

Current Issues in North American and Cultural Studies | Lecture Series of the North American Studies Program

Sarah K. Becker

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Water Corpses in US-American Visual Culture

Thursday | 9 January 2025 | 6:00 c.t.-8:00 pm
53111 Bonn | Rabinstraße 8 | Room 02.025



Gregory Crewdson, *Untitled (Ophelia)* (2001)

In her lecture, Sarah Becker explores the motif of the water corpse as a cultural and visual trope, interrogating the intersection of water, femininity, and death. Focused on photographs, films, and TV series, the talk examines the symbolic function of water as a site of passage and purification while showing how the trope drives patriarchal narratives as much as it critically addresses domestic violence and sexual assault. As she draws on cultural history, media and feminist theory, Becker argues that water corpses often occupy liminal spaces between life and death, imagination and reality, stillness and movement.

Sarah K. Becker is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Cultural History and Theory, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. She holds a BA degree in art and media studies from the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig and an MA degree in the study of culture from Humboldt. Her thesis 'Wassertod und Wiederkehr' explores how representations of drowning bodies in films, TV series, and music videos contribute to gender and media theory.