

# F03

## PRACTICES OF COMPARING IN SUPPLIER COMPETITION AND CUSTOMER ORIENTATION: THE AMERICAN AND THE GERMAN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

This project (a continuation of A02) deals with practices of comparing in the competitive, rapidly expanding market for automobile since the early 20th century. Here, focus is not only placed on the manufacturing companies as comparative actors, the comparative products of which were aimed at recipients such as the state as well as at manufacturing companies as customers. Rather, individual end customers are now shifting to the centre of comparative activities. New actors for comparison emerge, who turn comparing into a business model and constitute the automotive market as providers of market services.

### CONTACT

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### WEB

[www.uni-bielefeld.de/sfb1288](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/sfb1288)

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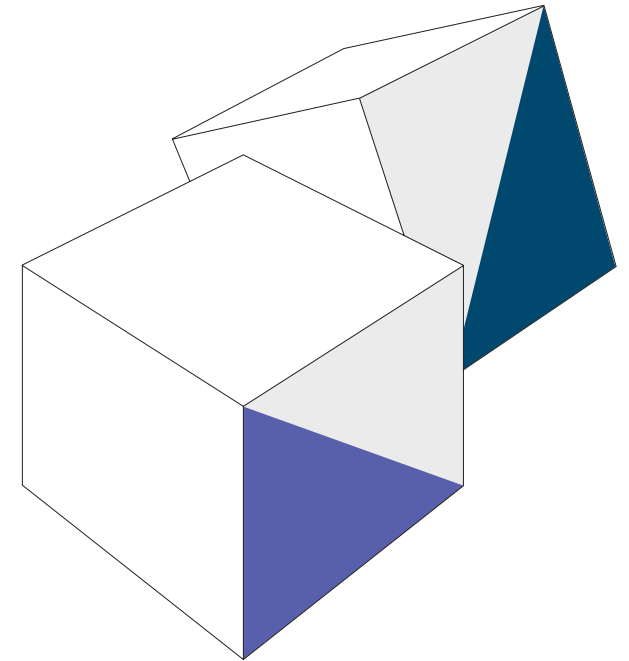
### LOCATION

Online via Zoom, registration to receive the Zoom link should take place via the three organisers above

This conference is organised by members of the Collaborative Research Center (Sonderforschungsbereich, or SFB) 1288 "Practices of Comparing. Ordering and Changing of the World" at Bielefeld University - funded by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, or DFG).

 UNIVERSITÄT  
BIELEFELD

 SFB 1288  
PRACTICES OF  
COMPARING



# US AND WESTERN EUROPEAN AUTOMOTIVE MARKETS FROM THE 1960S–80S

30.11.–01.12.2023 | Online via Zoom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2023

04:00PM (GMT+1) **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**  
Peter Kramper, Bielefeld

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04:15PM - 06:15PM **PANEL 1**  
**THE GERMAN AUTOMOTIVE MARKET IN THE 1980s**  
Chair: Apl. Prof. Dr. Christopher Kopper

Sönke Hebing, Aachen  
Japanese Innovation as a Threat?  
Competition and Cooperation between German and French Automobile Companies in the 1980s (Aachen)

Sarah Klode, Bielefeld  
Writing against the environment?  
The role of German car magazines for the conflicting market interests of the 1980s

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06:15PM Break

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06:30PM **PANEL 2**  
**THE US AUTOMOTIVE MARKET IN THE 1950s TO 1970s**  
Chair: tba

Richard Höter, Bielefeld  
The Tailfin: Dominant Comparisons in the US Market of the 1950s

Dr. William Chou, Washington D. C.  
A Comparative Approach to US/ Japanese Automotive Advertising in the US Market, 1957-1973

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 01, 2023

04:00PM - 06:00PM **PANEL 3**  
**AUTOMOTIVE MARKETS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**  
Chair: Manuel Palm

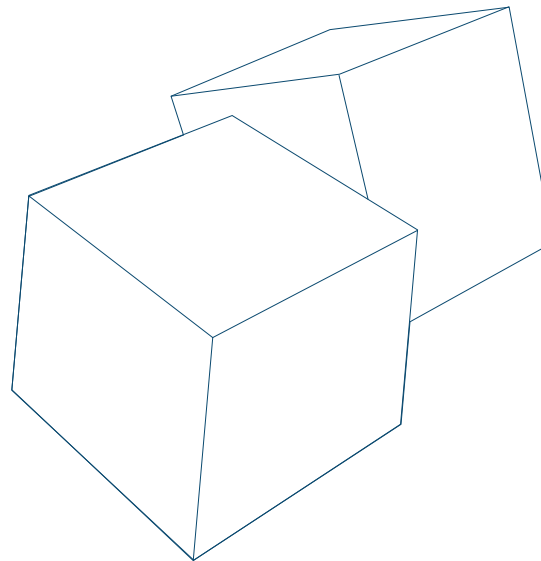
Dr. Christopher Neumaier, Potsdam  
“Clean” or “Dirty”? Diverging Perceptions of Diesel Emissions and their Health Risks in the USA and Germany, 1970s-1990s

Prof. Peter Norton, Charlottesville  
Defending Car Dependency, 1960-1990: U.S. Motordom’s Counteroffensive and Its Enduring Legacy (Charlottesville)

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06:00PM Closing Discussion

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Automotive markets in the US and (Western) Europe changed fundamentally during the 1960s-80s, mainly with regard to economic aspects, such as the transition from a sellers’ market to a buyers’ market. Yet the political, social, cultural and ecological framework of these markets also changed as environmental protection, safety, transport and economic policy, gender, advertisement and marketing gained in significance.

In response to these changes, new groups of stakeholders emerged. Intermediaries such as automobile clubs, magazines and specialist books, regulatory institutions, consumers, and consumer protection agencies became more prominent. These groups involved themselves heavily with the automobile and its new contexts such as environmental or safety issues and thus shaped interactions between producers and consumers. Their roles changed accordingly: while consumers potentially gained influence, producers had to increasingly invest in new forms of communication such as advertisement and marketing.

Against this backdrop, the workshop seeks to analyse the driving forces, scope, shape and relevance of structural changes in the automobile markets of the 1960s-80s, with a special focus on the new groups of stakeholders. The paradigm of "practices of comparison" that has been established by the Bielefeld Collaborative Research Center (CRC) 1288 offers a fruitful perspective on this problem. Central to the subproject of the CRC that organise the workshop is the role of practices of comparisons as both pre-conditions and results of competition and cooperation within markets. Good examples for this are the car comparison tests made by specialist magazines that relate the different producers and products to one another and thus create competitive situations.