



Annual Report  
2022





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2022

## Imprint

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## Opening Remarks

## The Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies after the Corona Recess

**Alfred Hornung**  
**Speaker**

The gradual relief of the restrictive precautions to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus allowed us to cautiously return to the regular schedule of our program in the course of 2022. It allowed us to begin the commemoration of the 70-year history of American Studies at Mainz and to pursue the research agenda of the Obama Institute focusing on the current project, "Disruption and Democracy in America: Challenges and Potentials of Transcultural and Transnational Formations," funded by the Ministry of Science and Health as a high-potential research area of the Johannes Gutenberg University. We reactivated the delayed invitations of fellows and their contributions to our research objectives. Thus, we organized a symposium on "Africans, Americans, and Colonial Germany" in April. Obama fellow Ruth Stanford, a sculptor and cultural critic at our long-time exchange partner of Georgia State University in Atlanta, presented features of memorials of German colonial history in Namibia, its traces in German street names and museums and connected it with current decolonial repercussions going



on in the US, Great Britain and continental Europe. Obama fellow Herman Bennett of the City University of New York outlined his research project on "Afro-Germans & Embodied Afterlives of Fascism and Jim Crow, 1955-1989," which reflects his own Afro-German background growing up in the bicultural context of the presence of American troops in Germany. Professor Heike Raphael-Hernandez (Würzburg) gave a preview of the publication of her study on "Deutschland und die Sklaverei," while the newly appointed chair professor Pia Wiegink at the Dependency and Slavery Studies excellence cluster in Bonn presented her new research project on "Slavery and Black Birding" in the Pacific. Doctoral candidate Ahngeli Shivam gave a personal account of her experiences in



the German educational system with a Malaysian Chinese background. Obama faculty members Mita Banerjee, Jutta Ernst, Axel Schäfer and Alfred Hornung provided background information and introductions and contributed to the vibrant discussion of the largely neglected German colonial history.

Our efforts to share the activities and research ideas of the Obama Institute across the disciplinary board of the University and with the community at large found once again the support of the German Association for American Studies, the General Consulate of the United States in Frankfurt, and the Embassy in Berlin. In February, Axel Schäfer organized the Annual Meeting of the historians of the GAAS on "Labor and Capital in U.S. History" as a hybrid event. In May, we were pleased to welcome Elizabeth Horst, Minister Counselor for Public Diplomacy of the US Embassy in Berlin, accompanied by Cultural Affairs Specialist Thomas Cybulski in Frankfurt for a discussion of our program in the Obama Institute, also attended by JGU president Georg Krausch. This turned out to be the preview to the inaugural visit of the newly appointed US Ambassador Dr. Amy Gutmann to Prime Minister Malu Dreyer of Rhineland-Palatinate and the Johannes Gutenberg University in June. We used the occasion to organize a townhall meeting for university and high school students on the status of deliberate democracy, Dr. Gutmann's major research area, which coincides with President Obama's politics and our current research agenda. Mita

Banerjee and Alfred Hornung moderated the discussion with the attentive and very responsive audience after addresses by President Krausch and Ambassador Gutmann.

The highlight of our 70-year anniversary was the organization of the prestigious summer school of the Harvard University Institute for World Literature in July. Mita Banerjee and Alfred Hornung joined forces with Professors David Damrosch and Delia Ungureanu, Director and Associate Director of IWL, to run a four-week intensive course program taught by internationally acclaimed professors of world literature for 90 PhD students from around the world who presented their own dissertation projects and received valuable input for further research. Special features of this summer school were the readings of two eminent writers of the United States and Germany. By sharing the opening session of the simultaneous high-level conference on "Indigenous Print Cultures, Media, and Literatures" (6-9 July), organized by Oliver Scheiding in co-operation with Obama fellow Cristina Stanciu (Virginia Commonwealth University), we could listen to the online reading of the Anishinaabe writer Gerald Vizenor. At the conclusion of the summer school, we were privileged to experience the transnational aura of Literature Nobel Laureate Herta Müller combining the reading from her 2009 novel *Atemschaukel* with a firm political statement on the war in the Ukraine. It was followed by a remarkable Q&A session moderated by Delia Ungureanu and Mita Banerjee. Over

the course of this very rewarding program common features of world literature and transnational American studies presented themselves for further research. This linkage was also evident in other research topics by Obama fellows. Thus, Prof. Moustafa Bayoumi (Brooklyn College, City University of New York) lectured on Arab American literature and culture and presented the Muslim perspective of the War on Terror. Prof. Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera (University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez) gave presentations on the Puertoricanization of U.S. Higher Education and completed work on his book *Decolonizing American Spanish* (Pitt 2022).

For the annual Obama lecture in conjunction with the Karl Dietz Memorial lecture, we wanted to get personal accounts of the evolution of Mainz American studies by our emeriti faculty members who participated in shaping the history of our field from its origin and whose work was foundational for the creation of the Obama Institute. Prof. Klaus Lubbers and Prof. Renate von Bardeleben, who studied and worked with Hans Galinsky, the founder of American Studies, opened up the session with very personal remarks. They recalled the early years and presented their own field of research, which established their international reputation. Prof. Winfried Herget, the first successor of Hans Galinsky, gave an extensive report on continuing the research on early American studies and German American relations. In their introductions of their former advisors, Prof. Jochen Achilles and Dr. Karl Ortseifen

shared their personal memories of their own encounters with Hans Galinsky. The newly appointed librarian Dr. Nora Kuster gave a short presentation on her US-related background and her ideas for future acquisitions for the USA library. We recorded this special 70-year anniversary event for our archives and will make it available to watch on [obama-institute.com/videos](http://obama-institute.com/videos).

The award ceremony began with a presentation of the Obama dissertation prize awardee, Dr. Christoph Nitschke, joining us online from Harvard University, who received his PhD degree from the University of Oxford for his thesis on "Boom and Bust Diplomacy: The Financial Crisis of 1873 and U.S. Foreign Relations." The Hans Galinsky Memorial prize for undergraduate and graduate students went to Josia Simon Jacobi for his bachelor thesis on "From Huck Finn to Joan of Arc – Twain's Quest for an Antidote to Determinism," directed by Dr. Claudia Görg, and to Jan Lukas Kunkies for his graduate research paper on "The Vanishing Colonialist – Contemporary Indigenous Authors and the Myth of the 'Vanishing Indian'" submitted in Oliver Scheiding's seminar on "Contemporary Indigenous Literatures."

Members of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies are active and esteemed principal investigators in third-party funds on Categories of Human Differentiation, Periodical Studies, Indigenous Studies, Life Writing and Medical Humanities. The Obama Institute serves as the editorial office of *The Journal*

of *Transnational American Studies* in the third year with Alfred Hornung as editor-in-chief, Sabine Kim as managing editor, and Ahngeli Shivam as one of the editorial assistants.

We gratefully acknowledge the academic and financial support of the heads of Johannes Gutenberg University and the Ministry of Science and Health for carrying out our research program. We are happy to report that our new research project on "The Return of the Submerged: Recovering Marginalized Knowledge within Fracturing Democratic Societies" found the appreciation of external reviewers and the approval of the financial authorities, granting us financial security for the next five years (2024 to 2028). This provides us with a good basis for planning our future programs.

This *Annual Report* documents the impressive output of the members of the Obama Institute in terms of research activities, publications, and innovative approaches to transnational American studies. It lists our very productive exchange program with 18 American and Canadian universities and recognizes gratefully the cooperation of our colleagues, especially Prof. J.R. Duke's annual organization of the American Studies summer program focusing on the South of the US. On behalf of the Executive Board, I would like to express our gratitude to the members of our Advisory Board and the Affiliate members at the Johannes Gutenberg University as well as the Atlantic Academy for their invaluable support and cooperation.

We welcome the new members of the Advisory Board, Prof. Herman Bennett (City University of New York), Jun.-Prof. Florian Böller (RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau) and Jun.-Prof. Nele Sawalisch (Trier University), and thank Prof. Jürgen Wilzewski (RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau) and Prof. Gerd Hurm (Trier University) for their service on the board. Prof. Dieter Dörr (Law), Prof. Oliver Emrich (Management and Social Studies), and Prof. Marc Siegel (Film Studies) have joined the Board of Associate Members of JGU, in exchange for Prof. Heike Drotbohm (Anthropology), Prof. Michael Simon (Cultural Anthropology) and Prof. Dagmar von Hoff (German Studies), whose valuable contributions we recognize gratefully. Thanks are due to all students and faculty members who empower the Obama Institute with their energy and commitment. Special thanks goes to Christine Plicht, who compiled this *Annual Report* expertly. Last but not least, we owe special thanks to Anette Vollrath and Christine Plicht, who untiringly and proficiently handle all administrative tasks of the Obama Institute.



## A View from Abroad

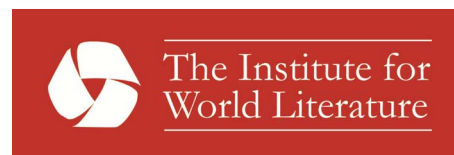
### The Institute for World Literature at the Obama Institute

**David Damrosch | Director, IWL**  
Ernest Bernbaum Professor of Comparative Literature, Harvard University

**Delia Ungureanu | Assoc. Director, IWL**  
Associate Professor, University of Bucharest

In July, the Obama Institute hosted the twelfth session of Harvard's Institute for World Literature. IWL's summer sessions rotate each year between Harvard and locations in Europe and Asia; after two Covid years online, it was a great pleasure for us, for our faculty, and for our 81 participants from 20 countries to meet together in the home of *Weltliteratur*, and in the city and university associated with Gutenberg's revolutionary work on the medium of print. It is this technology that has been instrumental in creating the global literary circulation that Goethe emphasized two centuries ago in declaring to his disciple Johann Peter Eckermann that "die Epoche der Weltliteratur ist an der Zeit, und jeder muß jetzt dazu wirken, diese Epoche zu beschleunigen."

Planning a month-long program with many different components takes considerable resources of time and energy in addition to more tangible ones.



The Obama Institute proved to be an exemplary host, and not only in practical terms: Alfred Hornung, Mita Banerjee, and their lead assistant Christine Plicht brought such good will and constant collegiality that we and our participants very rapidly came to feel at home. Aided by a team of student assistants whose own energy was matched only by their friendliness, the Obama Institute proved equal to every possible challenge, from the pressures of a global pandemic, to the local arrangements for restaurants and for community-building outings, to last-minute provision of fans for unexpectedly hot classrooms – a local manifestation of another global process, that of climate change. A comment by one of our participants says it all:

“I was nothing short of amazed by the IWL local assistants. What questions I had were answered thoughtfully and rapidly, and perhaps more impressive, I felt my needs and

questions were often met or answered before I realized I had them—a sign of remarkable consciousness on the assistants' parts. Moreover, they were simply kind and friendly. They should be commended! I wish they were my peers and administrators for longer than just four weeks!

Among the highlights of the month was a wonderful plenary session and evening with Herta Müller, thanks to the initiative of Alfred Hornung. We were able to share this and other plenary events with OI members and attendees, including a session on Native American literature, art, and activism. But even apart from the major events, every day brought new instances of Alfred's Mita's, and Christine's proactive thoughtfulness, including helping us to procure Covid tests that we provided for our participants once some cases emerged among the group.

In the anonymous survey we run at the closer of each session, our participants expressed their admiration and appreciation for everything that the Obama Institute and its staff did throughout the month. A few sample comments can suggest the experience of the group as a whole:

“The impact of IWL in my academic career will be visible soon as I am working on a topic that I want to extend. This session was a great opportunity to find people interested in the same topic and to approach my research in global terms. I would describe this session to friends and prospective

participants as the best place to acquire a new understanding of your own work, to evolve as a scholar and to meet excellent professors and colleagues.

“As someone putting the finishing touches on his dissertation, the timing was excellent, because it took me from that very particular problem of my research to a rather global frame of mind—an orientation I had before, but of course the dissertation, no matter how capacious, is always something of a rabbit hole. I now feel ready to reintroduce my work and reimagine its significance in and to world literary theory. The spirit of the IWL is indeed a generous one, and the palpability of this generosity reflects the people and professors who labour to organize the conference. This spirit engendered a sense of community with fellow students in turn. Thank you for your work. I hope the IWL continues for years to come.

Altogether, this was a splendid session, under still challenging pandemic circumstances, and we remain enormously grateful to our old and new friends at the Obama Institute for doing so much to make the month such a success.



Top: Detail from IWL group photo with IWL faculty members on opening day  
Bottom, from left to right: Alfred Hornung, Mita Banerjee, Delia Ungureanu, David Damrosch during closing ceremony



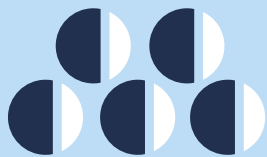
# 2022

at a Glance



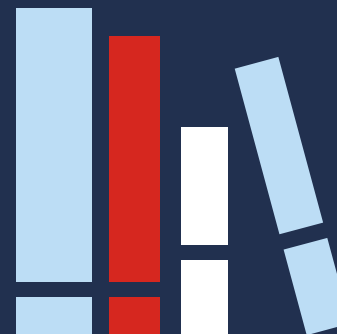
64

Bachelor, Master, and  
PhD Graduations



54

OI Faculty &  
Staff Members



45

Publications



2

Locations in  
Mainz & Gernersheim

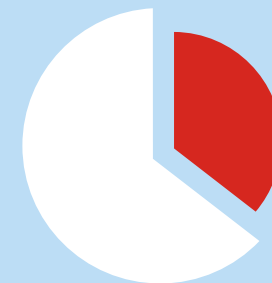
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Conferences



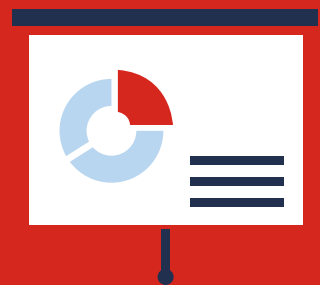
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Guest Lectures



2528

Students

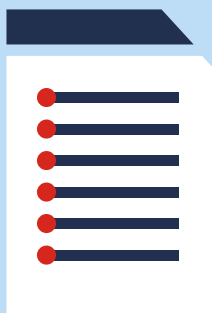


72

Presentations Given  
by OI members

14

Different Study  
Programs Benefit  
from OI Course Offers



1

Nobel Laureate



1

Ambassador

21

International  
Exchange  
Partners





## The Obama Institute

“ The Obama Institute aims to foster an understanding of the U.S. as a vibrant, complex culture in a changing world order, in which different visions of “Americanness” are taken up by communities across the globe.

Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

## Mission and History of the Obama Institute

The history of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies begins with the institution of the chair for American literature at Johannes Gutenberg University in 1952. After the establishment of the first professorship on the culture of North America in Germany at the University of Berlin in 1930, also in the service of providing useful information for the political regime, American authorities instituted positions at German universities for the study of the United States after the war in Munich and Erlangen-Nürnberg in 1946, and in Mainz in 1952. The choice of Mainz for the third chair of American Studies was certainly connected to the strong presence of American troops in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate in the Southwest of Germany with important air bases in Ramstein and Spangdahlem.

Mainz, the capital of Rhineland-Palatinate, and Wiesbaden, the capital of the state of Hesse across the Rhine River, used to have several barracks until the relocation of troops to the United States in the 1990s. Today there are still 18,500 troops stationed in Rhineland-Palatinate, and Wiesbaden-Erbenheim is the home of the Lucius D. Clay Garrison and became the Headquarters of United States Army Europe (USAREUR) in 2012. When the American troops left Camp Lindsey in Wiesbaden in 1993, they donated their extensive library with digital data bases to Johannes Gutenberg University where it

now forms the USA-Bibliothek in the Georg Forster Building, complementing the holdings of the departmental and university library. The cultural influences of this American presence transformed German society and animated the course of American Studies at Mainz. Hans Galinsky, the first chair and founder of American Studies, followed an all-inclusive and comprehensive approach to American literature and culture from the multi-language colonial beginnings to its modern expressions in the twentieth century with a link to an American language education in German *Gymnasiums*. His successors, Winfried Herget and Oliver Scheiding, as well as his professorial colleagues, Klaus Lubbers, Hans Helmcke, Renate von Bardeleben, and Frieder Busch, followed this path. Together with new professorial appointees, Alfred Hornung, Mita Banerjee, Jutta Ernst, and Axel Schäfer, they transformed the original one-chair basis over the years into a cooperative research platform with an international standing.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the CHE (Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung) ranking recognized the quality of American studies at Mainz as one of the four research intensive fields of the University. In the research rating of English and American Studies in Germany, administered by the German Council of Science and Humanities in 2010-12, Mainz American Studies, together with the John



F. Kennedy Institute in Berlin, received the highest score in research excellence. In 2012, we also celebrated our 60-year anniversary and organized the Annual Convention of the German Association for American Studies on the topic of "American Lives," with Ambassador Philip Murphy of the U.S. Embassy in Berlin addressing the audience in the opening ceremony. In our talks, we introduced the idea to found an Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies. Both the eminent status of Mainz American Studies and the popular acclaim of the American President Barack Obama in Germany motivated us to pursue the formation of such an institute, similar to the John F. Kennedy Institute in Berlin, but with a different research agenda.

The re-election of the President and his political objectives coincided with major research and teaching goals of our American Studies program: the multi-ethnic constitution of the United States of America, interreligious communication, the importance of life writing, and the transnational dimension of American politics and culture. In addition to the idea of liberty and freedom, one of the major incentives for the foundation of the John F. Kennedy Institute, the proposed Obama Institute would be guided by the idea of diversity underlying the development of American society in the twenty-first century. This also includes research on the activities of his family members at home and abroad, such as Michelle Obama's concerns for health issues and nutrition, the welfare programs of the president's Luo sister Auma in Kenya, and the musical education of children in Chinese orphanages pursued by his Kenyan

brother Mark. The president of Johannes Gutenberg University, Georg Krausch, and the members of the University Council strongly supported the idea of the Obama Institute. To gain President Obama's permission for the Institute, Dr. Hans Friderichs, former Economic Affairs Minister and chairperson of the University Council, served as a liaison with Ambassador Philip Murphy and the White House. In the summer of 2013, the Embassy communicated to us that "President Obama would be pleased to have an Institute named after him." The general agreement was to plan the official inauguration of the Obama Institute after the second term of his presidency. In preparation of this event, we organized an international conference on "Obama and Transnational American Studies" in October 2014, in which Dr. Auma Obama participated as a keynote speaker relating aspects of her German academic education and presenting her Foundation Sauti Kuu, a self-help program for young people in Kenya. We also had to clear several administrative hurdles and get the agreement of the Department of English and Linguistics, the Faculty of Philosophy and Philology, the University Boards of the Senate and the University Council. President Krausch proved to be a great help and saw to it that the "Regulations of the 'Obama Institute' (OI) research platform" within the Department of English and Linguistics successfully passed all bodies and went into effect on December 16, 2016. The appendix lists the members of the Executive Board, Advisory Board Members, and Associate Members.

Alfred Hornung

## Obama Institute Bylaws

**Regulations of the "Obama Institute" (OI) research platform  
within the Department of English and Linguistics,  
Faculty of Philosophy and Philology  
(Resolution of the Faculty Council on November 30, 2016)**

### Preamble

"The Obama Institute (OI) researches the roles of the USA in a changing global world in the most diverse areas, including culture, history, literature, media, economics, religion, medicine, the arts, and music. The research undertaken by the OI is interdisciplinary and transnational and leads the way in the new definition of area studies and cultural studies in the 21st century. In doing so, the OI fills a gap in current research by no longer restricting American Studies to the national borders of the USA. The OI studies not only processes of cultural exchange, but also shifting relations of the most various kinds. Staff from different research groups are currently working collaboratively across disciplines, including scholars of Cultural and Literary Studies, Law, Geography, History, and Sociology."

### § 1 (Tasks)

The OI undertakes interdisciplinary and transnational research on the roles of the USA with the most diverse approaches, including how nation-states such as the USA are redefining themselves at the beginning of the 21st century, how the complex demands of global migration and refugee displacement contribute to new forms of social relations, and how communication – such as between indigenous groups and settler societies – can be opened.

### § 2 (Members)

The work in the areas outlined in § 1 is principally a prerequisite for membership in the OI. Founding members are those members of the Executive Board, Advisory Board, and Associate Members who are named in the appendix to these regulations. The Executive Board will decide on the acceptance of further members (§ 3).

### § 3 (Executive Board)

The Executive Board consists of professors from the teaching area American Studies in the Department of English and Linguistics, Faculty of Philosophy and Philology, and from the American Studies, British Studies, and Anglophone Studies divisions, Faculty of Translation Studies, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies.

### § 4 (Tasks of the Executive Board)

The Executive Board has the following tasks:

- Advising and deciding on basic matters concerning the OI
- Development of the conceptual direction and the research program
- Deciding the financial and personnel arrangements
- Electing the OI Director
- Advising and deciding on the acceptance and exclusion of OI members.

The Executive Board will meet at least twice per semester.

### § 5 (Speaker)

The Speaker of the OI is a member of the Executive Board and is elected by the other members of the Executive Board. The term of office will usually be one year. The Speaker's role will be assumed in rotation by the members of the Executive Board.

### § 6 (Tasks of the Speaker)

(1) The Speaker represents the OI externally. The rules of § 79, Subsection 1, No. 1 of the Higher Education Act und § 9, Subsection 1 of the organizational regulations of the Department of English and Linguistics are not affected. (2) The Speaker is responsible to the Executive Board. (3) The Speaker can, in urgent, pressing circumstances effect interim decisions on behalf of the Executive Board. The Executive Board must be informed immediately; the Board can annul the interim decision or measure as long as these were not legally required and third-party rights were not created as a result of the decision. (4) The Speaker shall inform all members of the Advisory Board and all Associate Members concerning the current projects of the OI.

### § 7 (Advisory Board)

The Advisory Board is formed of: representatives with American Studies expertise in Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy Rhineland-Palatinate e.V., as well as outstanding researchers in Germany and abroad.

### § 8 (Tasks of the Advisory Board)

Via (virtual) conferences once per semester, the Advisory Board advises on questions and issues relating to the research strategies of the national and international collaboration with the Executive Board members.

### § 9 (Associate Members)

The Associate Members are Mainz University scholars. They shall establish and ensure the interdisciplinary networking of the OI at JGU.

### § 10 (Tasks of the Associate Members)

Associate Members will be consulted on the basis of their research specializations as well as their expertise for advice in ongoing conversations and will work jointly with members of the Executive Board on the development of the research program.

## Appendix

### *Executive Board Members*

Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee  
Prof. Dr. Jutta Ernst  
Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung  
Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer  
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding

### *Advisory Board Members*

Prof. Dr. Herman L. Bennett  
(CUNY, New York)  
JunProf. Dr. Florian Böller  
(RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau)  
Prof. Dr. Martin Brückner (U of Delaware)  
Prof. Dr. Rita Charon (Columbia U)  
Prof. Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin (Stanford U)  
Prof. Dr. Paul Giles (U of Sydney)  
Prof. Dr. Craig Howes (U of Hawai'i)  
Prof. Dr. Ursula Lehmkuhl (U Trier)  
Prof. Dr. Greg Robinson (U du Québec)  
JunProf. Dr. Nele Sawallisch (U Trier)

Dr. David Sirakov (Atlantic Academy  
Rhineland-Palatinate)

Prof. Dr. Werner Sollors (Harvard U)  
Prof. Dr. Elizabeth West (Georgia State U)  
Prof. Dr. Charles Wilson (U of Mississippi)  
Prof. Dr. Zhang Longxi  
(City U of Hong Kong)

### *Associate Members*

Prof. Dr. Manfred Beutel  
(Psychosomatic Medicine)  
Prof. Dr. Dieter Dörr (Law)  
Prof. Dr. Thomas Efferth  
(Pharmaceutical Biology)  
Prof. Dr. Oliver Emrich  
(Management and Social Media)  
Prof. Dr. Anton Escher (Cultural Geography)  
Prof. Dr. Friedemann Kreuder  
(Theater Studies)  
Prof. Dr. Matthias Krings (Anthropology)  
Prof. Dr. Franz Rothlauf (Economics)  
Prof. Dr. Marc Siegel (Film Studies)

## Executive Board

The Executive Board has the following tasks:

- Advising and deciding on basic matters concerning the OI
- Development of the conceptual direction and the research program
- Deciding the financial and personnel arrangements
- Electing the OI Speaker
- Advising and deciding on the acceptance and exclusion of OI members.

The Executive Board will meet at least twice per semester. Its current members are:

### Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

Mita Banerjee is professor for American Studies, specializing in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature and culture, with a focus on Ethnic and Indigenous Studies. She is a co-founder of the Center of Comparative Native and Indigenous Studies (CCNIS) at JGU, and co-speaker of the research training group "Life Sciences – Life Writing: Boundary Experiences of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience" funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Banerjee is the author of, among others, *Race-ing the Century* (2005), *Color Me White: Naturalism/Naturalization in American Literature* (2013), and *Medical Humanities in American Studies* (2018).



### Prof. Dr. Jutta Ernst

As a professor of American Studies, Jutta Ernst is attached to JGU's Germersheim campus. She is the author of *Edgar Allan Poe und die Poetik des Arabesken* (1996) as well as *Amerikanische Modernismen: Schreibweisen, Konzepte und zeitgenössische Periodika als Vermittlungsinstanzen* (2018). She has also overseen and co-edited various editions, including *The Canadian Mosaic in the Age of Transnationalism* (2010) and *Transkulturelle Dynamiken Aktanten – Prozesse – Theorien* (2015), and has authored a multitude of book chapters, encyclopedia entries, and academic articles.



### Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung (Speaker)

A research professor of American Studies and English specializing in Transnational American Studies and Life Writing, Alfred Hornung is the speaker of the Obama Institute. He cooperated in the foundation of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at Mainz as a forum of exchange with the universities of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy, and international partner universities. He was general editor of *American Studies: A Monograph Series* on behalf of the GAAS, editor in chief of the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, and serves on the editorial boards of several other academic journals. Recent publications are *The Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies* (2019) and *Al Capone: Der amerikanische Traum und das organisierte Verbrechen* (2021).





### Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer

Axel Schäfer is professor of American History at the Obama Institute. His research centers on nineteenth and twentieth-century U.S. intellectual and cultural history with a focus on religion and politics, transatlantic social thought, and public policy. He is the author of *American Progressives and German Social Reform, 1875–1920: Social Ethics, Moral Control, and the Regulatory State in a Transatlantic Context* (2000), *Countercultural Conservatives: American Evangelicalism from the Postwar Revival to the New Christian Right* (2011), and *Piety and Public Funding: Evangelicals and the State in Modern America* (2012).



### Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding

Oliver Scheiding is professor of North American Literature and Early American Studies. His research focuses on magazine studies, short fiction studies, media history and material culture studies. He is author of *Worlding America: A Transnational Anthology of Short Narratives before 1800* (Stanford UP, 2015) and the monograph *The Early American Novel* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003). His most recent book chapters appeared in *The Cambridge History of Native American Literature* (2020) and *The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story* (2023). He co-edits the book series *Transnational Periodical Cultures* (Leiden/Boston: Brill). He was awarded the Gutenberg Research College 2022/23 senior fellowship for his book project titled "Print Technologies and the Emergence of American Literature," forthcoming with Wiley-Blackwell. He serves on the board of the American Literature Association and edited the journal *Amerikastudien – American Studies* on behalf of the German Association of American Studies (2011–2019).



## Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is formed of representatives with American Studies expertise in Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy Rhineland-Palatinate e.V., as well as outstanding researchers in Germany and abroad. Via (virtual)

conferences once per semester, the Advisory Board advises on questions and issues relating to the research strategies of the national and international collaboration with the Executive Board members.



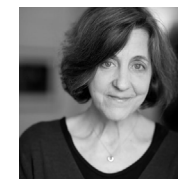
Prof. Dr. Herman L. Bennett  
(CUNY, New York)



JunProf. Dr. Florian Böller  
(RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau)



Prof. Dr. Martin Brückner  
(University of Delaware)



Prof. Dr. Rita Charon  
(Columbia University)



Prof. Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin  
(Stanford University)



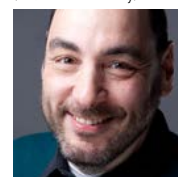
Prof. Dr. Paul Giles  
(University of Sydney)



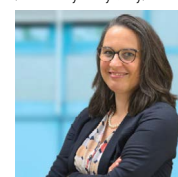
Prof. Dr. Craig Howes  
(University of Hawaii)



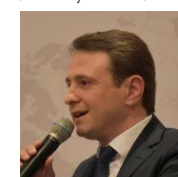
Prof. Dr. Ursula Lehmkuhl  
(Universität Trier)



Prof. Dr. Greg Robinson  
(Université du Québec)



JunProf. Dr. Nele Sawallisch  
(Universität Trier)



Dr. David Sirakov  
(Atlantische Akademie)



Prof. Dr. Werner Sollors  
(Harvard University)



Prof. Dr. Elizabeth West  
(Georgia State University)



Prof. Dr. Charles Wilson  
(University of Mississippi)



Prof. Dr. Zhang Longxi  
(City University of Hong Kong)

## Obama Fellowship

Through the Obama Fellowship program, the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies invites outstanding international scholars to lecture and work at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. The Fellowship offers financial support, office space, and facilities for visiting scholars. Fellows spend a significant amount of time at the Obama Institute, usually between two and four weeks. They pursue their individual research, but are expected to participate in graduate teaching, as well as offer a public lecture and make themselves available to postgraduate students.

### Obama Fellows 2022

#### Moustafa Bayoumi

(Brooklyn College, CUNY)

#### Herman L. Bennett

(The Graduate Center, CUNY)

#### Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera

(University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez)

#### Ruth Stanford

(Georgia State U)

### Previous Fellows

#### 2020-21

#### Cristina Stanciu

(Virginia Commonwealth U)

#### 2019

#### Ian Aflerbach

(U of North Georgia)

#### Hsuan L. Hsu

(U of California, Davis)

#### Richard King

(em., U of Nottingham)

#### Walter Benn Michaels

(U of Illinois at Chicago)

#### Mathias Nilges

(St. Francis Xavier U, Nova Scotia)

#### Elizabeth Tandy Shermer

(Loyola U, Chicago)

#### David K. Thomson

(Sacred Heart U)

#### Denise Uyehara

(Performance Artist)

#### Elizabeth West

(Georgia State U)

#### 2018

#### Celeste-Marie Bernier

(U of Edinburgh)

#### Michael Boyden

(Uppsala U)

#### Suzanne Ferriss

(em., Nova Southeastern U)

#### Mark Noonan

(CUNY)

#### Markus Reisenleitner

(York U)

#### Laura Stevens

(U of Tulsa)

#### 2017

#### Craig Howes

(U of Hawai'i at Manoa)

#### Michaela Hoenicke Moore

(U of Iowa)

#### Nina Morgan

(Kennesaw State U)

#### 2016

#### Patrick Erben

(U of West Georgia)

#### Rebecca Harrison

(U of West Georgia)

#### Sandy Isenstadt

(U of Delaware)

#### Alan Lessoff

(Illinois State U)

#### Charles Wilson

(U of Mississippi)

#### 2015

#### Greg Robinson

(U du Québec)

#### Martin Brückner

(U of Delaware)

#### Shauna Morgan Kirlaw

(Howard U)

## Fellow's Report

Reflections on the Obama Fellowship:  
Cambridge to Sioux City to Mayagüez  
to Mainz

### Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera |

University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez

Sioux City, Iowa, 3 December 2007, circa 9:00 AM: in the Humanities office in Lewis Hall of Morningside University, a radio calls out the daily news. I enter and greet my colleagues, peek into the mailbox while half-listening to the weather report.

I pause—open my eyes wide. Then I lean forward, toward the radio.

"Did he just say Obama is now favored to win the caucuses?" I ask the secretary, Marcie Ponder.

"Indeed, he did."

That flash in time is burned in my memory: it was the very first moment I thought Obama could become president. A month earlier, as his campaign struggled, he was introduced as "Senator from Illinois" at a town meeting on the west side of Sioux City. He looked tired shaking hands afterward. "Thank you for coming," he said to me, as I walked up. I told him I used to live on Elm Street in Cambridge, and that I was sure he would win Massachusetts. He laughed and said



he had lived just over the hill in Somerville. He asked about my family on Cape Cod and experiences teaching that semester in Sioux City. He nodded as we said goodbye—we wished each other luck.

Years later Obama would say Iowa was "where it all began."

A lot began there for me, too. A few months later I would return to Barcelona to defend my doctoral thesis and then move to Mayagüez to accept a position at Universidad de Puerto Rico. Almost a decade later, when I first learned of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, I thought of that December morning in Sioux City.

As Obama Fellow this year, along with writing and revising a book, participating in classes and guest lectures, my family was with me in Bacharach (for a quarantine, out

of caution upon arrival) and then in Mainz, where my sons' German skills advanced remarkably. Sharing the experiences at the Institute with them was very special – and the memories we made in Mainz were recounted with smiles to our friends and family in Puerto Rico, the US and Ecuador. I was also thrilled to represent the Universidad de Puerto Rico in Germany; our institution has many unique qualities, and it was an honor to be an ambassador of what we do.

It was a privilege and a delight to meet another Obama Fellow, Herman Bennett, and to see his lecture, as well as to spend time with Johannes Gutenberg University professors Alfred Hornung, Mita Banerjee and Oliver Scheiding, whose hospitality, kindness and interest in my project were excellent resources. The reflections from the graduate students there were also of great value to me, and in addition to the faculty and staff, the comments from Julia Sophie van der Horst, Inke Klabunde, María Laura Muñoz Ángel, Magdalena Diehl, Jessica Sophie Baumann, Erik Olson Reitan, and Samira Deq on my project were insightful. I must note with emphasis that Professor and Obama Institute Director Alfred Hornung's enthusiasm and knowledge, and his guidance about the local area, made me and my family feel very welcome.

The Obama Fellowship has given me an opportunity to move my work deeper into understandings and questions that overlap nations, cultures, and politics, with attention to the challenges facing marginalized communities in the US and Puerto Rico. Navigating these in Mainz in

collaboration with the faculty and students at the Institute has greatly enriched both my book and perspectives as a scholar.

As I conclude a term as Obama Fellow in Mainz, I reflect upon the intensity of my time there and what the Obama Institute represents. The Obama Institute has given me the time and resources I needed to complete a book – *Decolonizing American Spanish*, University of Pittsburgh Press – but, perhaps more important, my stint as Obama Fellow put me in touch with an academic culture of intellectual curiosity and generosity, one that curates the tradition that Obama began. While Barack Obama is a gifted orator, writer, and leader, his passions cross borders, languages, experiences and histories, and maybe more than anything else, his legacy is about exchange: some interactions have the power to bring people together to challenge traditions; to forge new ways of being, living and acting; to critique and rethink; to create knowledge and test it in new contexts; and such encounters and the questions they produce are cultivated at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies. In a moment when ignorance, hatred, nativism, racism, heterosexism, ageism, classism, ableism, colonialism, and the ignorance that makes them possible have a new place in society, what the Obama Institute is doing is perhaps more important than ever. As Obama Institute student María Laura Muñoz Ángel deftly commented to me in an email, about those very encounters, "such connections are long lasting and continue to evolve." Indeed, they do.

## Obama Dissertation Prize

Each year, the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies awards the Obama Dissertation Prize for outstanding Ph.D. work in the field of transnational American studies. The recipient will be announced in September. They will be invited to Mainz to present their dissertation project and receive their award as part of the talks taking place around the Obama Institute's annual Thanksgiving Obama Lecture.

Eligible for submission are dissertations completed at either a German or a foreign university in transnational American Studies and related fields, such as Early American Studies, Indigenous Studies, Life Writing, Ecology, Transnational History, Asian American/Pacific Studies, Material and Media Studies, Religious Studies, International Politics, and Economy. Unpublished manuscripts of dissertations, defended in the last two years, written in German or English, will be evaluated by an international panel to select the awardee.

### Awardee 2022

#### Christoph Nitschke

(University of Oxford)

"Boom and Bust Diplomacy: The Financial Crisis of 1873 and U.S. Foreign Relations"

### Awardee 2021

#### Alessandra Magrin Haas

(University of Strathclyde)

"The Wild West in Italy and in the Italian Imagination: Travel Writing, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and Popular Culture"

### Awardees 2020

#### Carlos A. Nugent

(Yale University)

"Imagined Environments: Mediating Race and Nature in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands"

#### Hannah R. Waits

(Harvard University | Ph.D. from University of California, Berkeley)

"The Missionary Majority: American Evangelicals and Power in a Postcolonial World"

### Previous Recipients 2015-19

See [obama-institute.com/opportunities/obama-dissertation-prize/](https://obama-institute.com/opportunities/obama-dissertation-prize/)



## Awardee's Report

**Christoph Nitschke |**  
**University of Oxford (History)**

Having begun my dissertation with the question how the financial crash of 1873 influenced U.S. foreign policy, I ended up with a thesis about the changing role of U.S. foreign relations in that particular moment of economic history. Along the way, I learned a lot of underrated stories from the 1860s and 1870s, like that one New York banker celebrated the birth of his son as conveniently outside business hours; or that another gambled away the deposits of formerly enslaved African Americans; or that the State Department was banished from its spot next to the White House and had to move into a ramshackle former orphanage to make room for the Treasury. I now know, too, that the first lady of the American expat scene in London missed a ceremonial ball for a lack of shoes; that Bismarck, North Dakota, was named to attract German settlers; and that the only item to grace the U.S. showcase at the Vienna World's Fair for its first few days was an oversized poster on the pork industry. But perhaps I learned only little about how to sharply delineate my topic. Luckily for me, I received the patience, guidance, and support needed to let the sources develop my question. It is multi-disciplinary and broadly interested institutions like the Obama Institute that



Photo credit: Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies

deserve credit for developing and rewarding slowly-gestating works of transnational and global history.

How, why, and with what effect did Americans rebuild transatlantic confidence in the nation's economy and finances after the Civil War? This is the question that I arrived at in my dissertation, titled *Boom and Bust Diplomacy: The Financial Crisis of 1873 and U.S. Foreign Relations*. The issue seems straightforward when viewed backwards from 1900: the country, now in possession of a formal empire, entered the new century as an economic superpower and must have logically arrived there with the predictability of its railroads. But once we put ourselves in the shoes of contemporaries, especially those of overseas observers, the United

States appeared far from a sure thing. Whether in 1863, as Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation made radical waves across the Atlantic, or in 1869, as a Wall Street panic demonstrated the inherent instability of the nation's paper currency, here was a transitory entity with an uncertain future, a war-torn, politically-divided, scandal-ridden, and as yet largely agricultural country. How did the nation's variegated prospects consolidate into something that convinced hordes of buyers from Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain to invest, as they say in Mary Poppins, "as propriety demands"?

My thesis, which I am honoured to have recognized with the Obama Dissertation Prize, explains the financial, cultural, and diplomatic making of American creditworthiness. By excavating from numerous archives on both sides of the Atlantic the personal connections between U.S. Treasury agents, private bankers in London, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam, and American foreign representatives in political and economic centres of Europe, and by reading their correspondence in connection to the public economic discourse of the time, the dissertation recasts the post-war boom and bust of the United States. Rather than excessive railroad speculation, I found in the crisis a story of the construction, and collapse, of a transatlantic bubble of imperial imagination. A pragmatic alliance of U.S. state and non-state actors aimed to fast-track growth by imagining the future United States as a profitable investment today based on the projected outcomes of tomorrow: swift national consolidation;

territorial expansion and indigenous removal; and global economic integration of a continental economy. Backed with social and diplomatic credibility, spreading the gospel of American investability created a narrative that offered intriguing simplicity at a time of opaque financial information. This 'boom diplomacy' transformed U.S. foreign relations into a conduit of capital acquisition and custodian of a corporatized national brand—and thereby exposed the nation to the dangerous irregularities of transatlantic financial flows.

## Hans Galinsky Memorial Prize

Prof. Dr. Hans Galinsky (1909–1991) was the founder and first chair of American Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University, which he held from 1952 to 1977. He established the field of American Studies in Mainz from a comprehensive and multilingual perspective, covering the literatures, languages and cultures from the colonial period to modern times in the twentieth century. His research became the basis for his dedication to teaching, which he considered an essential part of his engagement in the subject. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and teachers of English, he implemented an ambitious curriculum, including the use and practice of American English at *Gymnasiums* in Rhineland-Palatinate. In addition, he used his personal relations to American and Canadian colleagues to create the direct exchange program. His special area of interest was the colonial period, to which he also dedicated his post-retirement with a planned five-volume history of Colonial American literature, of which four have appeared (1991–2000).

He decreed in his will that he did not wish any flowers or wreaths for his grave. Instead, the money should be collected as the basis for a fund to be used to reward excellent work by undergraduate or graduate students in the field of Colonial American literature, language, and culture.

The money was put in a trust administered by the Hans Galinsky Memorial Prize committee, consisting originally of Hans Galinsky's successor, Prof. Dr. Winfried Herget, Dr. Karl Ortseifen, and Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung. The committee agreed that all student papers and theses on any aspect from the beginning of the colonial era to the end of the Early Republic would qualify for submission. In more recent years, the members of the Executive Board of the Obama Institute have selected the awardees.

The Hans Galinsky Prize is awarded once a year to the winner and a runner-up at the annual Karl Dietz Memorial and Obama Thanksgiving Lecture.

### Recipients 2022

#### Josia Simon Jacobi

"From Huck Finn to Joan of Arc – Twain's Quest for an Antidote to Determinism" (Bachelor's Thesis)

#### Jan Lukas Kunkies

"The Vanishing Colonialist – Contemporary Indigenous Authors and the Myth of the 'Vanishing Indian'" (Term Paper)

## Prof. Dr. Gustav Blanke and Hilde Blanke Prize

Every year, the Prof. Dr. Gustav Blanke und Hilde Blanke-Stiftung awards cash prizes to promising junior scholars in American Studies at JGU's Gernersheim campus. Named after Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gustav H. Blanke, who headed the American Studies department in Gernersheim from 1967 to 1979, the Blanke Foundation was established by Blanke himself in 1999 on the occasion of his 85th birthday. Since then, it has given out annual awards to junior scholars (M.A. and doctoral students as well as post-docs) whose individual research projects reflect the goals and the spirit of Blanke's life work: examining the beginnings, the development, and the global impact of the United States of America as well as documenting the efforts of the U.S. to strengthen relations among the nations.

After Blanke's death in 2001, the name of his wife was added to the official name of the foundation, yet its goal has remained unchanged. The foundation's board, which selects the winners of the awards, consists of the JGU Chancellor, the Dean of FB 06, former and current members of the American Studies faculty in Gernersheim, as well as the former mayor of the city of Gernersheim.

### Recipients 2022

#### Claudia Katharina Buhl

"Restricted Freedom in the Wild West: Boundaries and Restraints on Mobility in Rockstar's Video Game *Red Dead Redemption II*"

#### Mara-Xenya Schulz

"Kulturelle Aneignung in der Literaturübersetzung: Eine Analyse dreier Inaugurationsgedichte"

#### Vanessa Wittemann

"Queer Theory in der translatorischen Praxis: Übersetzungsansätze am Beispiel einer kommentierten Übersetzung der Kurzgeschichte 'Uncharted Path: Parenting My Agender Teen' (2019) vom Englischen ins Deutsche"

## Obama Lectures

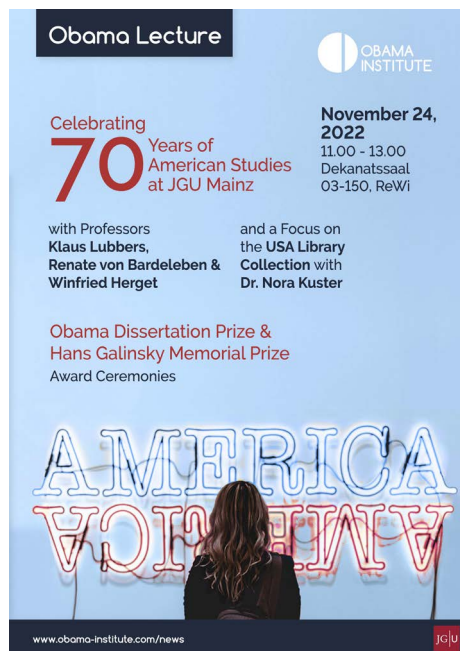
Each year, the Obama Institute holds two special lecture events, which take place around the time of two important U.S. holidays. The guest lectures, talks, and student presentations at these events demonstrate the broad scope and the vibrancy of our scholarly engagement with U.S. literature, culture, and history. While in July we focus on current research in American Studies, in November, we feature young scholars and highlight the results of teaching and studying American Studies.

### 4th of July Obama Lecture

In the summer, we usually invite a keynote speaker to give a lecture on a topic related to our work in Transnational American Studies. In 2022, the Fourth of July coincided with the opening of the Harvard Institute for World Literature's summer session. We had the pleasure of listening to the opening lecture by Prof. David Damrosch, Director of the IWL, titled "Born Global: Transcontinental Literature and Film, from Apuleius to Ang Lee." Instead of fireworks, we concluded this special evening with the IWL opening reception, where we had the chance to mingle with the IWL's international faculty and participants and introduce our guests for the month to some local food and drink specialties.

### Thanksgiving Obama Lecture

On Thanksgiving, we also give thanks and award the Obama Dissertation prize and other awards to outstanding (graduate) students for their contributions to our field. In addition, a keynote speaker presents excerpts of their work and a glimpse into current developments in American Studies research. In 2022 we took a look back and celebrated 70 Years of American Studies at Mainz with a number of professors emeriti.



## Awards and Offices

### Awards

#### Prof. Dr. Axel R. Schäfer

- German Historical Institute's Senior Fellowship in the program "Innovation through Migration" at the GHI's Pacific Regional Office in Berkeley, California

#### Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding

- Gutenberg Research College 2022/23 senior fellowship for his book project titled "Print Technologies and the Emergence of American Literature," forthcoming with Wiley-Blackwell

#### Dr. Johanna Seibert

- Award from the Vereinigung der Freunde der Universität Mainz e. V. in July 2022 for her research on Black newspaper print in the early Caribbean: "Archipelagic Media: Early African Caribbean Newspapers and the Whirls of Emancipation, 1827-1838"

### Offices

#### Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

- Deputy Director of the Johannes Gutenberg University Gutenberg Research Council.



Dr. Johanna Seibert





## Teaching at the OI in 2022

In our teaching at the Obama Institute, our goal is to involve our students in all projects of the institute. On the undergraduate level, we want to familiarize students with all aspects of American history and culture, from historical beginnings – Native American oral cultures and traditions as well as the beginning of Puritan settlement – to the present moment. Our courses are designed in such a way that they explore multiple media and genres (literature, short stories, films, comics, popular culture, political rhetoric, history of ideas) to

delve into the vibrancy of American cultural production both past and present. We invite our more advanced students to participate in current research projects at the Obama Institute through a variety of frameworks such as student conferences or internships. Moreover, we introduce new teaching and learning techniques into the American studies classroom, such as video presentations and mock trials, writing exercises and problem-based learning.

## Selected Teaching Projects

### Teaching Project and Exhibition Blätterwelten / Paperworlds

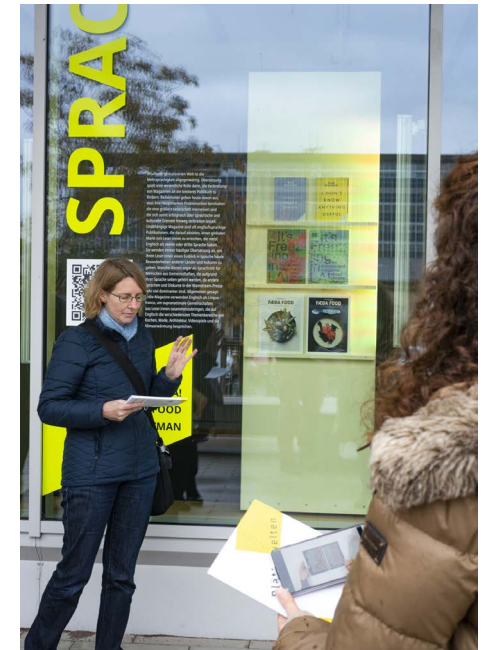
**April-July 2022**

**Mensa Campus Germersheim**

Previously: November 3, 2021-January 28, 2022 Campus Mainz, Schule des Sehens

Despite the continual digitization of print media, self-published zines and indie mags are experiencing a real boom worldwide. This development counters the widespread assumption that increasing online consumption is displacing magazine reading. On the contrary, independent magazines benefit greatly from the internet or influence digital media through creative print designs that emphasize their visual and haptic elements. They also set an example for commercial magazines, even serving as a benchmark for innovation.

This exhibition shows that indie mags serve as imaginative spaces and exhibition sites for society. In doing so, *Blätterwelten/*



*Paperworlds* gives us insights into an extremely material-rich and sometimes activist publishing practice. Conceived as a walk-by exhibition, it illustrates by way of example the four areas print & digital, language, cover, and time & everyday life.

Students of two seminars on journal research played a significant role in the selection of the exhibits, the exhibit descriptions, and the production of video-clips.

For the exhibition's digital material see:  
[www.transnationalperiodicalcultures.net/paperworlds-blatterwelten/](http://www.transnationalperiodicalcultures.net/paperworlds-blatterwelten/)





## Talk and Q&A with U.S. Ambassador Dr. Amy Gutmann

**June 7, 2022**  
**JGU Campus**

On June 7, 2022, JGU welcomed U.S. Ambassador Dr. Amy Gutmann to campus. After a meeting with JGU President Georg Krausch, the Obama Institute hosted Ambassador Gutmann for a talk and Q&A with our students. In her talk she discussed the future of transatlantic relations, climate change, the war in Ukraine, and then invited our students to share their perspectives on these topics and more. The large audience enthusiastically engaged with the Ambassador and a lively discussion ensued. We are very grateful to the U.S. Consulate General, the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of Science and Health, and JGU for co-organizing this unique opportunity.



Photo credit for all pictures on this and the next page: Peter Pulkowski



Colleagues at Mainz University,  
I am most honored - as a daughter of German  
Jewish refugee father and the first in my family to  
graduate university - to be here today. This is one  
of the world's great universities and home to fine  
studies and serious and judicious - and much more.  
I honor your fundamental contributions to  
democratic values and truth-seeking!

Shirley Furman



from left to right: Prof. Hornung, Secretary Hoch, Prof. Banerjee, U.S. Ambassador Gutmann, JGU President Prof. Krausch, U.S. Consul General Scharpf



**Institute for World Literature  
12th Summer Session  
(Harvard University at JGU Mainz)**

**July 4-28, 2022**

**JGU Campus Mainz**

hosted by Alfred Hornung and Mita Banerjee; report by participants Lisa Brau-Weglinski and Amina A. Touzou

This year, from July 4 to July 28, 2022, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies hosted the annual Institute for World Literature's (IWL) Summer School Program in collaboration with Harvard University. In four weeks, students, and scholars from all over the world were invited to participate in an extensive program, consisting of seminars and colloquia offered by renowned researchers on the various fields of world literature.

During the opening ceremony, IWL's director David Damrosch (Harvard University) gave a plenary talk on "Born Global: Transcontinental Literature and Film, from Apuleius to Ang Lee", followed by dinner and the traditional group photo. The first two weeks consisted of seminars offered by professors Baidik Bhattacharya (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies), Thomas Claviez (University of Bern), Dieter Lamping (JGU Mainz), B. Venkat Mani (University of Wisconsin-Madison), and Lawrence Venuti (Temple University), ranging from subjects on



Group picture with participants and faculty



JGU President Prof. Dr. Georg Krausch and Nobel Laureate Herta Müller

refugees in world literature to issues of translation. The colloquia, in turn, provided room for in-depth discussions of the IWL participants' own academic work within the field of world literature and beyond. Here, colloquia were, e.g., offered on "Postcolonialism" as well as "World Cinema". Moreover, a special event with Gerald Vizenor and Mishuana Goeman was

held, as well as Lawrence Venuti's plenary talk "On a Universal Tendency to Debase Translations; or, The Instrumentalism of Translation Fixation".

Furthermore, two outings were offered to participants and professors alike, which included a guided tour through Mainz's historical city and a visit to St. Stephan's Cathedral and its Marc Chagall windows, as well as a tour through another staple of Mainz life – the MEWA Arena of soccer club Mainz 05 – followed by a local wine tasting.

The second half of the 12th IWL Summer Session started off with Alfred Hornung's (JGU Mainz) keynote lecture "Politics and World Literature: The Case of Confucius," which was followed by Mita Banerjee's (JGU Mainz) plenary talk on "World Literature, Gender, and Migration in Elif Shafak's 10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World." After the two keynote lectures, the IWL hosted a "Reading and Conversation with Herta Müller," the 2009 winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, which set the tone for

the special panel closing this year's IWL Summer School Program: "We Refugees: Responses to Humanitarian Crises", featuring professors Gavin Tihanov, Helena Buescu (University of Lisbon), Stefano Evangelista (Trinity College Oxford), and Delia Ungureanu (University of Bucharest).

Aside from these special events, the academic program was comprised of seminars held by professors David Damrosch (Harvard University), Helena Buescu (University of Lisbon), Stefano Evangelista (Trinity College Oxford), Françoise Král (Université Paris Nanterre), and Galin Tihanov (Queen Mary University of London) on topics of, among others, "Globalization" or "Exilic Writing", as well as the resuming colloquia.

On July 28, 2022, the 12th IWL closed with a dinner cruise on the river Rhine, which allowed for a convivial few hours of recapitulating the past four weeks of events, seminars, and colloquia in an especially congenial atmosphere with good music and culinary delights.



Seminar session



Closing event



IWL photo credit: David Schmitz



## Teaching at Germersheim

Teaching American Studies at JGU's Germersheim campus draws on the various research projects currently conducted by the faculty members and simultaneously reflects the department's focus on educating translators and interpreters. Students learn the necessary tools to translate a variety of American texts from different fields and sectors into German (e.g., literary, legal, economic, and medical, among others) and are provided with the crucial cultural and literary competencies to transfer the culturally specific ideas and concepts these texts draw on.

Seminars and lectures in American Studies cover a wide range of topics and genres: e.g., Jutta Ernst, "American Literature and Culture II: 1865-Present"; Michael Lörch, "American Horror Stories"; Sabina Matter-Seibel, "Literaturübersetzen: Die Übertragung von Native American und First Nations Life Writing"; "American Cultural Concepts: Manifest Destiny"; Klaus Schmidt, "Digital Dystopias in Anglo-American Literature and Film"; Ines Veauthier, "'Decide to Be': A Critical Look at American Literature and Culture"; "Projekt-Proseminar Regionalkompetenz: What Is America? A Critical Look at Facts and Fictions." Due to our special focus on Canadian Studies, many classes take an explicitly comparative North American perspective: Jutta Ernst, "Diversity in Canadian Literature and Culture"; "North American Environmental

Writing"; "City Fictions: Urban Experiences in the U.S. and Canada"; Michael Lörch, "North American Ecofiction"; Sabina Matter-Seibel, "Ecocritical Thinking in the USA and Canada"; "Translators and Interpreters in North American Fiction"; "Indigenous Voices of North America (Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Film)."

Our faculty members also adapt interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and collaborate on joint projects (e.g., Jutta Ernst and Oliver Scheiding, "Magazine Studies").

On Monday evenings, students are invited to join the Research Colloquium in North American Studies to discuss their current research projects and any concomitant issues or questions.

American Studies classes at JGU's Germersheim campus are part of the following programs:

### **B.A. Sprache, Kultur, Translation**

(Language, Culture, Translation)

### **M.A. Translation**

### **M.A. Konferenzdolmetschen**

(Conference Interpreting)

**The Germersheim faculty graduated 17 B.A. and 12 M.A. students in 2022.**

## Bachelor of Arts in American Studies (Mainz)

The Bachelor's Program of American Studies offers a wide range of courses. In six semesters, students immerse themselves in the central fields of American literature, culture, history, language, and media.

**The B.A. program is structured in two phases of introductory (GMK) and advanced modules (AMK):**

**GMK I:** Language and Communication

**GMK II:** American Studies

**GMK III:** Cultural Studies

**GMK IV:** Cultural Studies and Professional Orientation

**GMK V:** Culture, Media, and Literature

**AMK I:** Advanced Language and Communication

**AMK II:** Regional and Transnational American Studies

**AMK III:** Early American Literature and Culture: 16th–19th Century

**AMK IV:** American Literature and Culture from 1900 to the Present

The introductory modules (GMK I–III) will familiarize students with the basic methodologies and subject matter of American literary studies and American

cultural studies. In addition to expanding their proficiency in English, students will explore a broad range of literary texts and historical documents, as well as cultural artifacts from all eras of American history. In advanced cultural studies classes (GMK IV–V), students will study topics related to historical and current developments in American society, politics, culture, and media. In the course of the first two years of their studies, students will also become familiar with relevant methodologies for doing American Studies.

In the advanced courses of the Bachelor program students deepen their knowledge of American literature and culture in topical seminars and conclude their course of studies with a B.A. thesis on a topic of their choice.

**In the winter term of 2021/22 and the summer term of 2022, the Obama Institute graduated 66 Bachelors of American Studies as well as nine Bachelors in the joint Mainz-Dijon American Studies program.**

## Master of Arts in American Studies (Mainz)

The American Studies Master's Program is designed to emphasize research-oriented perspectives on American language, literature, culture, and their theories. It builds upon the B.A. program in American Studies at Mainz University, but also welcomes applications of students from American Studies programs in Germany, Europe, and other parts of the world.

American Studies has seen a number of major changes in theory and practice in the last decade. Its traditional emphasis on the language, literature, and culture of the United States has been expanded both conceptually and methodologically. Reaching beyond the continental geographical focus of the United States, the more recent concept of Transnational American Studies includes new regions of language and literature, branching out into Atlantic, Caribbean, and Pacific Studies.

The Mainz M.A. program responds to these new developments and encourages students to explore the transnational dimensions of American Studies. The program offers a broad spectrum of courses and the opportunity to conduct research on American literature and culture from pre-colonial times to the 21st century with areas of specialization in comparative indigenous studies, early American studies, and transnational life writing. It maintains

long-established exchange programs and international cooperation with North American, European, and Chinese universities. The program also includes a special module on interdisciplinary studies allowing students to expand their research into cognate fields for a broad-based perspective on the Americas. The M.A. program especially emphasizes the need for students to experience the United States firsthand and is committed to offering students the possibility of studying at one of our partner universities in the United States, Canada, or China.

### The M.A. program consists of several modules:

**Modul 1:** Methodology

**Modul 2:** Early American Studies

**Modul 3:** Cultural Studies

**Modul 4:** Modern American Literature and Media

**Modul 5:** Advanced Research and Professional Orientation

**Modul 6:** Advanced American Literature and Media Studies

**Modul 7:** Advanced Interdisciplinary Research

**Modul 8:** Advanced Research and Thesis Preparation

Based on students' previous B.A. experience, modules 1–6 focus on cultural and literary studies in research-oriented courses. Students discuss methods, theories, and techniques of academic research. One of the central aims of the M.A. program is to introduce students to different forms of textual and cultural analysis and to involve them in current research projects.

In the second year, students engage in a larger guided research project that combines different historical, thematic, and methodological approaches. At the same time, the M.A. program enables students to further develop their own professional goals in orientation sessions geared towards a career outside or inside academia.

Study abroad is recommended for the second year and highlights the importance of an international training program for students seeking a Master's degree in American Studies.

**In the winter term of 2021/22 and the summer term of 2022, the Obama Institute graduated 34 Masters of American Studies.**



## Ph.D. in American Studies

The institute hosts a vibrant Ph.D. program, bringing together scholars from Germany, the U.S., Canada, and China. In addition to the conventional topics of American Studies, our Ph.D. students specialize in life writing research, indigenous studies, early American studies, material culture studies, and transnational American histories. Our Ph.D. students benefit from our partner institutions as well as from the international Ph.D. programs we are associated with.

### Individual Doctoral Studies

Depending on their research interests, students contact one of our program's professors. After admitting the candidates, the professors serve as supervisor and mentor. The duration of an individual doctorate usually ranges from three to five years. Depending on the requirements of the project, funding is possible for a period of up to three years. This is provided by Stiftung Rheinland-Pfalz, Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes, DAAD or foundations such as Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, and others.

### DFG Research Training Group (2015/2) "Life Sciences–Life Writing"

In addition to individual doctoral study, candidates can also attain their doctorates in structured Ph.D. programs resembling those in Anglo-American countries. A team of supervisors is responsible for supervising doctoral candidates. The program offers a curriculum of accompanying courses which are interdisciplinary in focus and promote the acquisition of "soft skills" and additional qualifications. The systematic and intensive supervision offered in our program "Life Sciences – Life Writing" allows candidates to complete their doctoral studies within three to four years.

### Binationl Ph.D. Mainz–Atlanta

For individual doctoral studies we offer a dual degree in American Studies jointly supported by Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and Georgia State University, Atlanta. The five-year program includes a mutual student exchange for 12 months as well as full integration in course work and teaching in the academic programs of both universities. The program is subsidized by both departments and is open to all graduate students who have earned a Master's degree in American Studies.

### Ph.D. candidates can also participate in the following exchange programs (10–12 months):

Columbia University, New York City  
(contact: Professors Banerjee and Hornung)

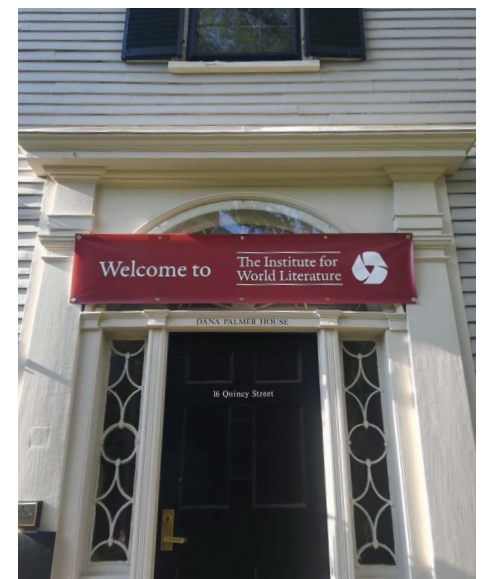
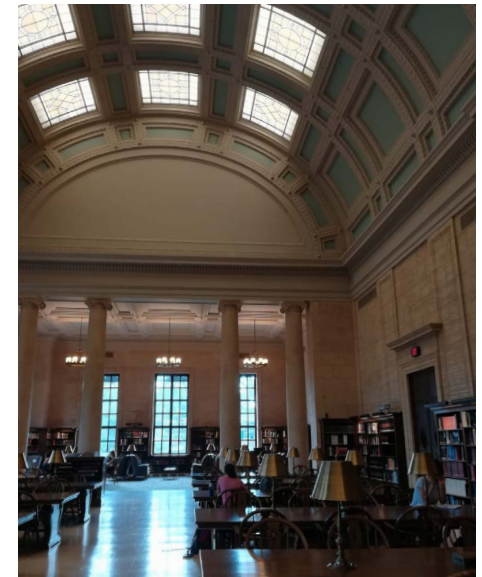
University of Mississippi, Oxford  
(contact: Professors Banerjee and Hornung)

University of California, Davis  
(contact: Professor Scheiding)

### Harvard University Institute for World Literature (IWL) Summer School

The Obama Institute is a member of Harvard University's annual IWL summer school program. This global program offers four weeks of coursework led by the world's most renowned literary scholars and hosted by different universities worldwide, alternating with Harvard University every third year. Through our membership, we can offer up to two PhD students the amazing opportunity to join an international group of young scholars for a short but intensive term abroad.

In 2022, the Obama Institute was honored to host the IWL summer session in Mainz. The "View from Abroad" in this Annual Report, the "Participant's Report" in the section on teaching projects, and Alfred Hornung's opening remarks offer a glimpse into the event from different perspectives.



## Study Abroad

The Obama Institute offers its students a wide variety of ways to go abroad during their studies, whether in the B.A., M.A., B.Ed., or M.Ed. programs, as well as as part of our Ph.D. training. We actively promote our students' applications to national funding programs such as those run by the German Academic Exchange Service and the Fulbright Commission, and regularly place our students in those programs, and we participate in the European ERASMUS scheme. But beyond that, the Obama Institute also offers a number of unique opportunities to go abroad that are based on the initiative of the institute's professors and teaching staff. With the Mainz Direct Exchange program, which annually sends nearly twenty students from all levels of our teaching program abroad to study at selected universities in the United States and Canada, the Obama Institute offers one of the most exciting exchange opportunities in American Studies. In addition, the annual Summer School, which takes a group of students on a research trip through the American South as part of their Culture Studies course work, regularly exposes students to what is to most a different and less-well known America.

The Middlebury College invites applications of Mainz American Studies graduate students to participate in the Bread Loaf School of English for an intensive six-week program from mid-June

to mid-August on its campuses of Bread Loaf in Vermont or Monterey in California. The participation of up to five students is graciously sponsored by the State of Rhineland-Palatinate. For more information consult [www.middlebury.edu/blse](http://www.middlebury.edu/blse).

We believe that the opportunity to study abroad is crucial to a successful education in a literature, history, and culture program, and even more so in a teaching program. It is not just about finding additional opportunities to speak the language you are learning, or to participate actively in the culture you are studying; it is also about learning about the different traditions of American Studies in other academic cultures. Therefore, our exchange programs are not limited to the United States, although that remains a natural focus. ERASMUS exchanges also lead our students to universities in Britain, France, Denmark, Poland, and other European countries, whose own traditions in the studies of the humanities are capable of rounding out the experience of studying American Studies in Germany.

### Direct Exchange Program

The Direct Exchange Program, established in 1956, is a unique opportunity for American Studies students at Mainz, connecting them directly with partner universities in the United States and Canada. The various exchange opportunities we offer—from

simple undergraduate studies with tuition waivers to teaching/research assistantships for graduate-level studies—enable students to experience the United States and Canada firsthand. Based on years of cooperation, the Direct Exchange Program is a tailored and competitive program. Currently, the institute offers direct exchanges with the following American and Canadian partner universities:

- Austin College, Sherman, Texas
- Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine
- Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario
- California State University, Chico, California
- Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts
- Columbia University, New York City, New York
- Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia
- Hood College, Frederick, Maryland
- Kansas University, Lawrence, Kansas
- Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont
- Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi
- Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, British Columbia
- University of California, Davis, California
- University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
- University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi
- Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland
- York University, Toronto, Ontario

At Germersheim, exchange opportunities exist with the following universities in the U.S. and Canada:

- Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
- Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont

- Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee
- Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois
- Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, British Columbia

### Erasmus Exchange Program

The EU-funded ERASMUS program enables students to spend a semester or two at a different European university free of tuition, and pays a small monthly stipend. The Obama Institute's ERASMUS partner universities for student exchanges currently are:

- Universität Bern, Berne, Switzerland
- Université de Bourgogne, Dijon, France
- University of Brighton, Brighton, UK
- Université de Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland
- Universiteit Gent/Ghent University, Belgium
- Università degli Studi di Padova, Padua, Italy
- Uniwersytet Warszawski/University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
- Universität Wien, Vienna, Austria

In addition, the Institute also has lecturers' exchanges with several universities:

- University of Warwick, Warwick, UK
- University of Kent, Canterbury, UK

## American Studies Summer School 2022

The American Studies Summer School has been an ongoing program at the Obama Institute since 2013. Established as a collaboration between Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung and Dr. John Richard Duke, Jr. (Professor of History and Executive Director of the American Studies Institute at Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas), the Summer School takes JGU students through the U.S. American South, exploring the African-American Civil Rights Movement, Southern Literature and Culture, as well as Southern Food and Music. In 2023, after a two-year Covid break, we were able to restart the program and take 14 students on the trip. Three of the participants were kind enough to provide a report from their perspective (see next page).

Currently, the American Studies Summer School is co-organized by Nina Heydt and Dr. Julia Velten. The planning and coordination would not be possible without the outstanding work and support of Dr. John Richard Duke, Jr. It is through his continued, enthusiastic commitment to this program, the Obama Institute, and our students that the Summer School is such a unique academic but also personal experience.



U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

Picture above and pictures on the following three pages:  
Personal impressions by courtesy of Summer School 2022 participants

## Participants' Report

**Schanet Asmellash, Theresa Klein,  
Sonja Schander**

Arriving in Searcy, Arkansas, we quickly familiarized ourselves with the group and our new environment, although having to adjust to Southern heat and humidity first. During our first week, staying at the hotel on the campus of Harding University, we would usually start off with class in the morning, followed by field trips in the afternoon. Classes included reading Southern literature and learning about important historical events of the Civil Rights Movement. Especially the field trips directly connected to aspects we had just discussed in class – like visiting Little Rock Central High School after learning about the tragic story of the Little Rock Nine – were a profound and moving experience.

We learned more about US politics by visiting the William J. Clinton Library and Museum; as well as American Art at the Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville and got insight into university life and college sports at the University of Arkansas where we were kindly shown around by Dr. Calvin White.

We really benefited from what "The Natural State" had to offer: our field trips did not only include museums and historical sights, but we got to enjoy several outdoor activities like fishing, canoeing, campfires,



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

and making s'mores. To wrap up our week in Searcy, various local families were kind enough to invite us to their homes to enjoy dinners at different houses, where we could talk to people who gave us an idea about what their everyday lives in the American South looked like and how their culture is different from what we know from Germany.

We kicked off our road trip with a stop in Memphis where we not only visited the National Civil Rights Museum - the former Lorraine Motel - but also the famous Sun Studios. The same day, a visit at Rowan



Oak, Faulkner's house, awaited us in Oxford, as well as a tour of the University of Mississippi Campus by Dr. Charles Ross. In the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, we met with author and journalist Jerry Mitchell who told us about his work with reopening lynching cases of the Civil Rights Era. Our next stop was New Orleans, where we had the chance to explore the city's cultural and musical landscape on our own: we got a taste of typical local dishes and experienced nightlife on Bourbon Street.

After a quick resting stop at Biloxi Beach, we were headed to Montgomery, and went to the Legacy Museum, an intense and emotional experience. At Tuskegee University, we got the chance to talk to Dr. Bernard Lafayette, a civil rights activist and former confidant of Dr. Martin Luther King. Other stops at important historical sites in Alabama included the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma and the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham.

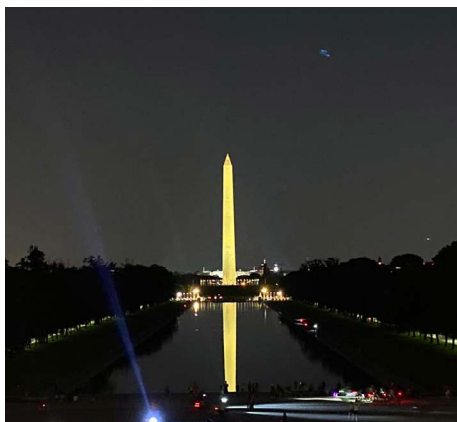


Greers Ferry Lake, Heber Springs, Arkansas

Before flying to DC, our final road trip stop was Nashville, where we had the chance to explore the abundance of country music the city has to offer. After visiting Fiske University and exploring the legacy of W.E.B. DuBois, as well as the famous Jubilee Singers, we were again free to discover the city on our own terms and look at important sights such as the Country Music Hall of Fame, or just enjoy live music in Nashville's many music venues.

In Washington DC, we toured the National Mall with its important sights and attended a baseball game. We finished off our trip at the Martin Luther King Memorial where we reflected on our learnings and experiences of the past three weeks.

All in all, the American Studies Summer School has been an amazing experience that we all benefited from academically as well as personally. We were able to get insights you normally do not get as a tourist; especially due to the many interesting people we got to meet and talk to.



Washington Monument, Washington, D.C..



OVAL OFFICE CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL CENTER 2022







## Research at the OI in 2022

The Obama Institute is dedicated to transnational research into American history, literature, and culture. It builds upon the commitment of "traditional" American Studies to interdisciplinarity, but extends it to studying the entanglements of American histories with intercultural transfers across oceans, continents, and regions. Broadly speaking, the transnational project has two main dimensions. First, it offers a research perspective that, while still regarding the state as a significant

actor, examines circulations, interactions, and connections beyond the nation-state. This involves the study of the movement of peoples, ideas, technologies, literatures, and institutions across national boundaries. Second, anchored in a postmodern and postcolonial outlook, transnationalism seeks to "dis-integrate" U.S. history and culture. This includes exploring all forms of diversity and inclusion implicit in American national narratives. Transnationalism's focus





on connections and circulations thus seeks to give voice to those who are not represented by nation-states. Based on this understanding the Obama Institute sees itself as a meeting place and a research space for transnational American Studies. It maintains one of the strongest American Studies research programs in German-speaking countries. It offers full coverage of research into the history, literature, and culture of the United States, from the colonial period to the 21st century, including issues of translation and adaptation.

Our research areas highlight the Institute's wide range of activities. Early American Studies, which includes DFG-funded research projects on American periodicals and magazine fiction, promotes research projects that explore the textual and material grounds on which the many cultures – both Western and Non-Western – meet in the Atlantic and Pacific worlds. The Center for Comparative Native and Indigenous Studies is designed as a platform to bring together scholars and students who work on Indigenous issues in a global context. The research training group "Life Writing/Life Sciences" explores the narrative practices that underlie explanations and models derived from both empirical data and social experiences. Projects in Political and Intellectual History focus on topics such as migration and social policy, transnational social thought and politics, and nationalism and internationalism in American society. Research on Religion and American Culture explores the global history of American evangelicalism and the

relationship between religion and politics, as well as religion and media. Material Culture Studies is a research initiative that connects the Institute to other disciplines, such as book history, art history, and sociology. And the collaborative research project Transnational Periodical Cultures contributes to the burgeoning field of periodical studies, exploring magazines, newspapers, and other forms of serialized mass media in transnational contexts.

Three senior and four junior members of the Obama Institute are PIs and project members in the DFG-funded Collaborative Research Center "Studies in Human Categorisation". The Obama Institute also cooperates with the Medical School and American Studies at Columbia University, New York in Narrative Medicine programs and the creation of a Medical Humanities research platform. The Obama Institute sees itself as a node connecting scholars in American Studies and beyond. It invites the cooperation of scholars throughout the international academic community who are interested in manifestations of transnationalism in a multiplicity of contexts.

In 2019, the Obama Institute received a research grant on the topic of "Disruption and Democracy in America: Challenges and Potentials of Transcultural and Transnational Formations" that will support our research until 2023. In 2022, our funding from the 'Forschungsinitiative des Landes Rheinland-Pfalz' as a 'JGU Potentialbereich' was renewed until 2028 on the basis of our research proposal on "Submerged Knowledge".

## Conferences

**Labor and Capital in U.S. History II**  
Annual Conference of the Historians  
in the Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Amerikastudien (DGfA)/German  
Association for American Studies (GAAS)

**February 11-12, 2022**

Organized by Anja-Maria Bassimir,  
Torsten Kathke, and Axel R. Schäfer

The 2022 annual conference of historians in the German Association of American Studies (DGfA/GAAS) was for the second time in a row dedicated to the issue of "labor and capital in U.S. history." Organized by Anja-Maria Bassimir, Torsten Kathke and Axel Schäfer, the two-day long conference took place in a hybrid format. In bringing into conversation various strands of the recent historiography, the conference explored issues ranging from political economy, labor migration, patterns of consumption, middle-class formation, social mobility and new forms of social solidarity to an unconditional basic income.

In addition to the panels and roundtable discussion, the conference featured two keynote addresses. ELIZABETH FAUE (Wayne State University) explored collaboration and conflict in the relationship between labor and new social movements during three crisis moments. In the 1930s, Chicago's Packinghouse Union combined unionism, antiracism, and community



activism after racial conflicts had pulled it apart in the 1920s. During the 1970s and 80s, social movements re-energized labor unions particularly in campaigns for occupational health and safety measures. In recent decades unions in the healthcare and education sectors have shifted the discursive terrain by addressing social reproduction rather than just production issues. The confluence of labor activism and social movements resulted in new alliances and the sharing of resources. DAVID ROEDIGER (University of Kansas) explored whether the U.S. has historically been a middle-class nation, whether it delivered on its promise to be one, and how politics create a middle-class constituency. He found that the middle class as an ideology emerged in the 1940s, was shaped by gendered and racialized power structures, and entered the political discourse as a constituency in need of



support only after the Reagan presidency. In a segment that related to Elizabeth Shermer's (Loyola University) discussion of student debt, Roediger pointed out that financing college education has not only made a middle-class lifestyle harder to attain but has also left the middle class both overspent and overworked. As the ability to reproduce middle-class lifestyles and identities weakens, it remains to be seen how labor relations might resurface in the political arena.

In summation, the conference challenged a range of common assumptions in the field. These include the notion that precarious service sector work in neoliberal regimes failed to bring about union activism; that neoliberal economics constituted a rejection of Cold War liberalism and the Sixties; and that the legendary American middle class was a pervasive and stable element of the body politic. The debates also indicated, however, that labor history needed to find new ways of engaging with other pressing issues. These include the impact of climate change, the relationship between human work and nonhuman actors, and how decentering the nation in labor history provides additional ways of exploring relations of power, resistance, and solidarity.

### Africans, Americans, and Colonial Germany Symposium

**April 29, 2022**

Organized by Alfred Hornung

The Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies organized a symposium on the heritage of Colonial Germany and the presence of people of African descent in German society. This trilateral investigation ranged from Germany to Africa, America and back, addressed the German engagement in the slavery trade and the institution of slavery, the violent effects of colonization still felt on site and visible in the spoils on display in the museums, and the systemic discrimination of Black people. Fellows of the Obama Institute, former and present colleagues presented aspects of their current research involving the relations between Namibia and Germany, the racist treatment of Africans, African Americans and Afro-Germans and the legacy of German colonialism in the Pacific.

We welcomed Ruth Stanford (Georgia State University, USA), Heike Raphael-Hernandez (University of Würzburg, Germany), Herman Bennett (City University of New York, USA), Pia Wiegink (University of Bonn, Germany) and a student presentation by Ahngeli Shivam (University of Mainz, Germany).

### Indigenous Print Cultures, Media and Literatures International Symposium

**July 6-9, 2022**

Organized by Oliver Scheiding and Cristina Stanciu (Virginia Commonwealth University)

The international symposium on "Indigenous Print Cultures, Media, and Literatures" highlighted the diverse range of indigenous print and media productions from the nineteenth century until today. It was jointly organized by Oliver Scheiding and Cristina Stanciu (Humanities Research Center at VCU) and held in Mainz over a four-day period, featuring both in person and virtual participants from around the world (Canada, continental USA and Hawaii, New Zealand, Europe, and UK). The symposium brought together recent trends in Indigenous and media studies, focusing on archives and digitization, periodicals and literary production, Indigenous (self-) representations and networks, as well as gender, citizenship, and literary modernities. The nine panels were complemented by three keynote addresses and a fruitful roundtable discussion. MISHUANA GOEMAN (UCLA), daughter of enrolled Tonawanda Band of Seneca, Hawk Clan, put into perspective the impact of bringing together theory and practice for



Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, especially in relation to the accessibility of archives. Citizen of the White Earth Nation in Minnesota and Professor Emeritus at UC Berkeley, GERALD VIZENOR read an excerpt from his newest book *Waiting for Wovoka*. Due to an increased Covid risk at the time, he decided not to travel to Germany but instead gave his reading virtually. BETH PIATOTE, Nez Perce, also gave a virtual keynote address. She focused on the role of the archive as one of the ways to "make the pieces come together" and tied it to tribally specific aesthetics.

The symposium laid out current work and trends at the intersection of Indigenous studies, periodical studies, and media studies towards expressions of Indigenous modernities. From traditional literary productions to periodical literary formation, contemporary digital forms of communication, and the significance of

land, tribal sovereignty, and recognition, the significance of the archive (and its recovery, revival, and reclamation) was an omnipresent factor in every discussion. The engaging debates showed potential connections between the fields, while the breadth of each topic challenged settler-colonial notions of belonging, history, and static forms of literary production. A sequel of the conference titled, "100 Years of Citizenship: The Indian Citizenship Act (1924), Sovereignty, and Native Activism," will be held at the University of Bordeaux,

France, in June of 2024, jointly organized by the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, the Humanities Research Center at VCU, and Nebraska University in Lincoln, USA.



## Selected Research Projects

**Humandifferenzierung**  
(DFG Sonderforschungsbereich/  
Collaborative Research Center)  
Johannes Gutenberg University and  
Leibniz Institute for European History, Mainz  
(SFB 1482/1; First Funding Period: 2021-25)



Mita Banerjee, Oliver Scheiding and Axel R. Schäfer continue their work as principal investigators within this cluster. The SFB addresses an elementary phenomenon: that people continuously categorize themselves and others. Human differentiation means first the external differentiation of humans from animals and artifacts such as robots, then the division of people into categories and groups such as ethnicities, nations, linguistic and religious communities, and finally the internal social differentiation based on characteristics such as age, gender, disability or performance.

The results of human differentiation usually appear in public discourses as given characteristics of people. In contrast, the SFB aims to raise awareness of the fact that people and social groups only acquire their characteristics by being differentiated in social practices. The research focus is on the question of how historical and contemporary societies categorize and spatially separate their members, thus making them "others" to each other and

suggesting social affiliations and identities to them. The goal is to develop a general theory of human differentiation that determines its sociocultural functions.

The SFB thus seeks to bring together a specialized and separated variety of research branches on the categorization of humans in a new overarching field "Studies in Human Categorization". This will no longer focus on individual distinctions—such as those based on gender, ethnicity, or religion—as has been the case in the past. Instead, the interplay of the many different affiliations of people is in focus.

The SFB will be funded with a total of about 10 million euros for an initial period of four years. Researchers from sociology and ethnology, American studies and linguistics, theater, media culture and translation studies at the JGU, and history at the IEG are participating.

<https://humandifferenzierung.uni-mainz.de>

**SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung  
(Studies in Human Categorization)**

Project A04

**Successful Aging: Best Agers at the  
Intersection between Differentiating  
Age and Achievement**

Principal Investigator: Mita Banerjee  
(Funding 2021-2025)

This project explores how human differentiations in terms of "age" and "performance/achievement" converge in current discourses on "successful aging". It discusses (self)representations of "successful aging" in different media in order to ascertain what effects the new choreography of "age-indifferent forms of aging" may have on normative constructions of age. On the one hand, extreme old age is connoted as positive in discourses of "best aging"; on the other hand, however, elderly high achievers may be seen as an implicit counter-narrative to "normal" aging, which is often associated with deficiency and disability.



**SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung  
(Studies in Human Categorization)**

Project A06

**Curated Bodies: Aesthetics and Human  
Differentiation in Lifestyle Magazines**

Principal Investigator: Oliver Scheiding  
(Funding 2021-2025)

The research project focuses on lifestyle magazines as spaces proliferating images of bodies in the mass-medial performance of human differentiation. The performative processes of categorizing people are predicated on the media-specific aesthetics of genres in magazines and their materiality. Magazines are powerful medial infrastructures of cohesion and mediation circulating the societal dynamics of human differentiation and creating opportunities for readers to tentatively imagine and define body- and lifestyles, identities and communities. The project hence introduces the role of aesthetics into the mechanics of human differentiation.





**SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung  
(Studies in Human Categorization)**  
Project B06  
**Migration and Welfare States in the  
USA: Global and National Dynamics in  
Bureaucratic Human Differentiation**

Principal Investigator: Axel R. Schäfer  
(Funding 2021-2025)

The project explores the genesis of categories of human differentiations as part of the consolidation and dissolution processes of modern statehood. Using the USA as an example, it examines the bureaucratic sorting of people in immigration and social policy between the World Wars. In particular, it studies the way social scientists, civic reformers, trade unionists, immigrant activists, government officials, and business lobbyists used their analysis of migration to formulate the knowledge base for the policies underlying the welfare state. The project's main interest is in the "master categories" of human differentiation these actors used in both policy arenas – such as ethnicity, race, gender and class, but also religion, profession, age, (dis)ability, health, or productivity. At the same time the project directs our attention to the global origins of modern forms of U.S. state building and political culture. This entails exploring how immigration regimes and social welfare states ushered in a reordering of the boundaries of inclusion/exclusion, principles of recognition/empathy, and systems of mutual care in the context of



the accelerating global flow of capital, commodities, and people, particularly since the late nineteenth century. The aim is to show how processes of human differentiation, nation-building and globalization have historically constitute each other.

**Periodicals and Indigenous Modernity:  
Building a Text Corpus of American  
Indian Newspapers and Magazines,  
1890-1930**

Oliver Scheiding  
(SCHE 1616/12-1; Funding 2020–2023)

This research project examines Native American periodicals and how they function as particular media formats to shape society and culture. Current research understands periodicals as serialized and aesthetic artifacts serving both as means of socialization and for establishing textual communities. Moreover, communication and media studies focus primarily on content, topic and the overall subject matter of periodicals. Scholarship tends to overlook, however, the indigenous periodicals' aesthetic and material dimensions to address questions of sovereignty and modernity. Despite the central role of periodicals as public institutions that fulfill social functions, innovations in print and public communication specific to indigenous periodicals have yet to be empirically and theoretically integrated into the fields of periodical studies and Native American studies. The project aims at differentiating Native American periodicals as aesthetic products and curated artifacts (i.e. the magazine as an experience not as a commodity), addressing questions of collaboration, interaction, and ethnic differentiation in a period of social and technological transition. The project



seeks to find out more about what makes Native American periodicals a powerful middle ground to affect the wider culture and mediate various types of indigenous modernity.

For more information and publications see:  
<https://indigenoussamericanperiodicals.uni-mainz.de>

### Life Sciences – Life Writing: Experiences at the Boundaries of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience (DFG Research Training Group)

Mita Banerjee with Norbert Paul  
(GRK 2015; Funding 2014-2023)

From the twentieth century to the twenty-first century, the conditions of human life have changed dramatically due to political, socio-economic, ecological and cultural influences. Simultaneously, the interpretative models and spaces of action in medicine have shifted from observing and influencing biological processes towards the biological and technological shaping of health and disease. Examples are manifold: assisted reproduction, prenatal diagnostics, organ transplantation, longevity and dying – in all of these boundary experiences, the role of medicine has changed fundamentally and has influenced the ways in which we conceptualize and deal with human life. These developments have also resulted

in new approaches to explaining and understanding human life and life narratives in social and cultural studies (life writing).

The graduate program converges the areas of life sciences and life writing and sees them as complementary approaches to understand, explain and act in boundary experiences of human life. To achieve this convergence, joint concepts need to be established. The graduate program focuses on three research areas – corporeality, ability, temporality – which function as three conceptual spaces, within which biomedical explanations, literary and cultural analyses, and human experience interact. The interdisciplinary approaches are linked by narrative practices, which function as the conceptual and methodological background against which boundary experiences of human life are studied from diverse disciplinary angles, such as medicine, neonatology, psychotherapy, pharmaceutical biology, molecular biology, social sciences, cultural anthropology, history, philosophy, ethics, German studies and American studies.



**DFG** Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft

### Indigenous Modernity and Non-Fiction Writing: Native American Periodicals 1890-1920

Frank E. Newton  
(PhD researcher in DFG project SCHE  
1616/12-1)

This research project explores Native American periodicals and their particular material and cultural history between 190 and the 1920s. It examines their material print arrangements (i.e., language, design, pictures, photographs, etc.) and how they function as vehicles to express an indigenous modernity. Current research understands periodicals as serialized and aesthetic artifacts serving both as means of socialization and for establishing textual communities. Moreover, communication and media studies focus primarily on content, topic, and the overall subject matter of periodicals. However, scholarship tends to overlook the indigenous periodicals' aesthetic and material dimensions to address questions of sovereignty and modernity. Despite the central role of periodicals as public institutions that fulfill social functions, innovations in print and public communication specific to indigenous periodicals have yet to be empirically and theoretically integrated into the fields of periodical studies and Native American and Indigenous studies. The project aims at differentiating Native American periodicals as aesthetic products to address questions of collaborations,



interaction, and ethnic differentiation in a period of social and technological transition. As such, the project understands Native American periodicals as a highly influential middle ground to mediate different types of indigenous modernity. The project seeks to demonstrate how Native American periodicals – heavily saturated in language and images – use aesthetic styles to create an indigenous print media that is part of the global modernities.

**DFG** Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft

## Transnational Periodical Cultures (Interdisciplinary Research Unit)

Oliver Scheiding and Jutta Ernst

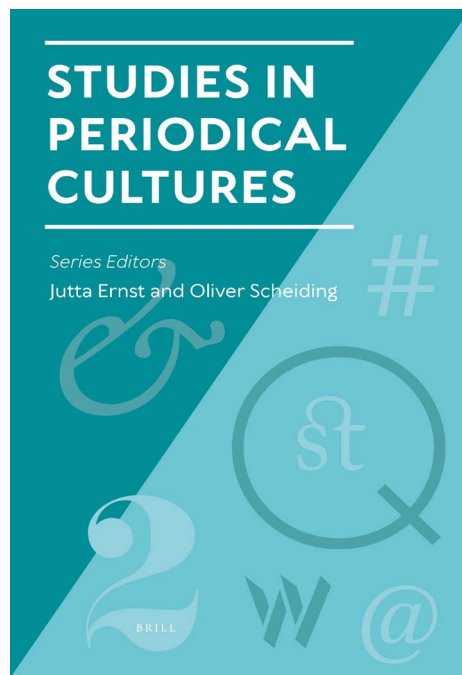
The research group on Transnational Periodical Cultures (TPC) contributes to the burgeoning field of periodical studies, exploring magazines, newspapers, and other forms of serialized mass media in transnational contexts. Funded by the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, TPC serves as an interdisciplinary forum for organizing workshops, conferences as well as graduate and postgraduate research, bringing together students and international scholars from literary studies, media studies, book studies, journalism studies, sociology, translation studies, text design, archival studies, and digital humanities.

For TPC's book series *Studies in Periodical Cultures* (Brill) see:

<https://brill.com/page/spc/forthcoming-series-studies-in-periodical-cultures>

For further TPC activities see:

[www.transnationalperiodicalcultures.net](http://www.transnationalperiodicalcultures.net)



TPC organized the following **workshops** in 2022:

### **Aus dem Alltag eines Magazinmachers**

(with Dirk Mönkemöller, editor of *The Weekender*) – January 2022, online

### **Zines Revisited** – July 2022

### **Research Colloquy – Periodical Studies**

– November 2022

## Immigrants, Welfare, and the Politics of Consumption in the Twentieth Century U.S.

Senior Fellowship at the Pacific Regional Office of the German Historical Institute, University of Berkeley, California, August-October 2022, "Innovation through Migration" Program

Axel R. Schäfer

The transition to a consumption-oriented economy and the vision of "freedom from want" are among the central experiences of modernity. As literary critic Van Wyck Brooks put it in his 1915 classic *America's Coming of Age*, "a familiar distinction between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries is that the problem of civilization is no longer the problem of want but the problem of surplus." In turn, beginning in the 1880s a wide range of different social and political actors created the knowledge base for the ideologies and policies underlying the rise of consumerist politics. Mainstream labor unions abandoned their traditional emphasis on the control over production for the consumerist "politics of more." Activists in civic organizations, particular women organized in clubs and associations, used the elevation of consuming to assert their political power as organizers of consumption. Social scientists parted with traditional producer-oriented concepts of economics, including the assumption of scarcity and the labor theory of value. Civil servants and bureaucrats pushed for the



expansion of state administrative capacities on the basis of the newly formulated politics of consumption. Business leaders pioneered concepts of welfare capitalism. And politicians recognized the potential for political mobilization in consumer-oriented and welfare policies.

In the process, they created new ways of categorizing, classifying, ordering, and hierarchizing people. These centered on defining an "American standard of living" in areas such as diet, health, leisure habits, and consumption. The various protagonists employed new cultural techniques that gave their concepts the aura of truth, objectivity, and accuracy –



namely collecting and analyzing large amounts of data and generating statistics. Creating this expert knowledge, the project argues, relied to a significant extent on the study of immigration and immigrants. Based on these taxonomies, many experts, reformers, bureaucrats, trade unionists and other public figures in the early twentieth century depicted immigrants as a threat to an "American standard of living" and established the white consumer as a template for a new consumer subjectivity. After World War II, however, the "prophets of consumption" increasingly utilized a categorization repertoire that celebrated the immigrants' participation in and contribution to a multicultural consumer society. Employing the human differentiation perspective thus allows us to understand ethnoracial classifications as a fluid category that is activated, operationalized, or made obsolete according to the requirements of different policy regimes. Nativism as well as multiculturalism were at different times essential parts of establishing consumer politics and the remit of the state.



### Popular Science in Crises

Davina Höll together with Jens Temmen,  
HHU Düsseldorf  
(Funding: 2022-23; Fonds Deutscher  
Studienpreis, Körber-Stiftung, Akademie  
der Wissenschaften und Literatur Mainz)

The project focuses on the uses and challenges of popular science in the current and intersecting crises of the Anthropocene. Popular science has become increasingly important as an avenue to politically intervene in the debates surrounding existential human crises - like the COVID pandemic or the climate crisis. Thus, the project wants to critically inquire into discourses of popular science as a way of contributing to a broader societal scientific agency and as a tool that employs pseudo-scientific knowledge to further political agendas ("populist science"). In other words, the project is most interested in the uses of popular science in crises and how popular science is in crisis itself. In order to explore these issues, a two-day workshop bringing together experts engaged in popular science - both theoretically and practically - and a public event targeted at a broader audience will be held in October 2023 in cooperation with the Academy of Sciences and Literature Mainz.



 **Körber  
Stiftung**



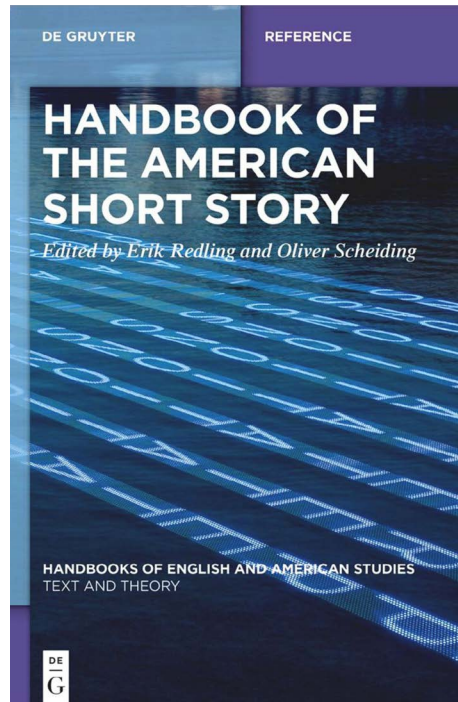
Akademie  
der Wissenschaften  
und der Literatur  
Mainz

## Selected Publications

Erik Redling and Oliver Scheiding (eds.)  
**Handbook of the American Short Story**

DeGruyter, 2022

This handbook offers students and researchers a comprehensive introduction to the multifaceted genre with a special focus on recent developments due to the rise of new media. Part I provides systematic overviews of significant contexts ranging from historical-political backgrounds, short story theories developed by writers, print and digital culture, to current theoretical approaches and canon formation. Part II consists of 35 paired readings of representative short stories by eminent authors, charting major steps in the evolution of the American short story from its beginnings as an art form in the early nineteenth century up to the digital age.

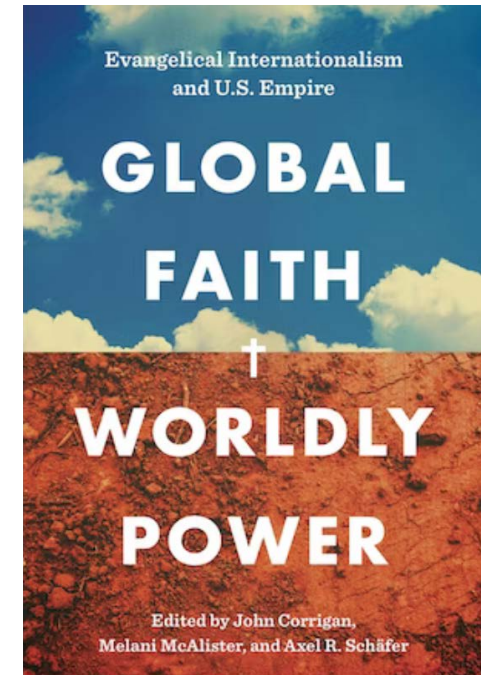


Volume 15 in the series *Handbooks of English and American Studies*  
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110587647>

John Corrigan, Melani McAlister, and Axel R. Schäfer (eds.)  
**Global Faith, Worldly Power: Evangelical Internationalism and U.S. Empire**

University of North Carolina Press, 2022

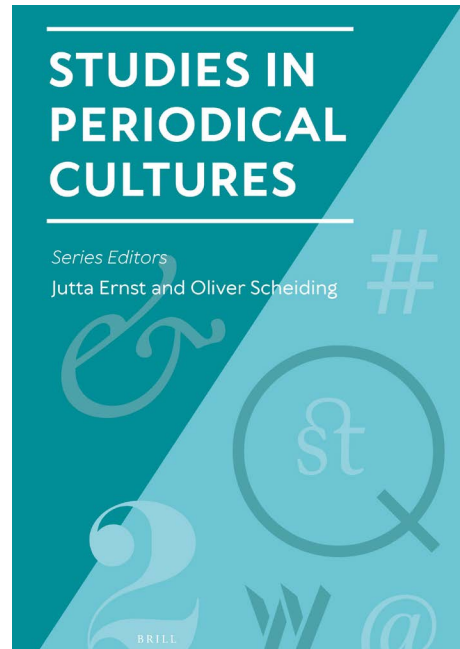
Assessing the grand American evangelical missionary venture to convert the world, this international group of leading scholars reveals how theological imperatives have intersected with worldly imaginaries from the nineteenth century to the present. Countering the stubborn notion that conservative Protestant groups have steadfastly maintained their distance from governmental and economic affairs, these experts show how believers' ambitious investments in missionizing and humanitarianism have connected with worldly matters of empire, the Cold War, foreign policy, and neoliberalism. They show, too, how evangelicals' international activism redefined the content and the boundaries of the movement itself. As evangelical voices from Africa, Asia, and Latin America became more vocal and assertive, U.S. evangelicals took on more pluralistic, multidirectional identities not only abroad but also back home. Applying this international perspective to the history of American evangelicalism radically changes how we understand the development and influence of evangelicalism, and of globalizing religion more broadly.



Jutta Ernst and Oliver Scheiding (eds.)  
**Studies in Periodical Cultures (Series)**

Brill, 2022

The new series 'Studies in Periodical Cultures (SPC)' contributes to the burgeoning field of periodical studies, exploring magazines, newspapers, and other forms of serialized media in (trans)national contexts. SPC invites contributions from a range of disciplines including approaches developed in the humanities and social sciences. The series welcomes transnational approaches to periodical studies providing fresh insights into foreign language publications, the role of international editions, the ethnic press, and related issues like race, gender, and sexuality. It also promotes the 'business turn' in periodical studies and highlights material and legal frameworks, design, translation, marketing and consumption.

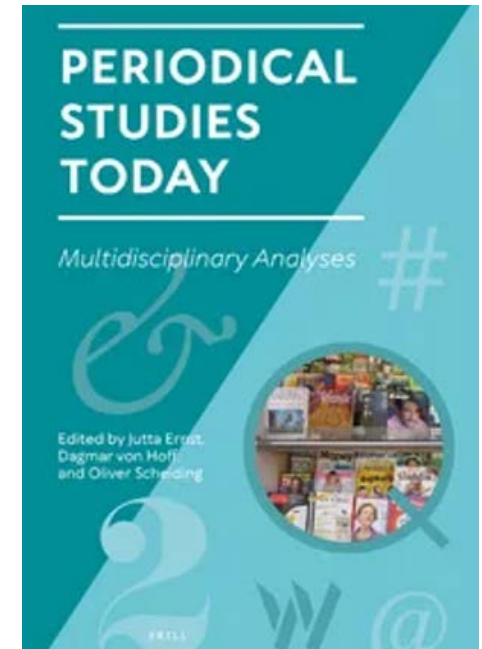


For information about the series and forthcoming volumes see:  
<https://brill.com/display/serial/SPC>

Jutta Ernst, Dagmar von Hoff,  
and Oliver Scheiding (eds.)  
**Periodical Studies Today:  
Multidisciplinary Analyses**

Brill, 2022

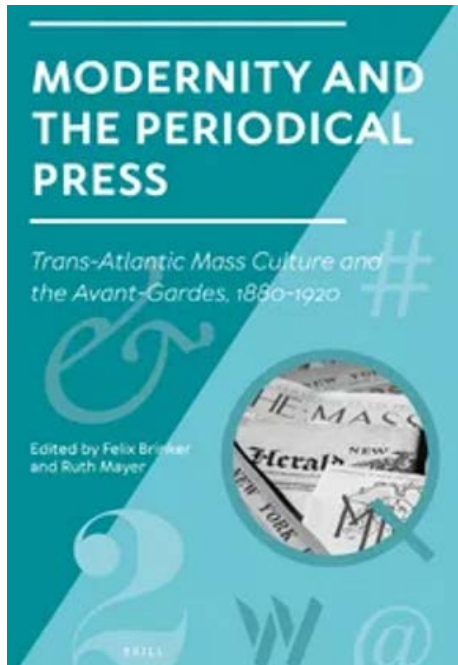
Combining theoretical and empirical approaches, this volume offers a wide-ranging survey of periodical research today. It illustrates the shift from content-related investigations and archival recovery to multidisciplinary analyses which consider, for instance, how magazines, newspapers, and other serial print products shape our opinions and help us to form like-minded communities. International specialists explore periodicals as relational artefacts, highlighting editorial constellations, material conditions, translation, design, marketing, and the consumption of newspapers and magazines from the late seventeenth to the twenty-first century. A must-read for academic and interested readers who wish to explore new and relevant ways to analyze periodicals.



*Periodical Studies Today: Multidisciplinary Analyses*, volume 1 in the series 'Studies in Periodical Cultures,' is available as an open access publication: free to read online, no account needed.

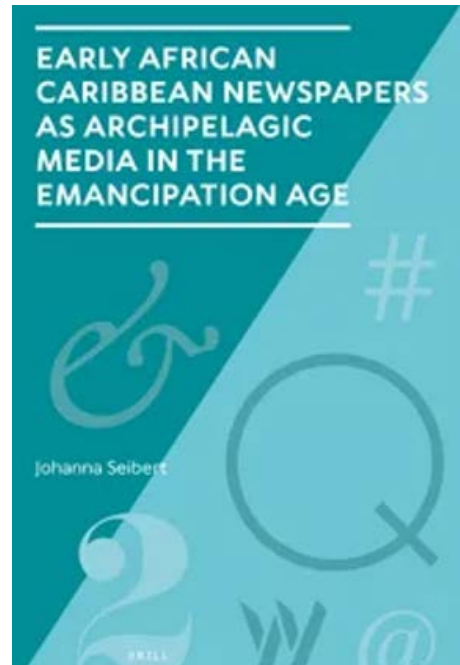
The volume's open access version is available under the following link:  
<https://brill.com/display/title/54179>





Felix Brinker and Ruth Mayer edited  
**Modernity and the Periodical Press: Trans-Atlantic Mass Culture and the Avant-Gardes, 1880-1920**

Volume 2 of 'Studies in Periodical Cultures'



Johanna Seibert authored  
**Early African Caribbean Newspapers as Archipelagic Media in the Emancipation Age**

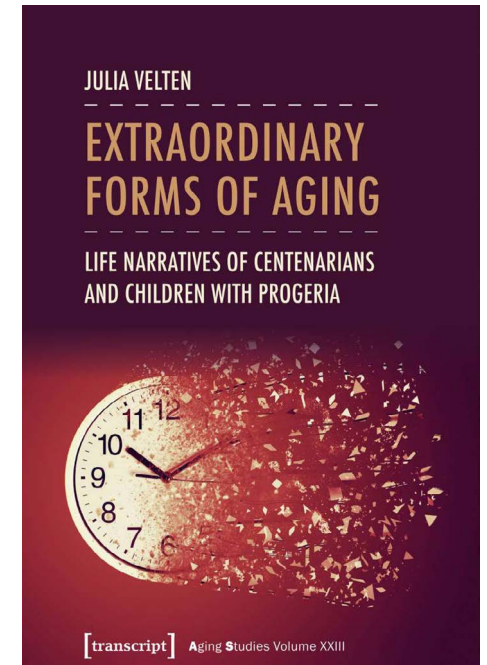
Volume 3 of 'Studies in Periodical Cultures'

For her research on Black newspaper print in the early Caribbean, Johanna Seibert received an award from the Vereinigung der Freunde der Universität Mainz e. V. in July 2022.

Julia Velten  
**Extraordinary Forms of Aging: Life Narratives of Centenarians and Children with Progeria**

transcript Verlag, 2022. Print, e-book

As part of the Transcript Aging Studies Series, this book focuses on life narratives of centenarians and children with progeria. Based on the assumption that the aging process is naturalized and therefore mostly remains invisible, it regards these extraordinary forms of aging as deferral from an aging norm, which reveals heretofore neglected aspects of the process. By looking at the extraordinary, it aims to uncover mechanisms of the ordinary. The study discusses the way age(ing) is experienced in these extraordinary cases and how imaginaries of the aging process are challenged or reinforced through the provided narratives. Thereby, it emphasizes the interconnectedness of cultural, social, and biological aspects of the aging process. What role does the cultural imaginary we have of the aging process play in our perception of the life-course? How is society influenced by the way individuals regard aging? And how does the undeniable reality of the aging body connect to the aging experience?



Regarding aging as a construct at the intersection of the social, cultural, biological, the book is situated at the intersection of aging studies, disability studies, and medical humanities. Using the genre of collaborative life writing it focuses on the way the aging process is negotiated by the aging individual, as well as by the people surrounding them.

Nina Morgan, Alfred Hornung, and Takayuki Tatsumi (eds.)

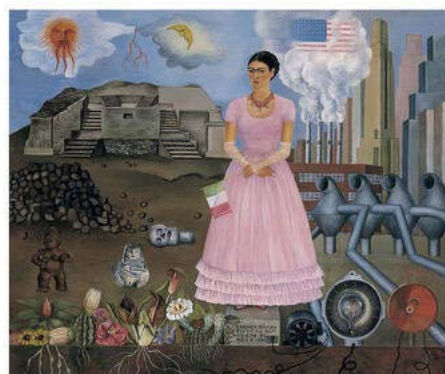
**The Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies**

[Paperback Edition]

Routledge, 2022

*The Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies* provides scholars and students of American Studies with theoretical and applied essays that help to define Transnational American Studies as a discipline and practice.

In more than 30 essays, the volume offers a history of the concept of the "transnational" and takes readers from the Barbary frontier to Guam, from Mexico's border crossings to the intifada's contested zones. Together, the essays develop new ways for Americanists to read events, images, sound, literature, identity, film, politics, or performance transnationally through the work of diverse figures, such as Confucius, Edward Said, Pauline Hopkins, Poe, Faulkner, Michael Jackson, Onoto Watanna, and others. This timely volume also addresses presidential politics and interpictureorial U.S. history from Lincoln in Africa, to Obama and Mandela, to Trump.



Edited by Nina Morgan, Alfred Hornung and Takayuki Tatsumi

The essays, written by prominent global Americanists, as well as the emerging scholars shaping the field, seek to provide foundational resources as well as experimental and forward-leaning approaches to Transnational American Studies.

Alfred Hornung (editor in chief.)  
**The Journal of Transnational American Studies**

2009 – current (Vol 13, No. 2)

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## List of Other Publications

- Banerjee, Mita.** "Black Lives Matter in Flint, Michigan: Narrative Medicine and Ecocriticism in Goliath and Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 11/9." *The Bloomsbury Handbook to the Medical-Environmental Humanities*. Ed. Scott Slovic, Swarnalatha Rangarajan, and Vidya Sarveswaran, Bloomsbury, 2022, pp. 27-40.
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- Damiescu, Roxana, **Mita Banerjee**, Norbert Paul and Thomas Efferth. "Lessons from Covid-19 to Increase Opioid Vaccine Acceptance." *Trends in Pharmacological Sciences*, vol. 43, no. 12, 2022, pp. 998-1000.
- Wagner, Nils-Frederic, **Mita Banerjee**, and Norbert W. Paul, "Who's next? Shifting balances between medical AI, physicians and patients in shaping the future of medicine." *Bioethics*, 36, 2022, pp. 111-112. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bioe.13000>.
- Bassimiri, Anja-Maria.** "Evangelical News: Politics and Bioethics in Conservative Christian Magazines of the 1970s and 1980." Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 2022. *Handbuch Zeitschriftenforschung*. Ed. Sabina Fazli and Oliver Scheiding, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2022. (Open Access Version).
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- Fazli, Sabina.** "Marie Claire: Frauenzeitschriften und Humandifferenzierung." *Handbuch Zeitschriftenforschung*, Ed. Oliver Scheiding and Sabina Fazli. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2022.
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- Gehrmann, Ruth.** "'So she would ask me to tell her stories': Indigenous Narratives of the Apocalypse in Cherie Dimaline's The Marrow Thieves." *U.S. American Culture as Popular Culture*, Heidelberg: Winter, 2022.
- Höll, Davina.** "'Perfect Scene of Horror': Cholera, Race, and Pandemic Injustice in Harriet Beecher Stowe's 'Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp' (1856)." *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, vol. 67, no. 4, 2022, pp. 437-55. <https://doi.org/10.33675/AMST/2022/4/6>.
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- Schäfer, Axel R.,** Melani McAlister and John Corrigan, editors. *Global Faith and Worldly Power: Evangelical Encounters with U.S. Empire*. Chapel Hill, University of Carolina Press, 2022.
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- , and Anja-Maria Bassimir. "Under the Cover of Religious Periodicals: Editorial Practice and Magazine Production." *Periodical Studies Today: Multidisciplinary Analyses*. Ed. Jutta Ernst, Dagmar von Hoff, and Oliver Scheiding. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2022. 332–368.
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- Schlarb, Damien B.** "Filling Out the Map: The Anxiety of Situatedness and the Topological Poesis of Video Game Maps," *Videogames and Spatiality in American Studies*, Ed. Dietmar Meinel, De Gruyter, 2022. pp. 137–152.
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- Velten, Julia.** *Extraordinary Forms of Aging: Life Narratives of Centenarians and Children with Progeria*. Transcript, 2022.

## List of Presentations Given by Members

- Banerjee, Mita.** "Gesundheit und Verantwortung in dystopischen Zeiten" (Akademie der Wissenschaften und Literatur Mainz, Dez. 2022).
- . "Der Aufstieg der 'Granfluencer' – Successful Aging auf Social Media" (Plenartagung II, SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung, Mainz, Dec. 2022).
- . "Die Phänomenologie des Privilegs: Gender und Whiteness in Raoul Pecks Film „I am not your negro“" (RV „Gender“ Studienprogramm Q+, JGU Mainz, Jan. 2022).
- . "Invited Roundtable Discussant. Violence, Care, Cure: (Self)perceptions within the Medical Encounter conference" (ICI Berlin, Feb. 2022).
- . "Invited Keynote Lecture. „Von den Asian American Studies zu den Asian German Studies? Race, Sprache, Geschichte(n)“ (Asian German Studies in Deutschland: Status quo und quo vadis. Uni Tübingen, Feb. 2022).
- . "Migration, Life Writing, and the Spectacle of the Body in Pain." (Online Webinar Talk. Thanatic Ethics: the Circulation of Bodies in Migrant Spaces. The University of Hong Kong, Mar. 2022).
- . "Hostile Terrain: Undocumented migration in Literature and Cultural Anthropology" (Kolloquium Center for Interamerican Studies (CIAS), Uni Bielefeld, May 2022).
- . "Towards an Asian German Studies? Korean Nurses, Deep Maps, and Popular Culture" (Keynote Lecture. Political Education & American Studies. Annual Conference of the German Association for American Studies (GAAS). Uni Tübingen, June 2022).
- . "Knowledge Drivers for Resilience and Transformation." (17th International Forum on Knowledge Asset Dynamics (IFKAD). Lugano, Switzerland, June 2022).
- . "Biomediality in the Andes: Life Writing, Disability and Medical Citizenship in Violeta Ayala's *The Fight*" (Life Writing, Creativity, and the Social international workshop. Uni Bielefeld, June 2022).
- . "World Literature, Gender and Migration in Elif Shafak's 10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" (Plenary Talk, Harvard University IWL 12th Summer Session, JGU Mainz, July 2022).
- . "The Enigma of Whiteness: James Baldwin in Switzerland" (Invited Guest Talk. SAUTE's 75th Anniversary. Uni Bern, Oct. 2022).
- . "Thanatic Ethics and Refugee Lives: Yusra Mardini's Autobiography *Butterfly*" (Invited Keynote Lecture. Postcolonial Narrations, Postgraduate Forum

- „Postcolonial Matters of Life and Death" in Kooperation mit der Gesellschaft für Anglophone Postkoloniale Studien. Uni Bonn, Oct. 2022).
- . "Gesundheit und Verantwortung in dystopischen Zeiten" (Wissenschaftliche Tagung: Gesundheit verstehen: Auf dem Weg zu einem integrativen Konzept. Akademie der Wissenschaften, JGU, Unimedizin Mainz, Dec. 2022).
- . "Der Aufstieg der 'Granfluencer' – Successful Aging auf Social Media." (Plenartagung II. SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung. Uni Mainz, Dec. 2022).
- Bassimir, Anja-Maria.** "Natural Profits – From Countercultural Cuisine to Yuppie Consumption." Panel "Normalizing Neoliberalism." Annual Meeting of the Historians in the German Association of American Studies (DGfA/GAAS), February 11 and 12, 2022, Mainz.
- . "Evangelikale in den USA: weiße Trump-Anhänger oder breite Religionsgemeinschaft?" Landesverband Rheinland-Pfalz-Saar der Evangelische Akademiker. Online Vortrag. April 25, 2022.
- . "Evangelical Debates about Abortion: Then and Now." Book Talk based on *Evangelical New: Politics, Gender and Bioethics in Conservative Christian Magazines of the 1970s and 1980s*. Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY, USA. September 14, 2022.
- . "Evangelical Debates about Abortion: Then and Now." Book Talk based on *Evangelical New: Politics, Gender and Bioethics in Conservative Christian Magazines of the 1970s and 1980s*. University of Maine, Orono, ME, USA. September 15, 2022.
- Ernst, Jutta.** "Reprinting *The New Poetry*: Magazines, Anthologies, and North American Modernisms," Workshop: "Programs of Modernity II: Little Magazines, Anthologies, and the Mediality of Manifestos," University of Cologne, May 2022.
- Fazli, Sabina.** "Queer Times in Space: Helen S. Wright's *A Matter of Oaths*" (Conference "Futures from the Margins," SFRA, U of Oslo. Online, June/July 2022).
- . "Magazine und Humandifferenzierung: Eine Skizze des Themen- und Problemfelds" (Symposium "Rewriting the Past in the Digital Age: Perspektiven und Methoden der Journalforschung," Hannover, July 2022).
- . "Temporal Affordances and Independent Magazines: The Postdigital and the Everyday" (Conference "Capturing Ephemerality: Praxeological Modes of Fixing Journal Literature," U of Marburg, August 2022).
- . "The Face. Humandifferenzierung in Lifestyle-Magazinen" (Plenary Meeting II, SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung, Mainz, Dec. 2022).
- Gehrmann, Ruth.** "Dreams as Resistance in Indigenous Futurist Novels for Adolescents", MLA 2022, Washington, DC & online, 6.-9.12.2022.

---. „Grandpa in Isolation: The Representation of Grandparents Experiencing the Pandemic on Social Media“, (eng)aging: 5th International Conference on Ageing & Technology Fair: Active Ageing through Innovation: Learning from the COVID-19 Pandemic, Prague & Online, 8.-9.6.2022.

**Georgi, Sonja.** "African-Native American Presences on Stage: Transnational Histories and Families in William S. Yellow Robe's *Grandchildren of the Buffalo Soldiers*." Guest Lecture, Department of English American and Celtic Studies, June 2022, Bonn.

**Höll, Davina.** "'his face distorted by the plague': Reading Poe's Cholera Texts in Times of Pandemic Crisis." Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Washington, D.C., January 2022 (online).

---. "'I am a Microbe' – Mark Twain und die Cholera." Lecture Series: Medicine and Literature, Freie Universität, Berlin, June 2022

**Hornung, Alfred.** Interview, WDR-ZeitZeichen, "Al Capone, US-Mafiaboss (Todesstag 25.01.1947)". January 25, 2022.

---. Interview, Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR Bayern 2) on the publication of biography: *Al Capone*, January 25, 2022.

---. Participatiion in the Aquin Evaluation of the Bachelor and Master Studies of Anglistik/Amerikanistik, Angloamerikanische Literatur, Sprache und Kultur, Englische Sprache und Literatur, Interkulturelle Europa- und Amerikastudien, University of Halle-Wittenberg, 24-25 January and 31 January -1 February 2022.

---. External Member of Search Committee "Media Cultures in North American and British Studies", Marburg, March-November 2022.

---. Organization of the Symposium "Africans, Americans, and Colonial Germany" with Fellows and Members of the Obama Institute, 29 April 2022.

---. Coordination of the collaborative Research Project on the emigration of slave holder Henrich Sistrunk of Swiss origin to Cuba and the US between Dr. Patricia Coloma Peñate (Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia, Spain), Prof. Elizabeth West (GSU) and Members of the Obama Institute, May 24, 2022.

---. Lecture "Al Capone", Volkshochschule München, May 24, 2022.

---. Lecture, "Jack London", Rotary Club Mainz, 2 June 2022.

---. Organization with Prof. Mita Banerje and officers of the US General Consulate Frankfurt of the Town Hall Meeting with the US Ambassador Dr. Amy Gutman on the occasion of her Inaugural Visit to Prime Minister Malu Dreyer and the Johannes Gutenberg University, June 7, 2022.

---. Participation in the biennial conference of the International Auto/Biography Association in Turku Finland with a presentation on "Obama Family Lives",

chairing a workshop and attending the business meeting of the Executive Committee von IABA, June 13-17, 2022.

---. Lecture on "Audre Lorde and Jack Kerouac in Mexico and the Creation of Transnational Life Writing", conference on "Life Writing, Creativity, and the Social", Bielefeld, June 24-25, 2022.

---. Participation in the 200-year anniversary of the Universitätsverlag Winter in Heidelberg as editor of the monograph series and speaker of the Obama Institute, July 1, 2022.

---. Organization with Mita Banerjee of the four-week Summer School of the Institute of World Literature, Harvard University, for 90 PhD candidates, JGU, July 4-28, 2022.

---. Lecture on "The Triangular Research of Waldemar Zacharsiewicz", International Conference "The North Atlantic Triangle from the Perspective of Personal Commitment in the Humanities", Austrain Academy of Sciences, Vienna, October 6-8, 2022.

---. Lecture "Die Kubakrise: 60 Jahre", Volkshochschule München, October 6, 2022.

---. Participation in the Annual Convention of the American Studies Association in New Orleans, lecture on "Tesla Gigafactory in Berlin-Brandenburg: Elon Musk's Unsustainable Business" and chairing the editorial business meeting of the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, New Orleans, November, 3-6, 2022.

---. Lecture on "The Influence of Confucius on American Politics and Culture", University of Texas at Austin and talks with Fellows of the Obama Institute, Prof. Chad Seales and Prof. Sean Theriault, Austin, TX, November 7-9, 2022.

---. Lecture on "Herman Melville and Transnational American Studies", Texas A&M International University, and talks with past-president Manuel Broncano of the International American Studies Association, Laredo, TX, November 10, 2022.

---. Organization of the annual Obama Lecture on the occasion of the 70-year anniversary of American Studies at Mainz with presentations by Proff. Klaus Lubbers, Renate von Bardeleben, Winfried Herget, JGU, November 24, 2022.

---. Lecture on "The Influence of Confucius on American Politics and Culture" in the lecture series "Current Issues in North American and Cultural Studies" at the University of Bonn, November 29, 2022.

---. Participation in the virtual international conference "Comparative Literature beyond Eurocentrism" and lecture on "The Revision of European Life Writing Conventions by Chinese Sources", Hunan Normal University, Changsha, December 2-3, 2022.



- Kathke, Torsten.** "Working Futures: Alvin Toffler and the Normalization of Neoliberalism." Annual Meeting of the Historians in the DGfA/GAAS 2022, Labor and Capital in the U.S., Mainz. February 11, 2022.
- . "Un/Divided: Spaltung der Gesellschaft, Waffen, demografischer Wandel." DAI Saarland. March 30, 2022, online.
- . "The Market as a Non-Capitalist Ideal: Educating for Neoliberalism in Alvin Toffler's *The Third Wave*." DGfA/GAAS Annual Meeting 2022, Political Education and American Studies, Tübingen. June 10, 2022.
- Lörch, Michael.** "The *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* and the Cold War Scholarly Print Culture," Workshop: "DDR-Zeitschriften: Erste Erkundungen," Marburg University, February 2022.
- Meerwein, Sandra.** "From 'Manifest Destiny' to a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific': US National Identity and the Conceptualization of Oceanic Spaces" (ASANOR Conference, Bodø, Norway, 29 Sep. – 1 Oct., 2022).
- Newton, Frank.** "Imagining Possible Futures. *Emergence Magazine* and the Language Keepers Project" Conference Designs of Tomorrow: Indigenous Futurities in Literature and Culture, University of Flensburg, May 16-17, 2022.
- . "Writing Democracy in Serialized Media. Legal Discourse in Late 19th and Early 20th Century Native American Periodicals" Conference 68. DGfA Jahrestagung 2022, University of Tübingen, June 9-11, 2022.
- . "Indigenous Dialogues. Early Native American Discourse in Boarding School Publications" Conference Indigenous Print Cultures, Media, and Literatures, University of Mainz, July 6-9, 2022.
- Schäfer, Axel R.** "The Strange Career of Normalized Neoliberalism: How Evangelicals and the Counterculture Forged a New Political Economy," Jahrestagung der Historiker in der DGfA „Labor and Capital in U.S. History," February 11-12, 2022.
- . "Golden Gate, Angel Island, Alcatraz: Nationalstaat und Humandifferenzierung an der US-Westküste," SFB- Plenartagung, December 9-10, 2022.
- Scheiding, Oliver.** "babaamaajimoo-mazina'igan: Indigenous Periodicals as Multimodal Archives." Modern Language Association Convention 2022, Washington, Jan. 6-9, 2022.
- . Panel organizer: Indigenous Periodicals as Multilingual and Multimodal Archives, recognized as MLA "Special Session." Modern Language Association Convention 2022, Washington, Jan. 6-9, 2022.
- . "New Areas in the Scholarship of the Short Story." American Literature Association (ALA) Annual Convention, Chicago, May 26-28, 2022.

- . "Early American History and Race in Contemporary African American Graphic Novels" American Literature Association (ALA) Annual Convention, Chicago, May 26-28, 2022.
- . "Scholarly Publishing in the Post-Pandemic World" American Literature Association (ALA) Annual Convention, Chicago, May 26-28, 2022.
- . "Indigenous Periodicals: American Indian Newspapers and Magazines, 1880-1930." International Conference, Indigenous Print Cultures, Media and Literatures, Mainz, July 6-9, 2022.
- , with Cristina Stanciu. Organization of International Conference, Indigenous Print Cultures, Media and Literatures, Mainz, July 6-9, 2022, sponsored by the Humanities Center of VCU, DFG, JGU, and Nebraska University Press.
- Schlarb, Damien.** "Viral Games: Viruses, Errors and Glitches in Videogames," Convention of the Modern Language Association (MLA), Session 92V: Viral Media, January 2022, Washington, D.C. (USA).
- . "Melville's Wisdom," Joint Guest Lecture for the Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Harriet Beecher Stowe Author Societies, January 2022, online. (*invited talk*)
- . "'Don't Look Too Close': Big Tech and the Rhetoric of Disruption", Jahrestagung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Amerikanistik (DGfA), June 2022, Tübingen, Germany, University of Tübingen.
- . "Melville's Skeptical Energies", Faith's Retireat Panel, Melville's Energies—13th International Conference of the Herman Melville Society, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle / Université de Paris / Sorbonne Université, June 2022, Paris France.
- . "Melville's Wisdom", New Publications in Melville Studies Panel, Melville's Energies—13th International Conference of the Herman Melville Society, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle / Université de Paris / Sorbonne Université, June 2022, Paris, France.
- Schmidt, Klaus H.** "Graphic (and Other) Excesses; or, Escalating Naturalism: Transnational Film and Visual Culture between Sensationalism, Social Critique, and Post-Postmodern Playfulness" (Invited Keynote). Symposium: "American Literary Naturalism and the Visual / Digital." University College Cork, Cork, Ireland. October 14-15, 2022.
- Veauthier, Ines.** "Bridging Worlds: Individual and Collective Reflections," Conference: "Life Writing, Creativity, and the Social," Bielefeld University and Center for InterAmerican Studies, June 2022.
- Velten, Julia.** "Internal vs. External: The Art of Science Communication in *South Pole Station* and *Don't Look Up*," Annual Conference of the Austrian Association for American Studies, Paris Lodron University Salzburg, 23.10.2022.

## List of Presentations at the Obama Institute

### January

**Dirk Mönkemöller** (The Weekender)

"Aus dem Alltag eines Magazinmakers" (online)

### April

**Herman L. Bennet** (The City University of New York)

"Afro-Germans & Embodied Afterlives of Fascism and Jim Crow, 1955-1989"

**Heike Raphael-Hernandez** (University of Würzburg)

"The Power of Images: Germany, Transatlantic Slavery, and Homegrown Racism"

**Ruth Stanford** (Georgia State University, Atlanta)

"Memorials of Germany's Colonial History in Namibia and the Federal Republic: An Artist's Investigation"

**Pia Wiegink** (University of Bonn)

"From North America to Oceania: 19th-Century German Perspectives on Slavery, Blackbirding, and Bonded Labor"

### May

**Herman L. Bennet** (The City University of New York)

"Imagined Pasts: Historical Thinking and Black Immigrants"

"Ethnic Formation Now and the Problem with the Past"

**Patricia Coloma Peñate** (Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia)

"The Phenomenology of Heinrich Sisstrunk: A Portrait of a First Settler in the New World"

"The Muslims Are (Always) Coming!: How Religion as a Category of Analysis Complicates American Immigration Narratives"

**Cathryn Halverson** (Minot State University, North Dakota)

"Juanita Harrison's 'Great Wide, Beautiful World'"

**Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera** (University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez)

"Leaving America: Emigrant Culture When the Dream is Over"

"From Lemonade to Homecoming: Beyoncé's Spatial Politics"

### June

**Moustafa Bayoumi** (Brooklyn College, The City University of New York)

"It don't gitmo better than this': Why Guantanamo Bay May Be the Best Worst Place for Understanding Transnational American Studies"

"Guantánamo's End?"

**Monika Fodor** (University of Pécs)

"Subjectivity Construction in Intergenerational Memory Narratives"

**Claudia Sadowski-Smith** (Arizona State University)

"Climate Migration Fiction"

**David Thomson** (Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, Connecticut)

"Bonds of War: How Civil War Financial Agents Sold the World on the Union"

**Jean-Michel Turcotte** (Leibniz Institute Mainz)

"Functionalism in Practice: Canadian Foreign Policy, International Politics and the Issue of Prisoners of War, 1939-1953"

**Wade Turvold** (DKI Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Honolulu)

"U.S. Regional Vision and Politics" (online)

### July

**Natalia Albu** (Center of Strategic Research, Legal, Political and Sociological

Research Institute, Moldova) and **Miemie W. Byrd** (DKI Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Honolulu)

"Women, Peace, and Security" (online)

**David Damrosch** (Harvard University)

"Born Global: Transcontinental Literature and Film, from Apuleius to Ang Lee"

**Linda Morra** (Bishop's University, Quebec)

"Women Writers in Canada: Working Beyond the Limits of Language"

**Herta Müller** (Nobel Laureate)

A Reading and Conversation with Herta Müller

**Christian Schmidt** (Archiv der Jugendkulturen, Berlin)

"Zines and Archives"

**Teal Triggs** (RCA, London)

"Zines by Design: Remediating Ripped & Torn"

**Lawrence Venuti** (Temple University, Philadelphia)

"On a Universal Tendency to Debase Retranslations; or, The Instrumentalism of a Translation Fixation"

**Matthew Worley** (University of Reading, England)

"Sniffin' Glue (1976-77) and Ripped & Torn (1976-79): Two Case Studies as to Why Fanzines Matter"

**November****Brigitte Johanna Glaser** (Georg-August-University Göttingen)

"Margaret Atwood's Venture into Graphic Novels: The Angel Catbird Trilogy and the War Bears Series"

**Johannes Müller-Lancé** (University of Mannheim)

"Ökonomische Einflüsse auf Textsorten in der Special Interest-Presse"

**December****Ian Afflerbach** (University of North Georgia)

"American Literary Modernism"

**Chandni Rampersad** (University of Duisburg-Essen)

"Ladies in the Gentleman's Magazine"

**Melissa Schlecht** (University of Stuttgart)

"Pedagogy of Survivance: Indigenous American Zine-Making as Counter-Hegemonic Practice"

**Jörg Theis** (Freelance Translator, Berlin)

"‘Aus Menschen gebaute Maschinen’: Innovative Unternehmenspraxis von Pflanzern auf den Westindischen Inseln und im Amerikanischen Süden"

**List of Faculty and Staff Members****Professors**

Banerjee, Prof. Dr. Mita

Ernst, Prof. Dr. Jutta

Schäfer, Prof. Dr. Axel

Scheiding, Prof. Dr. Oliver

**Research Professors**

Hornung, Prof. Dr. Alfred

**Emeriti**

Herget, Prof. Dr. Winfried

**Staff**

Heiser, Pia

Plicht, Christine, M.A.

Vollrath, Anette

**Faculty**

Bassimir, Dr. Anja-Maria

Brau-Weglinski, Lisa, B.A.

Bull, Anne, M.A.

Büyükgümüş, Simge, M.A.

Duvall, Margaret, M.A.

Fazli, Sabina, M.A.

Fellows, Ralph J. D.

Feyerabend, Dr. Britta

Gehrmann, Ruth, M.A.

Georgi, Dr. Sonja

Görg, Dr. Claudia

Heiß, Stephanie

Heydt, Nina, M.A.

Höll, Dr. Davina

Kathke, Dr. Torsten

Kleinstück, Lydia, M.A.

Kreye, Ylva, M.A.

Lörch, Michael, M.A.

Matter-Seibel, apl. Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Sabina

Meerwein, Sandra, M.A.

Moorhead, Bailey, Ph.D.

Neubauer, Tatjana, M.A.

Newton, Frank E., M.Ed.

Obenland, Dr. Frank

Raatz, Volker, Dipl.-Dolm.

Robichaud, Colette

Schlarb, Damien, Ph.D.

Schmidt, Dr. Klaus H.

Smith, Nasra, M.A.

Spahr, Dr. habil. Clemens

Türk, Dr. Claudia

Veauthier, Dr. Ines

Velten, Julia, M.A.

**Adjunct Faculty**

Achilles, Jochen Prof. Dr.

Dietrich, Dr. habil. René

Gernalzick, PD Dr. Nadja

Kohl, Dr. Martina

Kortenbruck, Anke

Lanzen, Dr. Christoph

Lanzendörfer, PD Dr. Tim

Reisner, Dr. habil. Philipp

Spahr, Dr. habil. Clemens

Temmen, Jens, M.A.

Touzos, Amina, M.Ed.

Wetzel-Sahm, Dr. Birgit





