



Small Arms – Big Business

Trading Small Arms: Political, Cultural and Ethical Dimensions in Historical and Global Perspective

Small arms trade and gun trafficking are pressing political issues. The small arms business poses severe problems to public health and security, and it is also a critical subject in international relations and moral politics.

ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

The workshop *Small Arms, Big Business* invites scholars from different academic fields and countries for an interdisciplinary debate on small arms trade. It intends to initiate a focused dialog about arms trade that is so far mainly separated in distinct disciplinary debates. By bringing different analytical models into dialog it intends to promote a discussion about small arms trade as it affects societies at home in its interplay with global trade.

June 8-10, 2017

Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung (ZIF) Bielefeld

CENTRAL TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

Market structures: Who are the players, and according to what strategies and implicit or explicit rules do they act? How are demand and supply regimens organized? How have both commercial and political actors tried to channel and to control arms trade?

Public health and public security: Does the way we talk about guns influence the way we structure our democratic and social system? What does it need to consider gun-trafficking a pressing public health issue?

Media and trade routes: Media, such as newspapers, internet, or social media, link producers, consumers and the public. Thereby, they have a fundamental productive impact in structuring and shaping references, deceptions and market structures.

Political, economic and juridical settings of the small arms markets: Does the global trafficking system evade national standards? And what kind of legal and ethical trend can be described with respect to the global dimension of the arms trade markets?

Moral framing of gun markets. What are the ways in which information on arms trade become public? What kind of knowledge is reflected, and what kind of information is ignored? What are the conditions under which civil society actors, NGOs and civil associations become part of the discourse of market regulations and how do they influence the structure and regulation of the local as well as global small arms trafficking networks?

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOCUS

To debate these questions, an interdisciplinary focus is essential. The papers and discussions comprise sociological, juridical, political, ethical, and economic perspectives, they include public health aspects as well as criminological expertise and will add historical scales to the different analytical settings. Since important contributions to the subject have recently been made by journalists, artists and activists, the workshop also intends to include their voices into the academic debate.

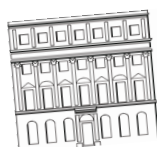
From an interdisciplinary perspective we would like to ask:

What has been identified (in the various disciplines) as the main political and commercial interests as well as technological factors that constitute gun markets? How do different sciences conceptualize development of these markets over time? What have been the (historically changing) logics and dynamics of the small arms trade? How have debates over the arms trade unfolded, and what ethics, moral and political values have inspired regulations?

IMPACT

Thus, the workshop seeks to connect the different disciplinary concepts and asks what they can learn from their respective methodological angles, and how the distinct disciplinary settings can be combined to a profounder understanding of global arms trade. Combining this interdisciplinary focus with case studies opens a broad scholarly debate on a neglected subject that is urgently needed. Interdisciplinary research may prove to be the most important tool to understand the pressing problem of regulation of small arms trade to establish civic peace. The overarching objective of this conference is to start this interdisciplinary debate and thereby make a contribution to violence prevention.

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