As in any other previous presidential race, Prof. Dr. Sabine Sielke argues, gender matters multiply in the 2020 US election. Engendering the race, her talk addresses the questions why the United States has not yet managed to inaugurate a female president; how come the majority of Americans claims that none of the former female Democratic contestants, ranging from Harris to Klobuchar to Warren, could beat Trump; and what it says about US-American (political) culture and conceptions of leadership that in November 2020 voters’ choice will be between two controversial white guys in their 70s. Her answers interrogate, among other matters, the seriality of feminism, the institution of presidency in the US, the position of female candidates in the presidential race, and the current retrotopian self-conceptions of US culture.

Sabine Sielke is Chair of North American Literature and Culture and Director of the North American Studies Program and the German-Canadian Centre at the University of Bonn. Her publications include Reading Rape (Princeton 2002) and Fashioning the Female Subject (Ann Arbor 1997), 20 (co-) edited books, and more than 130 essays on poetry and poetics, modern and postmodern literature and culture, literary and cultural theory, gender and African American studies, popular culture, and the interfaces of the humanities and the sciences. Her current work interrogates phenomena of nostalgia, the #MeToo movement, as well as processes of memory, mediation, and seriality at the crossroads of the cognitive sciences and cultural studies.