The conference explores how violence has been publicly represented as a deeply gendered phenomenon from the nineteenth century to the present. Individual contributions trace narratives of aggression and vulnerability in the fields of (popular) media, law, and politics. The conference maintains that these narratives have themselves influenced policymaking and continue to shape social realities in ambiguous ways. Public discourses on violence both challenge and reinforce gender hierarchies.
We aim to develop a more nuanced understanding of how gender hierarchies are intertwined with the often ambivalent public perception of certain types of behavior as violent or non-violent. To develop a common agenda, the conveners have invited experts in European and North American history, as well as scholars with a global perspective, to exchange their work. Seven individual panels will bring together perspectives on intimate, institutional(ized), and wartime violence but also on and legal initiatives and activism against certain forms of violence.
The opening keynote will be delivered by Mara Keire (Oxford University).

Venue
Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom
Istituto Storico Germanico di Roma
Via Aurelia Antica, 391
I–00165 Roma
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International conference of the German Historical Institutes in Washington and Rome, the Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg and the LWL-Institut für westfälische Regionalgeschichte.

Supported by DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft German Research Foundation

In-person event.
Please register for participation

dhi Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom
Istituto Storico Germanico di Roma

FZH Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg

ghi German Historical Institute Washington

LWL

GENDER & VIOLENCE

Power Dynamics and their Representations, 19th–21st Centuries

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
20–22 MAY 2026

WEDNESDAY, 20 MAY

OPENING KEYNOTE
18.00 - **Mara Keire** | Oxford, UK
"Meet the Swinger". Sex, Violence, and Domesticity in U.S. Photography, 1965–1995

THURSDAY, 21 MAY

9.30 - Arrival at the conference venue / Check-in

10.00 - **Petra Terhoeven**, **Raphael Rössel**, **Claudia Kemper**, **Daniel Gerster**
Welcome and Introduction

I – Representing Intimate Partner Violence

Chair: **Raphael Rössel** | Washington

10.30 - **Maren Röger** | Leipzig
Naturalization and Pathologization. (Media) Interpretations of Intimate Partner Violence in the Long Twentieth Century

Alberto Rizzelli | Padova-Venezia
The Via Sistina Drama. Judging Male Violence Against Women in a Late-19th Century Cause Célèbre

Julia Menges | Kassel
The Media Debate on Domestic Violence in West Germany and France in the 1970s

12.00 - Lunch Break

II – Gendered Spaces – Gendered Violence?

Chair: **Hannah Ahlheim** | Giessen

13.00 - **Kristy Campbell** | München
Gendered Spaces of Colonial Violence. How the 'Intimate' Sphere becomes a Space of Women's Violent Agency in German Southwest Africa (1884–1915)

Emma Teworte | Oxford, UK
'She looked like a beaten dog'. Gender-Based Violence, the Family, and Abortion in 1930s–1950s Germany

Zhanna Popova | Amsterdam
Class or Gender Interests First? Approaching Gendered Violence at the Workplace

14.30 - Break

III – Politics and Activism. Public Negotiations of Gender and Violence

Chair: **Daniel Gerster** | Hamburg

14.45 - **Elisabeth Kimmerle** | Potsdam
Historicizing Femicide. Feminist Activism, Gender, and Violence in 1970s–80s West Germany

Amrei Kienle | Tübingen
Gender-Specific Negotiations of Political Violence and their Representation in the Media in West Germany and Austria (1945/49–1959)

Catherine Davies | Zürich
Feminist Movements and Crime Policy. Comparing the US, France, and (West) Germany, 1970s–1990s

16.15 - Coffee Break

IV – Changing Legal Approaches to Gender and Violence

Chair: **Lars Döpking** | Roma

16.45 - **Lisa Hellriegel** | Bremen
Gender on Trial. Rape in German Court Cases, 1920s–1950s

Emilia Musumeci | Teramo
Impossible Violence. Forensic Medicine, Criminal Law, and the Myth of Anatomical Consent in Italy (19th–20th Centuries)

Sabina Mompó Toribio | Barcelona
"That woman's moral conduct is deplorable." The Punishment of Female Transgression Through Ordinary Judicial Proceedings for Sexual Violence (1936–1948)

18.15 - End of Panel IV

Afterwards: Conference Dinner (only for participants)

FRIDAY, 22 MAY

V – Male War, Female Peace? Gendered Violence within Military and Martial Contexts

Chair: **Claudia Kemper** | Münster

10.00 - **Kim Bootsma**, **Henk de Jong** | Breda
Female War Correspondents, Gender, and Representations of Wartime Violence (1944–1945)

Louise Earnshaw | Leeds
Behind the High Walls. Captivity, Endurance, and Gendered Narratives of Violence in First World War POW Testimonies

11.00 - Break

VI – Harming which Bodies?

Chair: **Petra Terhoeven** | Roma

11.15 - **Kena Stüwe** | Berlin
Of Body and of Structures – The Issue of Forced Pregnancies in the German Movement for Birth Regulation in the Early 20th Century

Eva Payne | Mississippi
Selling the Body? The Relationship Between Commercial Sex and Violent Sports in the 20th Century United States

Paula Muhr | Hamburg-Berlin
Gender and Violence in Medical Accounts of Hysteria and Functional Neurological Disorder, 19th–21st Centuries

12.45 - Lunch Break

VII – Intersecting Forms of Violence

Chair: **Vera Grund** | Roma

13.45 - **Ellinor Schweighöfer** | Frankfurt am Main
"I don't like Mondays." Amok and the Question of Gender

Anna Horstmann | Bielefeld
Gendered Experiences of Violence of Children in Germany During the Second World War

Susan Grayzel | Logan, USA
Reproduction at War. Pregnant Bodies & Spaces of Violence

15.15 - Break

15.30 - Joint Concluding Discussion
Moderators: **Raphael Rössel**

16.00 - End of the Conference