

**BERLIN PROGRAM**  
for Advanced German & European Studies

German Studies Association **GSA**

Friedrich  
Meinecke  
Institut

Guest Lecture

**Suzanne L. Marchand**

(Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge)

# What the History of the Humanities Can, and Cannot, Learn from the History of Science

Moderator: Paul Nolte (FU Berlin)

Photo by Annette Hornischer



SUZANNE L. MARCHAND is Boyd Professor of European Intellectual History at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. Marchand obtained her B.A. from UC Berkeley in 1984, and her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1992. She served as assistant and then associate professor at Princeton University before moving to LSU in 1999. She is the author, most recently, of *Porcelain: A History from the Heart of Europe* (Princeton UP, 2020), which was awarded the Ralph Gomory Prize of the Business History Conference. She has received fellowships from the ACLS, Wissenschaftskolleg, Berlin, Max Planck Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, and the Guggenheim Foundation, among others. In 2022–23 she will be working on a book titled *Herodotus and the Instabilities of Western Civilization* as a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin and Princeton's Humanities Center.

PAUL NOLTE is Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at the Freie Universität Berlin. His research interests in recent years have centered on transformations of democracy, on public intellectuals, the historiography in the Federal Republic as well as transatlantic history. As chair of the program's Academic Advisory Committee Professor Nolte advises fellows and regularly heads the research colloquium.

This lecture is a joint event by the Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies and the Colloquium zur Zeitgeschichte at the Friedrich Meinecke Institute.

This lecture poses the question, what can the history of the humanities learn from the history of science? The answer is, quite a lot; we could certainly include a much more developed inspection of humanistic practices and of the many, often previously unacknowledged, people who contributed to them. But the history of science cannot deliver for us a set of parameters which define our subject clearly, and the history of scientific practices may not yield such exciting results when applied to the humanities. Today, too, the sciences and humanities find themselves in quite different positions with respect to the need to deconstruct legitimizing discourses. If those historians may need to constantly remind the public that geniuses often have feet of clay, the history of the humanities has, at least at present, a different burden: to show that many persons in the past have striven to understand the human condition, often in ways we now find objectionable, but sometimes in ways that inspired, illuminated, educated, and liberated the minds of readers, contemporary and future.



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“Ein Besuch”, Carl Spitzweg, ca. 1855

## DATE

Wed, Dec, 7, 2022, 4–6 PM  
The lecture will be followed by a reception 6–7 PM

## LOCATION

Berlin Program, FU Berlin  
Ehrenbergstr. 26/28, Room 009

## LANGUAGE

English

By attending, you consent to the possibility of appearing in publicity materials and recordings distributed through the GSA and FUB outlets.