

# **Activist Writing – The Pamphlet in Practice, History, Media, and the Public Sphere**

**Online Conference – February 24-26, 2022**

Pamphlets are everywhere. In recent years, the polemical texts of the #MeToo movement, of Black Lives Matter, of anticapitalist movements, of Brexit, of anti-abortion coalitions, or of digital secessionists have demonstrably affected the normative fabric of Western societies. Pamphletary literature and the responses it elicits are at the core of social history and are drivers of revolutionary events. From disenfranchised groups defending their existence to transnational coalitions advocating for systemic change, pamphlets are both a preeminent medium of political transformation and a massively popular genre of literature.

How does the pamphlet, both in its traditional and digital forms, shape and frame the objectives of contentious politics? What pamphletary impulses lead to political action, and what political actions crystallize as normative change? The international bilingual conference “Activist Writing —The Pamphlet in Practice, History, Media, and the Public Sphere” addresses these questions from an interdisciplinary perspective.

## *Keynote speakers:*

Sigrid Weigel (February 24)

Robert Pfaller (February 24)

Eva von Redecker (February 25)

Philipp Staab (February 25)

Grace Blakeley (February 25)

Amber A’Lee Frost (February 25)

## **Registration:**

The conference will be hosted online. For registration, please visit

[www.artsautonomy.net/conference](http://www.artsautonomy.net/conference). If you are only registering for a keynote, please email us at [activistwriting2022@lmu.de](mailto:activistwriting2022@lmu.de).

Download the [Conference Flyer](#)

## **Program**

### **Thursday, February 24**

12:30

*Opening with Greeting Address*

Prof. Dr. Heike Paul Director of the Bavarian American Academy, Chair of American Studies at the Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen

Prof. Dr. Pierre-Héli Monot Principal Investigator of the Project “The Arts of Autonomy”, Professor of Transnational American Studies, Political Theory, Aesthetics and Public Humanities at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

13:00–14:15

*Keynote: Flugblatt, Pamphlet und Karikatur im Struktur- und Medienwandel der Öffentlichkeit*

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Sigrid Weigel, Former Director of the Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung Berlin and Chair of the Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren Berlin, Prof. em. at the Institut für Philosophie, Literatur-, Wissenschafts- und Technikgeschichte der Technischen Universität Berlin

14:30–15:45

*Panel 1: Claiming the Public Sphere – Pamphleteering on the Way to Modernity*

Wiebke Voigt (TU Dresden) Activist Writing in the Name of God: Reformation Pamphlets and the Emergence of the Public Sphere during the Early Reformation Period

Dr. Christoph Streb (LMU München) Enter the Author: Ultra-Personal Polemical Writing in Late 18th-Century Pamphlets and its Ambivalent Democratic Function

16:00–17:30

*Panel 2: Politics in the 1920s – Agitation and Action in Italian Fascism and the German Communist Party*

Dr. Manlio Della Marca (LMU München) “Ideas Going into Action”: Ezra Pound and Trans-media Pamphleteering in Fascist Italy

Daphne Weber (HU Berlin) The Means of Agitation: Pamphleteering as Production of Small Forms Organizing Crowds and Cadre in 1920s’ German KPD Agitprop Publications

17:30–18:30 Break

18:30–20:00

*Keynote: Erobern oder Verzichten? Politisches Fordern im Neoliberalismus*

Prof. Dr. Robert Pfaller Professor for Philosophy and Cultural Studies at the University of Art and Design Linz and at the Technische Universität Wien

## **Friday, February 25**

10:00–11:30

*Keynote (Lecture and Discussion): Revolution für das Leben*

Dr. Eva von Redecker Marie-Skłodowska-Curie-Fellow at the University of Verona, Centre for Politics and Theories of Sexuality (PoliTeSse)

11:45–13:00

*Panel 3: Agents of Change: Practices of the Pamphlet*

Prof. Dr. Juliane Prade-Weiss (LMU München), Prof. Dr. Dominik Markl (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome), Dr. Vladimir Petrović (Institute for Contemporary History, Belgrade) Appeals to Historical Authority Justifying Mass Violence in Pamphlets

Sakina Shakil Gröppmaier (LMU München, Project Member, “The Arts of Autonomy”) From Text to Event ... to Text: Pamphletary Appeals for Sovereignty in the Digital Public Sphere

13:00 –14:00 Break

14:00 –15:30

*Keynote (Discussion): Between Financialization and Digitalization: Transformations of the Public in Hyper-Modern Capitalism*

Prof. Dr. Philipp Staab Professor for Sociology of the Future of Work at Humboldt-Universität Berlin

Grace Blakeley Economist, Commentator, Author, and Activist (“Stolen. How to Save the World from Financialisation” 2019, “The Corona Crash. How the Pandemic will Change Capitalism” 2020)

15:45 –17:00

*Panel 4: Pamphlets and Factuality: Information and Disinformation in Public Discourse*

Dr. Nils C. Kumkar (Universität Bremen) Outsmarting Reality: Alternative Facts as the Opportunistic Lubricant of Public Discourse

Dr. David Bebnowski (LMU München, Project Member, “The Arts of Autonomy”) Voicing Reality: The Pamphlet as a Medium of Partisan Truths

17:30 –18:30 Break

18:00 – 20:00

*Keynote (Lecture and Discussion): Dirtbag*

Amber A’Lee Frost Co-Host of the Podcast “Chapo Trap House”, Author, Activist (“Dirtbag” forthcoming)

## **Saturday, February 26**

10:00 –11:15

*Panel 5: Pamphletary Practice in Manifestos*

Prof. Dr. Carsten Junker (TU Dresden) The Manifesto as Form: Queering the Subject of Polemical Writing?

Stefanie Kremmel (Universität Wien) Translation as Pamphletary Practice: Insight into the Translation History of the Communist Manifesto

11:30–12:45

*Panel 6: Re-Forming and Re-Cycling Pamphlets by African American Pamphleteers*

Prof. Dr. Dustin Breitenwischer (Universität Hamburg) Frederick Douglass and the Pamphlet as Re/Form

PD. Dr. Florian Sedlmaier (FU Berlin) Ida B. Wells Barnett’s Pamphlets: Re-Cycling, Media Monitoring, and Racial Leadership

13:15 –14:00

*Concluding Discussion*

## **Organizers:**

This conference is organized by the members of the ERC research project “The Arts of Autonomy: Pamphleteering, Popular Philology, and the Public Sphere” at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München. This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 852205).

Prof. Dr. Pierre-Héli Monot, Dr. David Bebnowski, Sakina Shakil Gröppmaier