

[Establishing Passionate Humanities in Munich \(June 28 & 29\)](#)

Announcement published by Stefan Bronner on Wednesday, May 15, 2019

Type:

Conference

Date:

June 28, 2019 to June 29, 2019

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

German History / Studies, Humanities, Languages, Philosophy, Teaching and Learning

Konferenz zur Gründung der *Geisteswissenschaften der Leidenschaften*- Ein Neuanfang

Establishing Passionate Humanities

JYM (Junior Year in Munich)

28. und 29. Juni 2019

Conference Call

Not only since 2015, society faces social, political, and ideological crisis in Germany as well as in North America. Today, studying humanities is mainly considered useless due to the impossibility of quantifying their results. Translated into the capitalist logic of our present time, this means a dark future for our disciplines. In the public sphere there is no presence of intellectuals like Marcel Reich-Ranicki anymore. Professors, in fact, follow their corporate careers under the public radar, working on their publications in order to be able to stay in academia as if it weren't one of the most precarious and exploitative fields. In the U.S., the crisis already shows even more severe consequences. Programs within the humanities face major cuts in funding, i.e. German departments lose their graduate programs, positions are frozen until eternity, and the student numbers go back due to increasing financial pressure. Disciplines like Religious Studies, Classics and the other foreign languages do not fare better since universities started operating with terms like "research" instead of "scholarship", "citation numbers", and "impact".

Facing the growing influence of international nationalism and anti-intellectualism, don't we have to do more than just analyzing, archiving and teaching students "skills" for their future in the corporate world? Shouldn't we, on the contrary, comment, construct, create, and seek public attention? If the humanities strive to remain relevant, we have to find ways to withdraw from quantitative evaluation

and, instead, justify our existence from within ourselves. More than ever, we must think about strategies to get involved, to actively engage in creating our reality in order to counter right wing populism and radical capitalism. Our disciplines need to create passion and community. New and creative approaches, openness toward new forms of academic communication, a broad public audience, artistic formats, and most importantly, courage to construct and speculate become inevitable, even at the risk of being mistaken. Perhaps the time has come to reinvigorate the grand identity narratives, whose death Lyotard declared in 1979.

Questions & Contributions

We would like to reflect upon and, in the form of interventions, construct relations between art, philosophical speculation and politics. We would like to grasp future notions of academia in broader ways and would like to rethink academia. Hence, we invite aside from traditional academic, artistic contributions. Discussions and contributions should entail but are not limited to the following questions:

- Which concrete communicative strategies do we need to actively influence the “pre-political” sphere and communicate our particular insights to a broad audience?
- What can we teach our students for their future that they don’t learn in other disciplines?
- Why should people choose study programs within the humanities today?
- How can we contribute to making society warmer, more solidary, more informed and more ethical?
- Facing a new nationalism and populism, can we go back to constructing grand identity narratives?

Establishing Passionate Humanities

The conference will take place on June 28 and 29 at the Junior Year in Munich (JYM). In this place, where American students are given a home away from home during their exchange year, we seek to establish a community amongst scholars and a new *Passionate Humanities*.

Deadline: May 30, 2019

Contact Info:

Stefan Bronner (University of Connecticut)

Marcel Schmid (University of Virginia)

Hans-Peter Söder (Junior Year in Munich)

Contact Email:

stefan.bronner@uconn.edu

URL:

<https://untiefen.blog>