

CURRENT ISSUES
IN NORTH AMERICAN AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Black Film, White Faces: Hollywood's Take on the Death Penalty, 1951-1968

PD Dr. Birte Christ
Universität Gießen | English Department



Still from *I Want To Live!* (1958)

This talk focuses on a cluster of over 30 crime films from the 1950s and early 1960s that revolve around the death penalty. It has often been argued – particularly with reference to Robert Wise's film *I Want to Live!* (1958) – that Hollywood took a progressive, abolitionist stance toward the death penalty. An analysis of Hollywood's entire death penalty-related output during the period as well as an attention to films' formal strategies of representing executions suggests, however, that Hollywood's take on the death penalty was much more of "mixed verdict."

In cooperation with



nas.uni-bonn.de

Tuesday
June 14, 2022
6:00 c.t.-8:00 pm

Room A, IAAK
Regina-Pacis-Weg 5
53113 Bonn

PD Dr. Birte Christ teaches American Literature, Culture, and Media at Justus-Liebig-University Gießen. She is the author of *Modern Domestic Fiction: Popular Feminism, Mass-Market Magazines, and Middle-Class Culture, 1905-1925* (2012) and is currently preparing a book entitled *Imagining the American Death Penalty: Race and Representation in the Long Twentieth Century*.

NORTH
AMERICAN
STUDIES
PROGRAM



UNIVERSITÄT **BONN**