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Cowboys All! Settler Colonialism and the Invention of Tradition at the Western Spectacle

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PD Dr. Stefanie Schäfer is assistant professor of American Studies at FSU Jena. Stefanie Schäfer's work centers on iconographies of power and on gendered figurations of the national in the US and Canada. She draws from concepts from Transnational North American Studies, American and Canadian Studies, as well as Popular Culture and Visual Culture.

This presentation takes a look at the staging of settlement history and its transformation into rodeo sports in North America's biggest Western Spectacles, the Cheyenne Frontier Days (est. 1897) and the Calgary Stampede (est. 1912). It combines a gendered reading of the Western spectacle with a critique of settler colonialist production of "native" traditions of the West and concludes with a look at contemporary rodeo narratives in popular culture.