

12th Annual Students and Graduate Conference, November 7-9, 2013

Call for Papers: American Wars: Material & Ideological Battlegrounds

“This nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger” (George W. Bush, National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims Of the Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001 Washington National Cathedral September 14, 2001). The contradiction of the United States’ commitment to the values of freedom, justice and democracy and the violent imposition of these values through war and warlike actions, implicit in this statement, has shaped the image of what was to become the United States and have helped build the American nation and society since the earliest days of colonization.

The history of the United States, in line with notions of Manifest Destiny and American Exceptionalism, has demonstrated that its proclaimed ‘peacefulness’ has been readily ‘stirred to anger’ by factors from within and without the nation, at the domestic and the foreign policy level. This history has not only been marked by military wars, but by social and cultural wars, such as racialization, the ‘war on women’ and ‘class wars’.

What is the rhetoric of American wars? How do the US deal with the contradiction of fighting a war against terror and for justice when standing up for a cause implies agency through conflictual positioning, often against (a) constructed ‘Other(s)’? The grounds of war are usually framed as ‘difference’, the main factor that produces enemies in the logics of American imperialism. How has the rhetoric of wars changed since claims that all men [sic!] are created equal and through the struggles to signal and eliminate American cultural inconsistencies set in motion by personalities such as W. E. B. Du Bois or Martin Luther King?

The 12th Annual Students and Graduate Conference seeks to explore the topic of American wars through an interdisciplinary approach, inviting students and researchers from various fields.

Possible paper subjects may include, but are not limited to:

- The US politics of bordering and separation - geographical, cultural, physical, etc., borders erected between the dominant/mainstream culture and social, cultural etc. ‘Others’
- The rhetoric of wars through political speeches, theoretical works and art; particularities of the means of a post-9/11 era and their relation to other forms of rhetoric in the history of the US
- The means by which popular culture is used to regulate, put into submission and campaign against the lives and bodies of women (by governmental institutions, political parties or religious groups)
- The ways in which the financial crisis deepened the struggle between different social classes in the US reflected in contemporary TV shows
- The extent to which certain wars are supported or countered by certain movements/discourses in academia



Please submit your paper proposals (max. 200 words) for a 20 minute presentation via email by **August 31, 2013** to: ASGConference.Berlin@gmail.com.