



The Far Right, Universities, and Counter-Institutional Knowledge Places

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Veranstalter

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Ausrichter

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Veranstaltungsort

University of Cologne

PLZ

50923

Ort

Köln

Land

Deutschland

Findet statt

In Präsenz

Vom - Bis

10.03.2027 - 12.03.2027

Deadline

01.05.2026

Von

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Places of learning and knowledge production are an important, yet under-researched, battleground for the far right. This conference seeks to deepen academic engagement with knowledge places and the far right from the 1960s to the present. It contends that far-right activities around knowledge issues have been shaped both by interactions with established universities and by the creation of 'independent', counter-institutional places of learning and teaching.

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The conference aims, first, to strengthen attention to (higher) learning and education within the growing body of research on the far right in contemporary history. Second, it takes up debates within the field of education about the central importance of issues of learning and education for far-right movements and deepens them through a historical perspective, particularly regarding forms and venues of adult learning. Third, the conference ties in with current debates about the stance of universities towards populist and right-wing influence.

We welcome paper proposals from all regions covering the period from the late 1960s to the present. Contributions may focus on, but are not restricted to, the following areas:

Academia under pressure: the far right's view of higher education.

To what extent did right-wing groups and individuals regard universities as their sphere of activity? How did students, researchers, and professors campaign for right-wing goals? How were universities used as symbolic or material resources? What forms of criticism of academia and higher education emerged, and which underlying motives (such as 'neutrality', 'freedom', 'achievement', 'left-wing hegemony', 'pedagogisation', etc.) shaped them?

Think tanks, centres and counter-universities: self-organised knowledge places of the far right. What learning spaces and organisations did protagonists from the intellectual right establish, and what were their main areas of focus? Which formats (e.g. conferences, summer schools, camps, self-study courses) were used, and how did they shape networks and intellectual positions? What intellectual and social significance did these "self-organised" knowledge places have?

Certified, with state recognition? Self-founded right-wing institutions and right-wing influences on established colleges and universities.

When and how have right-wing actors attempted to copy or take over established academic institutions? To what extent have they sought state funding or official recognition for their educational projects and examinations? What role do commercial right-wing institutions play that rhetorically claim university status and make broad educational promises?

Consequences and reactions in higher education and politics.

Who raised the issue of right-wing activities in the higher education context, both internally and publicly? What institutional responses and strategies can be identified? What consequences were discussed in politics regarding the regulation of right-wing 'educational' activities, for instance concerning charitable status of organisations, the prohibition of institutions, or financial support (e.g. from foundations)?

History of 'science' and 'education' in quotation marks?

Finally, the conference invites discussion on academic approaches to the study of right-wing learning and teaching. What are the strengths and challenges of historical analysis in this field? Which periodisations seem most appropriate? Which sources can be used, and what practical problems arise in their collection and analysis?

If you are interested in participating, please send an abstract (max. 300 words) to susanne.schregel@uni-koeln.de by May 1, 2026. There is no conference fee. We will try to obtain funding for travel and accommodation for all who do not have institutional funding.

Kontakt

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Zitation

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<https://www.hsozkult.de/event/id/event-161263>.

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