

The White House Embattled: The U.S. Election 2024

Lecture Series of the North American Studies Program |
in cooperation with the Amerika Haus NRW e. V., the
Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb), and the Deutsch-
Kanadische Gesellschaft e. V. (DKG)

Feeling Is Believing: Rethinking the Role of Conspiracy Theory in the 2024 U.S. Election Cycle

Monday | 27 May 2024 | 6:00-8:00 pm
53111 Bonn | Rabinstraße 8 | room 2.025

Prof. Donovan O. Schaefer
University of Pennsylvania | Philadelphia



Why has conspiracy theory risen to prominence in our current political moment—especially in the US, where presidential candidate Donald Trump has frequently affiliated himself with conspiracism? How is conspiracy theory deployed as a political tool? This talk proposes a new way of assessing the relationship between thinking and feeling, highlighting their deep interrelatedness and enabling us to see conspiracy theories as powerful political tools. This helps draw a clearer map of the role conspiracy theories are playing in the 2024 US election and devise more effective ways of responding to them.

Prof. Donovan O. Schaefer is an associate professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of, most recently, the award-winning *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism after Darwin* (Duke UP, 2022). His research examines the multiple overlapping relationships between emotion and power.