DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
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DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

'Extremely Violent Societies' - An Alternative to the Concept of 'Genocide'

SPEAKER
Dr Christian Gerlach
Department of History, University of Pittsburgh

VENUE: The venue will be the History Department Meeting Room, AS1/0524. Prof Murfett will move everyone to the HY/PS Lounge if the Meeting Room can’t handle the size of the audience.

DAY/TIME: Monday, 28 November 2005, 2:30 pm

Abstract

For one reason or another, a government targets one ethnic, racial or religious group for elimination, often combined with enforced cultural assimilation: this describes part of the usual pattern of 'genocide' scholarship. Historically, however, things have been rarely that simple. In most cases, several groups have become targets of various forms of mass violence, with many population groups actively involved in generating this violence for multiple interlocked motives without long-term planning. The model of 'genocide' does not adequately account for such phenomena, not to mention other well-known criticisms (such as arbitrary definitions and political instrumentalization). This presentation tries to sketch an alternative concept that could equip scholars to trace the complex origins of violence to the midst of societies.

About the Speaker


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