

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS & PROPOSALS
CAMPS, CARCERAL IMAGINARIES, & CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS
The 2nd Graz/Puerto Rico International Conference on Human Rights
from an Inter-American Perspective

May 30–June 2, 2024 University of Graz, Austria

Deadline: **October 23, 2023**

This **international conference**, which is co-sponsored by the Center of Inter-American Studies at the **University of Graz** and the Department of English at the **University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras**, offers a forum for graduate students, scholars, writers, practitioners, as well as former detainees from Guantánamo and others who have experienced incarceration can productively contemplate detention, imprisonment, internment, and related technologies of enclosure as well as examples of advocacy, resistance, and struggle that have emerged in reaction to them.

The history of the Americas shows that camps have been used again and again to confine members of numerous groups. The latter include detainees, inmates, prisoners, internally displaced people, asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, children, racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities, activists, and victims of political persecution, among others. In popular discourse, camps are often associated with short-term humanitarian operations related to the provision of shelter, food, and access to legal assistance. While some have functioned this way, scholars from numerous fields —literary studies, American studies, Caribbean studies, cultural studies, and critical prison studies—signal concern about the far-reaching cycles of punishment and abuse that tend to characterize them as well as their use as models by governments in other parts of the world. These and related insights prompt us to problematize camps, how they have functioned, and assumptions that they are humane, necessary, or effective.

The conference seeks to cultivate interdisciplinary and intersectional exchanges that creatively navigate the space between “free society” and knowledge about encampment and a broad typology of camps and camp-like institutions. These include “assembly centers,” barracoons, slave depots, detention and internment camps, prisoner-of-war camps, labor camps, “black sites,” offshore detention centers, concentration and re-education camps, and prisons, among others. Comparative work is welcome.

Participants are encouraged to formulate critical interventions that assist in better understanding and responding to realities of carcerality at the same time that they embrace the possibilities for future change. While proposals from all fields are welcome, organizers anticipate ample participation from inter-American studies, literary studies, cultural studies, legal studies, critical prison studies, Caribbean studies, critical discourse analysis, sociocultural analysis, and history.

Abstracts of 200-350 words for 20-minute presentations and proposals for panels of 3-4 participants (each with an abstract) should be submitted to camps2024@uni-graz.at by **October 23, 2023**. Please include short bios of 100 words or less. Proposals for presenting creative work (poetry, art, film) will also be considered. The conference languages are English and Spanish, and abstracts are welcome in either. See [our website](#) for additional details and a longer version of this call.

