

**Call for Papers**  
**German Studies Association, 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference**  
**3-6 October, 2019, Portland, OR**

**Science Discourses in Media and the Public Sphere of the Cold War**

This series of panels explore the dynamic relationship between diverging political agendas and state-sponsored scientific research in divided Germany. Between 1945 and 1990, the East and West competed not only ideologically, but also in terms of their scientific feats and media representation of such achievements. The Cold War offered a rich terrain for competition, showdowns, and reflection: from the release of Sputnik I in 1957, to reclaiming the cultural heritage of European scientists, to responding to Wernher von Braun's involvement into Explorer I and II and public support or dissatisfaction with nuclear armament. The space craze engendered entertainment genres such as the *utopische Filme* in the East and sci-fi in the West, popular documentaries, and educational features that shaped the public imagination of both ideological systems' achievements. Not unlike politicians, research institutions, such as the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft or the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Forschungsstelle in the GDR or the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung in the FRG, were central to reclaiming the role of science for the building of socialism or democracy post-1945. At the same time, popular science magazines, biographies of famous scientists, comics, cartoons, and fan clubs fed into the ever-increasing popularity of science. The series of panels that we are proposing aim to provide analysis of literary, media, and archival documents and to thus create a forum for further exploration of the intertwinement of politics and science in this time period.

We are inviting papers for several panels on the science discourse in media and the public sphere from a wide range of fields, including history, media history, film and visual studies, sociology, literary studies, political science, anthropology, and more.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- History of state-run science institutions (Max Planck Society and Institute, Alexander von Humboldt foundations and forums, subdivisions of the Science Academies, etc.);
- Role of scientists in the socialist society or the democratization process;
- Media representations of scientists, such as Wernher von Braun, Sigmund Jähn, Ulf Merbold, Yuri Gagarin, and others;
- Sci-fi literature and media and their commentary on scientific achievements;
- Propaganda efforts and initiatives;
- Wissenschaftsfilm, biopics, (auto) biographies;
- Children's media and educational efforts;
- Public reactions to scientists and science/ protest actions;
- Scientific discourse, armament and the Vietnam War;
- Peace movements and their stance on science during the Cold War; and others.

For consideration, please submit a 200-word abstract and a short bibliography by February 1, 2019, to Dr. Mariana Ivanova (Miami University, [ivanovmz@miamioh.edu](mailto:ivanovmz@miamioh.edu)) and Dr. Juliane Scholz (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin [jscholz@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de](mailto:jscholz@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de)).