert
 University of Mannheim

Nadine Klopfer
 University of Munich

Registration

Maria Theresia Seebauer
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We ask for your binding registration via the online form on the Academy's website by May 2, 2025 at the latest.

Click [here](#) to register or scan



Your registration is considered accepted when you receive a confirmation of participation from us. If you are unable to attend after registering, please let us know by May 2 at the latest, otherwise please note the cancellation fees on our website under Program/Current Conferences.

Conference fee

Including room and board €140 (reduced fee €80).
 Including meals without room €90 (reduced fee €60).

We kindly ask you to pay the conference registration fee in cash in Euros or via a German debit card at the reception upon your arrival at the Academy. Please note we have no facilities for processing credit card payments.

Pupils, students, volunteers doing military service and federal voluntary service, trainees, unemployed persons and recipients of citizen's allowance/basic income support are entitled to a reduced fee (please indicate this when registering).

Meals

The Academy offers you vegan, vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. Please let us know in advance which kind of meal you prefer. In case of any food intolerances or allergies, we are happy to prepare a meal for you for an additional €10 per conference.

Road construction measures

The main street in Tutzing is currently under construction. This may cause delays in arrival and departure. Bus and taxi services between the Academy and the train station are also affected. Please consider this when planning your trip.

Sponsoring group (Förderkreis)

Our Sponsors' Association supports projects and acquisitions of the Academy that cannot be realized with funds from the public budget. The annual membership fee is €50. Members under the age of 30 pay a reduced fee of just €20. In addition, the Förderkreis pays the participation fee for Academy conferences three times a year for its under-30 members. The offer is only valid for private individuals and not in connection with events for a closed group of participants.

How to find us

Tutzing is located approximately 35 km southwest of Munich on Lake Starnberg (Starnberger See).

From Munich Central Station (Hauptbahnhof): Take the urban railway S6 (S-Bahn) or the regional train (RB) to Tutzing. At the train station in Tutzing, take the Bus 958 or 978 to "Klenzestraße". You will also find cabs at the front entrance of Tutzing train station. Please note our special offers for conference tickets through the Deutsche Bahn (DB) found on our website, see contact "[how to find us](#)".



From the airport take the urban railway S1 or S8 to Munich Central Station and follow the instructions above.

You can also reach the Academy by foot from Tutzing train station. It takes you 20 to 30 minutes.

To reach the Academy by car, take freeway A95 from Munich via A952 to Starnberg and continue on the federal highway until you pass the town of Traubing, then take a left. At the end of the road turn right to Tutzing. The Academy is on your left shortly after passing the town sign Tutzing.

Our guests are invited to use the charging points of the Academy for E-vehicles (cars, scooters, bikes) free of charge.



TITELABB.: ISTOCK/RAWF8

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AKADEMIE FÜR
 POLITISCHE BILDUNG
 TUTZING

■ **International Academy** ■

Illusion, Fake, and Fraud in American History

Annual Conference of the Historians of the German Association for American Studies

9 – 11 May 2025



INVITATION

American history abounds with stories of deceit. Tricks and hoaxes, humbug, scams, fraudulent schemes, and fake news have shaped Americans' experiences – in the economic and political field, but also culturally and socially. Faking it can be disastrous, yet it can also have an empowering effect, opening up fields for self-fashioning, disrupting norms, and diluting arbitrary social or racial boundaries. Along with these historical practices of deception, narratives about fraud have unfolded. These narratives at times praise scammers as astute entrepreneurs, fulfilling the dream of self-making. Other narratives, however, express the fear of being duped and urge for the exposure of deceit; at times, these narratives are used for (fake) allegations of fraud.

What is described as fake and fraud at a given time reveals the normative power of defining deceit; both fraudulent practices and their narratives are deeply entangled with power relations in American history.

Michael Mayer
Akademie für Politische Bildung

Philipp Gassert
University of Mannheim

Nadine Klopfer
University of Munich

FRIDAY, 9 MAY 2025

2.00 pm *Arrival, Coffee and Tea*

3.00 pm **Welcome Address**
Michael Mayer
Philipp Gassert
Nadine Klopfer

Panel 1: Trickster Science

3.30 pm **The 'Science of Humbug' and 'Humbug of Science': P. T. Barnum's Philosophy of Deception**
Anna Köhler
University of Heidelberg

The Trickster Scholar: The Art of Academic Subversion, Fake, and Fraud in German American Studies
Frank Mehring
University of Nijmegen

Chair:
Volker Depkat
University of Regensburg

4.50 pm *Short Break*

5.00 pm **Roundtable. Doing American Studies in an Age of Disinformation: The View from Europe**
Discussants:
Sakina Shakil Gröppmaier
University of Munich

Christian Lammert
Free University of Berlin
Katharina Motyl
University of Mannheim
Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson
University of Augsburg

Chairs:
Philipp Gassert
Nadine Klopfer

6.30 pm *Dinner*

Keynote Address

7.30 pm **"Counterfeit Miracles": Politics and Theology in the Age of American Cinema, 1919-1933**
Carolyn Biltoft
Geneva Graduate Institute

SATURDAY, 10 MAY 2025

8.00 am *Breakfast*

Panel 2: Deception as Empowerment

9.00 am **The "Powerful Effect" of Black Laughter: Slave Resistance and the Oppositional Gaze of Enslaved People**
Sebastian Jobs
Free University of Berlin

Deceit, Thy Name is Woman: Louisa May Alcott's Behind the Mask and Gendered Deception in Nineteenth-Century Sensation Fiction
Sonja Pyykkö
Free University of Berlin

Chair:
Silke Hackenesch
University of Cologne

10.20 am *Break*

Young Scholars' Forum

I Culture, Memory, Environment

10.40 am **Symbolic Communication of Colonial and State Legislatures (c. 1760-1820)**
Kirsten Becker
University of Münster

From Craze to Crisis: Eating, Ecology, and the Collapse of US Oyster Fisheries
Philine Schiller
University of Augsburg

Transgenerational Trauma, Reclamation, and Returning "Home": US-American Jews and Germany

Haley Snyder
University of Munich

Chair:
Lara Röbig
University of Erfurt

II Transnational Politics and Activism

"Slavery and Freedom Cannot Exist Together": European Women in the US Abolitionist Movement
Anna Lindmair
University of Augsburg

A Secret Agreement with Jacques Delors? Anti-Europeanism in U.S. Presidential Elections 1992-2004
Richard Lange
Heidelberg University

In Lockstep towards East? The Debate on NATO's Eastward Enlargement between 1990 and 1999
Hans-Georg Ripken
University of Mannheim

Chair:
Elisabeth Piller
University of Freiburg

III Trade and Transportation

The Defenders: The Populist Attempt to Uphold Protectionism in the United States, c. 1880-1930
Fritz Kusch
University of Bremen

Building the City: The Instrumentalization of Rapid Transit Projects
Ricardo Singh
University of Munich

Between Rambonomics, Fortress America, and Capitalist Peace: US Trade Policy and European Integration during the Uruguay Round of GATT Negotiations (1985-1995)

Martin Utsch
University of Mannheim

Chair:
Torsten Kathke
University of Mainz

12.30 pm *Lunch and Free Time to Meet and Socialize*

3.00 pm *Coffee and Tea*

Panel 3: Deceptive Media Representations

3.30 pm **"Tippecanoe and Liar Too?"The Log Cabin in William Henry Harrison's 1840 Presidential Campaign**
Robert Winkler
University of Salzburg

The Illusion of Domestic Grace: Media Framing of Mamie Eisenhower and the 'Fake' Ideal of 1950s Womanhood
Natascha Joselita Kröcker
University of Mainz

"The First Big Lie of the Second World War": How Associated Press Facilitated Nazi Propaganda Coups During the German Invasion of Poland in the Fall of 1939
Norman Domeier
University of Prague

Chair:
Andreas Etges
University of Munich

5.45 pm **Steiner Price Reception**

6.30 pm *Dinner*

7.30 pm **Business Meeting (for DGfA Members)**