

Complicating Canada

Friday, 16 July 2010 • 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. • Uni Club • Konviktstraße 9 • 53113 Bonn

Glimpsed from abroad Canada often resonates a certain tepid benevolence. Against nationalist agendas it promises a multicultural alternative that is inclusive, flexible and tolerant and seems to produce literatures that echo the official multicultural politics. Against aggressive militarisms it claims to intervene globally through a discriminate logic of peace and democracy promotion. Against corporate medicine it posits a health care system, organized around social care and equality. Given these coordinates, it becomes easy to allow a vision of Canada's "liveable" cities to starkly contrast with projections of a squalid urban US-America.

This conference brings together scholars from different disciplines in a debate that aims at expanding conceptions of Canada. Exploring the cultural, political, and economic contradictions softened by dominant imaginings of Canada, the symposium, focusing on specific and paradigmatic processes of contemporary Canadian cultures, figures in the pressures of global markets in order to re-evaluate the status of some of Canada's most cherished social ideals.

Program

- 10:00 – 10:30 **Sabine Sielke** (Director, German-Canadian Centre, University of Bonn) and **Andrew Pendakis** (Visiting Lecturer in Canadian Studies, University of Bonn)
Welcome and Introduction
- 10:30 – 12:30 **Imre Szeman** (Canada Research Chair in Cultural Studies and Professor of English, Film Studies, and Sociology, University of Alberta)
"Florida in Canada; or Why We Don't Need Creativity"
Comments: Sabine Sielke
- 12:30 – 1:30 Lunch Break
- 1:30 – 2:15 **Sabine Sielke**
"The Poetics of Canadian Literature: Challenging the Politics of Reading"
Comments: Christian Klöckner (North American Studies Program)
- 2:15 – 3:00 **Eva-Sabine Zehelein** (Department of English, American, and Celtic Studies)
"A Study in Obsession: Maureen Hunter's *Venus in Transit*"
Comments: Simone Knewitz (North American Studies Program)
- 3:00 – 3:30 Coffee Break
- 3:30 – 4:15 **Sandra Fischer** (Department of Political Science and Sociology)
"Health Care in a Federal System – the Canadian Case"
Comments: Lars Metzger and Jared Sonnicksen (North American Studies Program)
- 4:15 – 5:00 **Andrew Pendakis**
"Middle Power: Canada and Political Betweenness"
Comments: Imre Szeman
- 5:00 – 6:00 "The Canadian Exception after 9/11"
Panel Discussion with **Sandra Fischer**, **Christian Klöckner**, **Sabine Sielke**, **Imre Szeman**,
and **Eva-Sabine Zehelein**
Moderators: **Jared Sonnicksen** and **Andrew Pendakis**