"The Repoliticization of Myth? East German Letters to Angela Davis"

Speaker
Olivia Landry
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This talk examines Angela Davis’s important epistolary connection to the German Democratic Republic. Between the years 1971 to 1972 an outpouring of support from socialist countries reached San Rafael and then San José, California, respectively, where Davis awaited and endured trial. This came in the form of letters, overwhelmingly written by school children in the GDR. For the youth of the GDR, Davis represented an iconic figure of social justice. But while the letters were instrumental in securing her freedom in the U.S., they at once stymied radical politics in the GDR, where Davis was actually adopted as a strategic depoliticizing myth.

(This talk is part of a co-authored project with Kathleen Smith.)

Olivia Landry is Assistant Professor of German at Lehigh University. She works on contemporary culture, film, and theater in Germany. Her first book, Movement and Performance in Berlin School Cinema, will appear in Fall 2018 with Indiana University

February 15 • 12:00 pm • Williams Hall, Room 070
Bring Your Own Lunch • Beverages and Dessert Provided

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