



**Heidelberg Center
for American Studies**

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

SPECIAL FEATURE

Florian Böller

Here to Stay:

Polarization and Gridlock after the 2020 Elections



**Ruprecht-Karls-Universität
Heidelberg, est. 1386**



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

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Editor

Welf Werner

Editorial Staff

Wilfried Mausbach

Julian Kramer

Anja Schüler

Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA)

Curt und Heidemarie

Engelhorn Palais

Hauptstraße 120

69117 Heidelberg

Germany

T + 49 6221/ 54 37 10

F + 49 6221/ 54 37 19

hca@uni-heidelberg.de

www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Coverdesign

Bernhard Pompey

Adapted Design and Layout

Barbara Grobe

Christian Kempf

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RECTOR'S WELCOME

PROF. DR. DR. H.C. BERNHARD EITEL
RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG

Dear Reader,

The 634th year since the founding of our Ruperto Carola has been an extraordinary year. In mid-March, the global Covid-19 pandemic forced the university, like the entire country, into a months-long lockdown. Most university employees started working from home. We bundled all resources to conceptualize and implement remote teaching and moved all classes online. The Studium Generale and other university-wide lecture series went digital on heiONLINE, the university's Internet platform for public events. Ever-changing state and municipal regulations presented an additional challenge: Not only did we have to apply them to university life, we had to communicate them broadly to as many university members as possible, including students and prospective students. All this did not always go smoothly, but our students acknowledged the collective effort and the success of digital and hybrid teaching formats while the general public availed itself of our new digital formats.

The HCA was a distinctive part of these efforts. Not only did it swiftly move all of its classes online, it just as expeditiously confirmed its long-standing commitment to furthering the dialogue between academia and the public at a time when public events became impossible. In late April, the HCA launched the podcast "Corona in den USA," which has since secured a large and loyal base of listeners. The Center also conceptualized the Ruperto Carola Ringvorlesung for the 2020-21 winter semester, entitled "Quo Vadis USA?" Both the podcast and the lecture series have become important features of heiONLINE. Yet, formats like these can never replace the in-person exchange that is so crucial to our academic community. I sincerely hope that here at the Ruperto Carola we can return to in-person teaching and live events in 2021 – and that we will at the same time benefit from and expand our digital endeavors in the years to come!

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Bernhard Eitel". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bernhard Eitel
Rector of Heidelberg University



PREFACE

PROF. DR. WELF WERNER
DIRECTOR OF THE HCA

Dear Friends, Benefactors, Students, and Colleagues,

The Heidelberg Center for American Studies is looking back on the most unusual and challenging year in its history. After a busy winter semester, we were in the midst of planning for an even busier summer term when the global Covid-19 pandemic forced the country – and indeed much of the world – into a complete shutdown. In March, the HCA still managed to host the annual meeting of the Wirtschaftshistorischer Ausschuss of the Verein für Socialpolitik. A joint conference with Princeton University, meant to honor the life and work of the African American abolitionist and writer James W.C. Pennington, and planned for the same month, had to be postponed amid the growing uncertainties of transatlantic travel. The HCA was forced to cancel all events and close its doors on March 16, just days before the opening of an exhibition and the launch of the 17th HCA Spring Academy. The Corona crisis thwarted the HCA Commencement in April and, for that matter, an entire carefully planned program of events, including the 67th Annual Meeting of the German Association for American Studies (DGfA/ GAAS), which was expected to bring 300 participants to Heidelberg University in June.

The spring lockdown felt like a heart-stopping moment, but thanks to our dedicated faculty and staff, who immediately fortified themselves and mobilized new energies, this did not last long. By the beginning of the semester in mid-April, all HCA classes had been moved online. Given that public events could not take place, our HCA Forum activities took to the airwaves with the podcast “Corona in den USA.” Hosted by Dr. Anja Schüler, our podcast brings the expertise of scholars from the HCA and other institutions to the wider public, and it immediately attracted a loyal following. Its more than thirty episodes (and counting) have generated more than 350,000 clicks as this annual report goes to print – a success beyond our wildest imaginations. But the HCA’s new digital formats do not stop there – our graduate blog is a testament to the prolific minds of our students, and our Facebook and Twitter accounts reach audiences across the globe. In addition, the HCA has put together the Ruperto Carola Ringvorlesung “Quo Vadis USA?” for the winter semester 2020-21. While we could not anticipate that the lecture series would completely

go online, we developed alternative formats long in advance and complemented traditional lectures with expert dialogues and a panel discussion that kicked off the series on the eve of the November 3 presidential elections. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the rectorate and the office of communication and marketing for their support and close cooperation.

While the Covid-19 pandemic encouraged us to boldly experiment with digital formats, the concept of the “digital HCA” dates back further. At its meeting in November 2019, the HCA advisory board had enthusiastically embraced our plans to substantially expand the HCA’s reach through various digital channels in the years to come. At the time, we had set out towards this goal by revamping our homepage and supplementing it with a new section documenting a number of high-profile 2019 events in video format. The developments outlined above confirm that our instincts were right on, and we will certainly use the experience from this extraordinary year to keep the ball rolling.

While the global pandemic represented our biggest challenge during the past year, there were other tidings that gave us reason to pause and reflect. In May, Rolf Kentner, an honorary senator of Heidelberg University, the honorary president of the Jacob Gould Schurman Foundation, and one of the HCA’s earliest and most faithful friends, passed away. With him, we lose a tireless supporter and champion of American Studies in Heidelberg, who always entertained a particular devotion to the work of young scholars, as revealed by the Rolf Kentner Dissertation Award, which will be continued in his honor by the Schurman Foundation. I am grateful that Hans-Hasso Kersten and Dr. Thomas Peuntner will carry on the work of the Foundation in Rolf Kentner’s spirit.

As this arduous year draws to a close, I am confident that 2021 will – after a difficult winter – see us on the road back to normalcy eventually. I look forward to the day when we can return to in-person teaching and events and come together jauntily in the Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais, the Alte Aula, and maybe even a newly designed inner courtyard.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Welf Werner', with a stylized flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Prof. Dr. Welf Werner
Director of the Heidelberg Center for American Studies



OBITUARY

ROLF KENTNER (1947-2020)

In 2020, the HCA mourned the death of its faithful friend and supporter Rolf Kentner, who passed away on May 20 after a prolonged illness. On top of his long career at Mannheim's BW bank, Rolf Kentner tirelessly volunteered his expertise to many civic endeavors, among them as president of the Schurman Society for the Promotion of American Studies at Heidelberg University and the Jacob Gould Schurman Foundation. Both associations were essential for the creation of the Schurman Library for American History, the establishment of the Curt Engelhorn Chair for American History, and the founding and development of the HCA. Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Detlef Junker, the HCA's Founding Director, paid tribute to Rolf Kentner's achievements as a "dedicated friend of German-American relations. Without his support the HCA would not have advanced to one of the most important centers for American Studies in Europe."

Both the Ruperto Carola and the Hochschule Mannheim named Rolf Kentner an honorary senator. He was always especially interested in the work of young scholars, which he supported by endowing a prize for an excellent dissertation in American Studies at a German university. After he resigned from the presidency of the Schurman Foundation, it resolved to name him honorary president and continue to award the Rolf Kentner Dissertation Prize as a tribute to his life time achievement.



THE HEIDELBERG CENTER FOR
AMERICAN STUDIES

MISSION STATEMENT

The Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA) is a central academic facility of the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg. As an intellectual center dedicated to the study of the United States, the HCA serves as an institute for higher education, as a center for interdisciplinary research, and as a forum for public debate. Building on long-standing ties between Heidelberg and the United States, the HCA also fosters interdisciplinary and intercultural exchange across the Atlantic.

Officially inaugurated in 2004, the HCA has become one of the leading centers for American Studies in Europe. It provides excellent research and education opportunities for scholars and students from all over the world. In addition, the HCA strengthens the profile of Heidelberg University as one of Germany's finest academic institutions. Heidelberg University's 634-year-old tradition of excellence, its international reputation, and its strong record in the study of the United States combine to create the ideal environment for the HCA.

BENEFACTORS

Although the HCA is legally and institutionally a central academic institution of Heidelberg University, financially it is perhaps the only public-private partnership (PPP) in the humanities in Germany. Without the long-standing support and patronage of dedicated benefactors, the founding and continuous operation of the HCA would not have been possible. The HCA is sincerely grateful for the generosity of many individuals, corporations, and institutions.

This report is testimony to the generous support of our benefactors, whose contributions are acknowledged on these pages. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all individuals, institutions, and corporations who have supported the HCA for many years, among them six honorary senators of Heidelberg University: Curt Engelhorn (†), Heidemarie Engelhorn, Soyehl Ghaemian, Rolf Kentner(†), Dr. h.c. Manfred Lautenschläger, and Dr. Hans-Peter Wild. In addition, the HCA gratefully appreciates, in alphabetical order, the donations of Dr. Kurt Bock and the BASF Group; Dr. Martin Bussmann and the Ladenburg Foundation; Elfie and Ray Carrell; Dr. Andreas Dienertowitz; Claudia Engelhorn; Herbert A. Jung; and Dr. Oliver Neumann and Dr. Thomas Peuntner of the John Deere Company. Donations from these benefactors not only enabled the institutional development of the HCA in general but also provided several scholarships for its master's and Ph.D. programs as well as funding for conferences.

With exceptional generosity, Honorary Senators Curt Engelhorn (†) and Heidemarie Engelhorn have sown the seeds which enabled the HCA and Heidelberg University to globally make their mark in the fields of American Studies and transatlantic relations. In 2008, they committed to supporting the HCA with 400,000 EUR annually and have done so ever since. In addition, the Engelhorn family most hospitably put the Curt und Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais at the HCA's free disposal and, moreover, underwrote construction of an annex to the landmarked palais that houses additional academic facilities and was dedicated in October 2009 (see p. 29).

Again, the Ladenburg Foundation and the Friends of the HCA, headquartered in New York City, have been pillars of institutional support. The Ghaemian Foundation supported the HCA from 2007 to 2012. It established the Ghaemian Travel Fund for scholars in 2007. From 2009 to 2013, the foundation offered a Ghaemian Scholar-in-Residence fellowship as well. The first recipient of this fellowship was Professor Rashida Braggs, who came to the HCA from Stanford University, followed by professors Patrick S. Roberts from Virginia Tech University, Charles Postel from San Francisco State University, and Sarah-Jane Mathieu from the University of Minnesota.

One of the most active benefactors of American Studies in Heidelberg since 1991, Rolf Kentner, established the Rolf-Kentner-Dissertation Prize in 2010. This annual award recognizes an outstanding and yet unpublished dissertation in American Studies submitted to a German University. In 2010, the award went to Daniel Stein from the University of Göttingen; the 2011 recipient was Frank Usbeck from the University of Leipzig; in 2012, Leonard Schmieding, also from the University of Leipzig, received this award; in 2013, the Kentner Prize was awarded to Jasper M. Trautsch, who received his doctorate from the Free University Berlin; in 2014 the award went to Juliane Braun from the University of Würzburg; Tom Kaden from the University of Leipzig received the Kentner Prize in 2015; the 2016 recipient of the Kentner Prize was Birte Wege from the Free University of Berlin; in 2017, the Kentner Prize went to Annika Elena Poppe of the Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung (Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, PRIF), who received her doctorate from the University of Frankfurt. In 2018, the Kentner Prize was awarded to Jonas B. Anderson from the University of Jena, who completed his doctorate at the LMU Munich. The 2019 recipient was Maria Sulimma, who received her doctorate from the Free University Berlin and now teaches at the University Duisburg-Essen. In 2020, the Kentner Prize went to Juliane Hornung of the University of Cologne, who received her doctorate from LMU Munich (see p. 80).

Dr. h.c. Manfred Lautenschläger and the Lautenschläger Foundation continued their longtime support of the HCA by providing funding for the James W. C. Pennington Award, set up jointly by the HCA and the Faculty of Theology. On the occasion of the award's inauguration, the HCA was honored to receive a message of greetings from U.S. President Barack Obama, acknowledging this new initiative (see HCA annual report 2010-11). In 2012, this prestigious award, named for the first African American to receive an honorary doctorate from a European University, brought the first preeminent visiting scholar in this program to the HCA, Professor Albert J. Raboteau from Princeton University, followed by Professor Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham from Harvard in 2013, Professor Laurie Maffly-Kipp from Washington University in St. Louis in 2014, Professor William L. Andrews from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in 2015, Professor John Witte Jr. from Emory University in 2016, Professor Harry Stout from Yale University in 2017, Professor Eddie S. Glaude from Princeton University in 2018, and Professor Paul Harvey from the University of Colorado Colorado Springs in 2019.

During the academic year 2019-20, five MAS students and four Ph.D. candidates were privileged to enjoy the support of the BASF Group, Elfie and Ray Carrell, and Heidemarie Engelhorn, the Leonie Wild Foundation, and Dr. Andreas Dienerowitz. And once more, the 2019 Spring Academy was made possible by the generosity of the John Deere Company.

Two foundations, the Schurman Foundation and the Friends of the HCA, are responsible for managing parts of our privately donated funds. With a registered office in Heidelberg, the Schurman Foundation is in charge of tax-deductible contributions to the HCA from Europe and Germany.

Jacob Gould Schurman Stiftung,
c/o Heidelberg Center for American Studies
Curt und Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais
Hauptstraße 120
69117 Heidelberg
Germany
T +049 (0) 6221 543710
F +049 (0) 6221 543719
Mail to: clarenz@hca.uni-heidelberg.de
IBAN: DE 29600501017421501253
SWIFT: SOLADEST

Since the spring of 2004, the American counterpart of the Schurman Foundation, the FHCA, has administered tax-deductible donations to the HCA from the United States:

Friends of the Heidelberg Center
for American Studies (FHCA)
c/o Lucy Whitehead
Mannheim LLC
712 Fifth Ave., 32nd Floor
New York, NY 10019
U.S.A.
T +1 (212) 664 8600
F +1 (212) 664 8415
JP Morgan Private Bank
1211 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036
ABA # 021000021
A/c # 739 178636

ORGANIZATION

As a central academic institution of Heidelberg University, the HCA is not part of a single faculty or department but is directly affiliated with the rector's office. A board of trustees (Kuratorium), composed of long-time supporters of the HCA and chief executives of Heidelberg University, advises the HCA in structural and financial affairs as well as in the solicitation of donations. A board of directors, one from each of the six faculties participating in the HCA, provides advice on strategic decisions and supervises the center's academic activities. Professor Welf Werner heads the HCA; daily business is managed by Executive Director Dr. Wilfried Mausbach.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In November 2005, the HCA established a board of trustees. Today, it consists of nine members, all of them long-time supporters of the HCA and of the endeavor to create a leading center for American Studies and transatlantic exchange at Heidelberg University. Along with HCA Founding Director Professor Detlef Junker they are: Dr. Kurt Bock, Dr. Martin Bussmann, Carsten Brzeski, Ray Carrell, Heidemarie Engelhorn, Joachim Häger, Dr. h.c. Manfred Lautenschläger, and the rector of Heidelberg University, Professor Bernhard Eitel. In 2014, and after rendering great service to the HCA since its inception, Dr. Bernd-A. von Maltzan left the Board of Trustees. His successor is Joachim Häger. In February 2018, the HCA's founding director became the chairman of the board of trustees. In May 2020, the HCA mourned the passing of its long-time trustee Rolf Kentner. Carsten Brzeski joined the board in November 2020. It meets at least once a year to discuss the institute's progress and to advise its future developments.



DR. KURT BOCK

Kurt Bock was Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of BASF SE from 2011 until 2018. He joined the company in 1985 and assumed the role of CFO in 2003. Kurt Bock is a member of the Supervisory Boards of BMW Group, Fresenius Management SE and Munich Reinsurance Company. Kurt Bock was born in 1958. He studied Business Administration in Germany and the United States. He is married and has three children.

(Photo courtesy BASF SE)



DR. MARTIN BUSSMANN

Dr. Martin Bussmann is a Trustee of the Mannheim Trust in New York. He is Managing Director of Mannheim LLC and active in other portfolio companies of the Mannheim Trust. He spent fifteen years in the health care and chemical industry with Knoll AG, Abbott Laboratories, and BASF in Europe and in the United States. Dr. Bussmann obtained his law degree from Heidelberg University in 1975 and was a Visiting Scholar at the Harvard Law School in 1977. He received his Dr. juris. utriusque degree from Heidelberg University in 1978.



CARSTEN BRZESKI

Carsten Brzeski is Global Head of Macro Research and Chief Eurozone Economist for ING. He has been ING Germany's chief economist since 2013. His main areas of expertise are national, European and global economic and political developments with a focus on macroeconomics, monetary policies of the European Central Bank (ECB) and financial markets. As one of the most quoted economists in Germany, Carsten Brzeski frequently comments in international media. Prior to joining ING in the Brussels Economic Research Team in 2008, he worked at ABN Amro's Economics Department in Amsterdam and at the European Commission. From 2000 to early 2004, he was senior policy advisor at the Dutch Ministry of Finance. He is a Berlin-born German and has studied at the Free University of Berlin, Northeastern University, and Harvard University. In 2019 he was a John F. Kennedy Memorial Policy Fellow at Harvard University's Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies.

(Photo courtesy ING)



RAY CARRELL

Ray Carrell was born in Texas in 1946 and holds a B.A. from Texas Tech University. He has more than forty years of executive experience in development, sales, and finance, including positions as managing director of companies in the U.S., France, and the U.K. From 1966 to 1982, his career with the Michigan-based Clark Equipment Company took him to Wiesbaden and Strasbourg. In 1982, he became group vice president of the Perkins Engines Group in Peterborough, Great Britain. Ray Carrell returned to Texas in 1987 as the President and CEO of MTU North America. In 1995, he joined the Board of Management of Kühnle, Kopp, and Kausch in Frankenthal and became president and CEO of the Company in 1999. With the sale of AG KK&K to Siemens AG in 2006, he joined ECM Equity Capital Management, a mid-sized private equity fund based in Frankfurt. Ray Carrell has supported the HCA and its multidisciplinary programs for many years, fostering the transatlantic dialogue that is important to him.



PROF. DR. DR. H.C. BERNHARD EITEL

Professor Bernhard Eitel studied geography, German philology, and literature at the University of Karlsruhe. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Stuttgart in 1989 and his *venia legendi* for physical geography from the same university in 1994 with a study on calcium-rich cover beds and calcrete generations in Namibia. Prior to coming to Heidelberg, Professor Eitel taught at the University of Passau. Since 2001, he has held the chair in physical geography and has also acted as head of the Department of Geography at Heidelberg University. His major fields of research are in geomorphology, geoecology, the Quaternary research, soil geography, geoarchaeology, and dryland areas, particularly in Namibia, Peru, and China. In October 2007, Professor Eitel assumed the office of rector of Heidelberg University. He was reelected for a second term in 2012.



HEIDEMARIE ENGELHORN

Heidemarie Engelhorn was born in Munich and lived there during her youth. In 1995 she was married to Curt Engelhorn. She has since been instrumental in selecting and shaping many philanthropic projects of her late husband, especially his extraordinary support of projects at Heidelberg University. They have included a chair in American history, major donations to the Schurman Library for American History, the generous dedication of the Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais, including the new annex, to the HCA as well as an annual donation of 400,000 EUR to the center. In 2008, Heidemarie Engelhorn was named Honorary Senator of the university for her unflinching commitment to and support for the promotion of American Studies in Heidelberg. In 2011, on the occasion of the 625th anniversary of the Ruperto Carola, Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn funded the lavish renovation of the aula of the "New University."



JOACHIM HÄGER

Joachim Häger is member of the Management Board of ODDO BHF AG and of the Management Board of ODDO BHF SCA. From November 2014 to June 2016, he was Head of Deutsche Asset & Wealth Management after heading Wealth Management Germany since June 2007. He was also a member of Deutsche Asset & Wealth Management Global Executive Committee and chairman of the supervisory board of Sal. Oppenheim and Deutsche Oppenheim Family Office AG. Following his apprenticeship at Deutsche Bank, Joachim Häger studied business administration in Trier, graduating with the degree Diplomkaufmann in 1990. He returned to Deutsche Bank and started his professional career as executive assistant to Deutsche Bank's chief economist, Professor Norbert Walter. From 1991 to 1997, Joachim Häger was responsible for mid-cap corporate client coverage in global banking. In 1997, he took over responsibility for Deutsche Bank Corporate Banking in Eastern Europe and Austria. In 1999, Joachim Häger joined the Private Banking Division and founded a private and institutional UHNW clients business in Germany. From 2002 to 2005, he served as a member of the Executive Committee of Private Wealth Management (PWM) with the responsibility for sales and strategy development. In 2005, he became a member of PWM's Global Executive Committee with responsibility for global strategic business development. Joachim Häger was born in Wuppertal in 1963. He is married and has two daughters.



PROF. DR. DR. H.C. EM. DETLEF JUNKER

The HCA's founding director was born in Pinneberg near Hamburg. He studied history, political science, philosophy, and German philology in Innsbruck and Kiel, where he earned his Ph.D. in 1969. In 1974 Professor Junker was appointed associate professor at the University of Stuttgart. He taught modern history at Heidelberg University from 1975 to 1994 and held the Curt Engelhorn Chair for American History there from 1999 to 2004. From 1994 to 1999, Professor Junker served as the Director of the German Historical Institute (GHI) in Washington, D.C. After his official retirement in 2004 he dedicated himself to founding and building the HCA and was instrumental in its institutional and academic success. The foci of his research are U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century, German history, international relations and the history of transatlantic relations, and the theory of history. His most important publications are *Die Deutsche Zentrumspartei und Hitler 1932/33. Ein Beitrag zur Problematik des politischen Katholizismus in Deutschland* (1969),

Der unteilbare Weltmarkt. Das ökonomische Interesse in der Außenpolitik der USA 1933-1941, (1975), *Kampf um die Weltmacht. Die USA und das Dritte Reich* (1988), *Power and Mission. Was Amerika antreibt* (2003) and the two volume handbook *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War 1945-1990* (2004), which he edited. In 2005, Professor Junker was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of the University of Maryland – University College Europe (UMUC) in Heidelberg, recognizing his commitment to fostering German-American dialogue and cross-cultural understanding. In 2007, he was appointed Distinguished Senior Professor of Heidelberg University. From 2009 to 2013, Professor Junker served as president of the American Studies Network Association (ASN) Europe. In September 2010, he received the Federal Cross of Merit for his exceptional support of American Studies as a discipline, his academic teaching, and his entrepreneurial abilities. In 2014, he was named 2014 Honorary Roosevelt Fellow of the Roosevelt Study Center.



DR. H.C. MANFRED LAUTENSCHLÄGER

Manfred Lautenschläger studied law at the universities of Heidelberg, Freiburg, and Hamburg. After graduating in 1968, he practiced as a lawyer for a short time before co-founding the Marschollek, Lautenschläger und Partner KG (MLP) in 1971. Following its conversion into a public limited company in 1984, Manfred Lautenschläger assumed the position of CEO, expanding the company to one of Germany's leading suppliers of financial consultation services. From 1999 to 2008, he was chairman of the supervisory board of MLP Group; since then he has been a member of the supervisory board. For many years, Manfred Lautenschläger has actively supported Heidelberg University, for example with the provision of the biennial Lautenschläger Research Prize, endowed with 250,000 EUR, and the new building of the university's children's hospital, partly funded by a donation from the Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation. In 1998, Lautenschläger was named honorary senator of the university. Recognizing that Germany owes the United States a special debt of gratitude for its democratic and prosperous development after World War II, Manfred Lautenschläger is convinced that a center such as the HCA can foster mutual understanding, especially in times when political differences create irritations in transatlantic relations. In October of 2008, Manfred Lautenschläger was awarded an honorary doctorate from Heidelberg University. In 2010 he generously underwrote the James W.C. Pennington Award, created by the HCA and the Faculty of Theology of Heidelberg University to honor the African American abolitionist and pacifist.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of the Heidelberg Center for American Studies consists of members from the six faculties that contribute to the HCA. These are the Faculties of Chemistry and Earth Sciences; Economics and Social Studies; Law; Modern Languages; Philosophy; and Theology. In 2004, six representatives from these faculties adopted the proposal of Professor Peter Hommelhoff, then rector of Heidelberg University, and named Professor Detlef Junker the founding director of the HCA. The late Professor Winfried Brugger and Professor Michael Welker were named deputy directors. In February 2018, Professor Junker resigned from the board of directors to head the HCA's board of trustees. He is succeeded by Professor Welf Werner. Also, Professor Welker left the board of directors, and the Faculty of Theology designated Professor Jan Stievernemann to replace him. The current deputy directors are Professor Manfred Berg and Professor Ulrike Gerhard.



PROF. DR. MANFRED BERG

On the HCA's Board of Directors, Manfred Berg represents the Faculty of Philosophy. He has held the Curt Engelhorn Chair in American History since September 2005. From 1992 to 1997, Professor Berg was a research fellow at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. Subsequently he taught at the Freie University Berlin, Cologne University, and the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. He also served as executive director of the Center for USA Studies at the Leucorea Foundation of the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. The foci of his research and teaching are African American History, the history of mob violence, and the history of U.S. foreign relations. He is the author of *The Ticket to Freedom: The NAACP and the Struggle for Black Political Integration* (2005), *Popular Justice: A History of Lynching in America* (2011), *Geschichte der USA* (2013), and *Woodrow Wilson. Amerika und die Neuordnung der Welt* (2017). In 2006 Professor Berg received the David Thelen Award from the Organization of American Historians (OAH) for the best article on American history published in a foreign language for his article "Black Civil Rights and Liberal Anticommunism: The NAACP during the McCarthy Era." In 2016 he won the Distinguished Historian Award of the Society of Historians of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era. In the spring of 2009 Manfred Berg was the Lewis P. Jones Visiting Professor of History at Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. From 2010 through 2012, Professor Berg served as dean of the Faculty of Philosophy of Heidelberg University. He is the speaker of the Graduiertenkolleg "Authority and Trust" (GKAT). In 2019 the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities made Professor Berg its regular member.



PROF. DR. ULRIKE GERHARD

Ulrike Gerhard is professor for human geography of North America at the HCA and the Institute of Geography. Previously she taught North American Studies as well as urban geography at the universities of Cologne, Würzburg, Munich, and Heidelberg. She studied geography at Marburg as well as Waterloo, Ontario, and Edmonton, Alberta, and received her Ph.D. in 1998 from Marburg University doing research on urban consumer landscapes in Canada and Germany. Since then she has analyzed political and socio-economic trends in U.S. American cities (see, for example, *Global City Washington, D.C. – eine politische Stadtgeographie*, 2007), spending several months in Washington, D.C., and other urban centers. Her most recent research topics deal with reurbanization trends in North American cities, urban inequality in the Americas, and urban sustainable politics across the world. She aims at developing a planetary research perspective on urban theory that takes into account the wide array of urban developments in an increasingly urbanized world. In 2017, she edited two volumes with national and international contributions on urban inequalities (*Inequalities in Creative Cities*) and the cultural geography of the U.S. (*Kulturgeographie der USA*). Professor Gerhard was a visiting professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from March to July 2015 and a Marsilius Fellow at Heidelberg University in 2016-17. Since 2015, she is the director of the real world lab "Urban Office Heidelberg." She joined the HCA Board of Directors in 2011.



PROF. DR. BERND GRZESZICK

Bernd Grzeszick studied law at the universities of Bonn, Freiburg, and Heidelberg. In 1992 he passed his first state examination. From 1992 to 1993, he worked as a research assistant at the University of Freiburg and pursued LL.M. studies at Cambridge University in 1993 and 1994. From 1994 to 1996, he completed his Referendariat, during which he also practiced in Paris and New York. In 1995, he was awarded a doctoral degree (Dr. iur.) for his dissertation on the development of federalist thinking in Germany, *Vom Reich zur Bundesstaatsidee. Zur Herausbildung der Föderalismusidee im modernen deutschen Staatsrecht* (1996). In 1996, after having passed the second state examination in Berlin, Bernd Grzeszick acceded to the position of assistant professor, first at Mannheim University, later at the University of Cologne. In 2001, Bernd Grzeszick received his *venia legendi*, having written a "Habilitation" thesis on rights, claims, and the reconstruction of state liability

from individual rights (*Rechte und Ansprüche. Eine Rekonstruktion des Staatshaftungsrechts aus den subjektiven öffentlichen Rechten*, 2002). Afterwards he was a visiting professor at the universities of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Bonn, and Münster where he was appointed professor for public law in 2003. In 2004, he assumed the chair for public law, international public law, and legal philosophy at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, where he also served as director of the Institute for Legal Philosophy and General Theory of the State. In 2009, Bernd Grzeszick was appointed professor for public law, international public law, and legal philosophy at the University of Mainz. Since 2010 he has held the chair for public law, international public law, and legal philosophy as well as the directorship of the Institute for Constitutional Law, Constitutional Theory, and Legal Philosophy at Heidelberg University. He joined the HCA's Board of Directors in 2011. In 2013, he was appointed an ordinary member of the social sciences class of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.



PROF. DR. SEBASTIAN HARNISCH

Sebastian Harnisch is professor for international relations and foreign policy and executive director of the Institute for Political Science at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, as well as a member of the executive board of the Heidelberg Center for the Environment (HCE). His main research areas include comparative foreign and security policy, international relations theories, cybersecurity, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and climate change policy issues. Sebastian Harnisch holds degrees in history and political science from Trier University and was a research fellow at the Japan Center for International Exchange (Tokyo, 1996), Columbia University (New York, 1996), and Yonsei University (Seoul, 1996-1997), as well as Heidelberg's Center of Excellency, the Marsilius-Kolleg (2011). He has taught at Trier University (2003-2006) and the Federal Armed Forces University in Munich (2006-2007) and was visiting professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University (2011), Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (2013), and China Foreign Affairs University (2018). Sebastian Harnisch is a member of the scientific advisory board of the *Foreign Policy Analysis* journal, as well as co-editor of the series Foreign Policy and International Order (Nomos) and the Oxford Research Encyclopedia for Foreign Policy Analysis (Oxford University Press). He has published numerous books, volumes, and articles in renowned journals. Professor Harnisch joined the HCA Board of Directors in 2010.



PROF. DR. GÜNTER LEYPOLDT

Günter Leypoldt is professor of American literature and culture at the Faculty of Modern Languages. He taught American Studies at the universities of Tübingen, Maryland – College Park, and Mainz. Günter Leypoldt holds degrees in American, British, and German literatures from the University of Cape Town (B.A.) and the University of Tübingen (doctorate and "Habilitation"). He has published essays on literary transcendentalism, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century aesthetics, twentieth-century literary and cultural theory, a monograph on contemporary fiction, *Casual Silences: The Poetics of Minimal Realism* (2001), and a study on nineteenth-century U.S. literary culture and its modernist reconstruction, *Cultural Authority in the Age of Whitman: A Transatlantic Perspective* (2009). His present research interests include transatlantic romanticism and modernism, American pragmatism, transculturality, the borders between aesthetic and religious experience, and the sociology of knowledge formation. Professor Leypoldt joined the HCA Board of Directors in 2009. He is the co-speaker of the Graduiertenkolleg "Authority and Trust" (GKAT).



PROF. DR. JAN STIEVERMANN

Jan Stievermann is Professor of the History of Christianity in the U.S. at Heidelberg University, and director of the Jonathan Edwards Center Germany. He has written books and essays on a broad range of topics in the fields of American religious history and American literature, including a comprehensive study of the theology and aesthetics of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Schoeningh, 2007) and *Prophecy, Piety, and the Problem of Historicity: Interpreting the Hebrew Scriptures in Cotton Mather's Biblia Americana* (Mohr Siebeck, 2016). In the scholarly edition of the *Biblia Americana* manuscript, he is responsible for volumes 5 and 10 (the first came out in 2015, the other is scheduled for 2021), and serves as the executive editor of the whole project. Among other multi-authored volumes, he co-edited *A Peculiar Mixture: German-Language Cultures and Identities in Eighteenth-Century North America* (Pennsylvania State UP, 2013), *Religion and the Marketplace in the United States* (Oxford UP, 2014) and the forthcoming Oxford *Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*.



PROF. DR. WELF WERNER

Welf Werner was trained in economics, finance, management, and economic history at the Freie Universität Berlin and Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. Before joining the faculty of International University Bremen as Professor of International Economics in 2004, he taught U.S. economic policy and history as lecturer and assistant professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies. He received his Ph.D. and *venia legendi* from the Economics Department of the Freie Universität in 1992 and 2003, respectively. He was a John F. Kennedy Memorial Fellow at Harvard University's Center for European Studies in 1994 and returned to the U.S. in 1997 as a research fellow at both Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and George Washington University. In February 2018, Welf Werner was appointed Professor of American Studies at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at Universität Heidelberg and director of the HCA. His research and teaching focus on U.S. domestic and foreign economic policies while giving due regard to their intertwining with history and political science. His interdisciplinary cooperation has occasionally gone beyond the social sciences, as, for example, with the volume *Wie viel Ungleichheit verträgt die Demokratie? Armut und Reichtum in den USA*, co-edited with Winfried Fluck (2004). Specific research interests have touched upon fields such as international trade in services, financial market globalization, monetary regime change, natural disasters and international risk management, globalization and inequality, welfare state reform, and the economic determinants of populism.

FOUNDATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Initiated by Professor Detlef Junker, in January of 2002, a group of Heidelberg professors and administrators set up an interdisciplinary venture with the aim of establishing a new center for the study of the United States of America at Germany's oldest university. The first order of business of the Heidelberg Center for American Studies was to develop a novel graduate studies program: the Master of Arts in American Studies (MAS). To raise public awareness of its activities, the HCA initiative also organized a public lecture series, "Typically American," during the winter term 2002-03, which soon attracted a broad audience. Within a year of its creation, the HCA opened a small office from which it continued to develop the MAS and future research projects and conferences. To date, 215 students from 47 countries and six continents have graduated from the MAS.

Ten departments from six faculties committed themselves to the program, enabling a broad range of disciplines to be represented at the HCA: American literature and culture, economics, geography, history, law, musicology, philosophy, political science, theological studies, and sociology. In December of 2003, thanks to the generous support of Heidelberg entrepreneur and philanthropist Dr. h.c. Manfred Lautenschläger, the HCA was able to settle into more spacious quarters in Heidelberg's beautiful Weststadt. Four months later, the center hosted its first conference, the HCA Spring Academy 2004 on American History, Culture, and Politics. Twenty-six European and American Ph.D. students from ten countries and six academic disciplines participated in this conference. The annual Spring Academy has since become a highly regarded forum for international Ph.D. students in the field of American Studies and has to date attracted close to 1,600 applications from almost 80 countries.

After Heidelberg University and the Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of the State of Baden-Württemberg both approved the statutes of the HCA as well as the regulations governing the proposed new master's program, the HCA was officially inaugurated as a central academic institution at Heidelberg University on October 20, 2004. Simultaneously, the first class of the MAS program enrolled. A board of directors was established, convened for the first time in December of 2004, and was subsequently joined by a board of trustees.

During the following years, the HCA substantially expanded its activities. This would not have been possible had it not been for another major donation. In early 2006, Curt Engelhorn acquired the "Haus Neukirch," a beautiful baroque town house in the heart of Heidelberg's historic city center. With restorations still under way, the HCA moved into its new home, the Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais, in May of 2006. The Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais opened up a whole new range of possibilities for the HCA. In order to fully realize the new potential, Heidelberg University, the State of Baden-Württemberg, and private donors agreed to set up a matching fund for the future development of the center. This fund enabled the HCA to initiate a joint venture with the American Academy in Berlin, bringing renowned fellows of that prestigious institution to the region as part of the Academy's Baden-Württemberg Seminar. In addition, the HCA was able to introduce a year-round Fellow-in-Residence program in 2007 and add another three young scholars to its staff, thereby broadening its research and teaching capacities. These

were much needed, as a year earlier, in 2006, the HCA had launched a three-year English-language Ph.D. program with a multidisciplinary curriculum. Currently, 20 students participate in our program while 23 have successfully completed their doctorate.

The next major development was the commitment of Heidelberg University in the spring of 2009 to provide funding for the HCA on a permanent basis once its start-up financing expired. In light of this reassuring news the HCA could celebrate the fifth anniversary of its founding (and the seventieth birthday of its founding director) at Heidelberg Castle. The center's vibrant growth continued. In October 2009, the HCA dedicated its new academic facilities, a modern annex to the landmark palais. The fall of 2009 also saw the first semester of the Baden-Württemberg Seminar under the exclusive direction of the HCA.

The annex filled to capacity during a lecture by Didi Kuo in November 2019



In late November of 2009, the HCA learned that its application – supported by Heidelberg University – for the creation of two professorships to be shared with the Institute of Geography and the Faculty of Theology, respectively, had been approved by the state government. These professorships were allocated under a special program designed to alleviate the impact of two classes

of secondary school graduates hitting German universities in the same year, 2012. In the spring of 2011, Ulrike Gerhard came to the HCA as Professor of Geography of North America, and Jan Stievermann joined the HCA as Professor of the History of Christianity in the United States. A few months earlier, the HCA had successfully completed negotiations with the English Department over a joint appointment of Günter Leypoldt, Professor of American Literature and Culture. This was the second joint appointment after Manfred Berg, the Curt Engelhorn Chair of American History, in 2009. With two "bridge professors" and two joint appointments, the HCA has now established firm operational "bridges" to the Departments of History, English, Geography, and Theology. In 2015, Heidelberg University created a new professorship in American Studies to ensure the succession of the HCA's founding director.

The earlier development of two "bridge professors" went hand in hand, however, with new obligations, as the HCA was required to establish a three-year B.A. program in order to create the necessary capacities for the anticipated students. The first half of 2010 was therefore dominated by conceptualizing a new course of studies that would be true to the HCA's multidisciplinary custom, yet geared toward a different, that is undergraduate, clientele. Under the guidance of Dr. Andreas Barz from the Dezernat für Studium und Lehre and with support from the Faculties of Philosophy, Theology, Chemistry and Earth Sciences, Modern Languages, Economics and Social Sciences, and Law, as well as several student representatives, the B.A. in American Studies (BAS) was developed in record time and shepherded through the bodies of the university. When the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts finally authorized the results, barely four weeks were left before the university's application period for the fall term closed. The program nevertheless became an instant success; currently, over one hundred B.A. students are enrolled at the HCA.

The HCA also continued to expand its activities both as a center for interdisciplinary research and as a facilitator of transatlantic academic exchange. Since 2012, the HCA together with Heidelberg University's Faculty of Theology has been annually awarding the James W.C. Pennington Award, generously endowed by the Lautenschläger Foundation. In the same year the Jonathan Edwards Center Germany was inaugurated. The center is a partnership between the Department of Theology and the Heidelberg Center for American Studies with the Jonathan Edwards Center at the Yale Divinity School. Together these institutions seek to further work on Edwards and early American religious history by supporting and advising related academic projects, by providing primary and secondary source materials, offering seminars, organizing lectures and conferences, as well as by engaging in student and faculty exchange both with Yale and the other international centers. In 2015 a new cooperation was initiated between the HCA and the University of Notre Dame, specifically its department of history and American Studies program. Its focus will be on doctoral and post-doctoral exchanges as well as on research collaborations. So far four joint colloquia took place, and several junior scholars have benefitted from the exchange. Since 2018, the HCA has also been participating in the doctoral summer school Notre Dame organizes with partners from Oxford and Edinburgh. In addition, the HCA has joined a new Notre Dame research-initiative on "Global 1776."

In the fall of 2016, the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) approved a grant application worth 3.5 million EUR for a new research training group (Graduiertenkolleg) based at the HCA. The projects of the group focus on "Authority and Trust in American Culture, Society, History and Politics." It rests on the shoulders of ten researchers from different disciplines including geography, history, linguistics, literature, political science, and cultural and religious studies. In addition, associate scholars from Germany, Europe, and North America are involved in the new research training group. The emergence and transformation of authority in state and civil society, social institutions, urban spaces, culture and religion, are at the center of the group's research program, as well as the shifting trust relationships inside the United States and in the transatlantic world. Professor Manfred Berg (Curt Engelhorn Chair of American History) serves as spokesperson of the research training group, Professor Günter Leypoldt (Department of English) is the deputy spokesperson. The first four-and-a-half-year funding period began in October 2017 and involves ten doctoral students, four research students, and one postdoctoral scholar. The research training group will make important scholarly contributions to this field and at the same time offer an innovative qualification program that will help young scholars to launch their careers inside and outside academia. The Grand Opening of GKAT took place in November 2017.

A conference in November 2019 taking place in the HCA's Stucco seminar room in the Engelhorn Palais



In the spring of 2017, Professor Welf Werner of International University Bremen accepted a position the university had created two years earlier to ensure the succession of the HCA's founding director, a joint appointment at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences and the HCA. In February 2018, the HCA board of directors designated him as the center's new director. Professor Werner has added economics to the center's portfolio, giving due regard to the discipline's intertwining with history and political science. Since then, the HCA has put a stronger emphasis on "Global American Studies," thus enlarging the traditional transatlantic perspective. One manifestation of this widened perspective is the Juniorprofessorship "Migration and the Americas," created in cooperation with the Heidelberg Center for Ibero-American Studies (HCIAS).

HCA professors are also involved in the work of Heidelberg University's Center for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS). At the same time, the center moved towards establishing a "digital HCA" by increasingly documenting high-profile events through video on its website; in addition, HCA graduate students founded the HCA Graduate Blog. In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic amplified this development since it rendered all in-person teaching and events impossible for two semesters. Hence, while classes moved online, the HCA at the same time launched the Podcast "Corona in den USA" and conceptualized the Ruperto Carola Ringvorlesung entitled "Quo Vadis USA?" as an exclusively online format.

THE CURT AND HEIDEMARIE ENGELHORN PALAIS

The home of the HCA is a beautiful old Bürgerpalais with a long history. The location can be traced back to 1564. In 1699, the "Haus Neukirch" was purchased by Burkhard Neukirch. The current structure was built at the beginning of the eighteenth century, making the home of the HCA fifty years older than its subject of study, the United States of America. In 2006, the former "Haus Neukirch" was renamed in honor of Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn, who had bought the building and generously granted the HCA rent-free use of the rooms for ten years, a grant that has been extended to 2031.

Within walking distance of the university library, two student cafeterias, as well as the university's time-honored premises at University Square – the Alte Universität, dating to 1712, and the Neue Universität, erected between 1929 and 1932 with funds raised in the United States by then-ambassador Jacob Gould Schurman. On the occasion of the Ruperto Carola's 625th anniversary in 2011 Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn fully refurbished the Neue Aula and donated a new organ, thus continuing Schurman's work.

The Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais is the ideal location for students and faculty alike. It also is an architectural gem, particularly because of the decorative stucco on its walls and ceilings. The extensive restoration of the palais revealed carvings long lost to multiple coats of paint, with lions' heads, musical instruments, roses, and women's faces literally coming out of the ceiling.

Thanks to the generosity of the Engelhorn family, a modern annex to the historic building was envisioned from the very start in the interior courtyard separating the palais from the student cafeteria and main university library. In October 2009, Honorary Senators Curt and Heidemarie Engelhorn, Heidelberg Mayor Dr. Joachim Gerner, Heidelberg University Rector Professor Bernhard Eitel, HCA Founding Director Professor Detlef Junker, sponsors and friends of the HCA, staff members, students, and guests gathered after the MAS commencement for the official dedication of the HCA's new academic facilities. The annex comprises a new lecture room, an elevator, a kitchen equipped for event catering, and additional restrooms. The most spectacular feature of the new building, however, is a 360-square-meter glass-covered atrium with a corkscrew staircase, making the entire space available for use as an auditorium, exhibition room, or concert

hall. The two seminar rooms, called Stucco and Oculus for their signature architectural features, have been outfitted with state of the art projection equipment. Thus, the HCA is well-prepared to host not only its BAS, MAS, and Ph.D. students but also an increasing number of international conferences and workshops.

PEOPLE 2019-2020



AZADEH AKBARI, M.SC. STUDENT ASSISTANT

Azadeh Akbari received her bachelor's degree in social research from Allameh Tabatabaei University in Tehran. In 2011, she graduated from the London School of Economics and Political Science with an M.Sc. degree in gender (research). She started her Ph.D. studies in human geography at Heidelberg University in April 2016. From October 2018 to November 2019, Azadeh Akbari administered the Rolf Kentner Dissertation Prize and assisted in furthering the HCA's digital communications strategies.



IDA BAHMANN, B.A. SPRING ACADEMY

Ida Bahmann, a HCA graduate, spent the academic year 2015-16 as an Erasmus student at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece. In August 2016, she started working as a student assistant at the HCA, where she supported Forum events, including writing retrospect reports for the HCA's website. She graduated from Heidelberg University with a B.A. in American Studies in 2017. After spending the academic year 2018-19 at Cornell University, she returned to the HCA to coordinate the Spring Academy and is currently pursuing an M.A. in English literature at Heidelberg University. Since July 2019 she coordinates the Spring Academy at the HCA.

PROF. DR. MANFRED BERG CURT ENGELHORN PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN HISTORY

(see p. 20)



GREGG CULVER, PH.D.

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Gregg Culver received his Ph.D. in human geography from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His regional focus lies in the geography of the United States with a special interest in the cities of the U.S. rust belt, and his thematic focus primarily involves the politics of urban transport, particularly regarding the role of discourses, ideologies, and normative values in shaping political struggles over mobility and urban space. His current research project "Mobility and the Making of the Creative City: Neoliberal Urban Restructuring and its Impacts on Mobility, Space and Social (In)Justice" is being funded by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft). Aside from investigating how neoliberal creative city strategies impact the production and politics of local mobility regimes, a central concern of his current research deals with investigating the material and biophysical dimensions of social injustice in urban mobility. Some of his recent publications have appeared in *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, *Geographische Rundschau*, *Journal of Transport Geography*, and *Mobilities*. At the HCA, he has taught various courses on the geography of North America and advises students with interests in human geography. Gregg Culver left Heidelberg University in the summer of 2020 to pursue a career in teaching.



DR. DOROTHEA FISCHER-HORNUNG

SENIOR LECTURER AMERICAN STUDIES

Dorothea Fischer-Hornung was Senior Lecturer in the English Department of Heidelberg University. Her research focuses on ethnic and post-colonial literatures and film in English as well as performance theories and practices. She has developed, taught, and published on international e-learning co-operations with universities in numerous countries. She is founding co-editor of the journal *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* and former president of MESEA, Society for Multi-Ethnic Studies: Europe and the Americas. For several years, Dr. Fischer-Hornung taught the MAS course "Methodology I: Introduction to American Studies." She has retired but continues to facilitate the HCA Spring Academy.

PROF. DR. ULRIKE GERHARD
PROFESSOR OF NORTH AMERICAN GEOGRAPHY

(see p. 21)

PROF. DR. SEBASTIAN HARNISCH
PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

(see p. 22)



RYAN HOSELTON, PH.D.
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Ryan Hoselton is a post-doctoral research associate and instructor at Heidelberg University with a dual appointment in the Faculty of Theology and at the HCA. Born in New Mexico, he earned his B.A. in history from the University of New Mexico, his M.Div. and Th.M. from Southern Seminary, and Ph.D. from Heidelberg University. His dissertation examined how early American evangelicals conceptualized the relationship between experiential knowledge and biblical interpretation in the context of the early enlightenment. His current research explores the history and theology of early transatlantic evangelical missions. He teaches a range of courses on American religious history and assists Professor Jan Stievermann with the *Biblia Americana* project and administration of the Jonathan Edwards Center Germany.

PROF. DR. DR. H.C. EM. DETLEF JUNKER
FOUNDING DIRECTOR

(see p. 18)



JENNIFER KLOTZ
ASSISTANT FORUM/SPRING ACADEMY

Jennifer Klotz has been pursuing a bachelor's degree in American Studies since the fall of 2018. From summer 2019 to spring 2020, she worked at the HCA as a student assistant, supporting Forum events and the HCA Spring Academy.



JULIAN KRAMER, B.A.
PUBLISHING

Julian Kramer obtained a B.A. in North American Studies and geography from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich and continues his education in the HCA's MAS program. In October 2019, he started working at the HCA where he supports the annual report and is responsible for the photographic documentation of HCA events. He also provides technical support for the HCA podcast.



CHRISTINA LARENZ
OFFICE MANAGER

Christina Larenz concluded her studies at the English Institute Heidelberg as a translator for English, French, and Spanish in 1988. Since then she has worked in various branches of industry and administration. She has also worked as a translator and a foreign language teacher. She joined the HCA team in September of 2008 and is responsible for the institute's administrative matters.

PROF. DR. GÜNTER LEYPOLDT
PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

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VALENTINA LÓPEZ LIENDO, M.A.
UNDERGRADUATE ADVISER

Valentina López Liendo studied English philology and East Asian studies at Heidelberg and Osaka Universities. After her B.A. degree, she continued to pursue her interest in literature with a master's degree in English philology and transcultural studies at Heidelberg University. She has worked as a language teacher for English, Spanish and German and as a student assistant at Heidelberg University's East Asian Studies Department and English Departments. After graduation she joined the HCA's Ph.D. program. From February 2019 to September 2020 she coordinated the BAS program.



DR. WILFRIED MAUSBACH

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wilfried Mausbach received his Ph.D. from the University of Cologne where he studied history, political science, and philosophy. From 1995 to 2000 Dr. Mausbach was a research fellow at the German Historical Institute in Washington, DC. Subsequently, he taught both in Heidelberg and at the Free University's John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies in Berlin. Dr. Mausbach has also been a Volkswagen Foundation Fellow, a Marshall-Monnet Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a visiting fellow at Carleton University in Ottawa. His dissertation on American economic postwar policy toward Germany was published as *Zwischen Morgenthau und Marshall: Das wirtschaftspolitische Deutschlandkonzept der USA 1944-1947* (1996). Next to authoring numerous articles, he has co-edited seven books, including *The Nuclear Crisis: The Arms Race, Cold War Anxiety, and the German Peace Movement of the 1980s* (2016; paperback 2019); *The American Presidency* (2012); and *Changing the World, Changing Oneself: Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s* (2010). He is also an adjunct editor of the two-volume handbook *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990* (2004). Since 2005, Dr. Mausbach has been executive director of the HCA.



NIKOLAS MARIANI, M.A.

GRADUATE ADVISER

Nikolas Mariani was born and raised in Germany to Croatian and German/American parents. In 2012, he graduated with a B.A. in English and philosophy from Heidelberg University. He subsequently received his M.A. at the HCA in 2015 with a thesis that dealt with emerging opportunities for independent news outlets in the media landscape after the Great Recession of 2008. Following his graduation, Nikolas Mariani worked at the German-American Institute in Heidelberg, where he coordinated Social Media and PR efforts, ran the project "U.S. Topics," an educational program for visiting German high-school classes, and helped organize a conference on "Journalism 2.0." In 2019, he joined the HCA's PhD program where the subject of his research is examining which factors help predict audiences' formation of trust in alternative news media. Next to his own research, Nikolas Mariani also serves as the coordinator of the HCA's MAS program.



HANNES NAGL, M.A.
**GKAT COORDINATOR, RESEARCH ASSOCIATE,
& WEB CONTENT MANAGER**

Hannes Nagl studied English and American literature and political science at Heidelberg University. After graduating in 2009, he joined the HCA's Ph.D. program, working on a thesis on "Figurations of Violence: Contemporary American Fiction and the Sociology of Modernization." From August 2010 to July 2011 he was a research assistant at the English Department of Heidelberg University as part of the research project "Violence and the Hidden Constraints of Democracy: A New Civilization Studies Approach to American Literature and Culture." At the HCA, he serves as webmaster and as coordinator for the Graduiertenkolleg "Authority & Trust" (GKAT). He also offers courses in American literature.



MICHAELA NEIDIG
ADMINISTRATION

Michaela Neidig graduated as European (trilingual) secretary from the Merkur International Akademie in Mannheim. Having started her career in the medical and industrial sectors, she assumed a position as secretary of the Curt Engelhorn Chair for American History in 2009, where responsibilities include the supervision of contracts for student research assistants in the history department. Since February 2012, she has enlarged her purview by also joining the HCA, where she is primarily working with Professor Stievermann.



BENJAMIN M. PIETRENKA, PH.D.
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Benjamin Pietrenka earned his Ph.D. in History from the University of California Santa Cruz in 2017, where he specialized in the history of early America and the Atlantic world with concentrations in the sub-disciplines of religion, German culture, gender, and race. As the recipient of fellowships from the United States Fulbright Commission, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), the Leibniz Institut für Europäische Geschichte Mainz (IEG), and the Regents of the University of California, Benjamin completed the research and writing of his dissertation entitled „Religion on the Margins: Transatlantic Moravian Identities and Early American Religious Radicalism,“ a study of the early modern Moravian Church through the lens of believers and their net-

works of correspondence that criss-crossed the Atlantic Ocean in the eighteenth century. At the HCA, Benjamin Pietrenka works as an historical researcher on the *Biblia Americana* Project and teaches courses on religion and American history.



NATALIE RAUSCHER, M.A.
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Natalie Rauscher is currently working at the HCA as a research associate in the field of political science and is responsible for the administration of the HCA's Rolf-Kentner-Dissertation Prize. She completed her doctorate in the HCA's Ph.D. program in December 2020. Among her research interests are discourses around the future of work, inequality, social media, and political protest, as well as U.S. catastrophe mitigation policy. She works with Professor Welf Werner, supporting his lectures and co-teaching the seminars on the U.S. economy. She is also co-founder and editor of the HCA Graduate Blog.



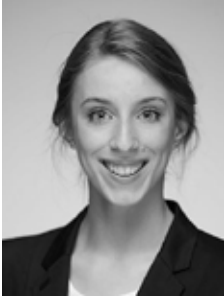
VIVIEN REINHARDT
STUDENT ASSISTANT

Vivien Reinhardt has been pursuing a Bachelor's degree in American Studies at the HCA since fall 2018. She started working as a student assistant at the HCA in the spring of 2019, supporting the founding director emeritus.



HANNAH ROCHAU
STUDENT ASSISTANT

Hannah Rochau took up her studies of sociology at Heidelberg University in the winter term 2017-18. She supported the HCA's main office from July 2019 to March 2020.



MAREN SCHÄFER, M.A. **UNDERGRADUATE ADVISER**

Maren Schäfer is research associate at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies and coordinates the Bachelor in American Studies program. She holds a B.A. in international business from Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University and Augsburg College, MN, as well as an M.A. in American Studies from Heidelberg University. Maren Schäfer joined the HCA's Ph.D. program in 2017 and is associated with the Graduiertenkolleg "Authority & Trust." Her research interests include U.S. populism, rhetorical strategies in political discourse as well as the impact of populist framing on anti-authority attitudes in the US. She is also working on populists' and populist movements' use of visual media on Twitter. At the HCA, she teaches the seminar „Core Competencies / Soft Skills.“ Maren Schäfer co-founded and contributes to the HCA Graduate Blog.



PROF. DR. DIETMAR SCHLOSS **PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN LITERATURE**

Dietmar Schloss teaches American literature and culture at both the HCA and the English Department of Heidelberg University. He holds a Ph.D. from Northwestern University and a postdoctoral degree ("Habilitation") from Heidelberg University. As a fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies, he was a visiting scholar at Harvard University. He has published widely in the fields of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century American literature and culture; his book *The Virtuous Republic* (2003) examines the political visions of American writers during the founding period of the United States. In 2009, he published a volume of conference proceedings entitled *Civilizing America: Manners and Civility in American Literature and Culture* as well as a collection of critical essays on the contemporary American novel. In his new project, entitled "Spaces of Decivilization," he explores the phenomenon of violence in American literature and culture from the vantage point of Norbert Elias's sociological theory.



DR. ANJA SCHÜLER

COORDINATOR FORUM & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Anja Schöler studied history, American Studies and journalism at the University of Münster, the University of Georgia in Athens, and the Freie Universität Berlin, where she earned an M.A. in American history. She was a DAAD Fellow at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and lived in Washington, D.C. for several years. She received her Ph.D. from the Freie Universität Berlin. She is the author of *Frauenbewegung und soziale Reform: Jane Addams und Alice Salomon im transatlantischen Dialog, 1889-1933* (2004) and the co-editor of *Social Justice Feminists in the United States and Germany: A Dialogue in Documents, 1885-1933* (1997), *Politische Netzwerkerinnen: Internationale Zusammenarbeit von Frauen 1830-1960* (2007), and *Forging Bonds Across Borders: Transatlantic Collaborations for Women's Rights and Social Justice in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2017). Her research interests include German and American social history, gender history, and transatlantic history. She has taught at the Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt University, and the University of Education in Heidelberg. She started teaching at the HCA in 2006. Since 2009, she has also been coordinating HCA Forum events, including the Baden-Württemberg Seminar, and is responsible for public relations. Since April 2020, she has been hosting "Corona in den USA," the podcast of the HCA.



FRANKZISKA SITTIG

STUDENT ASSISTANT

Franziska Sittig started studying English and economics at the Ruperto Carola in 2019. She joined the HCA as a student assistant in July 2020. She also contributes to various blogs, among them ZEIT ONLINE.



DR. ANNE SOMMER
MAS & PH.D. COORDINATOR

Anne Sommer (née Lübbers) studied political science, German philology, English, and Romance languages at Heidelberg University and the University of Bologna, Italy. She interned at the German Foreign Office in Berlin and at the Goethe Institute in Paris. After receiving her M.A. in 2006, she began work on her doctoral dissertation, making research trips to Italy, France, and Switzerland. She earned her Ph.D. in 2013 with her dissertation on "Alfieri, Foscolo, and Manzoni as Readers of Machiavelli: Intertextuality and Reception in the Early Risorgimento." Anne Sommer has worked for the HCA since 2003. From 2003 to 2007, she was responsible for organizing and convening the Spring Academy and the Baden-Württemberg-Seminar. She served as MAS coordinator from 2007 to 2019. In 2010, she was instrumental in developing and implementing the B.A. program at the HCA. In 2018 she took over the task and position of Ph.D. coordinator of the HCA's Ph.D. program as well. In November 2019, Anne Sommer assumed the position of Coordinator of Digital Education and Teaching at Heidelberg University.



TERESA STEINHOFF
STUDENT ASSISTANT

Teresa Steinhoff was a student in the HCA's BAS program from 2017 to 2020. From October 2018 to September 2020, she worked as a student assistant at the HCA, supporting executive director Dr. Wilfried Mausbach.

PROF. DR. JAN STIEVERMANN
PROFESSOR OF THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY
IN THE U.S. & DIRECTOR, JONATHAN EDWARDS
CENTER GERMANY

(See p. 23)



DR. HABIL. MARTIN THUNERT

SENIOR LECTURER POLITICAL SCIENCE & SOCIOLOGY

Martin Thunert joined the HCA as research lecturer in political science in September 2007. He is a graduate of Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe University Frankfurt, holds a doctoral degree from the University of Augsburg, and received his "Habilitation" in political science from the University of Hamburg, where he was an assistant professor. Martin Thunert was an exchange student at the University of Glasgow, Scotland and did graduate work at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. He has held appointments in political studies at several German universities and spent four years (2002-2006) as visiting associate professor of political science at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He was a Kennedy Fellow at the Harvard Center for European Studies and gained practical experience as staff assistant in the U.S. Senate (Labor, Education, and Health Committee).



MICHAEL TRÖGER, DIPL.-SOZ.

IT

Michael Tröger graduated from Heidelberg University in 2007 with a degree in sociology, majoring in industrial sociology. From 2001 to 2003, he was in charge of the IT administration at the Institute for Anthropology of Heidelberg University. After completing an internship in Lisbon in 2003, he started his own IT business. He currently is the IT service provider at the HCA.



CAROLINE WALTER

ASSISTANT FORUM & CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Caroline Walter has been pursuing a Bachelor's degree in American Studies since the fall of 2017. She specializes in history and geography. In October 2018, she joined the HCA Forum team and currently supports the Forum events as well as conference organization.

PROF. DR. WELF WERNER
DIRECTOR & PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN
STUDIES

(see p. 24)



EMMA WOLF, B.A.
ASSISTANT FORUM

Emma Wolf graduated from the HCA's BAS program in the spring of 2018, after spending the academic year of 2016-17 at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In April 2016, she started working for the HCA Forum where she regularly supports both event management and public relations and writes retrospect reports about the HCA's public events. Currently, Emma Wolf is pursuing an M.A. in English Literature at Heidelberg University.



LIANG YIN
ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT FOUNDATION
BUNDESKANZLER FELLOW

In the summer of 2019, Mr. Liang Yin, a journalist from China, received the German Chancellor Fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Between November 2019 and October 2020, "Buka-Fellow" Liang Yin was a visiting scholar at Heidelberg University and the HCA. At the time of his application, Liang Yin was affiliated with Xinhua News Agency, China Economic Information Service Shaanxi Branch, in Xi'an, PR of China. Under the guidance of Dr. Martin Thunert, Liang Yin conducted research on the relationship between think tanks and the media. After his return to China, Liang Yin will continue to work with Martin Thunert on this project. Papers with project findings will be published in English, German, and Chinese in 2021.

HCA INTERNS 2019-2020

In 2019-20, the HCA was once more fortunate to host excellent interns who provided valuable support for our work. We would like to thank Nevin Faden Gürbüz, who joined the Spring Academy team and assisted preparing the conference.

ADJUNCT FACULTY

Ida Bahmann, B.A.
Teaching Assistant, Literature

Professor Robert Isaak, Ph.D.
Lecturer Sociology

Judith Keller, M.A.
Teaching Assistant, Geography

Steven Less, J.D.
Lecturer Law

Maren Schäfer, M.A.
Teaching Assistant Key Skills
Teaching Assistant Political Science

Reinhold Siegle, B.A.
Teaching Assistant Geography

Daniel Sommer
BAS Debating Club & Presentation Skills

ASSOCIATED FELLOWS

Florian Boeller,
Junior Professor for Transatlantic Relations,
TU Kaiserslautern

Prof. Dr. Simon Wendt
Professor of American Studies, University of
Frankfurt

Professor Elizabeth Borgwardt, Ph.D.
Professor of History, Washington University
St. Louis

Professor Rashida Braggs, Ph.D.
Professor of Africana Studies, Williams Col-
lege

Professor Kirsten Fischer, Ph.D.
Professor of History, University of Minnesota

Prof. Dr. Philipp Gassert
Professor of History, University of Mannheim

Dr. Thomas Gijswijt
Associate Professor for American Culture and
Literature, University of Tübingen

Prof. Dr. Mischa Honeck
Professor for the History of Great Britain and
North America, University of Kassel

Professor Jeannette Jones, Ph.D.
Professor of History, University of Nebraska-
Lincoln

Prof. Dr. Martin Klimke
Professor of History, New York University Abu
Dhabi

Professor Charles Postel, Ph.D.
San Francisco State University

Dr. Alexander Vazansky
Assistant Professor of History, University of
Nebraska-Lincoln

COOPERATION AND SUPPORT

The HCA gratefully acknowledges the support of the following institutions in facilitating its programs:

The American Academy in Berlin; Max Kade Foundation; Hans Böckler Foundation; Andreas Henn Kunsthandel Galerie Stuttgart; Badischer Kunstverein; The American Chamber of Commerce in Germany; Baier Druck; Heidelberg; German Association for American Studies (DGfA); John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin; Heidelberg Program of Pepperdine University; University of Notre Dame; Yale Divinity School; Georgia State University; University of Sussex; University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; German American Institute Heidelberg (DAI); d.a.i. Tübingen; Mark Twain Center for Transatlantic Relations, Heidelberg; Heidelberg Center for Ibero-American Studies; English Department, Heidelberg University; Zentrum für Europäische Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften (ZEGK), Heidelberg University; Department of Religious Studies, Heidelberg University; Institute for Geography, Heidelberg University; Institute for Political Sciences, Heidelberg University; Alfred Weber Institute for Economics, Heidelberg University; Faculty of Philosophy, Heidelberg University; Faculty of Chemistry and Earth Sciences, Heidelberg University; Faculty of Theology, Heidelberg University; Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Heidelberg University; Heidelberg School of Education; Heidelberg University Association, New York, and its executive director Amanda Dohm Daquila; Heidelberg Alumni International and its director Silke Rodenberg; American German Business Club, Heidelberg; German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD); German-American Fulbright Commission; German Historical Institute (GHI), Washington, D.C.; the Amt für Wirtschaftsförderung und Wissenschaft of the City of Heidelberg and especially Irmintraud Jost; Government of the State of Baden-Württemberg; Canadian Embassy in Berlin; and especially the United States Embassy in Berlin and the United States Consulate General in Frankfurt/Main.

Additionally, the HCA would like to thank the following institutions of Heidelberg University for their support: the Rector and the Rector's Office; Communications and Marketing (KuM); the Zentrale Universitätsverwaltung (ZUV); the International Office; the Office for Equal Opportunity; the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy; the Computing Center (URZ); the Division of Planning, Construction, and Safety, especially Rainer Schmitt at Construction and Real Estate; the University Guest Houses; the Studierendenwerk Heidelberg; and the University Library. Furthermore, special thanks go out to the administrative staff of the Schurman Foundation (Christina Larenz) and the FHCA (Irina Padejeke-Enke and Lucy Whitehead), to the office of the Engelhorn family (Gunda Baumgartner), to Klaus R. Jörn, Immobilien Möller GmbH, and to attorneys at law Klaus-Dieter Freund and Jan Breckenfelder.



AN INSTITUTE FOR
HIGHER EDUCATION

AN INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

MISSION STATEMENT

As an institute for higher education, the HCA trains American Studies specialists in response to an increasing demand in academia, the public sector, and the business community. The HCA provides interdisciplinary academic and cultural teaching on the United States for students from around the world.

Having offered a Master of Arts in American Studies (MAS) program (see p. 51) from its inception and a three year Ph.D. in American Studies program (see p. 62) starting in 2006, the HCA completed its educational portfolio by adding a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies (BAS) in October 2010.

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN AMERICAN STUDIES (BAS)

The Bachelor of Arts in American Studies at Heidelberg University is unique in its broad range of subjects. The program is offered by the Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA) in cooperation with the English Department, the Institute of Geography, the History Department, the Institute for Political Science (IPW), the Law Faculty, and the Faculty of Theology, including its Research Center for International and Interdisciplinary Theology (FIIT). The option to specialize in geography or theological and religious history as well as to obtain an additional jurisprudential certificate makes this program unique even beyond Germany and Europe.

The BAS is a one of a kind multi- and interdisciplinary program designed to understand a complex subject matter: the United States of America. Students receive a thorough education in literature, cultural studies, history, political science, American religious history, and geography and have the additional opportunity to study U.S. constitutional and procedural law.

The B.A. in American Studies admits a small group of highly motivated students, approximately twenty-five freshmen annually. It places a strong emphasis on intense one-to-one support and mentoring as well as on student responsibility within a research-oriented teaching program.

The BAS is a full-time program lasting six semesters. Students are admitted once a year at the beginning of the winter semester. For application deadlines, please go to www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/ba/zulassung.html.

The program wants to attract German as well as international applicants holding a General Qualification for University Entrance ("Allgemeine Hochschulreife" or equivalent) with a special

interest in the history, politics, society, and culture of North America. The Bachelor in American Studies program at Heidelberg University lets students choose their individual focus, allowing them to specialize in the areas they are most interested in. The course of study comprises both subject-specific and practical parts. For more information, please visit the BAS website at www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/ba/index.html.

THE BAS CLASS OF 2023

In 2020, thirty-six students joined the HCA undergraduate program, the largest cohort to date. The HCA welcomed the BAS class of 2023 at the end of October with a two-day orientation session. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, students started their classes on November 2, three weeks later than usual. As in the summer semester 2020, all winter semester 2020-21 classes were taught online.



top row: Annabelle Hennemann, Jana Halter, Lea Brasen
middle row: Marie Johnson, Paul Emmering, Paul Hussi
bottom row: Pauline Gerber, Tabitha Koch, Vanessa Kreuzer

Not pictured: Antonia Braun, Michael Curtis, Ron Erben, Leon Fleischhacker, Pauline Gerber, Julia Lüll, Dana Haddard, Paulina Heeg, Larissa Huber, Moesha Huber, Tabitha Koch, Vanessa Kreuzer, Anna Lazarou, Julia Lüll, Philipp Mitze, Emilia Nabinger, Sophie Schmid, Jannik Siegler, Alexandria Tilger, Katyna Ullrich



top row: Alina Milch, Dorothee Renner, Elias Tur, Joshua Wolf
 Middle row: Lena White, Lilly Radschun, Maxine Wildenstein, Nicola Riehm
 Bottom row: Patrick Schollmeier, Sara Pies

BAS EXCURSIONS

On March 12, 2020, a group of HCA students was scheduled to visit Ramstein Air Base. The excursion to the United States Air Force base, which serves as headquarters for the United States Air Forces in Europe, Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA), and for NATO Allied Air Command (AIRCOM), was meant to give students an opportunity to both visit the site and to discuss the military mission of the NATO Allied Air Command with experts on base. Unfortunately, the visit had to be cancelled due to NATO instructions related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the annual Berlin excursion, students have the opportunity to visit American-related landmarks, to familiarize themselves with the history of transatlantic relations, and to explore the merger of history, politics, and culture that becomes visible in Berlin. Unfortunately, the excursion, scheduled for July 13 to 17, 2020, had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

EXCHANGE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BAS STUDENTS

In summer semester 2020 and the academic year 2020-21, HCA undergraduates had planned to avail themselves of the numerous exchange opportunities Heidelberg University offers. Unfortunately, all student exchanges were canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many students postponed their plans for a stay abroad.

MASTER OF ARTS IN AMERICAN STUDIES (MAS)

In 2017-18, the MAS was offered for the last time as a three semester program. Its final cohort graduated in 2019. In the winter term 2018-19, the HCA launched a newly designed four semester master's program, giving the students more choices among the course offerings and the opportunity to delve deeper into their chosen disciplines and research areas.

At the start of the program, students will choose two of the HCA's academic disciplines (history, human geography, literature and cultural studies, political science, and religious history) as their core disciplines. One of these two core disciplines will receive further emphasis in the research module, which is meant to prepare students for the writing of their M.A. thesis. The flexibility module gives students the opportunity either to take American Studies courses outside their core disciplines in order to broaden their understanding of the comprehensive field of American Studies, or to attend additional classes in one of their two core disciplines for a deeper engagement with their primary fields of interest. The interdisciplinary module is designed to bring the perspectives and methods of the various disciplines into dialogue with one another.

These subject modules are supplemented by a methodology module meant to impart both theoretical proficiency and empirical methods, as well as practical skills; and a module on cross-cutting perspectives, which – in the spirit of a traditional *studium generale* – affords students an opportunity to venture outside of the field of American Studies. There will also be a chance during the "mobility window," usually slated for the third semester, to study abroad on an exchange or accept an internship. The MAS program concludes with an examination module.

For more information, including course outlines of the classes offered, please visit the MAS website at www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/ma/index_en.html.

MAS GRADUATES 2020

Chau Pham Tran Bao

Chau, a Vietnamese girl, graduated from Assumption University in Thailand in 2012. She received a Bachelor degree in International Business Management with a Minor in Marketing. Ever since, she has worked for aluminum can making companies both in Thailand and BinhDuong province (north of HoChiMinh city). She wrote her M.A. thesis on "Economic, Political, Cultural and Societal Spheres: A Different Angle of How American and Chinese Influences on Today's Vietnam – The Use of Hard Power, Soft Power and Smart Power."

Johs Rasmussen

Johs spent most of his childhood in Denmark, although he also lived in the United States and China. He majored in American Studies at the University of Southern Denmark while also taking an elective in Comparative Literature at the University of Copenhagen. It was during Johs' recent travels that the MAS program gained his interest. His primary concern has been Cultural Studies in its American form, and his chief inspirations are Fredric Jameson, Ralph Ellison and Stuart Hall. Joh's M.A. thesis is entitled "Ralph Ellison's United States Of (In)Civility: Or, How Invisible Man's Publication History Reflects The Cultural Topography Of Postwar US Imperialism."

Sirui Wang

Sirui was born in Sichuan, China in 1991. She majored in English in Sichuan Agricultural University and graduated with honors in 2014. After graduation, she has been an English teacher in her hometown. She wrote her M.A. thesis on "The Process of Chinese American Females' Finding Their Own Cultural Identity Under the Dual Suppression Of Culture and Gender – Analyzing Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club, The Kitchen God's Wife and The Bonesetter's Daughter."

THE MAS CLASS OF 2021

Christian Allred

Christian grew up in Heidelberg, Germany as an American military dependent. He attended both German public school and an American high school on the base where his father worked. After high school, he moved to the USA to complete a B.A. in English and German at Brigham Young University. Besides literature, Christian enjoys sushi, European football, and folk songwriting.

Eva Bein

Eva Bein, a German national, obtained her B.A. in American Studies at Goethe Universität Frankfurt. Focusing on literature and cultural studies, she analyzed literary and journalist texts as well as films and TV series. With a minor in sociology, her work often includes feminist and gender-theoretical approaches.

Henry Chan Yee Hong

Henry holds a B.A. in English and an M.A. in literary and cultural studies from his native Hong Kong. Having worked in education in various capacities, he speaks Cantonese, English, and Mandarin and is fascinated by the sophistication of the German language. As a queer man of color he thinks constantly about the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality. In his M.A. thesis, where he investigates André Aciman's *Call Me By Your Name*, he explores the intricate relationships between the queer subject and the exiled Jew, an overlooked aspect in the film adaptation, by drawing on diasporic studies, queer theory, and Proustian modernism.

Fei Chang

Marius Kaisig

Marius was born and raised in Mannheim, Germany. He earned his bachelor's degree in American Studies from the University of Heidelberg in the spring of 2019 after spending a year at Illinois College in Jacksonville. Living this close to one of Europe's top universities, he considers it a privilege to be able to continue his studies in the HCA's Master's program.

Jacob McKenna

Jacob, originally from Ohio, graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a B.A. in American Studies in 2018. While at Notre Dame, he also took German courses and spent a semester abroad at the HCA in 2017. His bachelor's thesis explored German-American cultural activists and the power they wielded during the Cold War. His interests include German-American transnational history, Cold War history, modern art, and anything that involves exploring newspaper archives. For the past year, he worked at the Columbus Museum of Art, but chose to return to Heidelberg to pursue his academic interests.

Julian Kramer

Born and raised in a village on the outskirts of Munich, Julian graduated from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität with a B.A. in North American Studies and geography in 2019. This combination of subjects left him with a keen research interest in the U.S.-Mexican border, which also formed the subject of his bachelor's thesis. Outside of academics, Julian was always musically active in one way or the other and is currently playing in a band that plays mostly wedding gigs in and around Munich.

Junxuan Li

Junxuan comes from China. In June 2019, she graduated from the Department of Business English at Sichuan International Studies University, where she received her Bachelor of Arts. Her focus in the MAS is on human geography and political science. Her interests include U.S. economic and political policies, Silicon Valley, the modern culture, and societal changes in the United States.

Natalie Neuberth

Natalie was born and raised in a small town near Heidelberg. She earned her bachelor's degree in American Studies and French at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. The two-subject curriculum allowed her to attend the Université de Bourgogne in Dijon, France, followed by an academic year abroad at the Université de Sherbrooke in Quebec. The trinational study program allowed her to pursue a French "double license" in addition to her Bachelor of Arts degree. Her academic interests include political science, literature, and gender studies.

Shuangjie Sun

Shuangjie graduated from Shanghai International Studies University in China with a B.A. in broadcast journalism and a minor in English. Prior to joining the MAS, she had seven years of experience in media and advertising agencies.

Joshua Tobolt

Joshua Tobolt grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, Ill. He earned his bachelor's degree in history/social-sciences secondary education from Illinois State University. Following his graduation, he spent two years as a high school teacher in central Illinois teaching American and World History to sophomores and juniors. He has also spent the past two years being an assistant soccer coach at the varsity level in high school.

Julian Dominik Tomic

Julian Dominik Tomic, born and raised in Germany, obtained his B.A. degree in English and American Studies and German Literature at the University of Freiburg in 2019.

Hu Yueyue

Hu Yueyue is from Hefei, the capital of the Chinese province Anhui. She obtained her B.A. in English in 2016 from Anhui Normal University. In the following year, she worked as a consultant for Chinese students seeking to study at American universities. From 2018 to 2019, she was a teacher of TOEFL and IELTS preparatory courses.

Laura Vogel

Laura Vogel, born and raised in Germany, has always had a great interest in the United States after living and working in Asheville, North Carolina for a full year. Her interest only grew stronger while studying the bachelor of social sciences at the Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf. This interdisciplinary program with its focus in political science, media, and communication studies and sociology allowed her to examine current issues and phenomena from different points of view and schools of thought. Contemporary American politics, in particular, made her focus on politics and media studies and their correlation with each other. Consequently, this influenced her choice to intern at the public affairs office of the U.S. Consulate General in Frankfurt as well as to work for the Congress-Bundestag-Youth Exchange program at the GIZ in Bonn. In addition to her studies in the HCA's master's program, she now works for the DAI in Heidelberg and their outreach projects to further enhance her knowledge in transatlantic exchange in the day-to-day context.

THE MAS CLASS OF 2022

In the fall of 2020, the HCA admitted fourteen students from six different countries to its MAS program:

Maria Artemis Dobri (Germany), Konstantin Janosch Merlin Cunkskis (Germany), Thi Kim Chi Mai (Germany), Philipp Zeifang (Germany), Annie Michelle Caldwell (Germany), Kian Ashabi (USA), Meichun Kuo (Taiwan), Chaoran Liu (China), Silvia Rodriguez-Garcilazo (USA), Eylül Begüm Saglam (Turkey), Max Schiersner Caodaglio (Brazil), Nan Song (China), Xinyi Xie (China).



Top row: Annie Caldwell, Artemis Dobri, Kim Chi Mai, Max Schriesner Coadaglio
Bottom row: Merlin Cunkskis, Philipp Zeifang, Silvia Rodriguez
Not pictured: Kian Ashabi, Meichun Kuo, Chaoran Liu, Eylül Saglam, Nan Song, Xinyi Xie

HCA COMMENCEMENT 2020

Like all public events, the HCA commencement 2020 was canceled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We would have celebrated the graduation of 19 students from our B.A. program and 3 students from our M.A. program. We hope that they will be able to attend the 2021 commencement, scheduled for April 30, 2021 at the Old Lecture Hall of Heidelberg University.

STUDENTS' COMMITTEE

In the fall semester of 2012, several BAS students started to loosely organize into a group representing the student body. With the founding of the general student council (“Studierendenrat/ StuRa”) at Heidelberg University in 2013, the American Studies Students’ Committee (“Fachschaft”) became officially recognized. Members of the Student Committee help plan and support the orientation week for first-year students in the fall and organize events, such as the annual Christmas party and the summer barbecue. As every year, the Committee represented the American Studies programs at Heidelberg University’s 2019 fair for high school students. Within the HCA, the Students’ Committee has acted as an intermediary between the students and the staff and faculty whenever needed. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Student Committee activities have slowed down. However, we have resumed our meetings online, continued issuing our newsletter regularly to inform HCA students about talks, workshops, and other online activities, and are now working to establish a feedback system to improve online learning for HCA students and staff alike. It has been a year of many “firsts” for all of us (including our first online Christmas Party), but we are grateful for all students still participating in our activities and welcome new members at all times. For further information, please contact the 2019-20 Students’ Committee chairs Laura Vogel and Marius Kaisig at fachschaft@hca.uni-heidelberg.de.



Members of the student council at a picnic on the banks of the river: Shown from bottom center clockwise: Laura Garbe, Johanna Niggemann, Julia Wycital, Virginia Zentgraf, Verena Höringer, Daniela Willmann, Vivien Reinhardt, Marius Kaisig, and Laura Vogel

HCA SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

HCA Thanksgiving

A festive Thanksgiving dinner has been an HCA tradition for many years. On the fourth Thursday in November 2019, faculty and staff as well as supporters of the HCA gathered at long tables in the HCA Atrium. Along with several turkeys, guests enjoyed a pot luck buffet with traditional dishes as well as local wines.

2019 Thanksgiving festivities in the HCA's Atrium



Christmas Party

Once again, the HCA Students' Committee organized the traditional student Christmas party in December 2019. Students from all HCA programs got into the Christmas spirit in the festively decorated Atrium, enjoyed Christmas goodies and mulled wine and enjoyed a round of Karaoke.

The tree for the 2019 Christmas Party



HCA



I WANT YOU
TO WEAR YOUR MASK



A CENTER FOR
INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

A CENTER FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

As a center for interdisciplinary research, the HCA provides the intellectual and organizational setting for international and interdisciplinary research projects as well as for individual research. Besides serving as a home for its resident scholars and numerous visiting researchers, the HCA hosts and organizes international conferences, symposia, workshops, and seminars.

PH.D. IN AMERICAN STUDIES

Launched in 2006, the Ph.D. in American Studies program at the HCA continues to attract talented young scholars from around the world. Currently twenty-three students from ten countries are enrolled in the program, conducting cutting-edge research that brings various perspectives from cultural studies, political science, history, economics, literature, religion, and geography into a fruitful dialogue. They come from Canada, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Lithuania, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam.

The HCA's Ph.D. in American Studies offers a three-year English-language program to students who wish to earn a research-oriented academic degree at Germany's oldest university. The program aids students in acquiring the skills to conduct major scholarly research in the fields of American geography, history, literature and culture, politics, and religion. It not only offers a modern multidisciplinary curriculum but is committed to building a true community of scholars by fostering academic debate and continuous exchange among students and faculty members. For more information, visit https://www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/phd/index_en.html. Graduates are awarded either a "Doktor der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)" or a "Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)," according to their choice. To date, the HCA can boast a total of twenty-three graduates from eight countries who have built a successful career in and outside academia.

To apply successfully, candidates need to fulfill the general entrance requirements and must present a meaningful proposal that sketches the guiding questions of the dissertation project while embedding them in the current academic debate. The project proposal should demonstrate that the dissertation will make an important and original contribution to the field. The proposal should also outline the source materials that will be used and provide a realistic timetable for the completion of the project.

Furthermore, applicants need a letter of intent from a professor at Heidelberg University, stating that she or he is willing to be their advisor for the envisaged project. In addition, candidates must provide two letters of recommendation that assess their academic qualifications and evaluate the proposed dissertation project.

In 2019-2020, Gordon Friedrichs, Ryan Hoselton, and Natalie Rauscher graduated from the HCA Ph.D. program; they completed and successfully defended their dissertations. Congratulations!

In October 2020, the HCA welcomed two more doctoral candidates to its program, Bariah Altaf Qadeer from Canada and Jula Meret Maasböl from Germany. For more information on the HCA's Ph.D. students and more detailed descriptions of their projects see the following pages.

THE HCA GRADUATE BLOG

The HCA Graduate Blog was founded in 2018 by and for the Ph.D. and graduate students of the HCA. Since then, the blog has grown tremendously, and the editors want to thank all of the authors and readers who have contributed, read, and shared articles. If you are interested in what the up and coming researchers at the HCA are doing, don't look any further! Articles on specific research interests concerning the United States, as well as current and up-to-date topics are part of the HCA Graduate Blog. You can read, for instance, why blogs are a great source for academic research in "Yes We Can (Blog)! Blogs as a Field for Academic Research" by the editors of the blog, Andreas Balz, Natalie Rauscher, Maren Schäfer, and Aline Schmidt. 2020 also saw some exciting guest contributions, for example Detlef Junker on "America, God, and War since 1945" or Anja Schüler's article "100 Jahre Frauenwahlrecht: Die Symbolik der U.S. Frauenbewegung." More recently, the blog has featured several articles on the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences such as "Faking Grassroots – Tea Party-Style Astroturfing in Times of Corona" by Nikolas Mariani or "Who's Playing the Blame Game? – An Analysis of Media Framing of China and COVID-19 in The New York Times" by Shasha Lin and Hien Le Pham.

The HCA Graduate Blog emphasizes the interdisciplinary research at the center, offers a glimpse into the work of its graduate students, and hopes to ignite discussion and academic debate among researchers across disciplinary boundaries.

As you can see, research at the HCA is as interdisciplinary and vibrant as it can get!



The HCA Graduate Blog was launched in the fall of 2018 with a design relaunch in fall 2020

Check it out under:

hcagrads.hypotheses.org

Get in touch:

hcagrads@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Twitter:

[@blog_hca](https://twitter.com/blog_hca)

PH.D. CANDIDATES



ANDREAS BALZ (GERMANY) LANDESGRADUIERTENFÖRDERUNG

Andreas Balz was born in Mainz, Germany, in 1987. He studied English philology and biology at Heidelberg University as well as Scottish literature and British history at the University of Edinburgh. Besides a B.Sc. in biology, he holds a Staatsexamen in English and biology. His final thesis accomplished to reconcile his two major subjects by approaching two works by Cormac McCarthy, *The Orchard Keeper* and *The Road*, from an ecocritical perspective. After his graduation in December 2014, Andreas Balz first started to work as an academic advisor at the International Relations Office of Heidelberg University while pursuing his doctoral studies on authorship in contemporary American literature. In 2016, he received a scholarship from the Landesgraduiertenförderung of Baden-Württemberg and joined the HCA's Ph.D. program.

In his dissertation project, Andreas Balz aims at providing a new perspective on contemporary authorship, examining the social and cultural conditions of literary production as well as related practices like publishing and literary reception in the United States. Employing aspects of Pierre Bourdieu's field theory and performance-based approaches to culture rooted in theater and gender studies, the project conceives of authorship as a cultural concept defined by a variable set of activities within a literary field. The works of authors like Dave Eggers, Tao Lin, Sheila Heti, and Ben Lerner, which portray the daily routine of literary writers and exhibit a complex semi-autobiographical relationship with their real-life counterparts, serve as a starting point. Since literary production itself only represents one aspect of authorship, its analysis has to be complemented by a study of their authors' other activities "on the literary scene." Taking into consideration socio-cultural developments like the institutionalization of creative writing, the increasing importance of literary prizes, and the phenomenon of authorial celebrity, the project will explore how fictionalized and real-life "performances" of literary authors engage in shaping our contemporary concept of authorship.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Günter Leyboldt



ANASTASSIA BIEDERSTAEDT (GERMANY) BASF SCHOLARSHIP

Anastassia Biederstaedt received her bachelor's degree in English philology and art history from the University of Stuttgart in 2011. Three years later, she graduated with an M.A. in English philology with distinction from the same university. Her M.A. thesis "Bodies in Escape: Performative Gender versus Gender as Institution in Jackie Kay's *Trumpet* and Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex*" analyzed the construction and performance of masculinity in *Trumpet* and *Middlesex*. Within American Studies, Anastassia Biederstaedt mainly focuses on ethnic literatures and cultures. In this area, she is also interested in post-colonial questions that range beyond the borders of North America. Queer and gender studies belong to her earliest research emphases. Moreover, she is highly interested in posthumanism and theoretical questions which arise at the interfaces of human and animal or human and machine. A participant in both the Ph.D. in American Studies Program of the HCA and the research group Human Geography of North America, Anastassia Biederstaedt is writing an interdisciplinary dissertation with the working title "Animal Milk in Human Culture: A Critical Study of U.S. Milk Advertisements in the 20th Century," drawing from a broad variety of theoretical discourses for her project. Apart from this, she is a freelance teacher and multimedia artist.

Anastassia Biederstaedt's project examines milk advertisements as outcomes of a complex interplay of social and historical vectors of power. Her dissertation aims at investigating both the geopolitical and socio-cultural forces that helped to build milk as a cultural construct and the broad variety of myths and images intimately tied to this liquid. Given the persisting presence of milk overflow, how does milk continue to be promoted regarding these developments? Which changes did happen in milk advertising during the roughly hundred years since the beginnings of industrialization and urbanization? Which images are used and established to gain new consumers? How do these images inform and how are they informed by dominant discourses of race, class, gender, and species? These are some of the questions driving this dissertation project.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ulrike Gerhard



LOUIS BUTCHER (U.K.) **CURT ENGELHORN PH.D. SCHOLARSHIP**

Louis Butcher was born and raised in London to an American mother and English father. He spent most of his childhood holidays with family in Detroit and Los Angeles. He graduated with a B.A. in (modern European) history from the University of Bradford, which included a year abroad at Clarkson University in upstate New York. Louis spent a further seven months backpacking across Latin America in an effort to improve his Spanish before returning to the U.K. to work in Bath for a year. In 2015, he moved to Heidelberg to enroll in the HCA's MAS program. While there, he majored in political science, history, and law, and graduated in early 2017. Since then, Louis has occupied his time in Heidelberg by starting up an online business.

Louis Butcher's project is titled "How 'Policing's New Visibility' and Body-Worn Cameras Have Impacted Police-Citizen Relations in the U.S." It will seek to determine whether the growing use of police body-worn cameras (BWCs) in the United States has reduced the police's use-of-force – and excessive force, in particular – thus positively impacting relations between the police and the public at large.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ulrike Gerhard



THI DIEM NGOC DAO (VIETNAM)

HEIDEMARIE ENGELHORN PH.D. SCHOLARSHIP

Born in 1984, Thi Diem Ngoc graduated from the College of Foreign Languages, Vietnam National University, in 2006 with a B.A. degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). In the HCA's MAS program, she chose history, international business culture, and political science as her majors. With her M.A. thesis about "Moving on to a Common Ground: Vietnam-U.S. Normalization of Relations, 1990-1997" she qualified for the HCA's Ph.D. program.

Her Ph.D. project focuses on the main themes of Vietnam-U.S. relations in the late twentieth century from historical and political perspectives. After the Vietnam War, the "continuation of war by other means" among the American people and policymakers to codify the meaning of the war and cope with its legacy seemingly made normal relations between the two countries only a remote possibility. The freeze of Vietnam-U.S. relations dragged on, despite early efforts to improve relations and remove the U.S. economic sanctions on Vietnam. It was only in 1995 that President Clinton established normal diplomatic relations with Vietnam. Preceded by the lifting of the U.S. trade embargo on Vietnam in 1993, establishing diplomatic relations was a critical move to thaw relations between the two countries. There has been a wealth of literature on the Vietnam War; however, little has been done to shed light on how the U.S. and Vietnam have come to achieve reconciliation and "move on to common ground." Therefore, the project intends to explore the complexities of the normalization process and to specify the most important factors contributing to normalized relations in the 1990s. Thi Diem draws on the following points in her research: 1) the significance of the prisoners of war and missing-in-action (POW/MIA) resolution in the Vietnamese and U.S. political contexts; 2) the weight of mutual economic and security interests in moving towards normalization of relations; and 3) state and non-state actors' roles in the establishment of normal relations. Hopefully, the significance of this project will illustrate a turning point in Vietnam-U.S. relations against a haunting past of war memories and ideological conflicts.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Manfred Berg



JULIA K. LICHTENSTEIN (GERMANY) **CURT ENGELHORN PH.D. SCHOLARSHIP**

Julia Lichtenstein studied at the Johann-Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, where she received her B.A. and M.A. in American Studies, political science, and law in 2008. During her studies she was awarded a DAAD internship scholarship and was nominated for the best M.A. thesis of the American Studies Department at Frankfurt University. Julia Lichtenstein joined the HCA's Ph.D. program in October 2009.

Julia Lichtenstein's dissertation with the working title "Inner and Outer Space: Literary Negotiations of Southern Identity in Post-southern Times" investigates how contemporary Southern authors Barry Hannah, Larry Brown, and Harry Crews create and perpetuate a distinctive Southern literary space she calls the Ultra South. At first glance, contemporary Southern storytelling still reproduces and perpetuates traditional literary Southern tropes, but a closer investigation reveals their alienating role as empty signifiers. The equivalents of the Southern Gothic rotting mansion are in today's suburbs or trailer parks, residences with bad substance built with dirty or loaned money. William Faulkner's history-ridden cast is distortedly mirrored in Hannah's catfish-frying, cheap porn-bootlegging country folks who sneer at mainstream America or in Brown's white trash who term Oxford, Mississippi, "up north" and ironically have never heard about the Civil War. In the works investigated, Julia Lichtenstein argues, the readers are lured into the Ultra South by familiar markers and known defining features just to find themselves surrounded by surprisingly unfamiliar territory, but a territory still well-defined and with sometimes still seemingly impenetrable borders. Within the portrayed version of the South, a space Julia Lichtenstein calls the inner space is constituted by cultural practices and brings forth the imagined region. A strong and resilient regional identity is constituted and communicated, both in the protagonists and in the reader, and embedded in the outer space of the United States as a whole.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Günter Leyboldt



ANTHONY LIVANIOS (GREECE)

Anthony Livanios is an energy economist with experience in U.S. shale gas industry and the U.S. - Eurasian energy relations of natural gas pipelines. He holds a Master of International Affairs with focus on International Political Economy from Columbia University, New York (1991), and a B.A. in Economics from the American University, Washington, D.C. (1988). He founded U.S. Energy Stream with a mission to deliver cutting edge energy intelligence and to promote American and European energy investments. With twenty-five years of experience in working alongside oil majors and oil independents, on pipeline negotiations, LNG projects, and geopolitical risk assessments, he has been facilitating CEO business relationships across the United States and Europe. Anthony Livanios is committed to pro-bono and voluntary work, and he has been co-operating with prominent American non-profit think tanks like the Atlas Network, the Leadership Institute, the American Enterprise Institute, and Americans for Tax Reform.

Anthony Livanios' dissertation "The Origins and the Impact of the American Shale Gas Revolution" explores the influence of American oil culture and the challenges American oil independent entrepreneurs faced in the exploration and production of the American oil and gas fields. The project focuses on Texas, Oklahoma, and North Dakota, states that are at the heart of the American oil and gas unconventional production. The shale gas revolution is analyzed in relation to the culture of the wildcatters and the American business culture of innovative entrepreneurs. Anthony Livanios utilizes the methodology of qualitative primary research while performing and analyzing in-depth interviews with American oil and gas industry leaders.

Primary Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Detlef Junker, Dr. habil. Martin Thunert



NIKOLAS MARIANI (GERMANY)

Nikolas Mariani was born and raised in Germany to Croatian and German/American parents. In 2012, he graduated with a B.A. in English and Philosophy from Heidelberg University, writing his B.A. thesis on the rising Tea Party phenomenon in the USA. He subsequently received his M.A. at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies in 2015, where his thesis dealt with the emerging opportunities for independent news outlets in the media landscape after the Great Recession of 2008. Following his studies, Nikolas Mariani worked at the German-American Institute in Heidelberg, where he coordinated Social Media and PR efforts, ran the project “U.S. Topics”, an educational program for visiting German high-school classes, as well as helped organize a conference on “Journalism 2.0.” In 2019, he joined the HCA’s PhD program where the subject of his research is examining which factors help predict audiences’ formation of trust in alternative news media. Parallel to his research, Nikolas Mariani serves as the coordinator of the HCA’s MAS program.

Nikolas Mariani’s project “Alternative Media in Twenty-First-Century USA: Cultivating Trust in an Era of Distrust” focuses on the phenomenon of alternative, and often digital-native, news media outlets on the left and right of the political spectrum, and seeks to explore the question of how audiences of such sources come to form a relationship of trust with them. This comes at a time when the news industry in general and print journalism in particular are still struggling to adapt to a new economic reality created in part by the proliferation of the internet and exacerbated by the 2008 Great Recession. At the same time, polls are reporting record levels of distrust in mainstream news sources. Conversely, many of the same factors detrimental to mainstream news have allowed alternative news media to flourish. These sources often exhibit views, approaches, methodology, and economic models that differ greatly from mainstream news media. In his dissertation, Nikolas will examine the distinguishable factors that help predict how audiences form a relationship of trust to such outlets.

Primary supervisor: Dr. habil. Martin Thunert



SINA MOVAGHATI (IRAN)

Sina Movaghati received his M.A. in English language and literature from Kharazmi University, Iran, in 2014. His M.A. thesis, "Defamiliarization and Foreshadowing of Death in Henry James' *Daisy Miller* and *The Wings of the Dove*" discusses how James utilizes narratological techniques to reformulate his hackneyed subject of the "American Girl." Sina has published articles on Henry James, Paul Bowles, and W. Somerset Maugham. He also translated Bowles' acclaimed novel, *The Sheltering Sky*, into Persian. His current research interests are modern fiction, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Paul Bowles, and literary aesthetics. His latest article discusses the motives of Bowles' villains in the short story collection *The Delicate Prey*.

His dissertation with the working title "The Aesthetics of Failure: A Jamesian Tradition in Modern and Postmodern Novels" looks at the last novels of Henry James that are still a focal point for modern fiction scholars. The protagonists of these novels undertake missions to solve complicated and intricate affairs; however, on the verge of triumph, they lose interest in their goals and abandon their missions. *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), and *The Golden Bowl* (1904) all follow this pattern. Taking a closer look at these novels' unresolved dénouements, Sina Movaghati will study these works in light of Emmanuel Lévinas' interpretation of aisthesis. In Movaghati's readings of the novels, the much-debated "renunciations" of Lambert Strether, Merton Densher, and others are regarded as "modern failures" when intentionality is engulfed in a sensuous image and fails to arrive at the worldly target. Drawing on this thematic pattern, he will show that the Jamesian failure has become a successful prototype in the hands of the subsequent generations of fiction authors such as Edith Wharton, E. M. Forster, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Ian McEwan. These novelists' preoccupations with the subject of failure are also due to the aesthetic dimension and the aesthetic function of failure. Sina Movaghati also draws on concepts by proponents of the aesthetics such as Hans Robert Jauss, Wolfgang Iser, Alan Singer, and Rudolf Arnheim.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss



HANNES NAGL (GERMANY)

Hannes Nagl studied English literature and political science at Heidelberg University. After graduating in 2009, he joined the HCA's Ph.D. program working on a thesis on "Figurations of Violence: Contemporary American Fiction and the Sociology of Modernization." Between August 2010 and July 2011 he worked as a research assistant at the English Department as part of the research project "Violence and the Hidden Constraints of Democracy: A New Civilization Studies Approach to American Literature and Culture."

In his thesis, Hannes Nagl will analyze different contemporary American novels which are notorious for their depictions of violence. By doing so, he will especially focus on the following questions: What motivates the fascination with violence in contemporary American literature? How do these representations of violence square with the notion of a "pacified" and "civilized" society? The basic assumption that underlies the project is that such novels offer not only entertainment and thrill but can be read as socio-analytical novels which present a quasi-sociological analysis of the role violence plays in postmodern American society. From this perspective, the main aim of the thesis will be to make these socio-analytical and, to a certain extent, socio-critical aspects of contemporary "novels of violence" transparent. In order to do so, Hannes Nagl will draw on rather uncommon theoretical sources: Besides more recent sociological research on violence, he will use Norbert Elias' "theory of civilization" and other sociological theories of modernization as a theoretical background for the interpretations of the novels. Although Elias' theory is rather uncommon for literary studies and has been applied only rarely to an American context, his approach of modernization and modern society as well as his writings on the sociology of modern sport are considered as a promising and a fruitful theoretical model. From an Eliasian perspective, the literary and cultural fascination with violence and the reality of "pacified" modern societies are not contradictory but rather complementary facts. Beyond the individual "worlds" of the novels, the Eliasian approach will thus also help to shed new light on the various restraints and self-restraints that establish social discipline and peaceful cooperation in "civilized" Western societies as well as on the cultural role of real and imaginary violence in this context.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss



AMRA ODOBASIC (GERMANY) FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG

Born in Karlsruhe in 1990, Amra Odobasic studied English and Spanish philology at Heidelberg University and the Universidad de Buenos Aires. She graduated in Heidelberg in 2015 with a Staatsexamen and also holds a qualification for teaching German as a Foreign Language from the Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg. Since her very first semester, linguistics – particularly phonetics and phonology – has remained her passion, which is why she worked as a phonetics and phonology tutor for five semesters Heidelberg University's English Department. Her final thesis entitled "Politeness in Parliament: A Study in Contrastive Pragmatics" dealt with the question of whether parliamentary discourse in Great Britain and Germany is polite or merely "politic."

Amra Odobasic's doctoral research topic is entitled "Vocal Fry: A Sociophonetic Study in Women's Speech" and aims at investigating the causes for the ambiguity regarding vocal fry's social perception and potential negative evaluation when used by women. Vocal fry is a phonation that is characterized by a combination of rapid and short glottal pulses and a low frequency. Amra Odobasic's two main hypotheses are that it is not vocal fry causing the negative evaluation per se but a) an excessive use of vocal fry manifesting itself in a high ratio between vocal fry and word number and/or b) a combination of vocal fry and other (non-)linguistic features. Aside from the study of relevant research literature and the work with various spoken corpora, Amra Odobasic's main work will focus on analyzing test persons' reactions to vocal fry via questionnaires and via picture and audio recordings.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Beatrix Busse



MAARTEN PAULUSSE (THE NETHERLANDS) BASF SCHOLARSHIP

Maarten Paulusse received his bachelor's degree in history at Utrecht University in 2007 and completed his master's degree in American Studies at the same university in 2009. During his studies he did an internship in New York City with the U.S. correspondent of the leading Dutch current affairs television program *Nova* and undertook several other ventures into journalism. In the summer months of the years 2010-2013 he taught courses on Dutch history and culture to international students at bachelor level at the Summer School of Utrecht University. In the spring semester of 2011, Maarten Paulusse enrolled in the Ph.D. program at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies.

In his doctoral study Maarten Paulusse explores the ways in which politicized forms of "contemporary spirituality" have an impact in the American public sphere. The project aims to make a contribution to the contemporary discussion on the role of religion in American politics. In this far-from-settled debate among historians, political scientists, sociologists, theologians, and other analysts of public life in the United States, the primary focus in the past two decades has been on the interaction of forms of Evangelicalism, particularly those related to the "Christian Right," with American politics. This project, however, explores the matter from the angle of "contemporary spirituality," using the Occupy Movement as a case study and employing the extensive theoretical toolbox offered by the academic field of religious studies. In 2012 and 2013 Maarten completed two research trips to the U.S. during which he interviewed members of the Occupy Movement.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Inken Prohl



HIEN LE PHAM (VIETNAM)

Hien Le Pham (Le is her first name) was born in Da Nang, a beautiful city in central Vietnam. She graduated from Foreign Trade University with a major in international economics. Le worked for HSBC Bank Vietnam for over one year after graduation and started to collaborate with some publishing companies as a freelance book translator. Before moving to Germany for her graduate study in 2016, she was a fulltime corporate trainer at a U.S. software company for over three years. Le Pham received her master's degree in American Studies in April 2018 and decided to go further on her academic journey by joining the HCA's Ph.D. program.

Le Pham has a keen interest in American foreign relations, especially in the relationship between the U.S. and East Asia. Her project, which is titled "U.S. Policy towards China on Maritime Territorial Disputes in East and Southeast Asia," examines America's involvement and interest in these territorial disputes since the Nixon administration's famous rapprochement with the People's Republic of China in the early 1970s. The disputes involve several of America's strategic partners and long-time allies in the region. Thus, they pose serious challenges for U.S. policymakers trying to strike a balance between Washington's interest in establishing constructive relations with Beijing and America's commitment to its allies. An inquiry into America's reactions to China's territorial claims may therefore provide new perspectives on how the United States conceives of its role in a new multipolar. Eventually, the key questions that the project hopes to answer are whether, historically, the dilemma that the United States has to deal with now could have been anticipated earlier in the past, and what the possible flaws are in U.S. modern foreign policy that led to this situation.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Manfred Berg



JONATHAN PIKE (USA) BASF SCHOLARSHIP

Jonathan Pike most recently earned an MSt in theology from the University of Oxford where he wrote on Samuel Clarke's Newtonian theology in relation to moral agency and human liberty. Prior to that he obtained an M.A. in history from Oxford Brookes University where he wrote on the rejection of original sin and the recrudescence of more Pelagian perspectives in relation to the American Revolution. He earned his B.A. in history from Brigham Young University. He studies the impact of theology on political thought through the history of ideas. He is particularly interested in the long-eighteenth century's transatlantic flow of ideas in relation to the American Revolution and Founding. His dissertation focuses on the Trinitarian debates and their impacts on the substance and character of the American Revolution.

Jonathan Pike's dissertation continues his interest in the anatomy of an ideational revolution, or, more specifically, the theological roots of the American Revolution. Within the context of his prior graduate studies, his Ph.D. dissertation centers on the Trinitarian debates and controversies that formed a primary impetus toward the tripartite nexus of theological, societal, and political thought that fed into the justifications for and subsequent supporting structures of the American Founding. Related aspects of the political theologies held by principal Founders and other significant voices (such as Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Mayhew), as well as the transatlantic impact of seminal publications (such as Samuel Clarke's *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712)), are significant areas of endeavor in his research project, which aims to contribute to a greater and more cultivated understanding of the American Revolution and its origins.

Primary supervisor: Prof. Dr. Jan Stievermann



CHITRA SANAM (INDIA)

Chitra Sanam served U.S. citizens for over seven years in her capacity as a senior foreign service national with the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in India. She helped open the new U.S. Consulate in Hyderabad and build its American Citizen Services Unit from the ground up. Highlights of her career include temporary duty during crises at the U.S. Embassies in Yemen and Djibouti and collaborating with the U.S. Mission to encourage the Indian Government to accede to the Hague Abductions Convention. Prior to joining the Consulate, she enjoyed being a feature writer with India's national newspaper, *The Times of India*. She holds a Master of Science Degree in Journalism from Ohio University. She was born and raised in Hyderabad, India, but enjoys traveling to new places and seeing the world with a new pair of eyes.

"American leadership has been wanting, but is still wanted," stated Hillary Clinton in the Secretary of State nomination hearing at the start of the Obama presidency in 2009. "We must use what has been called 'smart power'... with smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy," she further discussed, after describing a range of smart power tools – military, diplomatic or cultural – that the Obama administration adopted. "Smart power," to that end, promised great potential for the U.S. to build stronger ties with nation states, cooperate, and address various worrisome global issues such as terrorism, pandemics, climate change, and energy. It led to a shift in U.S. diplomacy practices. Chitra Sanam's research aims to analyze how U.S. leadership through the lens of Obama's "smart power" has impacted U.S. diplomatic relations with the world in the area of transnational issues. A focus on better understanding "smart power" as a diplomatic tool of this era would certainly contribute to the growing dialogue on assessing the true value of "smart power" in addressing world issues specific to this time and age.

Primary supervisor: Dr. habil. Martin Thunert



MAREN SCHÄFER (GERMANY)

BASF SCHOLARSHIP

Maren Schäfer studied International Business in cooperation with ALDI SÜD, graduating from the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University in 2011. After receiving her B.A., she managed key accounts and international projects in an online marketing agency before she joined the MAS program at the HCA. As part of her studies, she spent a year at the University of New Mexico as a recipient of the Baden-Württemberg-Stipendium. In 2016, she graduated with a M.A. in American Studies. Her master's project reflected her interest in political rhetoric, dealing with "The American Presidency and the 'Power to Persuade.'" While working as a program coordinator at the SRH University in Heidelberg, Maren joined the HCA's Ph.D. program in 2017 to further pursue her interest in political rhetoric.

In her dissertation project, Maren focuses on the impact of contemporary populist rhetoric and framing on people's attitudes in the United States. Despite being a recurring feature of American politics, populism has perhaps reached an all-time high. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, increasing inequality and distrust of elites seem to have contributed to this development while the mass proliferation of digital media outlets and mobile devices has facilitated direct communication with a mass audience. Trump's victory in 2016 is seen by many as the manifestation of this trend. In the contemporary United States, more and more mainstream actors of all ideological persuasions seem to be employing populist rhetoric to shape people's attitudes and beliefs in their favor. In particular, framing has become a popular strategy to alter the ways in which information is being presented in the hopes of influencing people's attitudes. In her project, Maren Schäfer will address the issue of contemporary populist rhetoric. She aims at understanding how and why framing, especially with an underlying populist notion, can influence audiences by focusing on the political discourse among stakeholders of different ideological backgrounds.

Primary supervisor: Dr. habil. Martin Thunert



JUSTE ŠIMELYTE (LITHUANIA) LANDESGRADUIERTENFÖRDERUNG

Juste Šimelyte studied law at the University of Vilnius (Lithuania) where she specialized in commercial law. In 2007, she received her master's degree in law. In Lithuania, she also worked as a legal consultant in the law clinic of Vilnius University where she offered pro bono legal advice. In October 2007, she began her studies at the HCA, majoring in law, political science, and international business cultures. In 2008, Juste Šimelyte received her M.A. in American Studies with a thesis entitled "Cultural Globalization: 'Made in the USA' or 'Made in Europe?'"

Currently Juste Šimelyte is working on her thesis "Americanization and Europeanization: Two Forms of Cultural Globalization in Lithuania." It deals with social processes of the last twenty years in Lithuania, which has undergone dramatic changes in the political, economic, and cultural realm. After regaining its independence, Lithuania had to build new state institutions, create national laws, and determine new political and economic as well as cultural strategies. In 2004 Lithuania became a member of NATO and the European Union. The accession to the single European market and the free movement of goods, capital, and people facilitated transnational cultural contacts that brought new possibilities and challenges for Lithuanian culture. This empirical study focuses on the changes that occurred in Lithuania since the 1990s (after it became independent from the Soviet Union) and refers to the research areas that can be summarized in such key-words as space and place, identity, consumption, and cultural values. From the perspective of Americanization and Europeanization this thesis analyzes the transformation of Lithuanian cultural places and spaces, the building of a new identity, the perception of European values as "imposed from above," the consumption of popular culture, western artefacts, and (N)ostalgia remaining in a post-communist Lithuania. The thesis reveals the perception of Americanization and Europeanization as well as the relationship between these two multidimensional processes.

Primary supervisors: Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Detlef Junker, Dr. habil. Martin Thunert

AWARDING OF THE ROLF KENTNER DISSERTATION PRIZE

Before university activities once more went completely online, the HCA was fortunate enough to award the Rolf Kentner Dissertation Prize during an in-person ceremony on October 27, 2020. Dr. Juliane Hornung, assistant professor at the History Department of the University of Cologne, received the eleventh award for her dissertation entitled "Around the World with the Thaws: A Media History of New York's High Society, circa 1900-1945."

The Alte Aula of Heidelberg University filled to capacity according to Covid-19 regulations



HCA director Professor Welf Werner welcomed the audience at Heidelberg University's Alte Aula. He commemorated the HCA's longtime supporter Rolf Kentner, who had passed away in May. Rolf Kentner, the first chairman of the Jacob Gould Schurman Association and an avid supporter of young scholars, endowed the dissertation prize eleven years ago to be awarded for outstanding academic work in the field of American Studies at a German university.

After Professor Werner's welcome, Dr. Wilfried Mausbach briefly introduced Juliane Hornung's academic career. She received her M.A. from LMU Munich in 2014 and her Ph.D. in 2019. From September 2016 to February 2017, she was a fellow at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. Juliane Hornung's dissertation contributed greatly to the interdisciplinary field of American Studies, as it is situated at the crossroads of cultural geography, film studies, and tourism studies. By analyzing film and photo material from the first half of the twentieth century, Dr. Hornung gained insights into race, gender, and consumption patterns and reconstructed how Western travelers perceived foreign cultures and people.



Juliane Hornung

As society columns gained popularity in magazines and newspapers around 1900, a new social group emerged—the "high society." New York City became its capital. Writers and journalists largely determined the members this new group, which was defined by its mass media visibility. In her dissertation, Dr. Hornung explores the life of two of these twentieth century "influencers," Lawrence (1902-1983) and Margaret (1899-1965) Thaw, nicknamed Larry and Peggy by the media. Journalists discovered Peggy after she submitted professionally shot photos to a magazine. This marked the couple's entrance into the world of high society. Decades of worldwide travel followed, with Larry as the photographer and filmmaker, and Peggy as the "star" of their amateur movies. As the Thaws gained popularity in the gossip columns, they had professional filmmakers accompany their trips, and the production of their "private" movies became ever more elaborate and costly.



Wilfried Mausbach and Welf
Werner award the Rolf Kentner
Prize

The photos and video clips shown by Juliane Hornung convey the ambivalence of high society life, particularly for women. As tabloid celebrities, women enjoyed a more decisive role within their marriage; on the other hand, husbands paid for all the luxury and travel, resulting in increased economic dependence. Moreover, the public's constant observance made women vulnerable; readers and writers harshly and openly criticized aging and weight gain, which forced many high society women into constant make overs and dieting.

On top of this, the video clips allow a glimpse at the emerging consumer culture before World War II. In the two one-hour long films "India" (1940) and "The Great Silk Route" (1940), Larry and Peggy are traveling in a custom-made General Motors trailer. American companies sponsored their trip, and, throughout the movie, product placements occur. In later years, companies used Peggy's prominence and looks to advertise for cars and other products.

The Thaws vanished from the gossip columns as fast as they had appeared. During World War II, the tone in society reporting became increasingly modest and conservative. Money was tight, and people abstained from excessive consumerism. The "high society" became somewhat obsolete, and Peggy and Larry started to disappear from the tabloids. Juliane Hornung's dissertation topic encourages readers and listeners to take film sources seriously as they offer room for observations of race, class, gender, and consumerism like few other source. Moreover, Dr. Hornung's research shows that there were "influencers" before the digital age. The problems they faced have not changed much over the past one hundred years. The social pressure high society women experienced in the early twentieth century can once again be observed in today's social media culture.

GRADUIERTENKOLLEG AUTHORITY AND TRUST (GKAT)

After successfully launching its program with the first group of ten doctoral researchers in October 2017, the *Graduiertenkolleg* "Authority and Trust in American Culture, Society, History, and Politics" (GKAT) brought a second group of promising young scholars to the HCA and the Ruperto Carola in the fall of 2020. Initiated by an interdisciplinary group of ten Heidelberg professors and researchers, GKAT is generously funded by the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, DFG), which approved a grant application worth three and a half million euros in the fall of 2016. During the first four-and-a-half-year funding period, the research training group is comprised of two cohorts of ten doctoral candidates, numerous research students, and one postdoctoral researcher. In addition, GKAT profits from the support of renowned associated scholars from Germany, Europe, and the United States.

Within the broad field of American Studies, the GKAT program is designed to inspire innovative research and doctoral dissertations focusing specifically on questions of authority and trust – two central concepts which have come under scrutiny in recent decades during which American society and culture have become increasingly polarized. Studies show that American institutions and elites are suffering from a dramatic loss of authority and trust. Economic inequality, social and spatial segregation, and a decaying infrastructure have undermined trust in the fairness and efficiency of political processes. Anti-establishment populism and conspiracy theories resonate widely among the general public. Police brutality has reinforced a deep-seated distrust of authorities among minorities. Commentators and scholars agree that the crisis of authority and trust has been developing for decades and reflects the dissolution of social cohesion and consensus. The crisis of authority and trust has also affected U.S. leadership in world politics and the global economy.

Against this background, the GKAT research group aims at a systematic and interdisciplinary inquiry into the emergence and transformation of authority and trust in the U.S. from the nineteenth century to the present. The doctoral candidates funded by GKAT conduct research in three broad areas: "The Authority of the Modern State and Trust in Public and Social Institutions," "The Urban Dimension of Authority and Trust," and "Authority and Trust in Culture, Literature, and Religion." These research areas not only offer platforms for cooperation between diverse fields (such as geography, history, linguistics, literary studies/cultural studies, political science/social science, and religious studies/theology), but also allow the project to go beyond popular notions of crisis and decline and probe the complexities and contradictions of authority and trust in American life.

With personal and academic backgrounds in Europe, Asia, and the United States, the GKAT researchers approach these topics in the HCA's interdisciplinary tradition and bring inter- and transnational perspectives to their projects. Throughout the entire funding period, they profit from a multi-level mentoring and qualification program, which combines clear-cut structures and cooperative research with a maximum of intellectual freedom. Innovative elements such as thesis advisory committees, peer mentoring, and interdisciplinary courses and workshops are designed to support junior researchers in the successful completion of their individual projects as well as to provide them with a set of theoretical and methodological skills in the interdisciplinary foundations of American Studies and the basic concepts of authority and trust.

During the academic year 2019-20, the GKAT group continued its focus on the project's key concepts – "authority" and "trust" – most notably by hosting several renowned guest lecturers: Alexander Starre ("Willa Cather and the Professionalization of American Knowledge Cultures," FU Berlin); Barbara Buchenau ("Transatlantic Scripts for Postindustrial Urban Futures," University of Duisburg-Essen); Kai Sina ("Das schwierige Ganze: Goethe, Emerson und die Literatur der offenen Gesellschaft," Universität Göttingen); and David Wilson (University of Illinois), who presented his book *Chicago's Redevelopment Machine and Blues Clubs* (see p. 201). At the same time, GKAT's mentoring and qualification program offered the researchers a number of opportunities to not only to discuss their own projects but to also deepen their understanding of the interdisciplinary research endeavor as a whole. This eventually led to a collection of essays written by both GKAT faculty members and researchers and edited by Günter Leypoldt and Manfred Berg, which will be published by Transcript Verlag as *Authority and Trust in US Culture and Society*.

In their last year with GKAT, the first group of doctoral researchers, who had begun their work in October 2017, were obviously primarily focused on writing, revising, and finally finishing their dissertations. A weekly writing workshop gave them the opportunity to critically read and discuss central chapters of their dissertations with faculty members and fellow researchers and profit from their input and suggestions. In October 2020, the group held an international conference on "Authority and Trust: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Perspectives" (see 85), which not only provided them with first-hand experience of the organizing process for an academic conference, but also with the opportunity to present and discuss their findings and insights of three years of research on authority and trust in the United States. In addition, the outgoing group of junior researchers had the chance to take part in several workshops designed to facilitate qualifications and experiences that help them to develop their career prospects both within and outside academia after finishing their dissertation projects, most notably two Career Coaching Workshops including individual counseling.

The HCA welcomed the incoming second cohort of ten doctoral researchers from Germany, the U.S., China, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the U.K. in the fall of 2020. During a two-day Welcome Event, the junior researchers were introduced to GKAT and the HCA and as well as to relevant Heidelberg University services such as the Graduiertenakademie and the University Library. During the winter term, GKAT also offers a regular seminar on the basic theoretical concepts "Authority and Trust," which is complemented by several online workshops with scholars working on related topics.

GKAT CONFERENCES

GKAT Conference "Authority and Trust: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Perspectives," October 16-17, 2020

Three years after inaugurating the HCA's research training group on "Authority and Trust in American Culture, Society, History, and Politics" (GKAT), the group's first cohort of doctoral researchers marked the end of their term with a digital conference that served as an analytical capstone to discuss comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives on authority and trust.

What was originally planned as an in-person event for the summer shifted to an online platform that took place on 16 and 17 October. The conference's digital format – a common occurrence for many academic events across the world this year – encouraged a lively atmosphere for debate and discussion that connected nearly forty scholars participating from across Europe. The interdisciplinary program covered a broad range of academic disciplines and topics, from history and political science to literature and media studies. Claudia Jetter, GKAT's representative to the Graduate Council, opened the conference with a warm welcome and brief encapsulation of GKAT's origins as a research training group of junior scholars and their work on issues of authority and trust during the previous three years. GKAT's speaker, Prof. Dr. Günter Leypoldt, echoed the welcome and introduced the esteemed Prof. Dr. Aleida Assmann to give the introductory keynote on "The Search for Authority in an Age of Distrust: Fukuyama's and Lepore's Cases for the Nation."

Professor Assmann's presentation set the tone for the rest of the conference. In her talk, she stressed the importance of social cohesion and trust to address the deep political and cultural fractures in American society. "E Pluribus Unum has lost its binding force," she said before exploring how Francis Fukuyama and Jill Lepore each tackle the question of American history and identity in their recent works. Both Fukuyama and Lepore look for sources of authority to form a foundation for historical consensus, Assmann pointed out, but they do so from somewhat opposing perspectives. From here, Assmann called for the development of new national narratives that acknowledge a shared history, one that incorporates the perspectives of a variety of groups whose contributions to American memory culture are often overlooked or ignored altogether. "The future begins with remembering," she concluded.

For the conference's second keynote lecture on "Global Order 2020: The End of U.S. Authority?", Prof. Dr. Ulrike Gerhard, GKAT's co-speaker, introduced Florian Böller, a junior professor of political science at the Technische Universität Kaiserslautern. Jun. Professor Böller, who was GKAT's first postdoctoral researcher, mentioned how many of the ideas presented in his talk originated during his time at the HCA. Building on this earlier work, Böller examined how American "hegemonic overstretch" has generated domestic discontent, leading to political gridlock as well as, to some extent, the presidency of Donald Trump. Mistrust has risen within not just the American polity but also globally, as other states have become skeptical of the United States' role in the world. Florian Böller's analysis of trust in international affairs identified three determinants for trust: predictability, legitimacy, and identity. Ultimately,

he doubted whether the United States could quickly rebuild its global authority in the wake of such a stark period of distrust, noting that even under new leadership other states would question the United States' ability to build domestic consensus for its foreign policy.

Over the conference's two days, researchers delivered a series of diverse and fascinating presentations on issues relevant to authority and trust. Americans' distrust in government took center stage in Sergey Vedernikov's presentation on "The Lack of Political Trust and its Role in Post-Katrina Conspiracy"; Olga Thierbach-McLean's work on "apolitical patriotism," or the apparent discrepancy in American political culture whereby citizens tend to distrust the government's authority but nonetheless profess a deep pride in America as a nation; as well as Lucas Mathis's analysis of Woodrow Wilson's political philosophy, especially his views on democracy and the idea that distrust is actually a core component of American democracy. Similarly, Sabine Aretz spoke about "The Anarchist Zeitgeist and Occupy Wall Street," analyzing the writings of the movement's founders to understand how trust and leadership function within a grassroots organization that brands itself as resistant to an existing authority. Kamila Mirasova's presentation on nostalgia as a source of Ayn Rand's popularity also indirectly dealt with Americans' complicated conceptions of trust, showing how nostalgia prefigures a kind of historical mythmaking in Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" narrative that makes overtures to a historical moment that never truly existed but nonetheless resonates for many people who feel its loss.

Papers on literary and media studies also covered diverse aspects of authority and trust. Roman Bischof discussed "Negotiations of Trust and Authority in 20th century Mental Illness Narratives"; Lucia Toman examined "Autofiction and Fake Memoir in the Light of Textual-Authority and Reader's Trust"; Jesús Blanco Hidalgo presented an analysis of conspiracy as both a thematic element and a rhetorical device in the television series *The Wire*; Jessica Fuss took a closer look at "Changing Notions of the Heroic in Post-9/11 America" with a focus on Captain Chesley Sullenberger and his portrayal in the media as a morally superior foil to corrupt political leadership; and Mascha Helene Lange presented a provocative analysis of "The Transmedial Negotiation of Sexual Violence, Trauma, and Regaining Trust in the Elva-Stranger Case" that asked under what conditions trust can exist between a perpetrator and victim of sexual assault.

The depth and breadth of these presentations and discussions were emblematic of the kind of interdisciplinary scholarship produced within GKAT since its 2017 inception. The conference was a fitting end to the first round of GKAT research at the HCA, paving the way for the next group to build on a better understanding of authority and trust in American Studies.

The keynote speeches by Aleida Assmann and Florian Böller are available on the HCA's website (www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/videos/index.html) and on YouTube (Florian Böller: youtu.be/keB3mtVX6_M / Aleida Assmann: youtu.be/VoLcfW8ZqNY).

GKAT FACULTY

Prof. Dr. Manfred Berg (GKAT Speaker)

Curt Engelhorn Professor of American History, see p. 20.

Prof. Dr. Günter Leypoldt (GKAT Co-Speaker)

Professor of American Literature, see p. 23.

Prof. Dr. Ulrike Gerhard

Professor for Human Geography of North America, see p. 21.

Prof. Dr. Sebastian Harnisch

Professor for International Relations and Comparative Foreign Policy, see p. 22.

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss

Professor of American Literature, see p. 38.

Prof. Dr. Jan Stievermann

Professor of the History of Christianity in the U.S., see p. 23.

Dr. habil. Martin Thunert

Senior Lecturer Political Science, see p. 41.



PROF. DR. BEATRIX BUSSE

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

Beatrix Busse is professor of linguistics and language change at the University of Cologne. Having received her first degree from Osnabrück University, she received her Ph.D. from Münster University and then moved on to completing her Habilitation on speech, writing, and thought presentation in nineteenth-century English narrative fiction at Berne University (Switzerland) in 2010. She taught English (historical) linguistics at the universities of Osnabrück, Mainz, Hannover, and Bern and spent time as a visiting researcher in Birmingham (U.K.), Stratford (U.K.), and Lancaster (U.K.). Beatrix Busse's scholarly interests include the history of English, (historical) pragmatics and sociolinguistics, Shakespeare studies, stylistics, (historical) textlinguistics, systemic functional grammar, narratology, corpus linguistics, cognitive linguistics, ecolinguistics as well as e-learning and e-teaching. Her current research projects include the linguistic analysis of urban place in Brooklyn, a corpus of nineteenth-century grammars, and an interdisciplinary investigation of the notion of "patterns." Beatrix Busse is reviews editor of the *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* (Benjamins), series editor of the De Gruyter series *Diskursmuster – Discourse Pattern*, and member of the editorial board of the Continuum series *Advances in Stylistics*. From 2013-2019, she held the position of Vice-President for Student Affairs and Teaching at Heidelberg University. As of 2019, she is Vice-President for Student Affairs and Teaching at the University of Cologne.



PD DR. MARGIT PETERFY

SENIOR LECTURER AMERICAN LITERATURE

Margit Peterfy teaches American literature and culture at the English Department of Heidelberg University. She studied comparative literature, English and American Studies in Germany, Wales, and the U.S. (University of Maryland) and received her doctorate from the University of the Saarland (Germany) "summa cum laude" with a dissertation on William Carlos Williams' poetry. Between 1999 and 2013, she taught at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, and, as an interim professor, at the universities of Tübingen and Göttingen. She finished her "Habilitation" on "Utility and Aesthetics in American Popular Poetry" in January 2008. She is currently preparing a book for publication on the poems of John Greenleaf Whittier and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Since 2013, she has held the position of Senior Lecturer in American Studies at the Ruperto Carola. Her research interests include early American literature and culture, literary and visual American iconography, theory of images and imagery, intermediality, and the popular culture of nineteenth-century and early modern U.S., in particular theater and literary performative practices.

GKAT RESEARCHERS



DR. GORDON FRIEDRICHS (GERMANY) POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

Gordon Friedrichs studied political science and South Asia Studies at the universities of Frankfurt am Main, Arizona State, and Heidelberg. From 2013 to 2019, he was a research associate at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies as well as the Institute of Political Science at Heidelberg University. In 2019, he received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at Heidelberg University with a thesis on domestic polarization and U.S. global leadership. Since October 2019, he is a postdoctoral researcher in the interdisciplinary research training group “Authority and Trust in American Culture Society, History, and Politics.” Gordon Friedrichs has published three books: *U.S. Global Leadership Role and Domestic Polarization: A Role Theory Approach* (2020), *The Politics of Resilience and Transatlantic Order* (co-edited with Sebastian Harnisch & Cameron Thies, 2019), and *National Role Conceptions in a New Millennium: Defining a Place in a Changing World* (co-edited with Michael Grossman and Francis Shortgen, forthcoming). His research has been published in the *India Review*, *ASIEN*, and *The Korean Journal of International Studies*.

In his postdoc project, Gordon Friedrichs investigates the role of trust in U.S. global financial authority. The aim of this research is to develop an interactionist, relational understanding of U.S. global authority across different case studies over time. Accordingly, U.S. financial authority and the stability of the global financial system (currency exchange, financial governance, and regulation) are contingent on the degree and kind of trust exchange between the U.S. and other geo-economic actors. U.S. global financial authority consists of two main pillars: a responsibility for management of sustained global imbalances and a responsibility for systemic financial stability. Both pillars have undergone severe shifts, for example when the U.S. turned from a creditor to a debtor or when the U.S. stopped ensuring financial stability through tying the U.S. dollar value to the gold standard, fundamentally changing the authority structure, which, in turn, required new sources of trust like that of non-state actors such as banks and private investors.



ASAF ALIBEGOVIC, M.A. (BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA)

Asaf Alibegovic studied political science at the University of Sarajevo. He earned his first Master's Degree in International Relations from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva followed by the Master's Degree in Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy from Tsinghua University in Beijing. Asaf also attended Sciences Po in Paris. His principal academic interests include foreign policy analysis and East Asia international relations.

Asaf Alibegovic's Ph.D. project at GKAT and the Institute for Political Science at Heidelberg University aims to understand the dynamics of social processes of transformation of U.S. authority in East Asia during the Obama and Trump administrations. Attempting to develop a theory of practice-induced international social change, this project argues that presidential practices have decisive influence on the overall manifestation of U.S. authority in the region. The way presidential practices are performed and perceived shapes the social field of international life and contributes to renegotiation of roles and strategic positions of states within.



KRISTIN BERBERICH, M.A. (GERMANY)

Kristin Berberich studied English, German philology and German as a foreign language with a focus on linguistics at Heidelberg University. After working at the University of Auckland and teaching German at the University of Otago, New Zealand, and Mannheim University, she returned to the English Department at Heidelberg University where, in 2014, she joined Professor Beatrix Busse's team to compile and build a multimodal corpus to analyze place-making strategies in Brooklyn, New York. Following her growing interest in urban linguistics, she completed her master's thesis in 2016 with an analysis of the discursive reclamation of the Boston Marathon. Her research interests lie in the realm of sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, and gender studies.

At GKAT, Kristin Berberich investigates the discursive construction of neighborhoods, with a special emphasis on representations of the "good" neighborhood. For her analysis, she compiled a corpus of spoken, written, and online data in neighborhoods along Bedford Avenue. Due to the strong connection between discourse and social practice, neighborhood discourses immediately affect the lives of their residents. Kristin brings together corpus-based discourse analysis and linguistic ethnography to analyze neighborhood discourses produced by individual social actors whose perspectives are often underrepresented in decision-making processes in the urban space. Her dissertation project aims to shed light on various degrees of inter-personal, cross-spatial and cross-genre variation that create an intricate picture of neighborhood discourse, with special regard to trusting relations between neighbors. These insights reveal that an integrative view of the micro- and macro-levels of discourse is crucial to the analysis of urban spaces.



NICOLE COLAIANNI, STATE EXAM (GERMANY)

Nicole Colaianni studied English and history with a focus on education in Heidelberg. During her studies she gravitated toward American Studies, an interest that was furthered by the year she spent studying at the University of New Mexico. Her Zulassungsarbeit focused on the framings and conceptualizations of sexual harassment as part of the culture wars in the United States. She has worked as a teacher for English and history and as a student assistant at the Curt Engelhorn Chair for American History in Heidelberg.

In her Ph.D. project, Nicole Colaianni is continuing her research on the concept of sexual harassment. She aims to shed light on a so far unacknowledged aspect of the discussion on sexual harassment: one that engages with the topic as a matter of employment in which authorities are de facto transferred from the federal government to the private sector, causing a great shift in the power relationship between the federal government, employers, and their employees. She argues that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as well as the judiciary, by demanding private organizations to employ anti-sexual harassment policies, preventative measures, and grievance procedures, inadvertently relinquished much of their authority regarding this topic, transferring it to the organizations in question. In short, she hypothesizes that employers found themselves in a position of taking over government authorities within their microcosm of a company. The ensuing changes of trust relationships among those involved shall be a core part of her project.



ELIZABETH CORRAO-BILLETER, M.A. (USA)

Elizabeth Corrao-Billeter, a native to Ohio, studied psychology, art, and English literature at Ursuline College (B.A.) and English literature and composition at the University of Akron (M.A.) before earning a certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from INTESOL Worldwide and relocating to Heidelberg in 2013. Since 2008, she has held editorial roles at various research institutions and private publishers such as Cleveland Clinic, Wolters Kluwer, EMBO Press, Heidelberg University Clinic, and Simmons University. She has taught English conversation and academic writing at Heidelberg University, and was a writing consultant at the university's Academic Writing Support office from 2013 to 2016. She was also a member of the founding editorial team at Heidelberg University Publishing (heiUP), a DFG-funded Open Access humanities publishing project, where she helped to produce numerous articles, monographs, and edited volumes for the book series "Heidelberg Studies on Transculturality" and "Transcultural Research" (Springer), as well as the Open Access e-journal *Transcultural Studies*. In January 2017, an article she co-wrote on the experience of founding heiUP was featured in *The Journal of Scholarly Publishing*. Elizabeth Corrao-Billeter's dissertation identifies an emerging subgenre in contemporary American non-fiction, the voluntary simplicity memoir, and explores how these works advocate what can be called a "pastoral of practice." In this context, voluntary simplicity refers to the deliberate adoption of a lifestyle that is materially simpler than that which mainstream American culture typically encourages. While the extent and modes of these practices vary, voluntary simplicity memoirs argue the need for a quiet form of subversion against mainstream authority by calling the value of consumerism and globalization into question. Voluntary simplicity does not, however, disdain authority or contemporary culture in general: It instead shifts the placement of trust to alternative forms of authority by focusing on personal responses to simplification as well as emphasizing the importance of collaboration, community, and the revival of traditional skills. These memoirs thus provide a backdrop for the cultural history of voluntary simplicity as a social movement, as well as a context for the recent re-emergence of pastoral ideals and voluntary simplicity's shift in status from fringe movement to general acceptance by mainstream culture. In recent years, this acceptance has become so widespread that the movement itself is subject to commoditization – a development that may negate its original function and attract participants with less altruistic motives than those its founders originally held. Finally, this project examines the impact that this mainstreaming effect has had on American popular culture and public perceptions of what constitutes "the good life."



DAVID EISLER, M.A. (USA)

David Eisler grew up in Florida before attending Cornell University and earning a Bachelor's Degree in Astrophysics in 2007. He then served five years in the United States Army, earning the rank of captain and completing overseas tours in Germany, Iraq, and Afghanistan. After leaving the military in 2012, he moved back to the United States and attended graduate school at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, earning a master's degree in 2014. He then spent the next three years as a research analyst at the Institute for Defense Analyses in Alexandria, Virginia, before coming to Heidelberg to begin his doctoral studies.

David Eisler's dissertation, completed in the fall of 2020, is titled "Unburdened: Civil-Military Relations, Cultural Authority, and Contemporary American War Fiction." From the war in Vietnam to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the work examines the dynamic between the military and American society to understand how that relationship has influenced the literary fiction written about the wars. The project opens by tracing the evolution of the soldier-author's cultural authority over the literary representation of war throughout the twentieth century before showing how the end of the draft and the shift to an all-volunteer force has affected the authorship, content, and form of contemporary war fiction.



AYLIN GÜNGÖR, M.A. (GERMANY)

Aylin Güngör majored in British and American Studies with a minor in sociology at the University of Konstanz and received her B.A. in 2017. She then moved to Heidelberg for her M.A. in English Studies, focusing on American literature, and joined the HCA's GKAT as a student assistant in 2019. Her M.A. thesis was inspired by the intersections of literature and geography and analyzed the figuration of mobilities and movements in contemporary fiction of the Black Atlantic.

Aylin Güngör's dissertation investigates the manifestation of race-related trust in the representations of two American cities. With a cultural and geographical approach, her project explores how trust figures in Atlanta's and Los Angeles's contemporary visual culture and how it influences the cities' urban auras. Both cities' material histories are intertwined with the American struggle for racial equality, and both have (asynchronously) developed into production sites for and settings of visual culture. Thus, Aylin's aim is to uncover "urban signs" of trust and distrust that influence the cultural atmospheres of Atlanta and Los Angeles and can be related to the cities' demographic and political landscapes.



CLAUDIA JETTER, STATE EXAM (GERMANY)

Claudia Jetter was born in Stuttgart, Germany. After working in Bristol and Liverpool (U.K.), she studied Protestant theology and English literature, language, and culture at Heidelberg University. In the academic year 2010-2011, she worked as a German language assistant at a British boarding school in the United Kingdom. In 2016, she graduated with a teaching degree. Her research interests include gender and religion, new religious movements, and the intersections of American religion and politics. Claudia has presented conference papers at meetings of the Ecclesiastical History Society, the American Society of Church History and the Methodist Studies Seminar and has recently been a visiting scholar at the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at Brigham Young University.

Claudia Jetter's dissertation focuses on transformation processes of religious authority in mid-nineteenth century America. The project investigates the complex dynamics between prophets, scriptures, and communities to more adequately describe the charismatization of religious leaders like Holiness revivalist Phoebe Palmer, Transcendentalist R.W., or Mormon founder Joseph Smith. Regarding charisma as a dynamic and relational concept, the project is interested in highlighting the interplay between the performance of prophets through textual production and the followers' response to these texts through textual practice. The project draws on theoretical concepts of charismatic authority and scripturalization from sociology and religious studies and seeks to provide a comparative framework that helps situate the striking increase of new religious leaders with additional scripture in antebellum American religious history.



JUDITH KELLER, STATE EXAM (GERMANY)

Judith Keller studied geography and English at Heidelberg University, Germany, and Heidelberg University, Tiffin, Ohio, graduating with a double major in 2019. In her thesis "The Spatiality of Trust" she already explored different spatial aspects of trust using the example of urban redevelopment in post-Katrina New Orleans. After her graduation she became a research associate in Professor Ulrike Gerhard's "Geographies of North America" working group before joining GKAT in the fall of 2020.

In her Ph.D. project Judith Keller focuses on the importance of trust for urban development, especially with regards to home and housing in the city. In a rapidly changing urban environment, many cities are facing a housing crisis. Fearing for one's home or losing home is thus part of the everyday reality of many urban residents who live on the flip side of urban redevelopment projects. It is argued that these processes cause trust relations to shift affecting the homes of individuals, entire neighborhoods, and urban society at large. Trust and solidarity do not only erode but are undermined by practices of un-homing such as evictions and forced displacements that lead to increasing inequalities. In her dissertation, Judith Keller analyses various case studies situated in US-American cities.



SASHA LIN, M.A. (CHINA)

Born and raised in Guangdong, China, Shasha Lin earned her B.A. in English Language and Literature at Sun Yat-Sen University in 2017 and completed her M.A. in American Studies at the HCA in 2019. She wrote her master's thesis on "Racial Balancing Versus Racial Discrimination: Asian Americans and Affirmative Action" and situated Asian Americans within the legal and political discourse on affirmative action looking at a case study of *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College*.

Shasha Lin's dissertation is tentatively titled "Trust in the Fairness of College Admissions and Policy Acceptance." Public trust in higher education, or lack of it, has been a crucial topic among policymakers and educators. Higher education institutions in the U.S. have been facing outrage and questions about the fairness of their college admissions practices, fueled by the 2019 college admissions bribery scandal and the U.S. Department of Justice's investigations into admissions at Yale and Harvard universities. The project, by disaggregating the category of "Asian Americans" and focusing on Chinese, Filipino, and Vietnamese Americans, explores differences within a population that is often perceived and studied as a monolith. Since disaggregated data is limited, Shasha Lin will collect data from online surveys and in-depth interviews with experts in affirmative action, representatives of civil rights organizations, and students concerned with race-conscious admissions policies. The project compares and contrasts the extent to which Chinese, Filipino, and Vietnamese Americans trust the fairness of college admissions and its link to their support of affirmative action. The interdisciplinary project, which combines sociology, law, and political science, offers unique and refreshing perspectives on the decline of trust in the admissions system and the authority of higher education institutions.



VALENTINA LÓPEZ-LIENDO, M.A.

(GERMANY)

Valentina López Liendo studied English philology and East Asian studies at Heidelberg and Osaka University. Her B.A. thesis analyzes Rudyard Kipling's depiction of Japan in his travel writing with reference to Edward Said's *Orientalism*. After her B.A. degree, she continued to pursue her interest in literature with a Master's Degree in English Philology and Transcultural Studies at Heidelberg University. Her M.A. thesis centers on Colson Whitehead's literary strategies in his zombie novel *Zone One*, drawing from discussions on literary writers' use of genre elements, zombie studies, and post-soul conceptualizations of racial identity. She has worked as a language teacher for English, Spanish and German and as a student assistant at Heidelberg University's East Asian Studies Department and English Department.

In her Ph.D. project, Valentina López Liendo seeks to position Colson Whitehead in the literary field. She aims to examine how he can simultaneously function as the literary successor of authors such as Ralph Ellison and Toni Morrison, as the voice of Obama-era postracial America, and, considering the most current developments, as the politically aware Pulitzer Prize winner. She engages with current research in literary and relational sociology, which builds on Bourdieu's concept of the literary field and his analysis of the inner workings of literary production and distinction, such as James English's and Mark McGurl's influential work while also taking into account current discussions on contemporary conceptualizations of Blackness and African American Literature. She is interested in Whitehead's self-fashioning as a multifaceted literary author as well as the different (and shifting) contexts in which his work has been and is read, interpreted, and reviewed.

EDWARD MANGER, M.A. (U.K.)

Edward Manger earned his B.A. From the University of Kent in the United Kingdom in 2010 before completing a M.A. in History at the University of Edinburgh in 2012. His thesis examined the periodical literature produced by missionary societies during the 1857 “Indian Mutiny.” His research highlighted the use of providentialist discourses and rhetoric of Christian militarism that reinforced British rule in the Indian subcontinent as a divinely instituted Christian mission. His research interests focus on Victorian Christianity in Britain and the United States, particularly the intersection of religion and military conflict. Flowing from this is an emphasis on the impact of romanticism and medievalism on the language, architecture, and visual culture of Christian communities and the role of those communities in shaping and reacting to historical narratives that formed the basis for national identity in the nineteenth century.

For his dissertation research, Edward will explore the role of the church in the Antebellum South and in the development of Southern Nationalism in the lead up to and during the course of the American Civil War. He will unpack the discourses used by church leaders regarding the American Revolution, which was widely cast in a theological light, to show how those narratives were re-purposed to fit the cause of the South and preachers were able to draw upon a preexisting rhetorical tool kit in order to theologize their contemporary political and military situation. Alongside this will be an exploration of the use of “church history” more broadly to see the complex and sometimes self-contradictory nature of the identity perpetuated by southern clergymen in the reinforcement of “traditional” southern authority structures and social hierarchies. The impact of many clergymen serving in the military and the perceived “Christian” nature of the armed forces of the Confederacy will also form a central theme of the research. The decades prior to the Civil War were a time of stark religious development in the American context, the growth of populist religious movements, the Second Great Awakening and evangelistic enthusiasm as well as romanticism and the beginnings of biblical criticism. Edward will seek to elucidate how these trends affected the church’s position in the South and its relation to Southern Nationalism and the Confederacy.



JOHANNA MAST, STATE EXAM (GERMANY)

Johanna Mast was born and raised in the Black Forest (Germany). After spending an exchange year in Odessa, Texas, she studied German and English Studies at Heidelberg University and at Bristol University (U.K.). She received a scholarship from the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes (German National Academic Foundation) and graduated with a teaching degree from Heidelberg University in the fall of 2020. Her thesis combined literary studies and linguistics to accomplish a fusion between hermeneutical linguistics and close reading. After getting to know the DFG-Graduiertenkolleg “Authority and Trust” as a research student in 2018, she joined GKAT as a doctoral candidate in October 2020.

In her dissertation project, Johanna Mast analyzes the representation and deconstruction of informal public gathering places in contemporary American literature. The spatially-oriented literary studies project examines the struggles to create, preserve, and defend these “third places” that exist separated from the home and the workplace. By combining sociological and geographical theories with close reading, the project attempts to understand the complex and dynamic relation between space and literature. With space as a contested good in the urban context of modernity, the fight for authority over public space is showcasing social injustice and segregation in postmodern times, problematizing the notion that public spaces are accessible to all citizens. Within literary texts, these informal public gathering places, in which trust and mistrust emerge and accessibility and exclusiveness are contrasted, serve as a plot-driving and character-defining tool. Classical settings, like the bar around the corner or the hairdresser next door, are not merely a backdrop, but employed to criticize the social dynamics of the city, providing a deeper understanding of the personal, individual, and socio-economic consequences of spatial injustice.



ALEKSANDRA POLINSKA, M.A. (POLAND)

Aleksandra Polinska was born in Warsaw, Poland. In 2013, she earned her B.A. in English Philology from the Warsaw School of Applied Linguistics. Her thesis focused on the translation of culture-specific items and the assessment of the understanding between American and Polish cultures such renderings offer. In 2015, she received her M.A. in American Studies from the American Studies Center at the University of Warsaw. In her thesis, she analyzed the process of gentrification of two Brooklyn neighborhoods with the focus on the powerful role of real estate developers and, most notably, the media.

Aleksandra Polinska's doctoral project investigates the transformation of trust and authority in American news media and its political implications. While distrust of the news media has been expressed across the American electorate, it has followed significantly different trajectories on each side of the political spectrum. This development, embedded in the rapidly evolving news media landscape of the United States, has had significant impact on the political dynamic and developments in the country, including the 2016 presidential election. This research contributes to the studies of trust and authority in the news media in the United States by shedding more light on the different ways in which Americans' trust in the news media has been transformed on the opposite sides of the political spectrum. While certainly not the only source of information, the news media continue to play a very significant informative role as indicated in numerous polls by Americans themselves. Therefore, the analysis of how and why Americans' trust in media has been changing in an asymmetrical way as well as the political implications of this phenomenon are of vital importance. It is particularly so in the face of the ongoing proliferation of conspiracy theories and disinformation efforts, both domestic and foreign, as well as the (also asymmetrical) growing political polarization. As such, the project deals with historical, socio-cultural, and political matters, which guarantees its interdisciplinary character.



LAUREN REVER, M.A. (USA)

Lauren Rever is a public historian whose work at GKAT focuses on authority and trust in U.S. historical institutions. Since 2012, she has worked at museums, historic sites, and cultural institutions, often as a public-facing staff member. Originally from New Hampshire, Lauren received her bachelor's degree from Boston College in 2014 with a double major in history and German. She then spent a year teaching English on a Fulbright Scholarship in Ahrensburg, Germany. In 2017 she completed a Master's Degree in American Studies, Museums and Material Culture from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. This degree provided a strong foundation in the scope and methods of public history, as well as a chance to explore a personal research interest in popular music fandom. During and after graduate school, she stood as a gallery aide at the National Gallery of Art, gave tours at the U.S. Capitol, worked with toddlers at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, edited lesson plans for the National Park Service, and ran educational programs at historic houses. While crafting these visitor experiences, she formulated a question that brought her to GKAT: what role do these complex interactions at historical institutions play in the larger notion of U.S. history-making?

Lauren uses the lens of authority and trust to unpack what happens at these points of contact between historical institutions and "the public." Breaking down these points of contact is a starting point to explore tourism, the history profession, labor, identity, and space – key components of historical institutions. Her interdisciplinary approach draws from geography, American studies, and public history. Furthermore, Lauren continuously strives to place visitors and public history workers at the center of her research in order to upend traditional institutional hierarchies. Lauren believes museums are not neutral, and she stands with history professionals against the notion of "patriotic education."



ALINE SCHMIDT, M.A. (GERMANY)

Aline Schmidt majored in English Studies with a minor in political science at Heidelberg University. She graduated with a B.A. in 2014 and an M.A. in English Linguistics in 2017. As she focused on American politics and sociolinguistics throughout her studies, her master's thesis examined the performative authenticity of Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump during the 2016 primaries. Aline's research interests include critical discourse studies, pragmatics, social media discourse, and urban linguistics. In this research area, she supported Professor Busse's team at the English Department in the compilation of a multimodal corpus to investigate discursive place-making in Brooklyn, NY. In 2017, she joined the HCA's Graduiertenkolleg "Authority and Trust."

In her dissertation, Aline investigates the construction of a charismatic relationship between Donald Trump and his followers from a linguistic angle. She draws on social-constructionist perspectives in Max Weber's work, integrating language as a meaning-making resource that constructs and construes social reality and Weber's classic framework of charismatic authority as a highly personalized form of political leadership. Charisma is conceptualized as a social relationship between leader and followers, which is ultimately negotiated in discursive interaction. Considering the impact of social media on political action and on the dissemination of discourses and ideologies, Aline emphasizes the role of social media for the construction of the charismatic relationship. Synergizing methods from corpus-assisted discourse studies, she outlines interactional processes of performing and recognizing charisma under modern conditions. In particular, she analyzes reddit and Twitter as affective discursive spaces which catalyze processes of charismatization. Her dataset is comprised of a number of ad hoc specialized corpora, spanning genres from political speeches, televised debates, and Trump's tweets to comments and multimodal data on the subreddit *The_Donald*. Her project thus integrates various dimensions of authority and trust during the Trump presidency and aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of irrational and affective politics in the contemporary United States.



DR. TIM SOMMER (GERMANY)

Tim Sommer studied English, American, and German literature and culture at Heidelberg University and the University of Edinburgh and has been a visiting researcher at King's College, Cambridge, the Bodleian Library (Oxford), and Harvard's Houghton Library. He has delivered conference papers at venues including Oxford, Harvard, and Yale, is the recipient of the 2016 Ralph Waldo Emerson Society Graduate Student Paper Award, and has been a Ralph Waldo Emerson Visiting Fellow at Harvard University. His research interests include British Romanticism, New England Transcendentalism, and nineteenth-century Anglo-American literary relations. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in journals such as *Romanticism*, *Book History*, *The New England Quarterly*, *The Wordsworth Circle*, and the *Harvard Library Bulletin*.

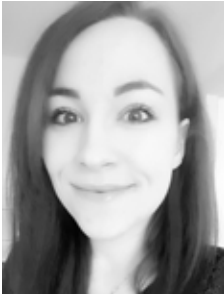
Tim Sommer's dissertation project, which he successfully defended in October 2019, examined the transatlantic origins of authority and trust in nineteenth-century American literature and culture by retracing the many ways in which the emergence and subsequent trajectory of both concepts in the American context were shaped in response to European discourses, British ones in particular. Focusing on Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882) and Thomas Carlyle (1795 – 1881) as two representative figures and drawing on recent approaches in transatlantic studies, transnational theory, and cultural sociology to account for their cosmopolitan careers and writings, the project asked how literature in the nineteenth-century Anglo-American cultural sphere became a key arena for defining and debating authority and trust. The dissertation aimed at refining our understanding of the extent to which this development was intertwined with phenomena such as the rise of literary nationalism, the sacralization of culture, and the professionalization of authorship.



SEBASTIAN TANTS, STATE EXAM (GERMANY)

Sebastian Tants was born in Lower Saxony, Germany. He studied philosophy and English Studies at Heidelberg University and, as an exchange student, European Studies at Cardiff University (U.K.). He received his state exam from Heidelberg University in 2016. In his thesis, he conducted a critical reading of Dave Eggers's dystopian novel *The Circle* (2013), establishing an intellectual link between Eggers's novel and the philosophical critique of modernity of the Frankfurt School. Before joining GKAT in the fall of 2017, Sebastian worked, among other things, as a teaching assistant for philosophy at Heidelberg University.

In his dissertation project, Sebastian Tants focuses on the configurations of trust in the work of Herman Melville (1819-1891). Tracing the way Melville used this theme throughout his career, the project examines a broad selection of his texts, ranging from his short fiction to his novels, with the aim of establishing a panorama of the multifaceted vision of trust embedded in Melville's prose writings. Considering Melville as a theorist of trust, Sebastian employs close reading as well as sociological theory in his textual analysis. In addition, he reads Melville's prose, which is often heavily intertwined with central societal and political discourses of the antebellum era, in its historic environment and discusses it alongside a selection of texts by its contemporaries. The concept of trust is analyzed in such varied contexts as the debate on slavery, colonialism, and intercultural contact as well as in regard to the production and reception of literature. Through these aspects, the research project aims at gaining a clearer understanding of the "performance" of trust literary works such as *Typee* and *The Confidence-Man* are engaged in.



STEFANIE WALLBRAUN, M.A. (GERMANY)

Stefanie Wallbraun grew up in Thuringia before completing her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration at the Ludwigshafen University of Business and Society in 2014. Afterwards, she attended Hamburg University to complete a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science in 2019 and a Master's Degree in Peace and Security studies in 2020.

The working title of Stefanie's dissertation project is "American gun culture and its potential to polarize the society: An analysis of harmful effects on institutional trust and government authority in the United States." Stefanie intends to show how the debate surrounding gun control promotes social and political polarization and therewith impairs institutional trust and the authority of the government. Of special interest to her is how the public debate on gun control affects political views of individuals and influences the perception of and interaction with individuals that hold different opinions.



COSIMA WERNER, M.A. (GERMANY)

Cosima Werner graduated from the University of Göttingen with a B.Sc. in Geography and a B.A. in Sociology in 2011. She then continued to the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg for her master's studies in cultural geography. In 2012 she spent one term at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and then completed her studies with her master's thesis entitled "The Variety of Urban Farming Practices: A Case Study from Detroit." In 2015 she joined Professor Ulrike Gerhard's team "Human Geography of North America" at the Institute of Geography at Heidelberg University as a research assistant as well as the HCA's Ph.D. program.

For her dissertation research, Cosima Werner shifted from urban farms to convenience stores – stores that do not provide any fresh goods or produce – in distressed and underserved neighborhoods of North American Cities. Since the turn of the century, inequality in American cities has also affected the food supply, resulting in so-called "food deserts" – urban areas with little or no access to fresh foods. The lower purchasing power of urban inhabitants has caused many supermarkets to move to suburban areas, opening the market for convenience stores, especially in underserved neighborhoods with a high share of ethnic populations. The poor nutritional value of foods available at convenience stores is often tied to the prevalence of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases in these neighborhoods. Cosima Werner's dissertation contributes new insights about convenience stores as social spaces, which also means focusing on the perspective of the customers, for whom convenience stores serve as reference points for their everyday lives. The empirical research is embedded in a theoretical framework about space and everyday practices. The preliminary assumption is that relational space concepts are conducive to analyzing how convenience stores are perceived by their customers. In particular, this approach uses qualitative methods such as participant observation, interviews, and analysis of visual material.



GEORG WOLFF, M.A. (GERMANY)

Georg Wolff studied history and political science at Heidelberg University, where he received his B.A. degree in 2014. His bachelor thesis examined the conception of history inherent in the strategy game series *Civilization* and *Total War*. In 2017, he graduated with a M.A. degree. His thesis, entitled “Sock it to the Left!” outlined key positions of the conservative youth group Young Americans for Freedom during the 1960s. From 2014 to 2016, he worked at the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities as a student assistant in the project “Edition of Cuneiform Literary Texts from Assur.”

Georg Wolff’s dissertation, which bears the working title “American Conservatism and the Struggle against Federal Authority,” aims to show how grassroots organizations partook in a coordinated effort to drastically reduce the impact of governmental action on the federal level. He examines the contradictions inherent in the ideological backgrounds of these groups, whose members shared their conservative identity but were split mainly in traditionalists and libertarians who had vastly different outlooks on topics such as civil rights or counterculture. Drawing mainly from archival material and interviews, he aims to paint a more balanced picture of these crucial processes in American history and to challenge prevailing narratives such as the conservative pied piper.

ASSOCIATED DOCTORAL CANDIDATES

Louis Butcher, see p. 66 (HCA Ph.D. program)

Jula Maasböl (HCA Ph.D. program)

Maren Schäfer, see p. 78 (HCA Ph.D. program)

RESEARCH STUDENTS

Aylin Güngör, Philipp Leonhardt, Tommaso Putignano.

ASSOCIATED SCHOLARS

Professor Jeffrey Alexander, Ph.D., Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University

Prof. Dr. Helmut Anheier, President and Dean, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, and Professor of Sociology, Heidelberg University

Professor Darren Dochuk, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Notre Dame

Professor Philip Goff, Ph.D., Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture, Indiana University-Purdue University

Prof. Dr. Barbara Hahn, Department of Geography and Geology, Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans Joas, Faculty of Theology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Professor Juliet Kaarbo, Ph.D., School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh

Dr. Wilfried Mausbach, Executive Director, Heidelberg Center for American Studies

Professor Cameron Thies, Ph.D., School of Politics and Global Studies, Arizona State University

Prof. Dr. Simon Wendt, Department of American Studies, Goethe University Frankfurt

Professor David Wilson, Ph.D., Department of Geography and Geographic Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

HCA RESEARCH

The following pages give an overview of the interdisciplinary research that coalesces at the HCA.

Cotton Mather's *Biblia Americana*: A Critical Edition of America's First Bible Commentary

Professor Jan Stievermann and a team of young scholars from American Studies and theology are now working on volume ten (Hebrews to Revelation) in the ongoing edition of the *Biblia Americana* by Cotton Mather. Together with general editor Reiner Smolinski (Atlanta), Jan Stievermann also serves as executive editor of the entire ten-volume edition of the *Biblia* to be realized by a team of seven international scholars. The original handwritten manuscript, never before transcribed or published, is a comprehensive English-speaking Bible commentary from colonial British North America, produced by the famed Puritan theologian Cotton Mather (1663-1728) between 1693 and 1728. Since 2010 this work—of great significance for both religious and intellectual history—is being made available for the first time by academic publishers Mohr Siebeck in what will ultimately be ten annotated volumes. In 2015 Stievermann and his team completed volume five that includes Mather's commentaries on the biblical books of the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Editing the *Biblia Americana* in its entirety is unquestionably one of the most important and promising interdisciplinary projects now underway in early North American Studies. Researchers examining the cultural, religious, or literary history of America as well as Europe can equally profit from this academic edition of the *Biblia*. In addition, Jan Stievermann's new monograph *Prophecy, Piety, and the Problem of Historicity: Interpreting the Hebrew Scriptures in Cotton Mather's Biblia Americana* (2016) offers the first comprehensive study of Mather's Old Testament exegesis.

The "*Biblia Americana*" also serves as one of the main sources for the DFG-funded project led by Prof. Stievermann:

(Re-)Translating Scripture in Early American Protestantism: A Comparative Study of Cotton Mather's "*Biblia Americana*" and Radical Pietist Revisionings of the Bible

Sub-divided into two studies, to be conducted by Dr. Caitlin Smith and Dr. Benjamin Pietrenka, the project aims to conduct comparative, side-by-side studies of scriptural translations that various individual Protestant exegetes and groups from British North America undertook during the early and middle decades of the eighteenth century. We ask why, how, and with the use of which resources did these New World Bible translations challenge existing translations, specifically the widely predominant King James (KJV) and Luther Bibles? And in what ways did these revised translations reflect particular theologies (esp. millenarian and Philadelphian speculations) and support diverging identity formations in the intellectual cross-currents of the Enlightenment and the Protestant evangelical awakenings? The project has an interdisciplinary research design that brings together interests and methods of traditional church history/history of biblical interpreta-

tion with those of the history of “lived religion”-paradigm and early American cultural and literary studies.

For more information, please visit matherproject.org

Sustainable Action in Urban Society

Knowledge about climate change and its consequences has become almost omnipresent. This is reflected by a growing number of initiatives and organizations working in that field, accompanied by a broad media presence. While everybody seems to be supportive of the idea of climate protection and sustainability, however, personal action as well as consumption habits are lacking behind these affirmative goals. How can we bridge the gap between knowledge and action? What role do environmental sciences (including geography) play for urban policy? The interdisciplinary research initiative Operationalizing Climate Science by the Heidelberg Center for the Environment (HCE), of which Ulrike Gerhard’s Chair for Human Geography of North America is part, tries to answer these questions by supporting and coordinating different projects on climate change in urban society. It combines different disciplines from geography to environmental physics, from psychology to economy, and from Geographical Information Systems to political science that use bottom-up as well as top-down approaches to understand the relatedness of environmental consciousness and willingness to act. Urban Geography, in particular, aims to analyze the following research questions: How can urban society contribute to sustainable actions regarding climate change? Which framework motivates citizens to participate? How can we reinforce and incorporate social commitment into urban policy? And what role do smart city initiatives play?

Mobility and the Making of the Creative City: Neoliberal Urban Restructuring and its Impacts on Mobility, Space and Social (In)Justice

The neoliberal creative city discourse has been one of the most significant urban discourses driving public policy interventions and urban restructuring in cities across the globe. However, the notion of everyday mobility practices, on the one hand, and the (re)production of mobility in cities and the politics this produces, on the other hand, have been largely overlooked in research on the creative city, even as (the reshaping of) mobility and its spaces appear to play significant roles in the making of the creative city. Thus, in this Habilitation project Gregg Culver is investigating whether and how neoliberal creative city strategies impact the production and politics of local mobility regimes and what this means for concerns over ever-increasing social inequality. Using the empirical example of the surprising, and as of yet largely unexplained, re-emergence of streetcar development projects in dozens of cities throughout the United States, this research aspires to make substantive theoretical and empirical contributions to urban, transport, and mobilities geographies.

African American History: National and Transnational Vistas

The HCA's research focus on African American history unites several endeavors. In 2008, the HCA joined a research initiative with the German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C. and Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.) on "The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany." Initiated by Professors Maria Höhn (Vassar) and Martin Klimke (New York University/Abu Dhabi), this research project and digital archive explores the connection between the establishment of American military bases abroad and the advancement of civil rights in the United States. It investigates the role African American GIs played in carrying the demands of the civil rights movement abroad beginning with World War II. In July 2009, the project was awarded the Julius E. Williams Distinguished Community Service Award by the prestigious civil rights organization National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at its Centennial Convention in New York City. As the NAACP explained, "By giving voice to their experience and to that of the people who interacted with them over civil rights demands and racial discrimination on both sides of the Atlantic, Höhn and Klimke are preserving and expanding the history of the African American civil rights movement beyond the boundaries of the U.S." As part of this research initiative, an exhibition on "The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany," including more than fifty black and white photographs as well as other exhibition samples, was shown in numerous cities across both Germany and the United States, including Augsburg, Berlin, Hamburg, Heidelberg, Mainz, Munich, Ramstein, and Tübingen, as well as in Washington, D.C., Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Berkeley, Calif., Oxford, Miss., San Francisco, Athens, Ga., Chapel Hill, N.C., as well as London, England. By illustrating the untold story of African American GIs and the transnational implications of the civil rights movement, the exhibit aims at advancing a more nuanced and multilayered sense of how America's struggle for democracy reverberated across the globe. The accompanying book *A Breath of Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany* by Maria Höhn and Martin Klimke was published by Palgrave Macmillan in October 2010 (www.breathoffreedom.org). The documentary "Breath of Freedom: Black Soldiers and the Struggle for Civil Rights," directed by Dag Freyer and originating from the project, premiered February 17, 2014, on the Smithsonian Channel in the U.S. and was broadcast on Arte on December 16, 2014. A German edition of the book was published by transcript Verlag in 2016. For further information on the project as well as access to its digital archive, please visit: www.aacvr-germany.org.

Two projects at the Curt Engelhorn Chair in American History explored the history of slavery, race, abolitionism, black political integration, and the civil rights movements from a perspective that encompasses intersections with social, political, and cultural developments outside the United States. They seek to contribute to a deeper understanding not only of the enduring relevance of African-American history at a national level but also to place questions of ethnicity, race, and racism in a larger global and transnational framework. Publications from these projects include *Globalizing Lynching History: Vigilantism and Extralegal Punishment from an International Perspective* and *Racism in the Modern World: Historical Perspectives on Cultural Transfer and Adaptation* (both eds. Manfred Berg and Simon Wendt, 2011).

In 2009, Martin Klimke and then-HCA research fellow Mischa Honeck co-convened a conference on Germany and the black diaspora at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. The conference volume *Germany and the Black Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250-1914*, edited by Mischa Honeck, Martin Klimke and Anne Kuhlmann-Smirnov, came out in 2013.

HCA research associate Anja Schüler has started work on a biography of the African-American biographer Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955), the preeminent figure of the African-American women's movement in the first third of the twentieth century. Utilizing one of the few roads for African American women to gain professional status, Bethune established and presided over what would in 1941 become the first fully accredited four-year college for African Americans in Florida; advised four presidents on child welfare, education, and civil rights; served two terms as president of the National Association of Colored Women; founded the National Council of Colored Women; and became a member of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Black Cabinet" and arguably the most influential African American woman in the New Deal administration.

Kurt Klein and Gerda Weissmann-Klein: Jewish Exile in the United States

In 2020, the HCA became part of a local endeavor to commemorate the fate of a Jewish family from Walldorf, a town just south of Heidelberg. During the early years of the Nazi regime, the three siblings Irmgard, Kurt, and Max Klein managed to emigrate to the United States. They tried desperately but unsuccessfully to arrange the emigration of their parents. Alice and Ludwig Klein were deported to Gurs (France) in 1940 and died in Auschwitz two years later. Kurt Klein returned to Europe in the last months of World War II as a "Ritchie Boy" with the U.S. Army. At the end of the war, he met his wife, Gerda Weissmann, a survivor of labor camps and death marches. The couple moved to the United States and dedicated their lives to Holocaust education, promoting tolerance, and community service. Gerda Weissmann-Klein's autobiographical account, *All but My Life* (1957) was adapted for the 1995 short film, *One Survivor Remembers*, which received an Academy Award and an Emmy Award. She has served on the governing board of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which features her testimony in a permanent exhibit. On February 15, 2011, President Barack Obama presented Gerda Weissmann-Klein with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States.

A local initiative in Walldorf planned to commemorate Kurt Klein's one-hundredth birthday on July 2, 2020 with a program of readings, films, and lectures by U.S. historians Atina Grossman and Frank Mecklenburg. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the original program was postponed to July 2, 2021; however, a smaller event did take place at the Astoria-Halle in Walldorf. Jointly organized by Wolfgang Widder, who initiated the endeavor, the Vereinigung Walldorfer Heimatfreunde, the Forum 84 theatre, and the HCA, more than eighty guests paid tribute to the life of Kurt Klein. The HCA will continue to provide academic support for this endeavor. Projects under way include the facilitation of German editions of the letters that Alice and Ludwig Klein wrote to their children during the war, the letters that Gerda and Kurt exchanged in the first year

after the war, as well as Gerda's memoir. We are delighted that the family has agreed to support these projects by making the original sources available.

More information: kurt-klein.de/

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2020: Regional Coordination – United States, Canada, Chile, and Mexico

HCA faculty member Dr. Martin Thunert continues to serve as regional coordinator (since 2007) for the OECD member states in the Americas (Canada, Chile, Mexico, United States) and affiliated member of the board of an ongoing international and comparative research project which is conducted and sponsored by the Bertelsmann Foundation in Gütersloh – the Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI). The SGI is a platform built on a cross-national survey of governance that identifies reform needs in forty-one Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and European Union (E.U.) countries. The SGI brings together a broad network of experts and practitioners aiming to understand what works best in sustainable governance. The SGI project offers full access to its data set and thus enables the comparisons that generate innovation in governance.

Some seventy international experts participate in this broad-based study. Based on 150 qualitative and quantitative indicators, the SGI provide a detailed picture of the countries' strengths and limitations in order to advance the debate on good governance and sustainable policymaking among OECD members. The SGI thus provide considerably more information than conventional economic data since social progress and sustainability cannot be expressed by growth rates or material prosperity alone. They also shed light on the success of OECD member states in additional policymaking fields crucial for ensuring the ongoing performance and long-term stability of economic, political, social, and ecological systems and for guaranteeing a high level of social participation. These fields include education, employment, healthcare, integration, innovation, and the environment. In addition to these traditional policymaking fields, the SGI also examine the quality of democracy and rule of law as well as each government's executive capacity in practice. The SGI and its sub-indexes are calculated using quantitative data from international organizations and then supplemented by qualitative assessments from recognized country experts. As a result, the SGI shed light on how capable each country is of using governance processes to identify pressing problems, formulate strategic solutions, and, consequently, ensure sustainable policymaking outcomes. Over the past twelve years the project has helped to create a comprehensive data pool on government-related activities in the world's developed market democracies – among them the United States, Canada, Chile, and Mexico. The role of the regional coordinator for the Americas is to edit, amend, and consolidate expert assessments written by eight recognized country specialists – two for each country, representing at least two academic disciplines (for example economics and political science) or two nationalities, including the subject nation. The results are four separate country reports of thirty to forty pages each on reform capacities of the United States, Canada, Chile, and Mexico, incorporating quantitative data interpreted through the lenses of the qualitative expert assessments.

The results of the latest SGI round were released as Sustainable Governance Indicators 2020 in October of 2020. The 2020 edition of the SGI examines the period just before the current COVID-19 pandemic began, providing a baseline on E.U. and OECD countries' governance capacities. As always, the entire data, rankings, and sub-rankings for each policy area as well as the country reports are accessible online free of charge on the project's website at <https://www.sgi-network.org/2020/>. Based on its highly interactive functionality, the SGI website offers users easy access to every level of information, including a short version of key findings. For a direct link to the U.S. country data and report (SGI 2020) go to https://www.sgi-network.org/2020/United_States. The USA 2020 country report, written by Dr. habil. Martin Thunert (HCA), Professor Christian Lammert (Free University of Berlin, JFK-Institute), and Professor Paul J. Quirk (University of British Columbia, Vancouver), can be downloaded at https://www.sgi-network.org/docs/2020/country/SGI2020_USA.pdf. Here are some of the results:

Showing increasing problems of fiscal unsustainability, the United States receives middling scores overall (rank 26) with regard to economic policies – for an observation period that ended in early 2020 before the Covid-19 pandemic set in. Its score on this measure has increased by 0.4 points since 2014. Economic growth has remained robust. However, the tax cut for corporations and high-income individuals passed in late 2017 has sharply increased the already unsustainable long-term deficit. The annual deficit reached above \$1 trillion in late 2019. The new North American trade deal passed the House, and President Donald Trump announced a new trade deal with China. Nevertheless, the trade war with China and lesser conflicts with European Union and Japan continued. The unemployment rate declined to a record low of 3.7%, with median household incomes climbing by 12%. Incomes have grown faster at the top, exacerbating inequality.

With significant weaknesses, the United States scores relatively poorly (rank 30) with regard to social policies. Its score on this measure has declined by 0.7 points relative to 2014. Educational inequalities between high- and low-income areas are severe, with performance generally disappointing. Federal education programs have been cut by more than \$10 billion, with some funding redirected to school-choice initiatives. The elimination of the Obama-era individual health-insurance mandate has increased the numbers of the uninsured and increased the cost of insurance premiums. Income inequality has increased dramatically. The administration has sought to bar undocumented immigrants from purchasing health insurance and to reduce food-stamp coverage. Work requirements in the social welfare net have been expanded. Direct family policy is minimal, but the employment rate for women is high. Ideological stalemate has prevented pension-system sustainability reforms. The Trump administration has taken numerous steps to cut legal and illegal immigration, with Trump showing active rhetorical hostility toward immigrants. The separation of migrant children from parents has produced a human-rights scandal. The incidence of hate crimes has increased, and the issue of police violence against Black citizens has remained in the spotlight.

Despite a history of ambitious environmental protections, the United States holds the SGI 2020's lowest position (rank 41) with regard to environmental policies. Its score in this area has declined by 1.2 points relative to 2014. With the administration routinely flouting political norms, the

United States falls into the lower-middle ranks (rank 24) with regard to democracy quality. Its score on this measure has declined by 1.4 points relative to 2014.

With a worrisome degree of chaos at top executive levels, the United States scores relatively poorly (rank 30) with respect to executive capacity. Its score on this measure has declined by 2.2 points relative to 2014. President Trump has shown virtually no interest in long-range planning. Executive decision-making does not follow orderly processes. The Republican congress has drafted key measures in secret, avoiding public discussion. Agencies have suffered massive losses of expert staff. The executive branch has seen calamitous failures of coordination in issues such as hurricane response and border control. A preoccupied Congress passed no major legislation in 2019. Despite concerns related to the effects of polarization, the United States falls into the upper-middle ranks (rank 17) in the area of executive accountability. Its score in this area has declined by 0.2 points relative to its 2014 level.

Congressional resources are quite substantial, and formal powers are strong. However, the administration has refused to provide access to important information and key figures for oversight hearings. The influential General Accountability Office performs audit functions. No specific ombuds office exists. There is no national data-protection authority. Citizens' policy-knowledge levels are on average quite low, with "partisan motivated reasoning" an increasing concern. Serious, in-depth policy reporting exists, but a decline in journalistic standards is evident, particularly in a right-leaning media that echoes Trump's constant claim that mainstream news organizations are reporting "fake news."

SGI was covered extensively, for example in a series of the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* in the summer of 2012 (editions 26/2012-29/2012) entitled "The Craft of Governing" ("Das Handwerk des Herrschens"). The series singled out "good governance" as the central topic for policymakers and civil servants in time of economic and financial crisis. In its introductory article, *Der Spiegel* described the Sustainable Governance Indicators and its sister project BTI as the "most ambitious experience in comparative politics since Aristotle's time." Current SGI News is available on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ProjectSgi>.

In the spring of 2018 the board of the Bertelsmann Foundation decided to fully fund the project for another four years. In the summer of 2020 the Bertelsmann Foundation's SGI Board decided to suspend the regular SGI survey round for 2021 and instead conduct a special survey "Sustainability and Effectiveness of COVID-19 Crisis Management," which is tailored to the central aspects of Covid-19 pandemic crisis management in the OECD world. The focus is on the vulnerability of countries in the areas of economic, health, and social policy and the resilience of the crisis response measures taken in these areas. As always, the focus is not only on the outcomes of specific policies, but also on the countries' reform performance and democratic governance capacities. In particular, input (democratic participation processes) and political-administrative steering performance are taken into account when assessing the sustainability of policymaking vis-à-vis the crisis management of the pandemic. In this special survey the Bertelsmann SGI Team intends to pool their available resources and concentrate on a smaller sample of 30 countries

(which will include the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Chile) and on a significantly reduced number of indicators. The Covid-19 Crisis Management expert assessment round was launched in November 2020 and will be completed in the second quarter of 2021.

Patterns of Economic Policy Advice in Germany and the United States: Organizational Models, Cultural Influences, and Advisory Discourses, with a Particular Emphasis on the World of Work (Muster der Politikberatung)

Funding for this project came from the Hans-Böckler-Foundation, affiliated with the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB), the Confederation of German Trade Unions. The project started in late 2013 and has now been terminated. In June of 2019 the project was concluded with the online-publication of the final report (in German) and an academic working paper in English (see below). A short project description (in German) is available at: <https://www.boeckler.de/11145.htm?projekt=2013-651-6#projektbeschreibung>. The final report entitled "Muster der Politikberatung: Wirtschaftspolitische Beratung in Deutschland und den USA im Vergleich," co-authored by Gordon Friedrichs, Dorota Stasiak, and Martin Thunert with the help of Natalie Rauscher and Hanna Thiele underwent the final copy-editing stage in 2018-19 and has been published online as an edition of the online-publication series "Study" of the Hans-Böckler-Foundation in June of 2019. The main findings can be summarized as follows:

The suppliers of economic policy advice surveyed in this study see a great need for evidence-based policy advice in both the U.S. and Germany. Most economic policy advisors and members of think tanks or economic research institutes see themselves less as a mouthpiece for particular social interests or for a clearly identifiable ideology than as members of a consulting consortium that participates in academic discourses and translates the ideas developed there into policy-relevant and politically useful concepts and proposals. Most economic policy experts interviewed for this study believe that policy advice relating to the world of work and the perspective of employees can be extended and optimized both in terms of its communicative orientation to an increasingly differentiated multimedia public and in terms of the range of sources of advice that can be consulted. If communicative strategies of policy advisors could be better geared towards different kinds of analogue and digital media and if the range of sources of advice could be broadened, this may lead to a greater impact of employee-focused economic and socio-political advice. See: Gordon Friedrichs, Dorota Stasiak, and Martin Thunert: *Muster der Politikberatung. Wirtschaftspolitische Beratung in Deutschland und den USA im Vergleich*, Study der Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, 423.

Düsseldorf: 2019, ISBN: 978-3-86593-338-6. 224 pages. It can be downloaded free of charge at: https://www.boeckler.de/pdf/p_study_hbs_423.pdf. The phase of dissemination of overall and partial results of the project within the academic community and the wider public began in the fall of 2019. A roster of American economic policy advisory organizations and institutes – compiled by the HCA project team – can be downloaded at https://www.boeckler.de/pdf_fof/101131.pdf

Another product of this research project on the mediatisation of (economic) expertise was published in late 2019 as: Dorota Stasiak, Eva Savinova, Gordon Friedrichs, Andrea Römmele, "Mediatisation of expertise? How media affects communication patterns in external economic policy advice in Germany and the United States," in: ZPB Zeitschrift für Politikberatung, 8 (2016), Heft 2-3, p. 115-129, ISSN print: 1865-4789, ISSN online: 1865-4789, <https://doi.org/10.5771/1865-4789-2016-2-3-115>)

Main findings: A common strategy of today's advisory organizations is to supplement personal, direct transmission of expertise with the public dissemination of recommendations. By doing so, these advisory bodies rely on multiple channels and forms of communication. The present article adopts this communication-oriented perspective to analyze the possible reasons and broader consequences of "expertise going public" within the framework of mediatization. Building on an analysis of the Internet presence of selected German and American organizations offering economic policy advice as well as questionnaires and interviews conducted among their representatives, it asks if they adapt to media logic or already adopt it and reflects on the practical and theoretical implications of such, often implicit, choices.

On August 25, 2020 Natalie Rauscher and Martin Thunert presented a paper entitled "Do Think Tanks Still Matter? How they (Could) Matter - Economic Policy Think Tanks in Germany and the United States and their Strategies of Policy Advice", which was based on a survey conducted for the project, at the 2020 Virtual General Conference of the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR), originally planned to take place in Innsbruck, Austria, but moved online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

HCA EXPERT IN RESIDENCE

In the fall of 2019, the HCA inaugurated its Expert in Residence program. The program aims to give HCA students and faculty access to the expertise of those who pursued a career outside of academics and are now bringing their know-how to an academic setting. Across the disciplines represented at the HCA, Experts in Residence will bring their experience and insights to HCA programs and events and thus promote a continuous interchange of skills and ideas. They will also share insights and advice from their own careers with HCA students, thus providing graduates of the HCA's study programs with invaluable guidance for the transition from academia to the job market. During their residence, experts will have the opportunity to engage with students and faculty both inside and out of the classroom, conduct workshops, or deliver public lectures. This program gives HCA students in particular the chance to translate ideas into practice and gain a real-world perspective on their work.

During the winter term 2019-20, the HCA welcomed its first Expert in Residence, the Scottish essayist, poet, and composer Bréon Rydell. Together with Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss he mapped out and taught a special undergraduate course on the subject: "The American Dream in the 21st Century – Where Are We Now?" The course commenced in October 2019 with an in depth consideration of the key historical perspective of the "American Dream" as expressed in the aspirations and achievements of the Puritans who voyaged across the Atlantic from England to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1629. Subsequent seminars focused on the works of outstanding landmark classics of twentieth-century American literature – *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925) and *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller (1949). In addition, other sessions focused on racial tensions in NYC, between Puerto Ricans and white Americans in *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim. Other topics covered were the important cultural contributions made by James Baldwin, Maya Angelou, and the Harlem Poets, as well as critical analysis of *Angels in America* by Tony Kushner, which dealt with the AIDS epidemic and the threats to the survival of the LGBT community.



Bréon Rydell with Dietmar Schloss

HCA SPRING ACADEMY 2020

The planning of the Spring Academy 2020 was brought to an abrupt halt when the severity of the COVID-19 outbreak became clear. Prioritizing health and safety caused the cancellation of the Spring Academy for the first time in seventeen years.

The Spring Academy team received 154 applications from 46 countries, and the dissertations selected by the committee were most promising.

The following panels had been planned for the 2020 Spring Academy:

1. Can you feel it? – Violence in Law, Literature and War
With presentations by Irina Brittner from Osnabrück University, Germany and Iain Flood from Newcastle University, U.K.
2. Environmental Racism, Activism, and Justice
With presentations by Sarah Marak from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany and Dorothee Schwieters from the University of Cologne, Germany
3. It's all in the Graphics
With presentations by Zohra Hassan-Pieper from the University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany and Elle Whitcroft from the University of Sussex, U.K.
4. Locating Hip Hop
With presentations by James Barber and Dianne Violeta Mausfeld, both from the University of Bern, Switzerland
5. Challenging Perceptions – Intersectionality of Race and Gender
With presentations by Nahum Welang from the University of Bergen, Norway and Kiefer Holland from the University of Edinburgh, U.K.
6. Public Policy – Regulating the Conspicuous Body
With presentations by Laura Kettel from the Freie Universität Berlin, Germany and Elizabeth Evens from the University College London, U.K.
7. It's all fiction – Arab and African Americans Transversing Ethnicities
With presentations by Insaf Sensri from the University of Badji Mokhtar, Algeria and Sini Elkon-salo from the University of Edinburgh, U.K.
8. De/Constructing Regional Spaces
With presentations by Emmanuel Falguières from the EHESS, France and Cameron Winter from the University of Georgia, USA

9. Performing U.S. Indigeneity

With presentations by Chadha Brahem from Eötvös Loránd University Budapest, Hungary, and Andrew Novell from the University of East Anglia, U.K.

10. Embodying Race and Religion

With presentations by Cody Musselman from Yale University, USA and James Hill Jr. from Northwestern University, USA

Two applicants agreed to fill in for participants who dropped out when the consequences of the pandemic began to manifest: We were very sorry to also miss the presentations of Amir Hussein from Emory University, USA and Cameron Seglias from the Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. The confirmed chairs for the panels were the facilitators of the Spring Academy, Dorothea Fischer-Hornung (HCA) and Wilfried Mausbach (HCA) as well as David Gruber from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, Ulrike Gerhard and Jan Stievermann, both from Heidelberg University. Additionally, we missed three workshops, a writing workshop by Sherry Föhr from Heidelberg University, a publishing workshop by Dorothea Fischer-Hornung, and a workshop on how to navigate the academic job market by David Gruber.

Ida Bahmann and Jenny Klotz along with intern Nevin Faden Gürbüz organized the conference and its surrounding events. The HCA Spring Academy Team is very grateful for positivity and encouragement, albeit the cancellation, and is looking forward to the next Spring Academy, which will take place from March 22-26, 2021.



HCA

Spring Academy 2020

HCA Spring Academy 2020

American Studies

Culture, Economics, Geography, History, Literature, Politics & Religion

- An international network for Ph.D. students
- A one-week interdisciplinary conference at Heidelberg
- March 23-27, 2020
- Deadline for applications: November 15, 2019
- www.hca-springacademy.de

HCA
Heidelberg Center
for American Studies

Curt und Heidemarie
Engelhorn Palais

Hauptstraße 120
D-69117 Heidelberg

T+49 6221 / 54 37 10
F+49 6221 / 54 37 19

hca@uni-hd.de
www.hca.uni-hd.de



Ruprecht - Karls - Universität
Heidelberg, est. 1386



CONFERENCES

A Hegemonic Transition? Reconfigurations of Global Economic and Security Orders in the Age of Trump, October 4-5, 2019, Heidelberg Center for American Studies

In October 2019, the HCA hosted a two-day international conference about whether the current reconfiguration of global economic and security orders amounts to a “hegemonic transition.” The conference, which was organized by HCA director Welf Werner and Florian Böller, featured scholars from the U.S. and Europe that explored the emergence of a multipolar global order and the relative economic decline of the West. Although international trends, such as the rise of China, have been debated for quite some time, recent developments in world affairs spark new attention to the possibility of a hegemonic transition. In particular, the U.S. under Donald Trump seems to abandon its traditional role as a global hegemon.

The conference commenced with Ayse Zarakol’s (University of Cambridge) opening lecture, which assessed the concept of global hegemony and the causes of previous hegemonic transitions. The first set of papers investigated domestic support and contestation within the West. Christian Lammert (FU Berlin) analyzed the failure of liberal institutions to cope with economic inequalities, and Christian Tuschhoff (FU Berlin) inspected the domestic sources of U.S. foreign policy to trace the current radical policy shift under the Trump administration. Looking at economic and welfare policies, Welf Werner (HCA) argued that the traditional social contract in the U.S. has been strained if not broken and that U.S. hegemony has lost its previously bipartisan support among American voters.

The second part of the conference focused on the international side of the potential hegemonic transition. Andreas Falke (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg) discussed Donald Trump’s trade policy. Here, the abandonment of the traditional role of the U.S. as a defender of multilateral rules may be most visible. Mark Schwartz (University of Virginia), however, maintained in his paper that the thesis of a hegemonic transition is overstated, in particular with regard to the geo-economic power of the United States. He pointed to the role of intellectual property, innovation, and the dominating function of the U.S.-dollar to underscore his argument.

Gordon Friedrichs (HCA) and Florian Böller (TU Kaiserslautern) presented papers on the effects of Trump’s “America First” doctrine among allies. While Gordon Friedrichs aimed to make sense of a “Trump-effect” through the lens of role theory, Florian Böller highlighted that European countries, such as Germany and France, already began to hedge against a further deterioration of transatlantic relations.

The final section of the conference was devoted to “challenger states” of Western Hegemony: China, Russia, India, and Brazil. Suzanne Loftus (Marshall European Center for Security Studies) looked at Russia’s status seeking foreign policy and demonstrated Moscow’s increased assertiveness on a global stage. Tobias Burgers (Keio University, Tokyo), on the other hand, focused on China’s influence in cyberspace to conclude that it has outpaced Western states, in particular in

developing countries. How India manages to navigate the period of power transition and U.S. decline was the topic of David Jacobs' and Patrick Kessler's paper (both University of Cologne). Finally, Luis Schenoni (University of Notre Dame) undertook an analysis of Brazil's foreign policy.

While not all presenters agreed that world politics has already reached the tipping point of a hegemonic transition, the conference nonetheless traced the seismic shift in global economic and security orders that are currently taking place. It remains to be seen whether these shifts will lead to more instability or a new equilibrium. The conference volume *Hegemonic Transition - Global Economic and Security Orders in the Age of Trump* will appear in the Palgrave Studies in International Relations in early 2021.

Front to back:
Ayse Zarakol, Christian
Lammert, Andreas Falke,
Christian Tuschhoff, and the
conveners Welf Werner and
Florian Böller



The Corrosion of the Liberal Democratic Order? Transatlantic Perspectives in Perilous Times, International Conference and Annual Meeting of the Political Science Section of the German Society for American Studies, November 7-8, 2019, Heidelberg Center for American Studies

For some time, it seemed as if democracy – especially in its market-liberal variant of U.S. American provenance – was the only game in town. In recent years, however, the marriage of liberal values, capitalism, and democratic order has come under considerable stress from a variety of directions. Increasing polarization and decreasing trust in institutions goes hand in hand with an erosion of confidence in the problem-solving capacities of governments and a growing pessimism about economic well-being and social progress more generally. At the same time, the disconnect between “the” people and their political representatives has become more and more visible, giving rise to new political forces across the political spectrum. These turbulent times are not limited to domestic politics, but also stretch beyond envisaged walls and borders into the realm of international politics: Here, the discontents of globalization and the dismal results of democracy promotion with coercive means after the end of the Cold War contribute to the erosion of American and Western authority on the global stage. These developments have opened

up room for new geo-strategic maneuvers and dynamics in a multipolar world. Overall, there are quite a few signs that a corrosion of the democratic order has been taking place.

The 2019 Annual Meeting of the Political Science Section of the German Association for American Studies (GAAS) addressed these challenges to the democratic order with a focus on the USA and in a comparative perspective. Florian Böller (TU Kaiserslautern) and Markus B. Siewert (TUM Munich) served as the local organizers of the meeting held at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies on November 7 and 8, 2019. The conference was generously supported by the German Research Fund's program line "International Scientific Events," the Atlantic Academy Rhineland-Palatinate, and the Heidelberg Center for American Studies.

The first panel "Renewing Representation? Chances and Challenges for Political Parties" was opened by Jonathan Hopkin (LSE London), who put the American case into a wider context by comparing it with existing trends in anti-system politics in Europe. Jordan Tama (American University Washington D.C.) focused on congressional bipartisanship in U.S. foreign policy. In doing so, Tama made a compelling case that even in an era of hyperpolarization, bipartisan cooperation is still partly alive in Congress. Jörg Hebenstreit (University of Jena) analyzed how campaign finance in the U.S. has changed over the last decade leading to new networks of private organizations which exist outside the formal structures of the Republican and Democratic parties but are closely intertwined with them in electoral politics.

The second panel focused on "Declining Legitimacy? Political Institutions under Pressure." Natalie Rauscher (HCA) elaborated crisis responses of the executive branch. Based on several case studies, she was able to show that increasing political polarization influences disaster relief policies and the underlying politics of mitigation. Focusing on the Supreme Court, Philipp Adorf (University of Bonn) addressed the development of the declining institutional legitimacy of the judicial branch of government as a final arbiter. He furthermore discussed reform options reflecting upon their potential to restore the functionality of the Supreme Court. Finally, Mike Cowburn (FU Berlin) presented his research on primary elections in the United States. Here, he examines how the composition of the electorate has changed over the last decades on both sides of the political spectrum, leading to ideologically more polarized parties.

The third panel dealt with the "Transformation of Democracy? Political Communication in the Digital Era." Bill Harder (American University Washington D.C.) explored the question whether U.S. President Trump's rhetoric on Twitter was "contagious" across the United States. Diego Ciccobelli (Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Florence) examined the personalization of politics on Facebook. He demonstrated how characteristics of the political and the media systems impact online political communication strategies. The presentation by Pascal König (TU Kaiserslautern) focused on the issue of micro-targeting by political actors. He discussed both the risks and the opportunities of micro-targeting for representative democracy, arguing for a more context-sensitive approach to this relevant issue. Finally, Curd Knüpfer (FU Berlin) elaborated on transatlantic online networks of right-wing groups. He looked at how right-wing online media are connected on both sides of the Atlantic but also at how they influence each other in a reciprocal manner.

The fourth panel turned to the “Faultlines of Liberalism? Democracy in the Age of Trump.” Boris Vormann (Bard College Berlin) addressed the question whether the phenomenon of Trump is global and put the characteristics of President Trump’s political style, rhetoric, and policies in a comparative perspective. Olga Thierbach-McLean (Hamburg) focused on the reactionary side of liberalism. She investigated how the current (over)emphasis on individualism in American society has its deep roots in the nineteenth century. Jan Hornat (University of Prague) inquired how U.S.-style liberalism was initially welcomed in post-communist countries, but later abandoned or even reversed to become a placeholder for unfulfilled promises. Michael Dreyer’s presentation (University of Jena) concluded the session by reflecting upon both ideational and institutional symptoms of crisis.

The highlight of the first conference day was the keynote speech by Didi Kuo from Stanford University which focused on the topic of “Political Parties and the Crisis of Democratic Capitalism.” Didi Kuo showcased how some of the most pressing problems in U.S. politics today gradually developed throughout time. Concentrating on various critical junctures from the early twentieth century onwards, Kuo exposed mutual and interlinked crises of political parties and the distortion of U.S. capitalism.

The second day of the conference started with the panel on the “Discontents of Liberalism? Capitalism, Inequality, and Marginalization.” Christian Lammert (FU Berlin) discussed the redistributive capacity of the U.S. tax system and underscored that the transfer system in the United States has grown more unequal over time. Welf Werner (HCA) traced the impact of polarization on the issue of deficit spending in the United States. He argued that the U.S. welfare state is inadequately equipped to mitigate the economic discontents of globalization hitting large parts of the U.S. workforce. Laura Kettel (FU Berlin) addressed the topic of criminalization of homelessness in U.S. cities and highlighted an increasing trend towards “law & order” policies despite overall declining numbers of homelessness in the United States. Ana-Constantina Frost (FU Berlin) concentrated on the role of the Central American diaspora in the United States. She demonstrated that Central Americans groups in the U.S. have in fact mobilized support and established organizations that seek to shape policies towards their native countries.

The last panel of the conference turned to the question of “World Order in Decline? Contestation of Liberal Authority Structures.” Maria Debre (Maastricht University) started this panel with a paper on the “death” and “survival” of international organizations. The project focuses on the factors that ensure institutional resilience providing important insights in an era of global illiberalism and retrenchment of international cooperation. Betsy Leimbigger (FU Berlin) discussed the role of key institutions of the liberal international order and diagnosed an increase of distrust towards institutions. Tim Heinkelmann-Wild’s (LMU Munich) paper addressed a two-fold question: under what conditions do multilateral institutions become contested and what strategies are employed by dissatisfied states to undermine those institutions. In the final presentation of the conference, Catherine Hecht (Vienna School of International Affairs & University Duisburg-Essen) explored whether the support for democratic governance in the international arena has declined over the past decades. Surprisingly, Hecht not only found increasing contestation of democratic principles but also traced their resilience within the U.N. General Assembly.

Overall, the conference provided insights into cutting-edge research at the intersection of comparative politics, international relations, and U.S. area studies, focusing on the broader theme of a corrosion of the liberal order within the transatlantic sphere. The meeting brought together researchers from the U.S., Europe, and Germany, and thus enabled the development of new scientific networks and research projects. This is noteworthy in particular since the research on the topic of a decline of the liberal order thus far has been characterized by disciplinary as well as regional divides. Despite the topic's overall focus on symptoms of crises, the presentations and discussions also highlighted examples of resilience of liberal norms and institutions – both in domestic and international politics.

Florian Böller & Markus B. Siewert



Conveners Florian Böller and Markus B. Siewert welcome conference participants in the HCA's Stucco.

Annual Convention of the Wirtschaftshistorischer Ausschusses des Vereins für Socialpolitik, March 4-6, 2020, Heidelberg Center for American Studies

During the first week of March, the HCA had the pleasure to host the annual meeting of the Wirtschaftshistorischer Ausschuss (Economic History Committee) of the Verein für Socialpolitik. The conference opened with a key note by Manfred Berg, Curt-Engelhorn Professor of American History at Heidelberg University. Professor Jan-Otmar Hesse, head of the committee, welcomed his colleague and the numerous guests in the HCA Atrium. In his opening remarks, Professor Hesse pointed to the growing public awareness of economic and social history, a clear indication of what this field contributes to German academia. He introduced to this year's topic of the panel discussion, "Autorität und Vertrauen in der US-Wirtschaft: Trends und Brüche," presented the panelists and key note speaker, and thanked the Heidelberg Center for American Studies for hosting the annual conference. HCA director Professor Welf Werner also welcomed the guests and emphasized that it was of special interest for an interdisciplinary institute like the HCA to present and support fields such as economic and social history because of their long and paradigmatic experience with inter-disciplinary research. He then passed the microphone to Manfred Berg, a historian with a special interest in the relationship and interdependencies between

politics, society, and the economy. His keynote commenced by asking the question what causes Americans to lose confidence in liberal and democratic institutions. The current American president, Donald Trump, who often presents himself as quite anti-democratic, epitomizes the loss of confidence and social polarization in U.S. society and thus the greatest shock it has experienced in recent years. James Carville, who coined the phrase "It's the economy, stupid!" in the 1992 election campaign of Bill Clinton, claimed that American presidential elections are strongly influenced by economic dynamics. Yet, Professor Berg emphasized, things are not that simple in the case of Trump, and we have to ask ourselves whether polarization is purely a socio-economic phenomenon or rather a cultural one. To probe this question, he turned to the history of populism in the United States. Populism is often used as a collective term for political movements that distinguish between the people and the elites. Although populism is often seen as a consequence of a loss of trust, populist movements in different countries pursued very different goals. In the United States, historically they appealed to the "common man," who had to protect himself from politics, thus purposefully distinguishing the political mainstream from followers of populist ideologies. As agrarian populism, this movement initially aimed at democratizing American politics in the nineteenth century. It was not until the twentieth century that populism took a conservative turn; populists like George Wallace increasingly started to employ racist slogans. During the progressive Obama years, populist reactionism grew in the Republican Party, advocating policies such as protectionism to shield the United States from the consequences of globalization. Compared to Western Europe, the U.S. has not much of a safety net for losers of globalization, which is one of the reasons why the gap between rich and poor has been growing steadily since the 1960s. Increasingly frustrated by these developments, many citizens have lost confidence in politics. Populism was therefore not only a logical consequence but also a remedy for what voters perceived as unjust. This, Professor Berg explained, all the more raises the question why there have been no attempts to redistribute economic resources through targeted policies and why many Americans continue to vote against their economic interests. He argued that in the U.S. economic challenges are fought out in cultural proxy wars quite frequently. Many populists are part of the middle class and have joined this movement out of a fear of social decline. In the coming decades, demographics will leave white Americans in the minority, which has become a contested issue in American society. It is therefore necessary, Professor Berg concluded, to consider the real effects of immigration more and to examine the prevailing economic inequality from many perspectives. Following Manfred Berg's lecture, Professor Hesse invited the guests to a short round of questions. They used the opportunity to discuss populism in American society in greater detail together with Professor Berg.

The panel discussion, which was open to the public, took place on the afternoon of the first conference day. Dr. Korinna Schönhärl (Goethe University Frankfurt), Professor Hartmut Berghoff (Georg-August-University Göttingen), and Professor Welf Werner (Heidelberg Center for American Studies) set out to discuss from different perspectives why Americans were losing confidence in the economic policies of their country. Professor Jan-Otmar Hesse (University of Bayreuth) moderated. In his introduction, Welf Werner pointed out that this topic was closely related to the work of the Research Training Group (Graduiertenkolleg) "Authority and Trust," GKAT, at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies. GKAT explores authority and trust from a multidisci-

plinary perspective, a particularly valuable approach to comprehensively understand the current threats to liberal democracy. The populist currents that can be observed in the United States are a consequence of policy failure in the past, Professor Werner explained. The loss of confidence in economic and welfare policies in particular has dramatic consequences, since both the technological and economic advances of Western industrialized countries are largely based on the confidence of citizens in democratic processes and the legitimacy of the rules of the game in modern market economies. This is specifically also the case in the United States, which emerged as the foremost economic power of the world as a country in which socio-economic arrangements have been negotiated, renegotiated, and agreed upon in democratic processes. Welf Werner cited the adoption of the Constitution in 1787 and the New Deal in the 1930s as examples of successful democratic negotiation processes that solidified long-term socio-economic progress. He contrasted these historical experiences with the current climate of polarization and distrust in U.S. economic policies and specifically with the causes and consequences of the presidential elections in 2016. Before the ratification of the American Constitution, individual states had almost unlimited powers in their economic policies, including the right to regulate commerce both within their jurisdictions and with other states and foreign countries with detrimental effects on economic growth and development of the nation. Only with the adoption of the Constitution and the strengthening of the federal government did these and other vital economic policy functions become the responsibility of national politics and its democratically elected representatives. In the Early Republic, these representatives fought out in public substantial economic policy controversies for the best path forward and made decisions that were eventually not only accepted but also legitimized by the trust of the great majority of citizens. During the economic crisis of the 1930s, American society plunged into a deep crisis of confidence, as citizens were disappointed by an economy based on the laissez-faire ideology of the nineteenth century. However, the countermeasures initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt together with the Congress and adjusted according to a trial-and-error principle demonstrated once more that citizens trusted the democratic process in times of mounting challenges. Professor Werner emphasized here that President Roosevelt set an example of maintaining and strengthening the relationship of trust between citizens and government through his regular radio addresses and that the New Deal legislation became the basis for the golden age of capitalism in the post-war decades. In an age of globalization, growing income inequality, increased volatility of the business cycle, and a crisis of the American welfare state, however, citizens have increasingly lost confidence in established politics since the 1970s. During the 2016 presidential elections, they reoriented themselves and placed their trust in a distrusting and distrustful presidential candidate instead. These three moments in the history of the United States show that fluctuations in the relationship of trust between citizens and politicians and in the authority of the government are closely linked to socio-economic development, Welf Werner concluded. Thus, the United States were currently in a severe crisis of legitimacy of economic policy, which is accelerated by the rise of emerging economies and the relative decline of the U.S. in the world economy. Although confidence in the government has also been declining in other Western countries, this decline was particularly rapid in the United States. The panel in the HCA Atrium then moved on to discuss the effects of this loss of confidence on tax morale, corporate corruption, and countercyclical economic policy.

The panel | to r:
Welf Werner, Hartmut Berghoff,
Korinna Schönhärl, Jan-Otmar
Hesse



Jan-Otmar Hesse handed over the floor to Korinna Schönhärl, who devoted herself to the topic of tax morale and especially to the question of why tax compliance has been so difficult to implement in the United States for quite a few decades. She pointed towards two basic narratives in American society: On the one hand, there was the traditional narrative, which emphasizes individual economic responsibility and aims at keeping state intervention in the form of taxation as low as possible. On the other hand, a strong countercurrent sought to distribute the wealth of individuals more broadly in order to compensate for social inequality. Building on this latter current, workers from the North and farmers from the South joined forces at the end of the nineteenth century to advocate for a progressive income tax. When it was introduced in 1913, the “source the rich” ideology was already widespread in the United States and remained dominant until the 1970s. Only with President Reagan, who cut marginal tax rates as part of his supply-side policies in the 1980s did this attitude decline sharply. Against this background, according to Dr. Schönhärl, tax morale has reached a low point, largely because citizens’ lack of confidence in politics and in a fair distribution of burden sharing. She also pointed out that the IRS’ constantly emerging crises and lack of information about tax compliance are incentives for citizens to avoid paying taxes.

Hartmut Berghoff then turned his attention to the topic of corporate corruption, which was first criminalized and prosecuted under President Richard Nixon. Up until then, U.S. corporate corruption was widespread, especially in foreign countries. American companies even used foreign accounts to finance election campaigns. Corporate opinions about foreign corruption, which had long been seen as a necessity, only changed when it began to be defined as shareholder deception because of forged balance sheets. In connection with the Watergate scandal, the exposure and criminalization of foreign corruption then led to a rapid loss of confidence in business and politics. Fear grew that, especially in the context of the Cold War, large-scale foreign corruption by American companies would do serious damage to the nation’s reputation. Politicians finally reacted and passed the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), which until the 1990s bore only minor consequences. In the wake of the globalization euphoria, however, the U.S. government began to exert pressure on the international community under the banner of fair trade conditions

to enforce the FCPA standards globally. This initially resulted in the Anti-Bribery Convention and, after the attacks of September 11, in an additional national and international intensification of anti-corruption work.

Finally, Welf Werner turned his attention to the topic of anti-cyclical economic policy. He explained that especially in the wake of the economic crisis of 2008-09 it became clear how difficult it has become in the U.S. to formulate adequate policy reactions to severe economic crises. Because of societal and political polarization, non-partisan cooperation has all but disappeared from the political system. According to Professor Werner, the Bush administration's reluctance to bail out Lehman Brothers reflected fundamental opposition to government intervention among Republicans and their voter base, which had cultivated an indiscriminate distrust of government for many decades. The Obama administration's efforts to introduce an adequate stimulus package once it had taken office in January 2009, when the U.S. economy was in free fall, was quickly tamed by Republicans in the Congress, who found themselves now in opposition to the government – and to any constructive efforts to fight the worst recession since the Great Depression. In a moment of national crisis, desperately needed economic policy interventions were severely limited in a dysfunctional political system in which trust and cooperation had been replaced by distrust and obstruction strategies since the latter half of the 1990s. Interactions between political parties and their voter base as well as the escalating effects of modern communications media amplified the divisions in society and among policy makers.

Following these remarks, Professor Hesse started the discussion, which was mainly concerned with the reasons for the continuous loss of confidence in U.S. economic history over the last decades and particularly in the Trump era. One member of the audience raised the question whether the public's lack of confidence in the financial system had not already existed much earlier and was simply reinforced by the financial crisis and the failure of Lehman Brothers. Welf Werner countered here that the priority of bank bailouts acted as a social explosive and drew attention to the problem that the wages of many workers had stagnated for four decades. Another guest noted that there was a legitimate counter model to taxes in U.S. society, namely voluntary contributions, which should be taken into account when considering tax morale. Dr. Schönhärl replied that voluntary donations were a way to control the use of that money, but that the tradition of redistribution had played a decisive role in the development of the tax laws that the U.S. still enforces today. When asked whether taxes were often not paid for racist reasons, Korinna Schönhärl replied that until the late 1960s a broad consensus could be found on financing the welfare state through government revenues. Thus it was not purely a matter of racist motivation, but had much more to do with the changing relationship between citizens and the state. Another guest questioned the explanation the panelists had offered for the loss of trust – was it not an oversimplification that only stood up to the direct comparison with the twentieth century and should we not rather speak of a "return to normal"? This was followed by a remark in the same vein – another guest pointed out that it was necessary to define the argument precisely, since state governments and the federal government fulfilled different functions. Professor Werner agreed with this and also remarked that a systematic comparison between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would be a worthwhile undertaking. However, he also stressed that clear

changes in the relationship of trust between citizens and the state could nevertheless be observed. The participants then wrapped up the discussion with brief closing statements. Here, Dr. Schönhärl once more emphasized that it was necessary to regard trust as a reduction of transaction costs. Professor Berghoff noted that despite the sluggish start of anti-corruption work, the penalties are often severe nowadays and that this was a way for the state to compensate for the historical shortcomings in this field. Professor Werner pointed out that it was necessary to look at the citizens' perspective, since their interests and attitudes are inevitably different from those of the actors in the corporate sector. Even in the context of American middle-class prosperity, one should not forget how many citizens have been working for stagnating real wages for decades and thus have continuously lost confidence in established politics. Professor Hesse then thanked the three experts and the audience for the lively discussion, which set the right tone for another two days of expert panels.

James W.C. Pennington and the World of Transatlantic Reform, March 10-12, Heidelberg Center for American Studies

Convened by Jan Stieverman (HCA) and Eddie Glaude (Princeton University), this conference planned to reassess the life and work of the African American abolitionist and writer James W.C. Pennington (1807-70) in the context of nineteenth-century transatlantic reform movements. The roster of speakers included leading experts of African American history, literature and reform, among them Manisha Sinha, John Stauffer, William L. Andrews, and Paul Harvey. Unfortunately, the conference had to be canceled because of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

67th Annual Meeting of the German Association for American Studies, "Participation in American Culture and Society", June 4-6, 2020, reconvened June 17-19, 2021, Heidelberg Center for American Studies

Participation is a core value of American citizenship and at the same time one of the nation's most ambivalent concepts. In colonial America, a larger share of white males had the right to vote than in any other society in the world. The Federal Constitution of 1787 was a milestone in the history of political participation because it tied political power to national elections.

In the nineteenth century, universal white manhood suffrage gave rise to the first electoral mass democracy worldwide. The struggle of women, racial and ethnic minorities, and immigrants for full participatory rights has been a major theme in U.S. history and remains a challenge today and into the future. This challenge reaches far beyond the realm of politics and encompasses full and equal access for groups and individuals to participate in a wide variety of social, cultural, religious, and economic activities.

Exclusion from participation based on class, race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation is indeed part and parcel of the nation's heritage. In recent years, fears of a backlash against participation

and inclusion are mounting as economic inequality is growing and American society is becoming more segmented and polarized. Ironically, social media, once believed to usher in a brave new world of easy and universal participation, drive the emergence of parallel worlds and echo chambers.

At the political level, attempts to undermine the right of minorities and the poor to vote are reminiscent of racist disenfranchisement during the age of Jim Crow. Thus, our conference theme is an important and timely topic that also speaks to the full range of disciplines represented in the DGfA/GAAS.

Conveners: Manfred Berg, Ulrike Gerhard, Günter Leyboldt, Margit Peterfy, Jan Stievermann, Martin Thunert, Welf Werner

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

The list below includes books, book chapters, journal articles, and entries in reference works in the field of American Studies by HCA faculty and staff in 2019-20.

Kristin Berberich (GKAT)

"What Graduates Can Learn from Reading Michelle Obama's *Becoming*," *HCA Graduate Blog* (2019).

"The Next Battle of Brooklyn: Keeping Bikers Safe in the City," *HCA Graduate Blog* (2019).

"Unearthing Brooklyn's Queer History," *HCA Graduate Blog* (2019).

Manfred Berg (HCA and History Department)

„'Ironie des Schicksals': Woodrow Wilson und der amerikanische Eintritt in den Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Kriegerische Tauben: Liberale und Linksliberale Interventionisten vom 19. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart*, ed. Jürgen Peter Schmied (Bonn: V & R unipress, 2019), 103-120.

„Prediger des gerechten Friedens. U.S.-Präsident Woodrow Wilson will eine neue, liberale Weltordnung begründen, in die auch Deutschland eingebunden wird. Er scheitert an der Machtpolitik der Europäer und an sich selbst," in 1919. *Der Vertrag von Versailles und warum er keinen Frieden brachte*, *ZEIT Geschichte* 1 (2019): 34-41.

„Besonders teuer sind junge Afrikanerinnen. Vor 400 Jahren werden in der britischen Kolonie Virginia erstmals Menschen verkauft – der Anfang der Sklaverei in Nordamerika," *Die ZEIT* 35 (2019): 16.

"Weg mit dem Teufelszeug! Vor hundert Jahren führten die USA die Prohibition ein. Das ‚noble Experiment‘ endete 1933 mit einem großen Katzenjammer," *Die ZEIT* (2020): 17.

"Die Würger vom Halse kriegen. Gustav Stresemann betreibt Großmachtpolitik mit freundlichem Antlitz," *ZEIT Geschichte. Der Rausch der 20er Jahre. Glanz und Tragik der Weimarer Republik*, 1:20 (2020): 90-95.

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„‘Wir müssen nur die Furcht fürchten.’ Im Kampf gegen die katastrophale Wirtschaftskrise seit 1929 stärkt der New Deal den Staat und gibt den Amerikanern neues Vertrauen." *ZEIT Geschichte: Katastrophen. Und was die Menschheit aus ihnen gelernt hat - von der Antike bis heute* (2020): 78-81.

"Der Erste Kalte Krieg? US-Präsident Woodrow Wilson und die Russische Revolution 1917-1920," in *Oktoberrevolution 1917 - Ereignis, Rezeption, Künstlerische Deutung*, ed. Felicitas Fischer Weikerthal, Tanja Penter, and Dorothea Redepenning (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2020), 169-185.

„Wenn es ums Ganze geht. Immer wieder wurden Präsidentschaftswahlen zu Wendepunkten der US-Geschichte. 1860 lösten sie einen Bürgerkrieg aus, 1932 leiteten sie einen demokratischen Aufbruch ein. Steht das Land erneut vor einer historischen Zäsur?" *Die ZEIT* 38 (2020), 17.

"'A Vitally Necessary War Measure': Woodrow Wilson's Conversion to Woman Suffrage," in *Women in U.S. Politics: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives. Essays in Honor of Hans-Jürgen Grabbe*, ed. Julia Nitz and Axel R. Schäfer (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2020), 31-46.

Dorothea Fischer-Hornung (HCA)

"'I would write with Mt. Fujiyama in view': Japan as Resonating Space for the Writing of Katherine Dunham's *A Touch of Innocence: Memoirs of Childhood*," in *Ethnic Resonances in Performance, Literature, and Identity*, ed. Yiorgos Kalogeras and Cathy C. Waegner (New York: Routledge, 2020), 167-184.

Gordon Friedrichs (HCA and Institute for Political Science)

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Günter Leypoldt (HCA and English Department)

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“Carlyle, Charles Robson, and the Printing of *Latter-Day Pamphlets*,“ *Notes and Queries* 66:2 (2019), 296 – 300.

“The Art of the Quote: Trump, Social Media, and the Uses of Literary Reference,“ *HCA Graduate Blog*, January 2020. <https://hcagrads.hypotheses.org/2699>.

“Canon, Corpus, Archive: Selection and Valuation from the Eighteenth Century to the Digital Humanities.“ *Anglistik* 31:2 (2020), 53 – 68.

“Between Aura and Access: Artefactuality, Institutionality, and the Allure of the Archival.“ *Anglia* 138:3 (2020), 384 – 403.

Jan Stievermann (HCA and Faculty of Theology)

Ed. with Isabell Klaißer and Oliver Scheiding. *Simplify, Simplify! Brevity, Plainness and Their Complications in American Literature and Culture: Festschrift for Bernd Engler on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*. (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2019).

"Elements of the Fantastic in the Short Fiction of Charles W. Chesnutt," In *Simplify, Simplify! Brevity, Plainness and Their Complications in American Literature and Culture: Festschrift for Bernd Engler on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Isabell Klaiber, Oliver Scheiding, and Jan Stievermann (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2019), 103-124.

"Methodismus." *Pietismus Handbuch*. Ed. Wolfgang Breul and Thomas Hahn-Bruckart (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 603-607.

"Nordamerika." *Pietismus Handbuch*. Ed. Wolfgang Breul and Thomas Hahn-Bruckart (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 326-340.

"Admired Adversary: Wrestling with Grotius the Exegete in Cotton Mather's *Biblia Americana*." *Grotiana* 41:1 (2020):198-235.

Ed. with Douglas A. Sweeney. *The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

"History, Providence, and Eschatology," In *The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Douglas A. Sweeney and Jan Stievermann (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 215-234.

"Europe," In *A History of Puritan Literature*, ed. Kristina Bross and Abram Van Engen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 72-90.

Martin Thunert (HCA)

With Svenja Falk, Manuela Glaab, Andrea Römmele and Henrik Schober, *Handbuch Politikberatung* 2nd edition (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2019).

„Politikberatung – eine Einführung. Kontexte, Begriffsdimensionen, Forschungsstand, Themenfelder," in *Handbuch Politikberatung* 2nd edition, ed. Svenja Falk et al. (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2019), 3-24.

„Politikberatung in Großbritannien," in *Handbuch Politikberatung* 2nd edition, ed. Svenja Falk et al. (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2019), 473-488.

With Anke Kessler and Andrew Sharpe, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2019 Canada Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2019).

With Fabian Klein, Edgar von Knebel, and Claudia Zilla, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2019 Chile Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2019).

With Jörg Faust and Wolfgang Muno, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2019 Mexico Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2019).

With Paul J. Quirk and Christian Lammert, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2019 United States Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2019).

With Gordon Friedrichs and Dorota Stasiak, *Muster der Politikberatung: Wirtschaftspolitische Beratung in Deutschland und den USA im Vergleich (Patterns of Economic Policy Advice in Germany and the United States: Organizational Models, Cultural Influences, and Advisory Discourses, with a Particular Emphasis on the World of Work)* (Düsseldorf: Hans-Böckler Foundation, 2019).

With Steffen Schneider, „Blaues Auge für Blackface, Gelbe Karte für die Red Machine: Kanada nach den Unterhauswahlen“, *Zeitschrift für Kanada-Studien* 40 (2020): 203-214.

With Anke Kessler and Andrew Sharpe, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2020 Canada Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020).

With Fabian Klein and Claudia Zilla, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2020 Chile Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020).

With Wolfgang Muno and Jörg Faust, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2020 Mexico Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020).

With Paul J. Quirk and Christian Lammert, *Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) 2020 United States Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020).

Welf Werner (HCA and Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences)

„Nullsummenspiel? Donald Trump und die Kostenvorteile,“ *Forschungsmagazin der Ruperto Carola* 14 (2019): 138-147.

With Susan Neiman and Josef Braml, „‘Im Zeichen der Freiheit’, America first! – Trumps Präsidentschaft: Was bringt sie seinem Land und der Welt? Podiumsveranstaltung in der Aula der Universität Osnabrück am 6. Dezember 2018,“ in *Osnabrücker Jahrbuch Frieden und Wissenschaft* 26 (2019): 101-129.

“The Trump Phenomenon: Economic Causes and Remedies” (Inaugural Lecture) in *Annual Report 2018-19* (Heidelberg: Heidelberg Center for American Studies, 2019), 170-188.

Co-editor, HCA Podcast „Corona in den USA,“ since April 2020.

SELECTED TALKS

During 2019-20, the following HCA staff, members, students, and associates gave the talks listed below.

Kristin Berberich (GKAT)

With Beatrix Busse and Jennifer Smith, "Avenues for Approaching the Urban." Eighth Biennial International Conference on the Linguistics of Contemporary English, University of Bamberg, September 2019, Bamberg.

"The Vastness of the Urban Datascape – How to Identify and Utilize Unlikely Types of Data." Trier University of Applied Sciences, December 2019, Trier.

Manfred Berg (HCA and History Department)

"The Problem of Political Trust in Contemporary American History." Kolloquium DFG-Graduiertenkolleg 2240 Authority and Trust, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, January 2019, Heidelberg.

With Detlef Junker, Wilfried Mausbach, Martin Thunert, and Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson, „Die Präsidenten der USA: 45 historische Porträts von George Washington bis Donald Trump.“ Book Launch, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, January 2019, Heidelberg.

„Völkerbund und Selbstbestimmung: Das Friedensprogramm des U.S.-Präsidenten Woodrow Wilson.“ Stiftung Demokratie Saarland, January 2019, Saarbrücken.

"Total War and Civil Liberties: The Repression of Dissent in World War One America from a Comparative Perspective." Annual Convention of the Organization of American Historians, April 2019, Philadelphia, Pa.

"'For the Liberation of all Peoples, the German People Included': Woodrow Wilson and the German Revolution 1918/19." Centre for War Studies, University College Dublin, May 2019, Dublin.

"Woodrow Wilson and His Domestic Critics: The United States and World Order after the Great War." Conference "1919: The Paris Peace Conference: The Challenge of a New World Order," Deutsches Historisches Institut, June 2019, Paris, France.

„Wie gefährdet ist die amerikanische Demokratie?“ Panel Discussion, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, June 2019, Heidelberg.

„Wie gefährdet ist die Demokratie? Ein historischer und vergleichender Blick auf die USA und Europa.“ „Demokratie Gestalten!“ Sommerakademie der Begabtenförderwerke, August 2019, Heidelberg.

„Die Verflechtung der deutschen und amerikanischen Wirtschaft nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg.“ Conference „Boom und Spekulationsblasen – Die Weltwirtschaftskrisen von 1929/1930 und 2007/2008,“ Volkswagenstiftung Hannover, November 2019, Hannover.

„U.S.-Präsident Woodrow Wilson und das Erbe des liberalen Internationalismus in der U.S.-Außenpolitik.“ Workshop „Amerika – Land des Widerspruchs. Die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika von der Gründung bis in die Gegenwart,“ University of Zurich, November 2019, Zurich, Switzerland.

„Von Andrew Jackson zu Donald Trump: Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Populismus und Demokratie in der Geschichte der USA“, Antrittsvorlesung an der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, January 2020, Heidelberg.

„US-Präsident Woodrow Wilson, das Selbstbestimmungsrecht und die Saarfrage auf der Pariser Friedenskonferenz 1919“, Landtag des Saarlandes in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Deutsch-Amerikanischen Institut Saarbrücken, February 2020, Saarbrücken.

„‘It’s the Economy, Stupid!’ Or Is It? Zum Verhältnis von sozialer Ungleichheit und Populismus in den USA“, Jahrestagung des Wirtschaftshistorischen Ausschusses des Vereins für Socialpolitik, March 2020, Heidelberg.

„Die USA vor den Präsidentschaftswahlen: Ein historischer Blick auf die Wahl 2020.“ Stiftung Demokratie Saarland, August 2020, Saarbrücken.

„A Ragged-Ass Fourth Rate Country“ – How and why did the United States enter the Path to War in Vietnam? Festival of Historical Films Rasnov, Romania, August 2020 (online).

David Eisler (GKAT)

„Authority, Authenticity, and the American War Novel.“ Historical Fictions Research Conference, Manchester, England, February 2019.

„Who Writes War Novels?“ Guest lecture, University of Southern Denmark (Odense), March 2019.

„Marvel’s Black Panther and the Metonymic War Veteran in American Culture.“ Annual Conference of the German Association for American Studies, Hamburg, Germany, June 2019.

„Being Human After War: Veteran Writers and the Public Sphere.“ Modern Language Association Annual Conference, Seattle, Washington, January 2020.

“War and American Memory Culture from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan.” Connecting Memories 2020 Symposium, Edinburgh (Scotland), June 2020 (online).

Gordon Friedrichs (HCA and Institute for Political Science)

„Nordkorea: Herrschaftsstabilisierungsstrategien und außenpolitisches Verhalten.“ Seminar „China und Nordkorea: Asiens Autoritarismus auf dem Vormarsch?“ Akademie für politische Bildung, July 2019, Tutzing.

„Zwischen Drohgebärden und Denuklearisierung – der Konflikt um Atomwaffen zwischen Nordkorea und den USA.“ Tagung „Atomwaffen – Konflikte um die nukleare Ordnung der Welt“, Evangelische Akademie Loccum, October 2019, Loccum.

With Sebastian Harnisch, “Populism and foreign policy analysis: Approaches and methods.” Institute of Political Science, 2019, Heidelberg University.

“All good things come in threes: Ideological, institutional, and affective polarization in the making of democracies’ foreign policy.” Workshop: New Directions in Foreign Policy Analysis, London University, 2019, London.

“Death by Transition? U.S. Leadership Role and Altercasting by Others under the Trump Administration.” Conference: A Hegemonic Transition? Reconfigurations of Global Economic and Security Orders in the Age of Trump, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, October 2019, Heidelberg.

„More Data, more Problems? Methodische Ansätze zur quantitativen Inhaltsanalyse von Außenpolitikpräferenzen und Kontestation“ [Quantitative content analysis of foreign policy preferences and contestation], Workshop: Methoden der Außenpolitikanalyse: Ansätze, Daten und Perspektiven [Foreign Policy Analysis Methods: Approaches, Data, Perspectives], 2019, University of Erfurt.

Ulrike Gerhard (HCA and Institute for Geography)

„Nachhaltige Stadtentwicklung – Ein (radikaler) Blick auf die Zukunft der Stadt.“ Neujahrsempfang der GAL Heidelberg, January 2019, Heidelberg.

„Reallabore – Transformative Wissenschaft im öffentlichen Raum.“ Panel discussion, Schader Stiftung, January 2019, Darmstadt.

“My Home is my Castle – Trust and Distrust in Housing Development in Cities.” Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers, April 2019, Washington D.C.

“My Home is my Castle – Trust and Distrust in Housing Development in Cities.” Heidelberg Center for American Studies, April 2019, Heidelberg.

„Wie gefährdet ist die amerikanische Demokratie?“ Panel Discussion, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, June 2019, Heidelberg.

With Editha Marquardt, „Town and Gown: Reallabore als Experimentierfeld kritischer Transformationsforschung.“ Deutscher Kongress für Geographie, September 2019, Kiel.

“Climate Action & Cities: Towards Sustainable Urban Development.” Climathon, EMBL Heidelberg, October 2019, Heidelberg.

„Wissen & Stadt – eine kreative Symbiose? Eine kritische Analyse mit empirischen Überlegungen aus Heidelberg“. Geographisches Kolloquium, Universität Bochum, November 2019, Bochum.

With Editha Marquardt, „Ein aktueller Überblick über die Bedeutung von Kooperationen zwischen Wissenschaft und Stadtverwaltung in Deutschland.“ IBA Labor Wissen & Stadt, March 2020, Heidelberg.

„Renaissance oder Niedergang? Die US-amerikanische Stadt im 21. Jahrhundert.“ Lions-Club Heidelberg, March 2020, Heidelberg.

“Wissen und Stadt Teil 2. Auswertung des Überblicks über die Bedeutung von Kooperationen zwischen Wissenschaft und Stadtverwaltung in Deutschland.“ IBA Labor Wissen und Stadt Heidelberg, October 2020 (online).

With Judith Keller, “No Place for Trust: Housing as the New Urban Frontier in Global City Washington, D.C.” Global City Seminar York University, Toronto, November 2020 (online).

Sebastian Harnisch (Institute for Political Science)

“Unintended Consequences.” Arbeitsworkshop, September 2019, Shanghai.

„Hegemonic Transition.“ Conference: A Hegemonic Transition? Reconfigurations of Global Economic and Security Orders in the Age of Trump, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, October 2019, Heidelberg..

„Deutsche Erinnerungskultur.“ Lecture, November 2019, Beijing.

“China ante Portas? Die Seidenstraßeninitiative der Volksrepublik und die Reaktionen in Europa.“ Lions Club Heidelberg, November 2019, Heidelberg.

„Nahe Feinde: Warum das nordkoreanische Regime seine ‚Gegner‘ öffentlich hinrichten lässt.“ Ringvorlesung Ambivalente Feindschaft, Universität Heidelberg, December 2019, Heidelberg.

With Florian Böller, „Die USA nach den Wahlen: Steht die Außenpolitik vor einer Kurskorrektur?“ Ringvorlesung „Quo Vadis USA?“ Universität Heidelberg, November 2020 (online).

„Werte und Geopolitik.“ Online-Diskussion, Akademie Loccum, Dezember 2020 (online).

Ryan P. Hoselton (HCA and Faculty of Theology)

“Reading the Bible Spiritually in the Early Enlightenment.” Fresno Pacific University, July 2019, Fresno, Calif.

“‘The Eyes of the Mind Opened’: Jonathan Edwards and Spiritual Exegesis.” The Jonathan Edwards Center at Gateway Seminary, August 2019, Phoenix, Ariz.

With Jan Stievermann, “Jonathan Edwards and German Pietism.” Yale & the International Jonathan Edwards Conference at Yale University, October 2019, New Haven, Conn.

Claudia Jetter (GKAT)

“Ongoing Revelation and Institution Building: Diverging Conceptions among Charismatic Prophets in Nineteenth-Century America.” Ecclesiastical History Society Summer Conference, Durham University, July 2019, Durham.

“Joseph Smith Jr., Phoebe Palmer and Divine Communication: How Spiritual Self-Authorization Challenged Traditional Norms in Nineteenth-Century America.” Religion and Radicalism Symposium, Manchester Metropolitan University, July 2019, Manchester.

“Transformation Processes of Religious Authority.” Brown Bag Session, Brigham Young University, December 2019, Provo, Utah.

“Inconspicuous Prophets: Phoebe Palmer, R. W. Emerson and the Democratization of Charismatic Authority.” Annual Meeting of the American Society of Church History, January 2020, New York City, N.Y.

“Phoebe Palmer: A Charismatic Lay Preacher Adopting Higher Criticism,” Wesleyan and Methodist Studies Seminar, Durham University, May 2020 (online).

“Phoebe Palmer – Devout Methodist or Dissenting Prophetess?” C19 “Dissent” Konferenz October 2020 (online).

Detlef Junker (HCA)

With Manfred Berg, Wilfried Mausbach, Martin Thunert, and Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson, „Die Präsidenten der USA: 45 historische Porträts von George Washington bis Donald Trump.“ Book Launch, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, January 2019, Heidelberg.

„Trump und die Selbstzerstörung einer imperialen Demokratie.“ Lions Club Heidelberg, Januar 2020, Heidelberg.

„Trump und die Selbstzerstörung einer imperialen Demokratie.“ Kulturforum Wiesloch, Februar 2020, Wiesloch.

Günter Leypoldt (HCA and English Department)

“Charismatic Trust.” Graduiertenkolleg Authority and Trust, January 2019, Heidelberg.

“Literature’s Meridans.” Tagung “Le cosmopolitisme littéraire: hommage à Pascale Casanova,” Centre Marc Bloch, February 2019, Berlin.

“‘Sacred calling:’ Vocation and Disenchantment in Romantic Authorship Models: Wordsworth, Emerson, and Beyond.” Lecture, University of Basel, April 2019, Basel.

“Minimalism’s Institutional Locations.” Symposium “Brevity, Plainness and Their Complications in American Literature and Culture,” University of Tübingen, May 2019, Tübingen.

“Populism and the Moral Economies of Reading.” Conference “Reading in the Age of Trump: The Politics and Possibility of Literary Studies Now,” May 2019, Mainz.

“Network Effects in the Transatlantic Literary Field, 1800 – 1850.” Conference “Transatlantic Literary Authority: Material Networks, Symbolic Economies,” Heidelberg Center for American Studies, July 2019, Heidelberg.

“Populism and the Moral Economies of Reading.” Conference “Les fin(s) de la critique. Institut du monde anglophone,” Sorbonne Nouvelles Paris, 2019, Paris.

“Doppelleben: Literarischer Markt, Literarisches Prestige.” Lecture series „Bestseller, Longseller, Kultbücher – Schlaglichter auf einen Kanon neben dem Kanon,” Heidelberg University, October 2019, Heidelberg.

„Literaturtheorie nach Bourdieu.“ Workshop, Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, February 2020, Essen.

Benjamin Pietrenka (HCA)

"New Moravian Bodies: Transcultural Constructions of Moravian Racial Rhetoric in the Danish and English Caribbean, 1760-1790." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Church History (ASCH), January 2020, New York City, N.Y.

Natalie Rauscher (HCA)

„Zukunft der Arbeit – Chancen und Risiken der Digitalisierung.“ Panel Discussion, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, July 2019, Heidelberg.

"Why Has Catastrophe Mitigation Failed in the U.S.?" Conference "Risk and the Insurance Business in History," Fondazione Mansutti, June 2019, Sevilla, Spain.

"Not Weathering the Storm: Catastrophe Mitigation in Times of Political Polarization." Panel Discussion Annual Meeting of the Political Science Section, German Association for American Studies, Heidelberg University, November 2019, Heidelberg.

„Leveling the playing field: Wie die aktuellen Ungleichheitsnarrative den politischen Diskurs in den USA nach links rücken.“ Panel Discussion Hans-Böckler-Stiftung und NRW School of Governance, University of Duisburg-Essen, Duisburg, December 2019.

„Neue Ängste und alte Vergleiche. Die Ludditen und die ‚Zukunft der Arbeit‘ im öffentlichen Diskurs der USA.“ Panel Discussion, University of Bielefeld, May 2020.

"Do Think Tanks Still Matter? How they (Could) Matter - Economic Policy Think Tanks in Germany and the United States and their Strategies of Policy Advice." Panel Discussion, ECPR General Conference 2020, August 2020.

Maren Schäfer (HCA)

"Shifting Visual Framing of American Populist Leaders in the 2020 Presidential Campaign." 4th Populism Specialist Group (PSA) Workshop, September 2020.

"'Totally Compromised Kangaroo Courts' and the 'Fake News Media' – Adjectives in Donald Trump's Twitter Discourse." Annual Meeting of the Political Science Section, German Association for American Studies, November 2020 (online).

Anja Schüler (HCA)

„Frauen in die Politik! 100 Jahre Frauenwahlrecht in Deutschland und den USA.“ Atlantische Akademie Rheinland-Pfalz, May 2019, Kaiserslautern.

„Mary McLeod Bethune und der Kampf der Afroamerikanerinnen für das Wahlrecht.“ Carl Schurz Haus, Februar 2020, Freiburg im Br.

Tim Sommer (GKAT)

“Networked Distance: Infrastructural Transatlanticism and Anglo-American Literary Culture at Mid-Century.” Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, January 2019, London.

“‘Spiritual Commerce’: World Literature and Cultural Nationalism in Goethe, Carlyle, and Emerson.” University of Edinburgh, April 2019, Edinburgh.

“Performing Nationhood on the Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Lecture Circuit.” May 2019, Frankenstein.

“From Page to Stage: Carlyle, Emerson, and Anglo-American Literary Culture.” International Academic Forum, Heidelberg University, July 2019, Heidelberg.

“‘Hyper-Germanized’ vs ‘Thoroughly Saxon’: Nationality, Race, and Style in Carlyle’s Early Transatlantic Reception.” University of Dundee, July 2019, Dundee, U.K.

“Canon, Corpus, Archive: Selection and Valuation from Romantic Criticism to the Digital Humanities.” University of Leipzig, September 2019, Leipzig.

“Material Exchange, Symbolic Recognition: *Weltliteratur* as Discourse and Practice in Goethe, Carlyle, and Emerson.” St John’s College, University of Oxford, November 2019, Oxford.

“Total Recall? Digital Humanities Corpora and the Literary-Historical Record.” English Department, Heidelberg University, December 2019, Heidelberg.

“Art, Gender, Market: Anne Brontë, Virginia Woolf, and the (Post-)Victorian *Künstlerroman*.” Department of English, American, and Celtic Studies, University of Bonn, January 2020, Bonn.

“Literature, Introspection, (Self-)Surveillance.” Digital Guest Lecture, Department of English, University of Bern, March 2020, Bern.

Jan Stievermann (HCA and Faculty of Theology)

“1776: Religious Roots and Outcomes.” Conference “Global 1776,” University of Notre Dame Study Center, January 2019, Kylemore Abbey, Ireland.

“Cotton Mather’s Biblical Politics of Religious Toleration.” Ecclesial History Symposium, Methodist Study Center, Oxford University, June 2019, Oxford.

“Putting American Puritanism Back into European Context.” University of Tübingen, July 2019, Tübingen.

“Cotton Mather’s *Biblica Americana*: Storehouse of Early Modern Learning.” Massachusetts Historical Society, August 2019, Boston, Mass.

„Die britischen Nordamerikakolonien als Experimentierfeld von Gewissens- und Religionsfreiheit.“ Conference „‘Hier stehe ich’. Gewissen und Freiheit – Worms 1521,“ September 2019, Worms.

“Jonathan Edwards and German Pietism.” International Jonathan Edwards Conference, Yale University, October 2019, New Haven, Conn.

Sebastian Tants (GKAT)

“Shifting Tides of Trust in Herman Melville’s *Benito Cereno*.” University of Lisbon, July 2019, Lisbon, Portugal.

Martin Thunert (HCA)

With Manfred Berg, Detlef Junker, Wilfried Mausbach and Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson, „Die Präsidenten der USA: 45 historische Porträts von George Washington bis Donald Trump.“ Book Launch, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, January 2019, Heidelberg.

„Zwei Jahre Trump – Transatlantische Partnerschaft, quo vadis?“ Panel Discussion, Außen- und Sicherheitspolitische Hochschulgruppe, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, January 2019, Heidelberg.

„Film Vice – Der zweite Mann.“ Panel Discussion, MAL SEH’N KINO, February 2019, Frankfurt.

„Die Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika; Grundsätze und die aktuelle innen- und außenpolitische Situation in der Ära Trump.“ Bildungszentrum der Bundeswehr, March 2019, Mannheim.

With Tobias Endler, „Die Zweite Halbzeit – Angriff oder Verteidigung? Innen- und Außenpolitik in der zweiten Hälfte der Präsidentschaft Trump.“ Volkshochschule Calw, April 2019, Calw.

With Tobias Endler, „Silicon Valley als Keimzelle der globalen Digitalisierung.“ SRH Hochschule Calw, April 2019, Calw.

“Losing and Regaining Trust in Experts – U.S. Policy-Makers and the Public in Comparative Perspective.” GKAT Faculty Workshop, May 2019, Frankenstein.

With Manfred Berg, Ulrike Gerhard, Wilfried Mausbach, and Welf Werner, „Wie gefährdet ist die amerikanische Demokratie?“ Panel Discussion, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, June 2019, Heidelberg.

“(Dis)Trust of Experts and Contemporary Populism: the U.S. in Comparative Perspective.” Conference “Cultures of Populism. Institutions and Hegemonic Practices,” University of Witwatersrand, July 2019, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa.

“The United States in the Age of Trump. One Year before the 2020 Elections.” Bayerische Lehrerakademie, September 2019, Dillingen.

„Amerikanische Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik im frühen 21. Jahrhundert.“ Bildungszentrum der Bundeswehr, October 2019, Mannheim.

„Was ist bloß los mit Luzerne (Pennsylvania, USA)? Ein Augenschein im Trump-Land.“ Zentrale der Hochschulbibliothek Luzern, October 2019, Luzern, Switzerland.

„Drei Jahre Präsident Trump – in welcher Verfassung befinden sich die USA und die Welt?“ Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Wiesloch-Walldorf, November 2019, Wiesloch-Walldorf.

With Tobias Endler, „Droht die Eskalation? Politik, Wirtschaft, Krisen und Wahlkampf in den USA.“ SRH Hochschule Calw, November 2019, Calw.

„Dämpfer und Neustart für Justin Trudeau? Das politisch gespaltene Kanada nach den Wahlen 2019.“ Deutsch-Kanadische Gesellschaft, November 2019, Frankfurt/M.

“State of the Union Address and Speech from the Throne: One Continent – Two Visions.” Amerika Haus e.V. NRW und die Deutsch-Kanadische Gesellschaft e.V., February 2020, Osborne Clark, Cologne.

„Die Demokratische Partei nach dem ‚Super Tuesday‘ – Wer fordert Trump heraus?“ Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Hessen und Frankfurter Rundschau, March 2020, Frankfurt.

„Die USA und die transatlantische Partnerschaft – Innen- und Außenpolitik im Präsidentschaftswahlkampf.“ Gespräch mit Andreas Schwarzkopf, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Hessen und Frankfurter Rundschau, May 2020, Frankfurt (Live-Stream).

With Natalie Rauscher, „Do Think Tanks Still Matter? How They (Could) Matter – Economic Policy Think Tanks in Germany and the United States and their Strategies of Policy Advice“, European Consortium for Political Research, General Conference, August 2020 (online).

„Wohin gehen die USA? Das gespaltene Amerika vor (und nach) der Richtungswahl 2020.“ York - Pennsylvania Club e.V., Leinfeld-Echterdingen, October 2020, Echterdingen.

„Schicksalswahl? Die USA vor den Präsidentschafts- und Kongresswahlen 2020.“ Online-Panel, Atlantische Akademie Rheinland-Pfalz, October 22, 2020 (online).

„Joe Biden and Donald Trump – Two Candidates and Their Campaigning Under COVID-19 Conditions.“ Visions for America? Evangelische Akademie Loccum, October 2020 (online).

„Four More Years?“ Panel Discussion, Ringvorlesung „Quo Vadis USA?“, Universität Heidelberg, November 2020 (Live-Stream).

„Die Wahlen und das Wahlsystem.“ US-Wahlnacht der Atlantischen Akademie Rheinland-Pfalz, November 2020 (online).

„Nachbetrachtung der U.S. Wahlen,“ Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut Saarbrücken und Union-Stiftung, November 2020 (online).

„(Dis)Trust of Experts and Contemporary Populism: The Case of the United States in Perspective.“ Annual Meeting of the Political Science Section, German Association for American Studies, November 2020 (online).

„Amerika hat gewählt.“ Fernuniversität Hagen, Lehrgebiet Politikwissenschaft, November 2020 (online).

„Wohin gehen die USA mit oder nach Donald Trump? Die Richtungswahl 2020 in der Analyse Part 1.“ Centre for Cultural and General Studies (ZAK), Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT), November 2020 (online).

With Tobias Endler „USA - nach der Wahl.“ Volkshochschule Calw, November 2020 (online).

With Tobias Endler; „USA vs. China: Das Ringen um die Vormachtstellung im 21. Jahrhundert.“ SRH Hochschule Calw, November 2020 (online).

„Wohin gehen die USA mit oder nach Donald Trump? Die Richtungswahl 2020 in der Analyse Part 2.“ Centre for Cultural and General Studies (ZAK), Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT), December 2020 (online).

Welf Werner (HCA and Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences)

„Anmerkung zum Social Contract in den USA.“ Gesellschaft der Freunde der Universität Heidelberg e.V., Heidelberg Center for American Studies, January 2019, Heidelberg.

“Three Ingredients for Anti-Globalism in the U.S.: Hegemonic Decline, Technological Progress, Domestic Policy Failure.” Conference “Obsolete, Resilient, Resurgent? The Nation-State in a Globalized World,” Center for International and Transnational Area Studies, May 2019, Regensburg.

With Eleonora Rohland, “Natural Catastrophes and Risk Management in the United States.” Panel, “Risk and the Insurance Business in History,” Universidad Internacional de Andalucia, June 2019, Sevilla, Spain.

“Why has Catastrophe Mitigation Failed in the U.S.?” “Risk and the Insurance Business in History,” Universidad Internacional de Andalucia, June 2019, Sevilla, Spain.

„Wie gefährdet ist die amerikanische Demokratie?“ Panel Discussion, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, June 2019, Heidelberg.

„Countercyclical Fiscal Policy? Die U.S.-Wirtschaftspolitik unter Trump.“ Summer School “Democracy in Decline,” Pfalzakademie Lambrecht, July 2019, Lambrecht.

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SPECIAL FEATURE

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HERE TO STAY: POLARIZATION AND GRIDLOCK AFTER THE 2020 ELECTIONS

BY FLORIAN BÖLLER, TU KAISERSLAUTERN

Given the unprecedented and often-times norm-breaking presidency of Donald Trump, anything but an unusual election night on November 3, 2020, would have been surprising. And indeed, unlike any election since 1948 – when headlines prematurely blurted out Thomas E. Dewey’s supposed victory over President Harry S. Truman – the 2020 elections evolved into a protracted nail-biter at the presidential level with no clear winner projected for days after polling stations had closed. The loser’s response was unusual as well. Donald Trump refused to accept his defeat, falsely declared himself the winner already on election night, and continued to propel conspiracy theories according to which the “totally rigged” election “was stolen.” But despite week-long legal skirmishes, several recounts in key battleground states, and Donald Trump’s refusal to concede, Joseph R. Biden will be inaugurated as the 46th president of the United States on January 20, 2021, and Kamala Harris will be the first woman, and the first person of color, to hold the second highest office in the country.

On a superficial level, it could be argued that American democracy survived the onslaught of anti-democratic forces, including a president with apparent disregard for democratic principles, norms, and institutions. To be sure, darker projections that warned against a usurpation of the 2020 elections by Trump, in which the president and his Republican allies would overturn their electoral defeat with the help of state legislatures and courts, have not come true – although the fact that Trump personally sought to influence members of the Michigan canvassing board, which certifies the state’s election results, documents unsettling undemocratic maneuvers by the 45th president. Despite the short-term resilience of the United States electoral system and the self-correcting wisdom of the American electorate, U.S. society is still deeply divided and polarized. The country’s political institutions face far-reaching challenges across many policy fields: the economy, health care, immigration, but also America’s role in international affairs. These challenges have been long in the making; most of them have been salient topics in U.S. politics well before the populist wave pushed Donald Trump into office. Already during the 2008 election campaign, long-term unemployment, increasing wealth disparities, lack of medical insurance for millions of Americans, and a decline in U.S. power and authority on the global stage have been diagnosed as significant threats to societal cohesion and as a source of distrust towards the institutions tasked to provide political solutions for these challenges. In this essay, I will argue that the current situation of deep polarization and the resulting gridlock are here to stay under a Biden-Harris administration. The structural sources of crisis will not disappear with the election of a new president. Furthermore, polarization and gridlock at home impact the role of the U.S. abroad. Although the Biden presidency will be able to heal some of the wounds

that have been inflicted upon the transatlantic partnership during the Trump administration, the United States will remain restrained by domestic disagreement. Biden will therefore not be able to remake the United States' traditional role as the "guardian" of the liberal world order.

A Victory, but not a Landslide

After the dust of the election night and the ensuing uncertainty of who can claim the necessary 270 electoral votes had settled, it became clear that Joe Biden won an impressive victory. More citizens voted for Biden and Harris than for any other presidential ticket before. Voter turnout set a record at 66.7 percent, surpassing the 2008 and 2016 elections (57.1 and 59.2). No modern-era election brought more voters to the polling booths.¹ The Biden-Harris ticket received over six million more votes than the incumbent's ticket.

In evaluating these results, it is also important to consider the historical track record. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, only six out of twenty-one incumbents lost re-election (William H. Taft, Herbert Hoover, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush, and Donald Trump). In the Electoral College, Biden's 306 votes will secure him a clear margin of victory over Trump's 232. Furthermore, the electoral coalition of the 46th U.S. president will arguably be broad. The former vice-president managed to rebuild the infamous "blue wall," which Trump tore down with his victory in several midwestern states in 2016, and Biden expanded the traditional Democratic map by winning Arizona and, even more surprisingly, by turning Georgia blue for the first time since Bill Clinton in 1992. White voters supported Biden to a larger degree than Hillary Clinton, and he ramped up support from Independents by 12 percentage points while solidifying the Democratic base compared to 2016 (see *Washington Post* 2020).

Yet, despite the Biden campaign's overall success, 2020 cannot be seen as a "landslide" victory. Turnout on the Republican side was, in fact, also impressive. Trump managed to extend his constituency substantially, receiving approximately eleven million more votes than in 2016. In a historical perspective, neither Biden's popular vote share (51.1 percent), nor his Electoral College margin (56.8 percent) can be interpreted as a landslide. Political scientists have set the threshold for a landslide victory at 75 percent for the Electoral College and 55 percent for the popular vote, which makes Ronald Reagan's reelection in 1984 the last such blowout (see Lewis-Beck et al. 2010, p. 69). Furthermore, in weighing the decisiveness of the elections, it is also important to ponder the results beyond the presidential level. Here, many Republican down-ballot candidates will be emboldened by the 2020 election, in particular in House and Senate races that went better than expected for the Grand Old Party (GOP). In the House of Representatives, Democrats defended their majority, but Republican candidates were able to make up several seats. And in the Senate, Democratic hopes for a clear majority have not been realized. Depending on two run-off elections in Georgia, the GOP may even hold on to its majority in the Capitol's smaller chamber. This situation is in stark contrast to 2008, when Democrats did not only win the White House, but also expanded their majorities in both chambers of Congress, and, most significantly, achieving a near filibuster-proof "super majority" in the Senate.

¹Political scientists typically refer to Franklin D. Roosevelt's election as the beginning of the modern presidency (see Neustadt 1991). Higher turnout was last registered during the elections of 1900 (73.2 percent), thus notably before the introduction of women suffrage in 1920 and the expansion of voting rights for Black Americans in the 1960s (see US Elections Project 2020).

It is hence very doubtful that Joe Biden can claim to have received a clear mandate as the result of a landslide win. Politically, a landslide represents an overwhelming victory, which induces the opposing party to reconsider its strategy and policies and which in turn allows the victorious candidate to govern with (at least modest) bipartisan support. Yet if anything, it is more plausible that the 2020 elections cemented the existing polarization. Both Trump and Biden were able to increase their vote share amongst self-identified Republicans and Democrats. The most salient issues in the 2020 election cycle – the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic and its economic fallout, health care, and Supreme Court nominations – proved to be deeply divisive within the electorate. Supporters of both parties also showed little common ground on traditional issues along social-economic and value-oriented cleavages, such as abortion rights (Deane & Gramlich 2020).

Hyper-polarization in Congress and Society

High levels of ideological polarization are not a surprising finding given the decade-long developments in U.S. politics. The trend towards tribalism has started long before Donald Trump assumed office in 2017, and it will outlast him.

The most widely used indicator to track the degree of polarization in U.S. politics is the so-called DW-NOMINATE score, developed by the political scientists Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal (Lewis et al. 2020), which draws on roll-call votes in Congress. Each vote in Congress is here mapped along a two-dimensional ideology scale, which considers socio-economic as well as value-oriented issues. The ideology of members of Congress and their respective parties can be gauged by how they voted on these issues. Using this indicator highlights the long-term development of ideological polarization and presents a clear argument that the current situation of divisive tribalism in U.S. politics is unprecedented since the end of World War II.

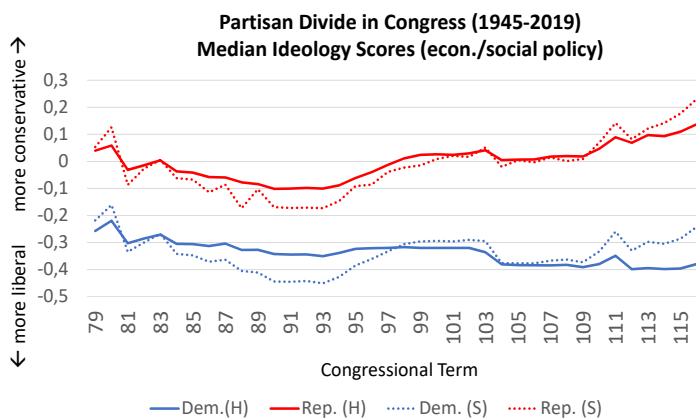


Figure 1: Partisan Divide in Congress (1945-2019, median ideology scores regarding economic and social issues) Own depiction based on voteview.com data (Lewis et al. 2020). Dotted lines (Senate), solid line (House).

Focusing on ideological scores on social and economic issues, it is evident that the ideological divide in Congress between Democrats and Republicans has been growing, both in the Senate

(dotted line) and the House of Representatives (solid line) (see Figure 1). While the ideological gap began to widen only slowly during the late 1970s and 1980s, the “Republican Revolution” led by Newt Gingrich (GA) in 1994 (104th Congress), which resulted in the first Republican majority in both chambers of Congress since 1953, accelerated the partisan divide. A second significant boost in polarization can be identified with the rise of the “Tea Party” movement in 2010 (112th Congress), which further pushed the Republican Party to embrace more conservative positions. To be sure, the Democratic caucus, in particular in the House, also moved away from the ideological center and became more progressive over time. However, the main driver of the growing partisan divide in Congress is the Republican turn towards the right side of the political spectrum.

A closer look at the DW-NOMINATE data also reveals that there is no ideological overlap anymore. Forty years ago, some Democrats in Congress were more conservative than the most liberal Republicans – and vice versa. Today, this is no longer the case: In the 116th Congress (2019-2021), the most conservative Democratic Senator, Joe Manchin (WV), is still more liberal than the least conservative Republican, Susan Collins (ME). In comparison, during the 95th congressional term (1977-1979), eleven Republican senators were more liberal than the most conservative Democrat in the smaller chamber.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to provide a full analysis of the causes of polarization. Such an investigation would have to consider, amongst other factors, the partisan realignment in the 1960s and 1970s following the embrace of civil rights legislation by the Democratic Party and the growing ideological cohesiveness within the two major parties. Looking at the current political situation, it may suffice to hint at three consequential developments, which accelerated the centrifugal trends and resulted in an era of hyper-polarization: First, since the 1990s, the media system has become increasingly fragmented. More recently, echo-chambers in social media fostered this fragmentation while distrust towards “the mainstream media” skyrocketed. In this regard, Fox News and Breitbart are the tip of an iceberg under which conspiracy theories flourish and the ability to find common ground becomes impossible. Second, contestation of diverse lifestyles and liberal culture has been increasingly embraced by conservative movements, in the U.S. as well as in Europe. This development benefited the political right in their push to mobilize against perceived threats to the traditional (white) pillars of society. In the U.S., populism is most prevalent in its nativist trait, which includes clear racist tendencies, anti-immigrant rhetoric, and nationalist discourses. Third, the inability of the U.S. to cope with economic discontents resulting from the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009 has been a driver of polarization (see Lammert & Werner 2021). Mass unemployment, loss of homes, and growing income disparities have fueled the perception – among the ideological left and the right – that a corrupt elite cannot save “Main Street” while bailing-out “Wall Street.” The political system’s apparent lack of problem-solving capabilities is most problematic as it undermines the public’s trust towards governmental institutions, which in turn provides incentives for political actors to capitalize on this mistrust and adopt positions outside traditional ideological boundaries (for a recent discussion see Berg 2021, p. 38).

All three developments underscore that the political polarization in Washington, D.C. is not just an elite phenomenon, but has its roots in a divided U.S. society and here in particular among the politically active part of the population, which participates in choosing candidates during primaries and regularly takes part in elections.

As a candidate, Joe Biden frequently addressed the growing polarization and promised to strive to heal the wound of divisiveness and tribalism. Yet, it is unlikely that Biden will be able to deliver on this promise. It can be argued that a landslide victory would have been a necessary condition in order to bridge the partisan divide. Had Biden's election represented an overwhelming victory including a convincing mandate, we may have seen the losing party soften its adversarial strategy.² In reality, the opposite can be observed.

The lame-duck period after the elections in November 2020 demonstrates that partisan warfare continues to shape the political discourse in the United States. According to opinion polls, seventy to eighty percent of Republican voters believe in the debunked conspiracy theory that widespread election fraud allowed Biden to succeed (Badger 2020).

The important Georgia run-off election for the Senate, which will determine the majority in the smaller chamber of Congress, provides a preview of the continuity of ideological polarization under a Biden presidency. The Republican candidates, Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue, are aligning themselves with the outgoing president and his attempt to delegitimize the election rather than seeking to charm the median voter in a state that went Democratic on the presidential level. At the same time, the persistence of partisan entrenchment reduces the chances for Biden to find support among Republican members of Congress for his agenda. The next president's ability to reach across the aisle will also be constrained by the progressive wing of his party, which already demands to stay true to the Democratic platform.

The Looming Gridlock

The second structural cause of the current political dilemma in U.S. politics is directly related to the aspect of polarization. Ideological polarization undermines the basis for bipartisan cooperation. On the one hand, it reduces the electoral incentives to cooperate with partisan rivals. On the other hand, politicians disagree due to incompatible ideological preferences. At the same time, the U.S. system of checks and balances provides numerous veto-points within the political process. Minorities, which are also overrepresented due to the peculiarities of the U.S. electoral system, have thus ample opportunity to block policy proposals. For this reason, it is oftentimes impossible to legislate without bipartisan cooperation. The result of the conjunction of polarization and checks and balances is the inability to arrive at major reforms. As noted above, this sets in motion a vicious circle: Gridlock on salient economic and social challenges across policy fields becomes a source of distrust regarding the efficacy of political institutions (in particular Congress), which in turn fosters polarization.

² Admittedly, this is an optimistic scenario. After their defeat across the board in 2008, the GOP in fact decided to fundamentally oppose any Democratic policy proposals – a strategy that yielded electoral gains at the 2010 midterms.

Seen from this perspective, the key result of the 2020 election, apart from the top of the ticket, is that Democrats will retain their majority in the House of Representatives and that the Senate will – in all likelihood – still be controlled by the Republican Party and Mitch McConnell (KY) as the majority leader. Of course, at the time of this writing (December 2020), there is still the possibility of a Democratic majority in the Senate and hence unified government with same-party control of all three key institutions. But Democrats currently face an uphill battle to win both U.S. Senate seats in the Georgia run-off elections on January 5, 2021. Even if that should happen, they will only have the tiniest margin possible in the Senate, with Vice President Kamala Harris casting the tie-breaking vote in a Senate split by 50 Republicans, 48 Democrats, and 2 Independents, Angus King (ME) and Bernie Sanders (VT), who both caucus with the Democratic Party.

Without a simple Senate majority, President Biden would even face difficulties setting up his cabinet. More significant decisions, such as filling Supreme Court vacancies, would become utterly unrealistic.

Even in the most optimistic scenario for Democrats, a sweep in the Georgian run-off elections, significant legislation may still be blocked by a filibuster, the tactic to obstruct the passage of a bill using the Senators' right to speak. Democrats would need ten Republicans to break a filibuster and win a cloture vote to proceed to the final roll call of the bill. It seems not unlikely that Democrats will be able to convince moderate Republican senators, such as Susan Collins (ME), Lisa Murkowski (AK), or Shelley Moore Capito (WV), from time to time, but "Durchregieren" – the swift passage of major reform bills – will certainly not be possible.

Comparative data on the legislative success of presidents lends support for this prognosis. The "presidential success scores" track how many votes in Congress were taken in line with the president's policy position. It is important to note that presidential success scores are an imperfect indicator for presidents' legislative support, since they only refer to votes for which the president has expressed a policy stance (negative or positive). Oftentimes, presidents will not reveal their preferences in order to avoid a clear defeat, or they will only support bills which they know will receive a majority in Congress. Nonetheless, this data yields interesting findings (see Figure 2). First, divided government reduces the chances of success in Congress substantially. President George W. Bush's first two years in office provide a partial exception. In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, his legislative success remained comparatively high, despite Democratic control of the Senate. Apart from this exception, recent presidents' success in Congress was contingent on their party's power in the legislative branch. Second, presidents Clinton, Obama, and Trump had only a small window of opportunity to achieve legislative victories in Congress. This is especially true for Obama and Trump. President Trump's score of success in Congress fell from a record-breaking 98.7 percent in 2017 to 73 percent in 2019, after Democrats regained the majority in the House of Representatives following the 2018 midterm elections. A similar drop in legislative support can be detected after the first two years of the Obama presidency. Comparable to 2018, the governing party lost the midterm elections and with it the ability to pass important legislation. Obamacare, the stimulus bill to restart the economy after the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform act, and other signature

legislation were passed during Obama’s first two years in office. The same is true for Trump. The tax reform bill, arguably the president’s most important piece of legislation, was only possible during unified government. For both presidencies, after two years, the midterm elections shifted the balance of power back to divided government.

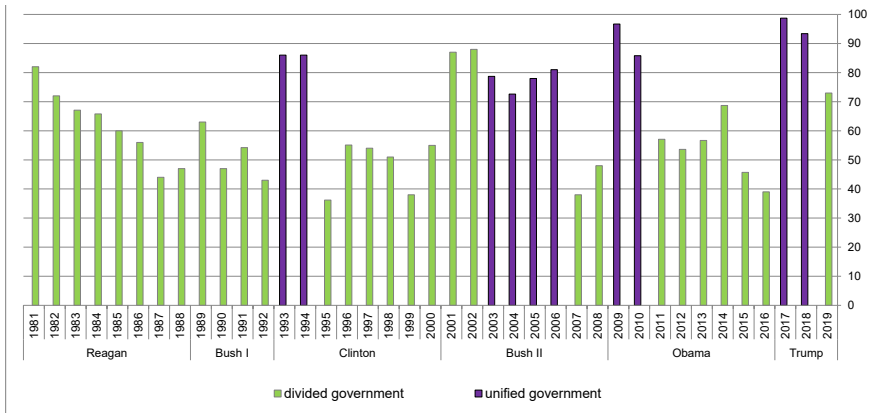


Figure 2: Presidential Success in Congress (percentage of votes in line with stated preference of POTUS)
Own depiction based on Congressional Quarterly Weekly Vote Studies, various years (see Böller & Siewert 2020).

In times of hyper-polarization, raw voting power in Congress is key to the ability to govern. Obama’s legislative track record during the first two years capitalized on a comfortable majority in the House and Senate. For a short period of time, from April 2009, when Arlen Specter (PA) joined the Democratic caucus, to January 2010, when Edward Kennedy’s (MA) vacant seat went Republican, Democrats even enjoyed a filibuster-proof “supermajority” of 60 seats in the Senate. In fact, this majority was necessary for the adoption of Obamacare, since all Republicans voted against the Affordable Care Act in the House as well as in the Senate.

President Biden will not have the luxury of a supermajority. The 46th U.S. president may not even have a simple majority in the Senate. In this case, and in contrast to his two predecessors, who were able to start under unified government, Biden will not have this small window of opportunity for legislative success. Given the historical track record of midterm elections, in which the president’s party typically loses, and in view of Republican gains in the House in 2020, Democrats may well lose their majority in both chambers after the next federal elections in 2022. In order to achieve legislative success, Biden could of course attempt to build bipartisan coalitions. Exceptions to the rule of gridlock under divided government still exist – albeit very few. The passage of the first Corona relief bill by Congress in 2020 indicates that bipartisan cooperation can still be achieved. However, legislation to provide funds in response to a global health emergency are distinct from bills that address challenges to which the parties have formed long-standing and incompatible policy positions. The latter category includes in particular health care, gun control, immigration, and climate change policies. In these areas, Biden’s chances for legislative success are more than dim. Not only would it be tremendously difficult to find support from the

Republican side. Any concession towards the GOP would risk to expose the frictions between the moderate and progressive wings within the Democratic Party. However, with no votes to spare in the Senate and a tight margin of error in the House, Biden's room for maneuver among Democrats is already highly circumscribed.

As a way out of policy gridlock in Congress, President Biden will most likely pursue a strategy that heavily relies on unilateral measures. Already Biden's predecessors Obama and Trump increasingly made use of executive orders – and executive agreements in the realm of international affairs – which do not need congressional approvals. However, there are several shortcomings for this strategy. First, executive orders are limited in their functional scope. As Congress retains the power of the purse, executive orders can primarily change the implementation of existing laws, for example in the area of environmental protection or immigration procedures. Presidents can also attempt to divert existing funding to increase the effectiveness of executive orders – as Trump did with partial success to reinforce the security infrastructure at the Mexican border. But setting up completely new policies, which necessitates considerable budgetary appropriation, will not be possible via executive orders. Second, presidential directives can quickly be rescinded by the next officeholder. On the one hand, this will benefit Biden, as he is poised to overturn several executive orders of the Trump era. On the other hand, these policy changes might be again reversed by the next administration. Finally, and most importantly, executive orders lack legitimacy. They solely rely on the president's authority. Since the George W. Bush administration, presidents have sought to enlarge their unilateral powers in view of looming gridlock. In doing so, they have regularly stretched the scope of presidential powers at the expense of Congress. This practice has invited criticism that these unilateral actions are unconstitutional. The lack of legitimacy in turn fuels mistrust towards an executive that is perceived as unaccountable. Thus, governing by executive order offers a dangerous path, detrimental to the goal of bridging the partisan divide.

Beyond the Waters' Edge

Presidential powers in foreign policy and domestic affairs differ considerably. Political scientist Aaron Wildavsky (1966) even claimed that there are actually two presidencies: one in international and one in domestic affairs. Due to the strength of Congress and the limits of presidential influence on the legislative branch, presidents are more powerful "Commanders-in-Chief" than "Legislators-in-Chief." The thesis of the two presidencies still partly applies to the post-Cold War era. Presidents enjoy more leeway in foreign affairs. They can initiate foreign policies without the approval of Congress, for example launch diplomatic initiatives and formulate key strategic doctrines regarding national security policies. They are also more powerful in deciding on force posture and military interventions around the globe while Congress struggles to enforce its war powers to control and limit the president. The chief executive also negotiates and concludes bi- and multilateral agreements on the international level. While proper international treaties necessitate a two-thirds majority in the Senate, so-called executive agreements can be concluded without the legislative branch's approval and offer an imperfect substitute to conclude international deals.

President Biden will be able to make use of all these tools to reshape the global role of the United States. The Biden administration's foreign and security policy will therefore follow a distinctively different grand strategy compared to the nationalistic Trump doctrine of "America First." Biden's foreign policy will be more multilateral and less self-centered. The next president will show more understanding for America's international allies and will (presumably) be less active on Twitter. As president, Biden will seek to rebuild the trust that has been worn-out by the Trump presidency's disregard for transatlantic norms and common interest. Perhaps most importantly, Biden will re-enlarge the definition of national interest of the United States. All U.S. presidents have sought to defend U.S. national interests. However, every post-World War II president, except Donald Trump, understood that protecting a liberal world order, with democracy, human rights, and capitalism as core principles, was an indivisible part of U.S. interests (see Junker 2010, p. 44). Addressing salient fears among European allies that the U.S. might withdraw its security umbrella, the Biden administration will underscore that the U.S. shares fundamental values and interests within the transatlantic community and will leave no doubt about its commitment to NATO's collective defense. This will in turn provide the core resource for trust within the Western partnership. Of course, transatlantic disagreements will not simply vanish after January 20, 2021. Washington will still criticize the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project, will continue to demand that European partners step up their defense expenditures, and will seek to protect U.S. industries in trade relations. Nonetheless, it can be expected that a Biden administration will return to consultation within established multilateral institutions and engage in meaningful communication to manage transatlantic disputes. Based on this multilateral approach, the prospects for U.S.-European cooperation on issues such as climate change, nuclear non-proliferation, and the growing assertiveness of China will most likely improve.

Despite this rosy outlook of a new honeymoon in transatlantic relations under President Biden, there is an important caveat to be made. The thesis that presidents enjoy more leeway in international affairs was grounded not only in constitutional powers but also in domestic support for the president's foreign policy agenda. Beyond unilateral instruments available to the "Commander-in-Chief," Congress still retains the tools to obstruct the president's foreign policies. There are numerous examples of foreign policy defeats for U.S. presidents in Congress. The few instances where the Republican Party has abandoned Trump almost exclusively pertained to foreign policy matters. When Trump toyed with the idea to lift sanctions against Russia in 2017, Congress implemented an even stricter sanctions regime with a veto-proof majority. Similarly, Trump's plan to cut the foreign aid budget was repeatedly gutted by a bipartisan coalition in Congress. Finally, the 45th president's attack on NATO was at least symbolically contested by the legislative branch, which highlighted the importance of the alliance in several non-binding resolutions.

While these examples of congressional activism against the president's foreign policy authority indicate that there are still remnants of an internationalist consensus in Congress, which seeks to protect the U.S. alliance and security architecture from populist attacks, the dominating trend points in a different direction: Foreign policy bipartisanship has almost vanished. Consequently, politics does not stop at the waters' edge anymore. Instead, the increasing polarization on domestic issues has spilled over into the realm of foreign and security policies.

For Donald Trump, the increasing polarization on foreign policy issues had the effect that Congress remained weak as a check against many elements of the “America First” doctrine. Aside from the exceptions noted above, Republican members of Congress supported the president’s foreign policy while Democrats regularly voiced concern and criticism. Since Trump’s international policies were destructive in kind – undermining international institutions (such as the WTO or NATO), withdrawing material support for international organizations (such as the World Health Organization), and terminating agreements (such as the Paris Climate Accord) – only bipartisan agreements could have stopped or at least slowed down the president’s wrecking ball. At the same time, Congress is in a powerful veto-position when it comes to the inception of new treaties and regimes. For example, while Trump was able to unilaterally withdraw from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) without congressional interference, Biden would need a two-thirds majority in the Senate to enter a similar agreement in the future. In this case, Republican opposition to such an agreement would endanger its ratification. In 2010, Barack Obama was barely able to secure the ratification of a traditional bilateral arms control treaty with Russia, the New Start Treaty. Only thirteen Republican senators supported the agreement, while twenty-six voted against it; a clear break from the traditional support for these types of treaties under presidents of both parties in the decades before. Thus, increasing polarization of foreign policy issues complicates the creation of new institutions and commitments while destructive strategies remain oftentimes unchecked.

A comparative assessment of roll call votes in Congress underscores the diminishing power of bipartisanship to support the United States’ global role. As Figure 3 shows, the percentage of votes which had bipartisan backing diminished both in domestic and in foreign affairs. While the level of bipartisanship is still higher regarding international issues, the downward trend is clear.

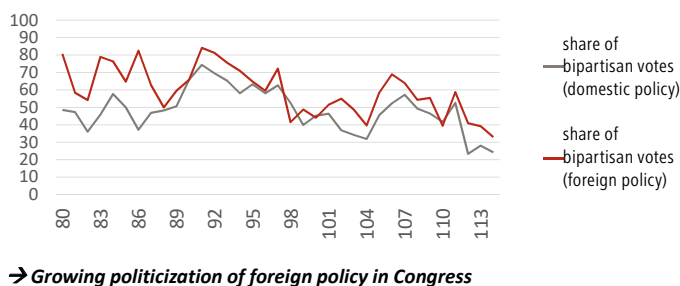


Figure 3: Share of bipartisan votes on domestic and foreign policy issues in US-Congress (in percentage, 1947-2017)
Source: Own depiction. Data based on Comparative Agendas Project (2020).

As a result, key issues, from arms control and nuclear non-proliferation to international climate policies, trade, and human rights treaties, have become heavily politicized between the two parties. It was therefore impossible for Barack Obama to summon bipartisan support for most of his key foreign policy accomplishments. Republicans vigorously denounced the Iran Nuclear deal, the Transpacific Trade and Investment Partnership, and the Paris Agreement on climate policy.

Without the domestic commitment to key foreign policy decisions, the reliability of the U.S. as a global leader is undermined. The next president may simply reverse or terminate existing deals and policies. Consequently, while Joe Biden's foreign and security policy will in fact look different than Donald Trump's, the reliability of the United States in international affairs will still be hampered by the lack of domestic support for the traditional leadership role. The growing polarization of foreign policy is diminishing the authority of the president to rebuild international regimes and institutions that have suffered during four years of "America First."

Conclusion

For many European observers, the election of Joe Biden as president may be perceived as the victory over populism, anti-democratic politics at home, and unfettered unilateralism abroad. And indeed, the next administration will not only differ in rhetoric and style, but also in terms of substantive policies. However, structural factors entrenched in the political system and driven by a deeply polarized and divided U.S. society are here to stay. The immediate aftermath of the 2020 elections demonstrated that Trump still wields influence over the Republican Party despite his defeat and that GOP candidates in Congress continue to follow his leadership. The one-term president has invested his remaining political capital into de jure futile efforts to question the core institution of U.S. democracy: its electoral system. In view of large swaths of Republican supporters believing conspiracy theories regarding a "stolen election," Trump has de facto contributed to delegitimizing the authority of the presidency and U.S. democracy writ-large. This anti-democratic strategy is poised to deepen the level of polarization even further.

As a consequence, the Biden administration will struggle to find support for its political agenda among Republicans in Congress, regardless of the severe challenges, both at home and internationally. Without even modest bipartisan backing, significant legislative achievements may be out of reach for the 46th president. The resulting policy gridlock will then continue to undermine the already weakened confidence in the problem-solving capacities of democratic political institutions.

International affairs may differ from domestic gridlock. But since polarization has also infected foreign and security policy, key international initiatives will lack support from the opposition party in Congress. The broken consensus in international affairs undermines the reliability of the United States to enact a costly leadership role to uphold a liberal world order that has come under attack from within and without. Allies in Europe and Asia will have to consider that the shelf life of U.S. foreign policy commitments is determined by electoral cycles.

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A FORUM FOR PUBLIC DEBATE

A FORUM FOR PUBLIC DEBATE

As a forum for public debate, the HCA facilitates communication among academia and the general public as well as between the business community, the political sphere, and the media. Strongly believing that mutual respect and consideration can only be achieved through an open-minded but critical debate, the HCA seeks to establish a venue for dialogue and discussion about the United States, thus enhancing the understanding of the United States in Germany.

Events in the HCA Forum present new research and current issues in the field of American Studies. The Baden-Württemberg Seminar is the signature lecture series of the HCA. In addition, the HCA invites the public to debates, panel discussions, book launches, and exhibits.

THE BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG SEMINAR

Each spring and fall, the Heidelberg Center for American Studies invites distinguished scholars, public policy experts, journalists, writers, and artists to its Baden-Württemberg Seminar. The program was initiated in the spring of 2007 as a lecture series with fellows of the American Academy in Berlin coordinated by the HCA and later extended to include other distinguished speakers. Participants present their current work, discuss issues of transatlantic interest, or read from their writings at selected institutions throughout the state.

Baden-Württemberg's profound interest in the United States is reflected in many of its cultural, political, and economic institutions, its corporations, museums, and libraries. Winter semester 2019-20 saw the twenty-sixth semester of the HCA's Baden-Württemberg Seminar. During the following summer term, our signature lecture series unfortunately had to be suspended because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We wish to thank all of our committed partners in this program for their support and look forward to great events in the future.

FALL SEMINAR 2019

The twenty-sixth semester of the HCA's Baden-Württemberg Seminar presented distinguished colleagues from Vanderbilt University, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Stanford University, the University of Southern California, and the Max-Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg.



Thomas A. Schwartz

Professor Thomas A. Schwartz kicked off the fall program at the HCA on October 28. In his studies, the historian focuses on the history of foreign relations of the United States, Modern European history and the history of international relations. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University where he then taught for five years before transitioning to Vanderbilt University in 1990. He has published on John McCloy, Lyndon B. Johnson and the Vietnam War, on U.S.-European relations as well as on American foreign relations and its leading figures. His most recent work is entitled *Henry Kissinger and American Power*. Professor Schwartz also served as the State Department's commissioned speaker on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of German reunification. At the start of his lecture "From John McCloy to George Bush: America's Foreign Policy Establishment, European Unity, and German Reunification, 1945-1990," Thomas Schwartz elucidated his chosen cast of characters, deeming them as "lenses of an era." John McCloy (1805-1989), an American diplomat and presidential advisor, served as U.S. High Commissioner for Germany after World War II, a position he held for nearly three years. He is deemed influential for the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany in May 1949. George H.W. Bush (1924-2018) held the office of forty-first president of the United States from 1989 to 1993, succeeding Ronald Reagan and preceding Bill Clinton. At the start of Bush's term, Europe faced enormous challenges with the fall of the Eastern Bloc and German reunification in 1989. Though very different, the two men were likewise connected by many similarities. As High Commissioner for Germany, McCloy pushed towards European integration and helped to create a stable basis for cooperation between Germany and the Allied Forces. In 1952, he founded the American Council on Germany, with members of America's foreign policy elite such as Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. and Dean Acheson. Bush, on the other hand, was more of a "cautious pragmatist." According to Schwartz he is one

of the “fathers of a reunited Germany,” strongly supporting German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and unification while France and Britain approached the process cautiously. Under Bush, America supported Germany under the condition that the country remained in NATO. Why is this topic still relevant, asked Professor Schwartz? The United States established a set of foreign policy principles, for example promoting a liberal world order through democracy, free trade, and open sources, furthering European unity and providing security through NATO and U.S. military forces. Today, the foreign policy principles established by the United States seem to be at stake. However, is it “The End of the German-American Affair” yet, as Matthew Karnitschnig dubbed it in *Politico*? Indeed, the relationship between the two nations has drastically shifted. With the end of the Cold War and the withdrawal of American troops from German military bases, personal face-to-face relationships have faded, and the common enemy, the Soviet Union, has vanished – and so has the glue that held this very special relationship together. Today, Professor Schwartz fears the resurgence of isolationism among Americans and nationalism among Germans. With NATO being more and more under attack, he sees the need for a different transatlantic relationship for the twenty-first century. What this new relationship could look like remains open.

The Baden-Württemberg Seminar moved on to Tübingen, where on November 6, the d.a.i. hosted a reading with Joy Castro, author of the crime novel *Hell or High Water*. The lecture series returned to the HCA on November 7 with a talk by Didi Kuo, a senior research scholar at the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law at Stanford University. She gave the keynote at the conference “The Corrosion of the Liberal Democratic Order? Transatlantic Perspectives in Perilous Times” (see pages 126). On November 20, the HCA had the pleasure to co-host a talk with Civil Rights Memory Activist Joanne Bland at the Badischer Kunstverein in Karlsruhe: “Reflections from Selma: Picturing the Jigsaw Puzzle of Social Movements.”

Roberto Suro



On November 21, the HCA welcomed Roberto Suro, who presented to the audience a highly relevant and much debated topic: “Immigration in Comparative Perspective.” Uwe Wenzel, director of Heidelberg’s Mark Twain Center for Transatlantic Relations, warmly welcomed the scholar and briefly introduced his body of work. Roberto Suro holds a joint appointment as professor of

Journalism and Public Policy at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. His work focuses on immigration policy, Latino politics, and migration to the United States from Central America. Uwe Wenzel underlined the relevance of this topic, deeming immigration control a “still unfinished business.” Professor Suro’s talk started out by comparing Latino immigration to the United States with immigration to Europe in the 1980s and today. In the 1980s, laborers from Mexico took on the journey to find work in the United States, and guest workers migrated to Europe for similar reasons. Today, migration movements show an entirely different pattern, posing new challenges. In Professor Suro’s opinion, governments are still trying to apply the same remedies to a different situation, leading to the perception that they carry out immigration control ineffectively. One defining difference between the 1980s labor migrations and today’s migration movements are their pace and unpredictability. Due to modern technology and social media, migrants are moving rapidly, arriving by the thousands. Moreover, the reasons for migrating have changed; while labor migrants moved mainly for economic reasons, migrants today often leave their home countries out of despair and fear. Reasons such as love and money cannot be ignored either, leading to a mix of motives that governments need to meet accordingly. While these challenges are hard to tackle for any properly functioning nation, they become a real problem when posed to debilitated democracies, to polarized, anti-institutionalist countries with a weakened center, changing demographic and outdated legal standards. Immigration policy in the United States today is still based on the 1951 Refugee Convention that defined the treatment of Cold War refugees. In addition to outdated policies, maladjusted asylum processes slow down the immigration procedures even further. Nations who find themselves unable to deal with immigrants arriving by the thousands resort to policies of deterrence. However, while these might bring short-term successes, they do not work in the long run. In order to find a successful way forward, Roberto Suro offered some ideas for future policy-making. Global players must turn to the countries of origin first to stabilize conditions there as far as possible. Orderly, non-criminal channels must be created while supporting the periphery in order to prevent uprisings. At home, legislators must renew existing policies and reorganize immigration processes. In the midst of these improvements, governments must not disregard the power of social media; information flows back to home countries in an instant, and refugees share powerful messages with the whole world. Suro ended his lecture by assuring the audience that it is not yet too late but will soon be – so we should all work together on “finding a new path.”

The Baden-Württemberg Seminar continued on December 9 with a talk by Larry Diamond, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. He followed a joint invitation by the HCA and the Institute for Political Science to give a keynote address on “Ill Winds: Saving Democracy from Russian Rage, Chinese Ambition, and American Complacency” for the conference “Democratic Backsliding in Asia.” Professor Aurel Croissant of the Institute for Political Science welcomed the large audience that had assembled in the HCA’s Atrium and was delighted to introduce the evening’s distinguished speaker. Larry Diamond commenced his lecture by highlighting six major trends that have threatened the stability of liberal democracies across the globe in recent years. These trends are declining global levels of freedom and democracies; a deterioration of rule of law; a wave of liberal populism; an

increase in polarization and intolerance magnified by social media; an authoritarian resurgence; and a decay of democratic values accompanied by decreasing self-confidence especially in the U.S. and Europe. He explained that these threats affected liberal democracies but had an even more detrimental effect on electoral democracies, which tended to be less stable. Here, he referred to statistics according to which thirty-five per cent of all electoral democracies had failed between the 1970s and 2019 while liberal democracies in Western Europe and North America, on the other hand, seemed to have been relatively stable. In fact, due to their complex system of participation, competition, equality, and horizontal accountability, their decay manifested itself in a pattern of gradual decline fueled by sudden changes and thus was not easily noticeable. He claimed that furthermore all kinds of governments – democratic and autocratic alike – currently experienced such systemic decline. This phenomenon was not the result of a shift in public opinion as studies demonstrated that people continued to support democratic values. It was more likely that weak rule of law, aggrandizement of executive power, and severe polarization – and especially in the case of America, a growing lack of horizontal accountability – were at the root of this global decay. In his closing statement, Larry Diamond focused on the question how one could counteract such an all-encompassing process effectively. In an international climate where democracies received increasing criticism and the governments of Russia and China actively subverted core democratic processes, the populace had to reclaim its responsibility and get involved in order to address pressing issues such as polarization. The solidarity among authoritarian rulers was weakest on the local level, after all.

Larry Diamond with Welf Werner



On January 23, the Baden-Württemberg Seminar welcomed its first speaker of the new year, Mark Somos, who currently holds the position of Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Experienced Researcher and Senior Research Affiliate at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg. Professor Jan Stievermann opened the evening and highlighted his colleague's broad academic education with degrees in both law and history as well as his outstanding research that combines legal, political, and book history. Outlining the central argument of his lecture, Mark Somos claimed that the state of nature was a forgotten ideology in the historiography of the American Revolution that was as essential to the revolutionaries as liberty or equality. He explained that the concept of the state of nature had been

widely known in Europe and the American colonies in the eighteenth century but was absent from histories of the American Revolution even though there were abundant sources documenting debates concerning its relevance and meaning among the founding fathers. While some European philosophers thought of it as an undesirable condition, the American discourse coined it largely positively. In his 1761 speech about the rights of the British colonists, lawyer James Otis identified it as an equalizing concept that created a condition which allowed colonists to organize a sovereign government and secede from Great Britain. Later on, John Adams retrospectively called Otis' radical ideas about the state of nature the beginning of the American Revolution. In the 1760s, this idea entered the public discourse, and, encouraged by the Stamp Act, small and large-scale legal disputes began to incorporate the state of nature into their legal arguments. Eventually, participants of the constitutional debates decided to censor the term, rephrasing it as the state of society or the state of civil society in the hope to deradicalize it. Nevertheless, it remained greatly significant to the colonists. John Adams and other founding fathers eventually began to employ the concept as an argument for independence, claiming that it gave them the right to form their own government. In the closing note of his lecture, Mark Somos emphasized that the state of nature had not only been an influential idea in the lead-up to the Revolution, but also continued to carry significance in American public, political, and legal discourses today. He pointed out that Supreme Court rulings regarding burglaries or reparation claims invoked this idea. Yet, the lack of a comprehensive legal history or uniform definition of this concept and the rights it comprised lead to confusing or even contradicting applications.



Mark Somos

Jackson Janes, President Emeritus of the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies at Johns Hopkins University, was scheduled to cap the fall semester 2019-20 of the Baden-Württemberg Seminar with a talk entitled "The Big Chill: German-American Relations in Reset Mode" on February 6. Unfortunately, he had to cancel the trip, as first ramifications of the Covid-19 pandemic had begun to set in.

“CORONA IN DEN USA” THE PODCAST OF THE HEIDELBERG CENTER FOR AMERICAN STUDIES

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020 forced the HCA to cancel all public events. Remaining true to its long-standing commitment to further the dialogue between academia and the public, the HCA launched the podcast “Corona in den USA” on April 30. Since then, it has evolved into a weekly forum for experts on both sides of the Atlantic to discuss the ramifications of the global pandemic in the United States. Anja Schüler and Welf Werner make up the editorial team, and Anja Schüler has hosted most episodes. Thomas Steinbrunner composed the audio logo. Julian Kramer provides technical support, and Caroline Walter and Emma Wolf put together the following compilation. Special thanks go to the Jacob-Gould-Schurman Foundation for their support of this project. Listen to the HCA podcast on our website, Apple Podcasts or Spotify.

The Logo of the HCA podcast



Anja Schüler and Manfred Berg, the Curt Engelhorn Professor for American History at Heidelberg University’s History Department, launched the HCA podcast with a talk about “Existential Crises in U.S. History.” Historic observations can help to better understand recent events and put them into perspective to other similar situations. Manfred Berg turned to two existential crises of modern American history in particular: the Civil War and the Great Depression of the 1930s. In American collective memory, these two crises stand paradigmatically for the ability of the U.S. to withstand even the hardest times. However, crises are never “good” or “bad,” but rather ambivalent periods. In the case of the American Civil War, only an enormous military intervention made it possible to fight and end the war that was followed by a decades-long reconciliation period. The Covid-19 pandemic, though, a crisis not caused by human failure but by a virus, cannot be

compared to either crisis, Manfred Berg concluded. He attested the United States' a weak position at the time of the outbreak, caused by a delegitimization of the state that has been going on for decades. Unfortunately, President Trump does not take a reconciling, strengthening role in this scenario but rather encourages the ongoing polarization of American society. The militarist rhetoric of the self-proclaimed "war president" and the creation of ever-new bogeymen invigorate right nationalism and an emotionally charged society. "The United States under Trump became a failed nation," Manfred Berg quoted the American journalist George Packer. All hope now lies with the 2020 presidential election in November. Manfred Berg anticipated two scenarios; if the majority of Americans voted for a new Democratic president, he could generate a new social consensus, similar to Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" of the 1930s. Another scenario would be a less clear-cut outcome, in which one candidate receives the majority of the popular vote and the other the electoral vote or one candidate even contests the election altogether.

In the second episode of "Corona in the United States," Anja Schüler and Martin Thunert, HCA Senior Lecturer Political Science, discussed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the domestic politics of the United States. Martin Thunert had visited the country in February to observe the ongoing election campaigns and emphasized how unprepared the government had appeared at the time. While many Americans seemed to prepare for a lockdown by the beginning of March, the crisis only really arrived at the White House after Donald Trump has heard of a study of the Imperial College of London, which predicted an astronomical death rate for his country. Consequently, Americans currently looked toward their governors for guidance. In the federal system of the U.S., states could adapt measures to their specific needs and hence currently enjoyed high rates of trust. President Trump, in contrast, had significantly lower approval rates from the public, which was unusual in comparison to other national crises and mainly due to Trump's erratic behavior. Analyzing the effects of the pandemic on the ongoing election campaigns, Martin Thunert emphasized that the question of how to organize the upcoming election currently occupied most politicians: Democrats, who wanted a nationwide vote-by-mail ballot, and Republicans, who insisted on a personal vote, disagreed about how to proceed. Lastly, Anja Schüler asked her guest about the strategy of the Trump campaign – he obviously could no longer point to his economic successes but instead had to find a way to address the high death rates, historic unemployment rates, and severe economic losses. Most importantly, however, he would have to create a narrative that dominated the discourse about the Corona virus and united the now-divided Republican Party, which disagreed on whether it was more important to help the economy or the people.

A global pandemic has caused challenges to health care systems worldwide that could never have been anticipated. In the third episode of the HCA podcast, Anja Schüler and Axel Murswieck, professor emeritus at Heidelberg University's Department of Political Sciences and Sciences Po in Paris, tried to determine how grave the consequences of the pandemic were for the U.S. healthcare system. On the surface, the position of the U.S. seems strong: The country can boast a significant accumulation of medical and scientific expertise, world-leading technological companies, quasi-infinite financial capacities, and a military complex with tremendous logistical resources. Despite this, the U.S. has become the pandemic's epicenter, with 200

Corona-related deaths per one million population (global rate: 34 deaths/1 million). President Trump's inability and unwillingness to take this crisis seriously are mainly to blame for this situation. But some state governments have also not taken their responsibilities seriously by failing to impose curfews and prohibiting spring break parties, for example. Fighting a global pandemic is a real challenge – especially for a country with a flawed health care system. In most cases, employees are insured through their employer, though this rarely means full coverage and is often connected to additional fees and deductibles. Medicare and Medicaid are the two government-sponsored health care programs in the United States and the nation's most extensive social insurance programs, with Medicare insuring people over 65 years and people with disabilities and Medicaid insuring people and families with limited financial resources. However, the programs' benefits vary from state to state, and even the "Obamacare" reform failed to establish extensive basic medical coverage for all. Now twenty million Americans are facing the Covid-19 pandemic without health insurance. They are protected in case of medical emergencies through a government bill but have to pay all additional costs beyond their emergency treatment. And with rising unemployment, even more Americans will end up uninsured. Yet, Axel Murswiek doubted that any revolutionary changes would happen should a Democrat win the November elections; federalist principles and an ideology of individual freedom are too ingrained in U.S. society.

In the fourth episode of "Corona in den USA," Anja Schüler spoke to economist and HCA Director Welf Werner about the economic ramifications of the pandemic. Unemployment figures of an estimated twenty-five per cent and a predicted GDP of almost minus five per cent point towards a dynamic Welf Werner compared to the Great Depression. However, this crisis was unique since it was the result of political measures and thus affected all economic sectors relatively equally. Asked how the government addressed this crisis, Welf Werner referred to monetary and fiscal policy. The Federal Reserve, which was independent of the U.S. government, had adapted its monetary policy to the imminent crisis early on. Congress quickly responded with a comprehensive economic growth package passed with broad bipartisan support in March. The short- and long-term effects of both measures, however, could only be assessed later. After all, the current crisis was not the result of a loss of trust in the government, and economic recovery depended above all on the prevention of a second wave of infection. When asked how the U.S. handled the crisis in comparison to other states, Welf Werner mainly emphasized the government's failure to prepare appropriately and the vast discrepancies in the fight against Corona in the individual states. He further pointed out that the trust relationship between citizens and politics would be crucial for the development of the coming months.

Catastrophic news of thousands of infected and dying people in New York City haunted the media in April and directed attention to American cities as the epicenters of the corona pandemic. In the fifth episode of the HCA podcast, Anja Schüler spoke with Ulrike Gerhard, Professor for Human Geography at Heidelberg University, and Judith Keller, research assistant at the Heidelberg's Institute for Geography, about the implications of the pandemic for American cities and urban planning. Over the past years, American cities have experienced a boom. Redevelopment measures made inner cities more attractive; new mobility concepts made them more sustainable – and more expensive: inner cities have become a multi-billion dollar business. While the rich

can afford this increased attractiveness, other social groups experience displacement, unemployment, evictions, and homelessness. The United States finds itself in the middle of a housing crisis that began long before the pandemic. The pandemic highlights many of the United States' structural deficits and social inequalities that have been haunting the nation for decades. In New York City, the pandemic's hotspots are unevenly distributed geographically, with the predominantly African American and Latinx neighborhoods of the Bronx and Queens mostly affected. In New Orleans, another epicenter of the pandemic, the population suffers from Louisiana's overburdened medical system and an extremely underfunded infrastructure since the city steers most of its investments towards tourism. A quarter of New Orleanians live below the poverty line with mostly African Americans and children suffering from poverty and insufficient medical care. Many poor citizens do not own a car; many of the city's homeless live in tent cities that accelerate the spread of the virus even more. Washington, D.C. offers a similar picture. Here, much of the African American population resettled east of the city after rents rose in the District. The virus now hits neighborhoods such as Anacostia the hardest. Ulrike Gerhard and Judith Keller offered excerpts from their conversations with citizens who work at the frontlines, like community activists and nurses. They voiced their admiration for German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her way of dealing with the crisis "like a scientist" and lamented their governments' inability to act fast and efficiently. Right now it is not the government but neighbors, friends, and families that help and support each other in the worst of times while mistrust in state institutions grows. The coronavirus pandemic did not create most of these problems but it exposes them all the more.

On the sixth episode of the HCA's podcast, Anja Schüler discussed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on U.S. diplomacy with the distinguished American diplomat and former president of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick. He emphasized that Donald Trump's foreign policy had grown out of his self-understanding as a disrupter. Yet, his extreme withdrawal from multilateral diplomacy and institutions did not reflect the opinion of most Americans who supported American international engagement. Since the pandemic had spurred many conflicts between nations, as current debates in the E.U. demonstrated, the U.S. was not the only country to change its course in multilateral relations. Zoellick emphasized that, while Trump had increasingly withdrawn in the course of the pandemic, other U.S. bodies like the Federal Reserve and non-profits like the Gates Foundation initiated quick global action. When asked about his assessment of the current developments in foreign policy between the U.S. and China, Robert Zoellick replied that the main issue was whether Western nations were able to cooperate with China despite their ideological and political differences. This would depend, however, on who was to design future foreign policy. Would foreign policy change after the election, Anja Schüler was curious to know. In the eyes of Robert Zoellick this remained a matter of speculation. Finally, Bob Zoellick remarked that Europe, due to its recent history and relationship to China, might become a vital factor. Ultimately, the U.S. was unlikely to return to pre-Trump conditions due to rapid, ongoing global changes.

For the seventh episode of "Corona in den USA," Anja Schüler invited two HCA students spending time in the United States, to report on protest movements in the pandemic: Sebastian Mayer, who received his B.A. from the HCA in 2016 and currently works on his dissertation at the University of Washington in Seattle, and Betty Schaumburg, a bachelor student at the HCA who

currently lives in Greensboro, N.C., where she completes an online internship with the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. Their experiences differed widely: Betty Schaumburg was one of the last Germans to enter the country before Donald Trump's entry ban on March 13. Friends in North Carolina advised her to better not mention that she had just arrived from Germany, as Europeans were viewed as primary virus circulators at this time. Many of her depictions were evocative of the situation in Germany – frantic toilet paper hoarding, shortened store opening hours, and an increased spread of conspiracy theories. Republican politicians in the state prevented mandatory mask-wearing and effective stay-at-home orders. Sebastian Mayer observed a different scenario in Seattle, where the first Covid-19 case already occurred in late February. Officials successfully communicated the virus' risk, at which point many people entered self-quarantine; as a consequence, the infection curve stayed fairly flat. Respirators and hospital beds remained unused and were sent to virus hotspots where medical personnel needed them. Strict "phase 1" regulations currently remain, but Sebastian Mayer hoped for relaxation in the coming weeks. At the University of Washington, he observed the challenges most universities encountered worldwide – closed libraries, online classes, tutorials, and office hours. The University of Washington's "four-quarter system" exacerbated the challenge. Here the beginning of the pandemic happened right in the middle of the exam period, and teachers only had one week to prepare for the next term of online classes. The death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, sparked nationwide protests against racism and police brutality. Both Seattle and Greensboro are historical sites of civil disobedience. In Greensboro, the first sit-in protesting segregated restaurants took place in 1960, and Seattle looks back on a long history of protest culture with the first great labor strike of 1919 and the WTO protests in 1999. Despite this shared history, the experiences of the two HCA students differed significantly. Betty Schaumburg described the Greensboro protests as mostly peaceful, with people marching together and artists installing a downtown walk-in art gallery, though she also recalled the use of tear gas and armed right-wing extremists demolishing the gallery's artwork. Sebastian Mayer's experiences were quite dramatic: Following the first weekend of protests, 14,000 complaints were filed against the police department. Even after protesters retreated to solely peaceful protests, police officers remained aggressive and resorted to violent measures such as tear gas, pepper spray, and flash grenades. When mayor Jenny Durkan issued a 30-day ban on tear gas, the police ignored her orders. An acquaintance told Mayer that this "felt like the Vietnam protests of the 1960s." These accounts showed that U.S. society is starkly divided in matters of racism, police brutality, and virus containment.

On the eighth episode of the HCA podcast, Anja Schüler discussed the pandemic's impacts on religious life in the U.S. with church historian Professor Jan Stievermann. Even though two-thirds of religious Americans view the crisis as a divine intervention, there are distinct differences among conservative and liberal traditions in all three Abrahamic religions. While conservative Christians emphasized supernatural interpretations, liberal groups underlined the forces of nature. Nevertheless, all religious groups equally had to face the challenge of continuing to offer services despite the closing of their facilities and the ban of large group meetings. And while radio, television, and drive-in church services were no novelty for Americans, alternative services did not attract the same number of participants. After all, many believers identified closeness and direct contact as core features of their religious practices. Professor Stievermann argued that,

therefore, public debates about the reopening of churches had, compared to Germany, not only begun earlier in the U.S. but were also more heated. Especially evangelical churches opposed the lockdown as an infringement on their first amendment right of religious liberty. Since these groups traditionally supported the Republican Party, President Trump used every opportunity to back their claims to secure their support in the upcoming election. However, Jan Stievermann emphasized that evangelical support for the Republican Party was recently declining rather dramatically, following the protests against systemic racism and for the support of minorities that were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The long-term effect of the pandemic on American churches was difficult to assess. While, on the one hand, it was reasonable to assume that church attendance would increase, it was important to remember that American churches were privately financed. Following the lockdown, many had therefore lost the majority if not all of their income, which could lead to a mass closing of churches comparable to the Great Depression. This would be detrimental to minorities, who oftentimes relied on the social outreach of churches.

For the ninth episode of "Corona in den USA," Anja Schüler invited political scientist Natalie Rauscher for a discussion on the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic on the American workplace. Natalie Rauscher is a research assistant at the HCA and one of the founding members of the HCA Graduate Blog; her work focuses on the sharing economy and the impact of digitalization and automation. The discussion looked at winners and losers of the pandemic in the workplace, the consequences the crisis had on the sharing economy, and the future of the American labor market. The Covid-19 pandemic required a rapid restructuring of the workplace; classic office models suddenly seemed obsolete. The home office emerged as a successful concept, shifting the work environment from crowded open space offices to the socially distant study (or kitchen table). Big Tech companies have profited most from this shift. Conference call technologies such as Zoom, online communication tools such as Facebook, and distant teamwork software such as Microsoft Teams, have registered hundreds of thousands of new users who now depend on this technology for their daily work. With people around the world being stuck at home, online shopping and online entertainment services have reached record highs as well. Amazon emerged as a more significant threat than ever to the retail industry, in particular since consumers increasingly requested its grocery delivery service. And with lockdowns in place, entertainment companies such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Youtube, and Apple TV have replaced cinema and theater visits. As promising as digitalization and the remote workplace may sound, not all members of society can profit from it, as the past weeks have shown. So-called "essential" workers, such as health-care workers, are among the people who do not benefit from the trend towards home-office work. Those groups are especially exposed to the virus; they are often underpaid and not medically insured. Ethnic minorities are represented disproportionately among them. Moreover, outside the workplace, they are not able to protect and isolate themselves as well as wealthier groups of society: many African Americans and other ethnic minorities do not own their own car and instead rely on crowded public transport; they share apartments with multiple generations of family members. The pandemic has also had adverse effects on the sharing economy. Uber, Lyft, Airbnb, and the like were not able to operate during the first months of the crisis, and it remains unclear when their workers will return on a regular schedule. This is particularly critical, as these workers are not employed by the companies they work for but hired as self-employed

contractors. They are neither insured nor entitled to receive unemployment benefits, and crises are particularly hard on them. Their prospects remain unclear, as the pandemic developments are unpredictable. But a changed consumer behavior, government regulations, and developments in artificial intelligence will continue to alter and form the new workplace, Natalie Rauscher predicted. The home office will become a widely used model, albeit dependent on personal resources and preferences. However, this crisis has once again uncovered the underlying structural problems of the American labor market.

The tenth episode of the HCA podcast featured a talk between HCA Postdoctoral Researcher Gordon Friedrichs and Sebastian Harnisch, Professor for Political Science at Heidelberg University, on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on U.S. leadership in the world. Early on in the pandemic, President Trump had not only withdrawn from international leadership, he also increasingly withdrew from his role as a domestic leader. His lack of leadership in the fight to contain the virus in the U.S. had forced states to take on this responsibility. While some governors had stepped up to the challenge and acted quickly and effectively, others had not, and thus some states were hit more than others. The lack of U.S. leadership left the international community equally confused, Professor Harnisch explained. More clearly than ever before, the world now realized that U.S. global leadership was a thing of the past. Yet, this also offered an opportunity for change, especially considering the recent controversy surrounding the U.S. exit from the WHO, which was confirmed shortly after the release of this episode. In the light of new events, the remaining member states of the WHO had to reorganize and could therefore reshape the organization to meet new needs. The discussants then turned to the question of the relationship between the U.S. and China, which was difficult to assess accurately at this point in time. Professor Harnisch remarked that an escalation was always possible but that one had to acknowledge China's present efforts to establish good relationships with other countries. Finally, the two scholars offered an outlook into the near future that would not exclusively be shaped by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The eleventh episode of "Corona in den USA" took a look back at a pandemic that raged in the United States more than two hundred years ago. Anja Schüler's guest was Dietmar Schloss, Professor for American Literature at the HCA and Heidelberg University's English Department. During the late eighteenth century, the city of Philadelphia again and again suffered from yellow fever pandemics. The most important metropolis of the East Coast in those days, Philadelphia was not only an economic hub but boasted a large community of intellectuals and medical experts and maintained a progressive and cosmopolitan flair. The 1793 yellow-fever-outbreak hit the city especially hard and prompted its political and economic elites to flee, which in turn caused the breakdown of social and administrative structures. Its poor and sick population was left behind. In addition, Dietmar Schloss pointed out that African Americans at the time were widely considered to be immune against yellow fever and had to serve as nurses and undertakers; as "essential workers" they increasingly demanded to be appreciated and receive full citizenship. Doctors and scientists were divided about the pandemic's origin: "Localists" believed that the yellow fever stemmed from the environment. "Importists" were of the opinion that the pandemic was imported by migrants coming in large numbers from Haiti at the time. Apart from different therapeutic approaches, both groups had different political positions as well: Whereas

the “localists” were clearly in favor of Thomas Jefferson and hence represented a democratic-republican position, the “importists” mainly consisted of the bourgeoisie. These controversies regarding the yellow-fever-pandemic had enormous political effects: When the pandemic ended in 1797, the elections were won by representatives of the elites that had fled Philadelphia during the pandemic, not of those who had stayed and performed essential work to combat the pandemic. As Anja Schüler resumed, the failed crisis management of the political elites was thus rather rewarded than punished.

For the twelfth episode of the HCA podcast, Anja Schüler invited Michael Butter, Professor for Literature and Culture at the University Tübingen, to a talk about conspiracy theories. While about half of Americans and roughly a third of Germans believe in at least one conspiracy theory today, such theories were significantly more widespread in Europe and the U.S. just a few decades ago. Why their popularity had decreased much more in Europe than in the U.S. was related to several developments, explained Michael Butter. A high degree of polarization in the media, politics, and society nurtured the belief in rigid enemy images and complicated the differentiation between facts and untruths. A sense of powerlessness and being overlooked furthermore lead individuals to seek refuge and understanding in alternative realities. Therefore, the spreading of conspiracy theories was not just a question of education. Today, the Internet enables conspiracy theorists not only to connect and exchange their views more effectively, it also gives them a platform to publish their ideas cheaply. As a result, conspiracy theories have evolved from a certain stigma to potent counter realities. It was, nevertheless, important to remember that existing theories and people who believed in them had merely become more visible during the Covid-19 pandemic but had not gained more popularity, Michael Butter pointed out. Their defined causal explanations act as a counterbalance to the fundamental uncertainties we all experience at this moment in time. Anja Schüler was curious to know how conspiracy theories could be revealed and dismantled, and Michael Butter pointed out that while, in theory, it was fairly easy to demonstrate their factual errors, such exercises bore no or little meaning to the people who believed in them. If one believed in conspiracy theories, one had accepted an alternative reality which made it easier to accept inherent contradictions as well. After all, it was not about finding the truth but opposing the mainstream. Lastly, Anja Schüler asked her guest how one could tell whether a conspiracy was real or just a theory. Here Michael Butter pointed out that theories were always perfect while actual conspiracies were not since they were confronted with coincidence and the unforeseen.

The “Culture Wars” were the topic of the thirteenth episode of “Corona in den USA.” Anja Schüler and Günter Leypoldt took it on with particular regard to the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2020 presidential election. The professor for American literature at Heidelberg University’s English Department and co-speaker of the Graduiertenkolleg “Authority and Trust” pointed out that the term “culture wars” originally goes back to the German “Kulturkampf,” the nineteenth-century dispute over the influence of the Catholic church. Since the 1980s, the term has been used in the United States to describe the conflicts between conservatives and liberals. For the past decades, these conflicts centered around highly emotional topics that define America’s moral condition to the participants of this debate, such as abortion or homosexuality. Many voters of the Democratic and Republican parties realigned along those issues and began to behave as if

really belonging to different cultures. Democrats rallied the educational elite and black minorities; the Republican party increasingly became the party of the working class, drawing it in with a conservative agenda and neoliberal reforms. Arenas of the “culture wars” are often cities along the East and West Coast or college towns with high levels of education. Americans in the rural areas of the mid-west, as well as the older generation, often feel left behind; the GOP offers them, the “losers of the culture wars,” a strong public platform. How do these debates relate to the pandemic, Anja Schüler asked? “Mask wars” have erupted around the coronavirus protection measures, and politicians are sending strong signals by adhering to them or not. President Trump refuses to wear a mask at official appearances while the Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden complies to this measure. Surveys have shown that Democratic women and city dwellers are the strongest supporters of the Covid-19 rules. Wearing masks now reflects one’s political affiliation. Media outlets feature experts with contradicting opinions on the matter, adding to the polarization between the two factions. Other recent debates focus on police brutality towards African Americans and historic representation through statues and memorials. #BlackLivesMatter demonstrations around the country bring racism to the forefront of the public debate and demand an end of police brutality. These demonstrations have a highly symbolic value, and participants call for reparations for discrimination and a reconsideration of historical representation in the public realm. Statues and memorials of confederate generals are taken down in the United States; textbooks and maps are revised. Many liberals question and reconsider the universal narratives that are often tinted by racist thought. Most conservatives, though, feel their historic heritage threatened. A deep rift runs between the parties of the “Culture Wars,” and Günther Leypoldt doubted that a future President Joe Biden could reconcile conservatives and liberals. According to him, the Culture Wars will continue in the future as long as their topics persist.

In the fourteenth episode of the HCA-Podcast, Anja Schüler talked to Terrence Wride, a student in the HCA’s Master of American Studies Program about the #BlackLivesMatter protests. A native of Oregon and just recently returned from the U.S., Terrence reported on the protests that took place during a family visit in Salt Lake City, Utah. Especially remarkable for him was the fact that the crowds mainly consisted of young and white adults. A few days before George Floyd was killed by the police in Minneapolis, a brutal murder had taken place in Salt Lake City as well: a Hispanic had been shot dead by the police, and the Salt Lake City District Attorney ruled that the killing was justified. This led to rising protests in the city. Despite some efforts already underway in Utah to reduce racial injustice and police violence – educational programs in universities and petitions to reduce police funding, for instance – problems persist, especially in predominantly white states such as Utah. Terrence Wride also reported on his involvement in an organization that promotes social justice for Native Americans, which has just recently received support from a Utah state senator. He also commented on the protest in his home state, Oregon: The capital of Portland had gotten worldwide attention as President Trump had deployed federal agents in July to quell the protests, using tear gas and undermining local authorities there. In Terrence’s point of view, this led to a resurgence of the #BlackLivesMatter protests. Whereas Portland long has been known for its racist history, it also displays some distinctive features of liberal activism. For this reason, the atmosphere in and around Portland currently can be described as two-fold with respect to the upcoming presidential elections in November 2020: Voters in the rural sub-

urbs are overwhelmingly approving Trump's re-election, whereas the urban voters remain clearly Democratic. However, like many other U.S. citizens, Terrence fears that Trump could convince the majority of white-middle-class voters again – not only in Portland, but many other American cities as well.

For the fifteenth episode of "Corona in den USA," Anja Schüler invited Florian Böller, Junior-Professor for Transatlantic Relations at the TU Kaiserslautern, for a conversation about political polarization during the pandemic. He defined polarization as the ideological contrast of political and social groups: extreme contrary political positions become powerful, whereas moderate groups are weakened. This phenomenon had been apparent in the U.S. since the 1960s, but only within the last quarter of the century has it become one of the greatest problems in American domestic policy. Especially during the Obama presidency, ideological polarization between the two parties has gone up, and the political blocks have become more and more homogenous. Not only has the whole American political system become more dysfunctional, citizens have lost trust in institutions. Political scientists agree that political polarization reflects the strong divisions in American society. Especially those parts of the population who are politically engaged are drifting apart ideologically: the Republican voters are as strongly conservative as Democratic voters are convinced of progressive values. Not even the Corona crisis has caused a "rally-effect" in the U.S. so far, which could bridge these political divisions. Rather, society tends towards even bigger estrangement: Among Republicans, for instance, only a third is afraid to get infected by the Corona virus and be hospitalized whereas more than the half of Democrats is worried about it. This ambiguous perception is clearly visible in the general evaluation of the U.S.-president: Only eight percent of Democrats approve of the way Donald Trump manages the Covid-19 pandemic, but more than three quarters of Republicans are convinced of Trump's abilities. However, by attacking medical experts and institutions or constantly denying the seriousness of the virus, Trump amplifies the Corona crisis, which actually should be a matter of health and less a matter of politics. In view of the upcoming U.S. elections, he uses his aggressive rhetoric as well to set American citizens, especially Republicans, against China as his current worst enemy – a strategy which could turn out to be successful in the end. On the other hand, his political rival Joe Biden tries to steer a middle course in politics instead of polarizing the political edges. That is reason enough for hoping that he as the next president might be able to improve trans-atlantic relations, said Florian Böller. Nevertheless, in his political decisions Biden still needs a certain amount of support from the Republican Party, which might be difficult to achieve.

In the sixteenth episode of the HCA-Podcast, Dr. Anja Schüler talked about the #BlackLives-Matter Movement in the context of the African American Civil Rights Movement with Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson, Professor at the University of Augsburg. She explained that the #BlackLives Matter Movement has reached the level of its current intensity because the death of the African American George Floyd was for the whole world to see: How a young black man suffocated at the hands of a policeman on May 29 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was filmed and then spread on Social Media. While the movement dates back to 2012, it gained momentum because of George Floyd's death. As a decentralized movement without a popular leader, it differs from the historic Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s. Yet, it is still noteworthy to mention how much support

#BlackLivesMatter has gained so far from white citizens both in the U.S. and world wide. However, there is still an enormous lack of cooperation among blacks and whites. The pandemic has exasperated the problematic situation of blacks: As Professor Waldschmidt-Nelson explained, only few African Americans can afford proper health insurance. Furthermore, there are still more blacks than whites in insecure jobs who neither earn sick pay nor have much option to switch to home-office. For this reason, many of them are not able to pay their rent, which might increase problems such as homelessness among black people during the pandemic. All of this points towards structural racism, a problem which has been bottled up since the Civil Rights Movement's peak. White Democratic, but segregationist voters from the South turned to the Republican Party after the civil rights legislation had been passed by Congress. With the first African American president in the White House in 2008, segregationists were furious about the fact that their last white "privilege" had fallen. With respect to the U.S. elections in November, Professor Waldschmidt-Nelson was convinced that a black charismatic and female vice president for the Democratic Party could be decisive for Joe Biden to secure the support of African Americans.

Anja Schüler's guest in the seventeenth episode of "Corona in den USA" was David Eisler, a member of the Graduiertenkolleg "Authority and Trust" (GKAT). He currently works on his dissertation about the relationship between American civil-military relations and contemporary war fiction after serving on active duty for five years himself. The American military is an ever-present force in international conflicts as well as in domestic matters. While U.S. engagement in the world has remained relatively stable, it is hard to say how other nations perceive the American military. Within the United States, however, the military's standing is clear: 75-80% of the American population support the troops if they act in the public interest. From a Gallup survey, the U.S. military emerged as an institution in which the American public has confidence. The coronavirus pandemic did not leave the American military unaffected; lockdowns and 55,000 Covid-19 cases among active-duty members slowed down the regular activities and training among troops. The case of the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* received worldwide attention: Crew members contracted the virus in March 2020, and Captain Brett Crozier's first attempt to evacuate the ship was denied by his superiors; in the end, over 1,000 crew members tested positive for the virus, and Crozier resigned. The National Guard, the reserve branch of the United States Armed Forces, has proven to be essential to contain the coronavirus spread. In April, the government mobilized 45,000 National Guard troops to assist the federal and state governments in measures fighting Covid-19. They operated test sites, distributed equipment and food, and helped local law enforcement. 2020 has also brought controversial issues back on the fore. When law enforcement used tear gas on June 1 to clear protesters from Lafayette Square so President Donald Trump could pose with a Bible in his hand in front of St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. General Milley was by his side. The highest-ranking officer in the U.S. military, Milley later apologized for being involved in the spectacle. Another controversial situation occurred at the virtual Democratic National Convention. When American Samoa took its vote, active-duty military personnel flanked the two representatives. The American military's role at public protests this year was quite contested, and political appearances are of little help in these times. David Eisler assessed military personnel appearing in conservative talk shows, or any political event for that matter, as highly critical and unhealthy for civil-military relationships.

In the eighteenth episode of the HCA podcast, Anja Schüler talked to Detlef Junker about three American presidents in times of crisis. The historian and founding director of the HCA began by illuminating the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, who iconically embodied U.S. civil religion. Following Lincoln's election, the southern states seceded from the Union, triggering the Civil War in 1861. Lincoln, who regarded the Union as eternal and unchangeable, faced this crisis with persistence. As a self-made man and religious American, he framed the Civil War as a test to American greatness and a landmark event for America's national purpose in his famous Gettysburg Address. Following Lincoln's presidency, the Republican Party remained mostly in control of American politics until Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for the Democratic Party during the Great Depression. Professor Junker emphasized that FDR, who regularly addressed the public, approached both the Great Depression and World War II in global categories. His New Deal affected all aspects of American life, fundamentally breaking with the prevailing idea of minimal government intervention. Further, at the onset of World War II, Roosevelt rejected isolationist tendencies and instead framed American interests in a global context. As president, Roosevelt set new standards for the American presidency in the twentieth century. So how do Roosevelt and Lincoln's success stories compare to President Donald Trump and his approach to the global Covid-19 pandemic? Although Detlef Junker admitted that the U.S. had not been in particularly good shape in many respects before Trump's election in 2016, he was adamant that the current president had not improved the nation's condition since. He argued that Trump's narcissistic character made him a destructive president who was unable to exercise his duties within the scope of a free republic. Trump's refusal to accept a defeat in the upcoming election was partly due to the many legal consequences he would face after leaving the White House.

The nineteenth episode of the HCA podcast featured a book talk with former World Bank President Robert Zoellick about his new book *America in the World: A History of U.S. Diplomacy and Foreign Policy*, a selection of historical vignettes from the Early Republic to modern times. HCA Director Welf Werner took over the microphone. Focusing on biographical stories, the volume looks at foreign policy not from a theoretical perspective but in the context of problem-solving, as it was the case, for example, after World War II. Though U.S. actions from this period now constitute transatlantic diplomacy milestones, back then they were pragmatic responses to counterbalance the fragmentation of post-war Germany, emphasized Bob Zoellick. The founding of the Federal Republic of Germany ultimately was the result of George Marshall's perception that Soviet officials had no interest in addressing fragmentation and his subsequent installment of the Marshall Plan. The resulting military alliance of Western nations, including West Germany, triggered the Berlin Crisis and ultimately the construction of the Berlin Wall. These crises later informed President John F. Kennedy's approach to the Cuban Missile Crisis and his conviction that the Berlin Wall was the global dividing line between East and West. When Welf Werner asked Bob Zoellick how U.S. diplomacy contributed to the end of the Cold War, the latter pointed to President Ronald Reagan, who believed that the Cold War was a battle of ideas. Reagan addressed and framed this belief in his speeches with which he attempted to inspire people in the Soviet Union to fight for reform. Despite improved relations between Gorbachev and the West in the 1980s, President George H.W. Bush believed Germany's unification was necessary to end the Cold War. The 2+4 Process, in which Robert Zoellick had been involved prominently,

consciously put East and West Germany in the forefront to unite the Germans behind the issue of unification and harness the momentum created by public support. The key to success, Bob Zoellick explained, was not only moving negotiations along quickly but also the trust among the involved parties. Finally, Welf Werner asked his guest to assess the current administration's diplomacy in light of these historical events. Here, Bob Zoellick remarked that it was foolish to disrespect past American diplomatic efforts to support and unite Europe. Still, Donald Trump wanted to maintain his position as an outsider and disruptor by consciously breaking with his predecessors and American diplomatic tradition. Questioned about the upcoming election, Bob Zoellick remarked that if Joe Biden won, his administration would face overwhelming domestic issues that would force him to prioritize. On the other hand, Biden could address many domestic issues like migration or climate change while simultaneously reviving international ties and transatlantic relations.

For the twentieth episode of "Corona in the USA," Anja Schüler spoke with political scientist Professor Andreas Falke about a first assessment of the Trump presidency. On which of his 2016 campaign promises did he deliver? Andreas Falke referred mainly to protectionist and nationalist promises Trump made to his working-class supporters, which he implemented mostly by resigning from previously negotiated trade partnerships. Although Trump changed tariff regulations, catering to his supporters' belief that American companies were being "ripped off," he had ultimately only increased prices for American consumers. Considering these results, it was surprising, remarked Anja Schüler, to see that most Trump voters still supported him even when their specific economic situations had not improved. Andreas Falke explained that Trump's ideas about trade and the global economy, for example, his concept of asymmetric distribution of pain regarding trade deficits, appealed to his core voters and were able to overshadow meager real-life improvements. Focusing on the Covid-19 pandemic, Andreas Falke argued that Trump's lack of early responses and serious consideration of the virus were a severe failure that had forced the president to reorganize his entire campaign. Sadly the pandemic overshadowed the impacts of his tax reform that would have been a pillar of his presidency. Simultaneously, increasing numbers of minority victims of the Corona virus turned the spotlight on the civil justice crisis. It did not look brighter in the realm of foreign policy, contended Andreas Falke, where Trump's actions were reminiscent of nineteenth-century isolationism. Defining international relations as not beneficial and global ties as costs had resulted in a highly inconsistent and ineffective foreign policy. Especially his investment in a relationship with North Korea had not yielded any results. Yet, it was difficult to label the Trump presidency as a complete change in American politics since many of his radical tendencies mirrored traditional beliefs that had also been present in the Obama and Bush administrations. The current president would, however, leave a mark in the judiciary where he solidified a conservative majority by appointing a large number of judges in Federal and Appeals Courts. So who would win the upcoming presidential elections? Although Trump's approval ratings were low, it was not easy to gauge the final election results, which would be determined by white educated women, thought Andreas Falke.

Anja Schüler and political scientist Christian Lammert from the FU Berlin analyzed the politics of Joe Biden in the twenty-first episode of the HCA podcast. President Trump's contraction of the

Corona virus and his subsequent hospitalization had obviously undermined his political narrative of controlling the pandemic and violently interrupted his campaign. The polls reflected the growing criticism of Trump's government style and his mismanagement of the pandemic and put Biden in a strong lead. Joe Biden indeed presented a very different approach to the pandemic, Christian Lammert remarked. Biden strongly favored face-masks and argued for more diverse and broad economic support while the Trump administration had focused on small business owners. Biden, currently positioned at the moderate center of the Democratic Party, could count on progressive groups' support in their joint effort to defeat Trump. However, if Biden won the election, progressives would have a chance to renegotiate their influence on a Democratic White House as well. Their impact would be decisive for several issues, for example for climate policy where Biden held a very moderate position and did not favor substantial structural change. How much support could Biden expect from black and Hispanic voters? While the former supported Democrats, conservative Hispanic voters, who felt intimidated by the progressive discourse of #BlackLivesMatter and other social movements, could turn to Republicans, Lammert remarked. And how would foreign policy change in a Biden White House? Christian Lammert suspected the only drastic change would probably be in style and rhetoric. Asked for a prognosis for the election, Christian Lammert was hesitant to trust current polls. Just this year, America had witnessed an impeachment, endured a pandemic, experienced nationwide protests for social justice following repeated police violence, and seen the president fall ill. Polls did not accurately incorporate these national crises in their results, and even though Christian Lammert gave Biden a good chance to win, the race could become very close. Further, if and how Trump would accept a defeat remained unclear.

Three weeks before the 2020 presidential election, Anja Schüler and historian Manisha Sinha took a closer look at Kamala Harris, Joe Biden's running mate, in the twenty-second episode of the HCA Podcast. Manisha Sinha is the Draper Chair in American History at the University of Connecticut, recipient of the 2017 Frederick Douglass Book Prize for her book *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition*, and has spoken several times at the HCA. She considers Kamala Harris a pioneer in many fields of her career. In 2011, she was elected attorney general of California, the first black woman to ever hold this office. She had been the second black woman ever to be elected to the Senate, which put her on the national stage in 2017. According to Manisha Sinha, Kamala Harris represents the diverse and multicultural Democratic coalition quite well. She holds more centrist liberal views on specific law enforcement issues while her stance is rather social democratic on others; she is a firm believer in state regulations to protect the environment and contain climate change. While these standpoints sparked suspicion among Republican conservatives who then labeled her socialist or even communist, she is instead situated in the liberal central wing of the party. After running for presidential office herself but dropping out of the race in December 2019, Joe Biden declared her his running mate on August 11, 2020. She has proven that she can run for state-wide and electoral offices and win – the Democrat's ultimate goal in this year's election. The vice president's role has traditionally been somewhat undefined; if the Biden-Harris ticket won, however, Kamala Harris would receive executive responsibilities, as Joe Biden did as vice president under the Obama administration. She was able to demonstrate her abilities in the vice-presidential debate on October 7. Though constantly interrupted by in-

cumbent vice president Mike Pence, she did quite well and appeared more focused on policy and more charismatic than her contender. Her election to higher office would mean a lot for women and ethnic minorities, emphasized Manisha Sinha. American women have never had a political role model like Germany has had with Chancellor Merkel for the past fifteen years. Kamala Harris' election to high office would be a powerful statement and a strong symbol of the U.S. as a country of immigrants. With unprecedented participation in early voting, Manisha Sinha confidently predicted a Democratic victory, "important for the U.S. and the whole world."

The twenty-third episode of the HCA Podcast raised the question whether the U.S. had to anticipate chaotic presidential elections. Anja Schüler once again talked to Manfred Berg, Curt Engelhorn Professor for American History. Commentators already devised chaotic scenarios for this year's election: polling stations reduced and understaffed due to Covid-19; massive mail voting in an underfunded U.S.-postal service; a president who refuses a peaceful transition and instead calls on right-wing militia to defend him. According to Manfred Berg, there were three possible outcomes to this election: the first one assumes Joe Biden is winning the election and a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives. This "landslide victory" was what liberal Americans are hoping for today, similar to the elections of 1932 when Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt prevailed over Republican Herbert Hoover, or 1980 when Republican Ronald Reagan won over Democratic incumbent Jimmy Carter with 489 to 49 electoral votes. However, Manfred Berg doubted that this scenario will play out in 2020 but instead predicted the second possible outcome, a close Democratic win. In this case, he assumed that Trump would likely not accept his defeat. Thirdly, if Trump indeed won this election, Democrats would as well doubt the outcome. The Democratic party has changed under the Trump administration. His threats of not accepting the election results would cause Democrats to instigate legal measures and result in mass demonstrations. Especially remarkable about this year's election are the millions of early voters who have already sent in their ballots via mail. High participation in mail voting might cause the "blue shift," a close result ending up in favor of the Democratic party after all mail-in ballots are counted. Also, in this case, Trump has announced that he will not accept the outcome. Manfred Berg assumed that by November 4, the result will have arrived. Depending on the outcome, he fears reoccurring riots on each milestone date until Inauguration Day. Within American society, polarization runs deep. Their fear of perpetual Trumpism drives liberals while conservatives dread socialism. And with Donald Trump still in power, everything remains within the bounds of possibility. A statement coined by football coach Henry Sanders seems to be Trump's guiding motto: "Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing."

In the lead-up to the 2020 U.S. presidential election, Anja Schüler spoke to political scientist Martin Thunert about his prognoses and upcoming critical races in the twenty-fourth episode of the HCA podcast. Considering that experts expected the voter turnout to be significantly higher than in previous years, it would be, said Martin Thunert, mainly a question of who will mobilize most voters across states. Although the polls claimed that mail-in-ballots and early voting favored Democrats, a few swing states would ultimately determine the electoral college outcome. Thus Trump had to secure Florida's electors without which he would indeed lose the majority in the electoral college. Meanwhile, it was likely that Trump and the Republicans had

lost and would continue to lose much of their former support. First, Trump had not invested enough effort to call Biden's qualification into question – normally a popular strategy employed by presidents campaigning for a second term. Additionally, two years prior, the Republicans had lost a substantial electorate of female white middle-class voters during mid-term elections. Lastly, Trump's mishandling of the Covid-19 pandemic might also have encouraged his elderly supporters to defect to Biden, who projected more political stability. Still, the swing states would decide the election, and most of them had Biden and Trump going head to head. Both candidates, therefore, might have legal grounds to dispute results in these states. Republicans had already initiated such legal disputes in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin even before November 3. Consequently, Trump's most recent Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett could play a decisive role in the election outcome. How about the outcome for the Senate and House of Representatives? While Martin Thunert was confident that Democrats would be able to retain their majority in the House, he doubted that they would also overturn the Senate. Currently, it seemed like Republicans focused extensively on Senate elections, possibly to regain voters' trust and prepare for the 2024 elections. Furthermore, voters' increased tendency to vote a straight ticket complicated prognoses for congressional elections. And who would occupy the Oval Office next year? Even though Martin Thunert believed Biden had good chances for winning, he also emphasized that Trump would likely try to influence any outcome in the last week before the election.

The twenty-fifth episode of the HCA was devoted to an early analysis of the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Anja Schüler welcomed political scientist Martin Thunert alongside historian Manfred Berg and asked them if it was possible to declare a winner at this stage. Martin Thunert replied that Democrats seemed to lead and had possibly managed to win several swing states. Simultaneously, it appeared likely that they would retain their majority in the House of Representatives but would not win a majority in the Senate. Republicans, on the other hand, had increased their presence in many state governments, significantly impacting their ability to shape voting districts in the future. It seemed that more of Trump's former white elderly male supporters had voted for Democrats this election – possibly due to his mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic. Still, more white middle-class women and middle-aged male Latinos seemed to have supported Trump this year compared to 2016. Manfred Berg wearily emphasized the threat of lengthy impending lawsuits over specific swing states, which would begin on a state level but could eventually involve the Supreme Court. Martin Thunert remarked that it would be unclear if and how the predominantly conservative Supreme Court would get involved here. Yet, it was likely that seeking legal action would encourage either candidate to contest and litigate further. However, if prosecutors claimed voter fraud, they would have to show substantial evidence contradicting the unanimously positive reports given by volunteers across the country, Manfred Berg remarked. Both he and Martin Thunert addressed the divided government as a substantial issue for the next president. If Biden won, he would have to address the pandemic and the economy, and the Republican majority in the Senate would significantly influence the measures he could pass. Even though bipartisan support for measures targeting the spread of Covid-19 was likely, the high degree of polarization in U.S. society made more comprehensive, long-term cooperation among parties in the future very doubtful. Both discus-

sants agreed it was improbable that Trump would quietly leave the White House and expressed concern about the sporadic and chaotic actions that might follow a Biden victory. In closing, Manfred Berg was convinced that this election would go down as a historic moment, and Martin Thunert stressed that a Biden Presidency could follow a similar political course, albeit still cause a drastic and positive rhetoric change.

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RUPERTO CAROLA RINGVORLESUNG „QUO VADIS USA?“

In the fall of 2020, the United States saw a historic presidential election. Multiple crises, among them a global pandemic and an unprecedented polarization of the electorate, raised many questions about where the country is headed. In winter semester 2020-21, the HCA conceptualized the university-wide lecture series (Ringvorlesung) entitled “Quo Vadis USA?” It is part of the Ruperto Carola’s focus on “friends and enemies.” Twice a year, Heidelberg University designates a focus theme (“Fokusthema”) to engage the broader public with research that is especially pertinent to society. The Ruperto Carola Ringvorlesung and the Ruperto Carola Forschungsmagazin in particular are designed to reflect the respective foci. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, all events of the Ruperto Carola Ringvorlesung took place online. The team of Rhein Neckar TV produced superb videos. Watch them at <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/heionline>.

The Ruperto Carola Ringvorlesung commenced at the Aula of Neue Universität on November 2, the night before the U.S. presidential elections, with a panel discussion entitled “Four More Years?” Panelists shared their view on swing states, voting behavior, and polarization, among other topics. Moderator Wilfried Mausbach of the HCA welcomed the panel of international experts: journalist Nana Brink (Deutschlandfunk Kultur), political scientist Martin Thunert (HCA); Rachel Tausendfreund (German Marshall Fund of the United States) and Horst Kläuser, former correspondent of the ARD in Washington, D.C. joined the podium online. A brief look at the U.S. voting system quickly made clear that the so-called swing states play a crucial role in all presidential elections; states that – in contrast to “safe” states – can go to either the Republican or the Democratic candidate. In Michigan, one of the swing states, Biden currently leads in the polls by eight percentage points. However, after the 2016 election, eight per cent are no reliable margin, as Michigan’s Rachel Tausendfreund warned. Another swing state, Florida, is a “must-win state” for Trump if he wants to stand a chance in this election, Martin Thunert emphasized. The past weeks have revealed an electoral behavior very different from earlier elections. Horst Kläuser observed this transformation particularly among seniors, who traditionally voted Republican but now might do otherwise. Georgia, Texas, and Arizona, traditionally GOP country, now seem to turn into swing states on the grounds of able candidates, a more progressive elderly population, and a high mail-voting turnout. However, many Trump voters abstain from openly admitting their support, making polls somehow unreliable and adding to unpredictability. Donald Trump has already threatened to refute the election outcome if it did not favor him. After the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the appointment of Conservative Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court, Trump has a real chance to stop vote count through the courts. Scenarios like this testify to a deeply polarized society. Rachel Tausendfreund reported on the polarization she has experienced in her own family. She believes that conservative media outlets like FoxNews and conservative talk radio contribute largely to this polarization as they claim that Democratic politicians make bad decisions on purpose. But this was not only true for conservative media outlets, Horst Kläuser demurred; liberal media outlets have turned into anti-Trump media channels and forfeited some of their objectivity along the way. Which way will America take in the

future? All panelists agree that significant changes are already underway within the American political landscape; many Republican supporters have turned away from Trump and more might follow after this election. But the Democratic party will change as well. Martin Thunert quoted Representative Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, whose politics differ so much from Joe Biden's that in any other country they "would not be in the same party." Yet, American society craves safety and reconciliation today, and so Nana Brink concluded this discussion with her prediction of a decade of domestic reconciliation.

Election dust still settled on November 9, when the second event of the Ruperto Carola lecture series "Quo Vadis USA?" took place, featuring a conversation between political scientists Florian Böller (TU Kaiserslautern) and Sebastian Harnisch (Heidelberg University) about the U.S. election's impact on foreign policy. HCA Executive Director Wilfried Mausbach introduced the discussants and raised the question of how transatlantic relationships would change during the Biden presidency. A foreign policy change under Biden and Harris depended on a Senate majority, Florian Böller remarked, which would be decided in the runoff elections in Georgia in January. He further raised the question if Biden's foreign policy style could build on approval rates during the Obama administration. While Sebastian Harnisch also anticipated a radical change of tone in personal political relationships, he questioned whether Biden's foreign policy would depart drastically from Trump's. Though Biden would likely revert some of Trump's controversial foreign policy decisions, such as pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement, he would probably pay more attention to domestic issues, suggested Professor Harnisch. His colleague agreed with this assessment and raised the question of how a lack of domestic bipartisan support could damage Biden's international reliability. Indeed, this was a significant problem, agreed Sebastian Harnisch, because social and political schisms limited the president's sphere of influence. Still, transatlantic relations would improve significantly under Biden, assured Florian Böller, as Europeans could expect a more constructive communication in areas like security policy. Equally, he expected Biden to reverse Trump's decision to withdraw American soldiers from army bases in Germany. However, previous criticisms and demands, such as increased defense spending, would not simply disappear. The two political scientists then analyzed how European and American relations with China could change during the Biden administration. Though the U.S. would likely demand more toughness from Europe in its political exchanges with China, these relationships would become more multilateral as well, suspected Sebastian Harnisch. Finally, Florian Böller raised the question of climate policy, an essential factor behind unifying moderate and progressive groups within the Democratic Party. While he assumed this polarizing issue would create strong Republican resistance, Professor Harnisch was positive that Biden would initiate progressive measures early in his presidency regardless.

The lecture series continued through the end of January with the following events: November 16, Myles Jackson, Institute for Advanced Studies, Princeton on "Forschungserfolg versus Privatsphäre: Humangenetik in den USA und Deutschland"; November 23, Sabine Sielke, University of Bonn, "Columbus, Jefferson & Co. vom Sockel stürzen? Aktuelle Konflikte um Erinnerungskulturen und Geschichtspolitik"; November 30, Andreas Falke, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, and Welf Werner, HCA, "Die U.S. – Wirtschaft nach der Krise"; December 7, Michael Butter, Uni-

versity of Tübingen, „Verschwörungstheorien nach Trump“; December 14, Ulrike Gerhard, HCA, and Judith Keller, Institute for Geography, „Renaissance oder Krise? Überlegungen zur aktuellen Situation und Zukunft der U.S.-amerikanischen Stadt“; January 11, 2021, Jan Stievermann, HCA, and Daniel Silliman, *Christianity Today*, „Religion and Politics after Trump“; January 18, Simon Wendt, University of Frankfurt, „#BlackLivesMatter: Bürgerrechtsbewegung 2.0?“; January 25, Manfred Berg, Heidelberg University, and a guest, „Nach der Amtseinführung: Quo Vadis USA?“.



HCA BOOK LAUNCHES

In the academic year 2019-20, the HCA continued its tradition of celebrating book publications by its staff and visiting scholars. On November 26, 2019 the HCA was delighted to welcome Professor Charles Postel of San Francisco State University for the Book Launch of his new publication *Equality: An American Dilemma*, which analyzes three egalitarian mass movements in U.S. society during the Gilded Age. Professor Manfred Berg warmly welcomed Professor Postel, who had spent the academic year 2011-12 as visiting scholar at the HCA and thus was a dear friend and esteemed colleague. Charles Postel thanked Manfred Berg for his kind introduction and the HCA for the opportunity to return to Heidelberg where he had begun working on his book. Through this project, Professor Postel remarked, he had discovered how deeply egalitarian movements were rooted in American culture. The climate of post-Civil War America lead social activists to understand that basic equality between the sexes, races, and classes was the necessary foundation on which equality of opportunity could develop. Consequently, newly formed associations began to orchestrate nationwide activisms to this end. Yet, their notions of equality often excluded African Americans and other racial minorities.

Charles Postel



The three egalitarian associations – the farmers’ movement The Grange, the women’s movement led by the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), and the working class movement Knights of Labor – provided insights into the effects of this exclusiveness and the failures of contemporary egalitarian movements. The Grange advocated against growing corporate power, which threatened individual farmers. Even though membership numbers peaked in the late nineteenth century, The Grange maintained its broad impact on American life that manifested itself in, among other things, the Granger Laws. Although they did not advocate against equality for

African Americans, Grangers' activism excluded black farmers and campaigned against federal attempts to maintain multi-racial constructs in the South. In their view, this was corporate power exercised by the government to suppress white farmers. The WCTU, which had campaigned successfully for a number of women's rights issues, was involved in a similar scandal surrounding well-known activists Frances Willard and Frances Harper. While the latter promoted equality for African American women, Frances Willard aspired a large-scale political reshaping of American politics. Unfortunately, most of Willard's support came from elite white women of the South, which caused much criticism and eventually resulted in internal schisms. Even the Knights of Labor failed to uphold their ideal of global human solidarity when the Farmers Alliance, a group they sought a coalition with in order to counter the siege from employers, confronted the Knights' policy of solidarity with African Americans. In his closing statement, Professor Postel remarked that such contradictions could be overcome successfully, too, as the North Carolina Fusion proved. This coalition between the African American Republican Party and the white Populist Party formed despite contradicting views to bring down the dominant conservative government. Charles Postel was therefore optimistic that common goals could be achieved today as well, irrespective of opposing views. After a round of applause, he gladly answered questions from the audience that was intrigued by his claim.

To the sound of Buddy Guy, a sizable audience convened in the HCA Atrium on January 28, 2020 for a book launch to celebrate the publication of David Wilson's *Chicago's Redevelopment Machine and Blues Clubs*. Ulrike Gerhard of Heidelberg University's Institute for Geography introduced the author as a long-time friend of the HCA. David Wilson is a professor at the Department of Geography and Geographic Information Services at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research centers on urban spaces and ranges from the study of cultural processes to economic and political aspects of U.S. cities and urban areas around the world. Apart from his 2018 monograph on Chicago's blues clubs, David Wilson co-edited *The Handbook on Spaces of Urban Politics* (2018) and co-authored *Urban Inequalities across the Globe* (2015). Professor Wilson's talk focused on the urban process of gentrification, a phenomenon that cities around the world have been experiencing for the past decades. Gentrification refers to the physical and social restructuring of a city for the affluent, taking from the less affluent. With the Chicago South Side, David Wilson chose an unusual case study. The predominantly African American neighborhood rates as one of the poorest parts of Chicago and therefore not as an area prone to gentrification. However, to David Wilson the developments are not surprising: He evaluates the South Side as a logical next step of Chicago's southward moving "gentrification frontier." As a blues musician himself, the topic of researching South Side blues clubs felt dear to his heart, and his monograph is shaped by ethnographic accounts. Many nights he spent in the blues clubs talking to musicians, clients, and owners. This familiarity with the topic gives his research an authenticity that he could not have achieved with other standardized methods. Blues clubs reflect the South Side's social composition and offer a vignette for understanding gentrification processes and the resistance against them in this particular part of town. The clubs epitomize the neighborhood's heart, provide a gathering place for locals, and secure the survival of blues musicians who earn their living by performing at the clubs. Today, developers, builders, and the state, the parties Wilson refers to as the "redevelopment machine," pose a threat to the livelihoods of

the South Side community. Progressing gentrification can already be observed in the clubs with their changed aesthetics, higher cover charges, and modified menus that now offer craft beer and fine wines. South Side blues clubs have moved towards a “superficial authenticity”; tourists now come to watch “exotic” musicians but not, as they might expect, in their “natural” environment but in a gentrified one, constructed for the purpose of capital accumulation. Locals refer to the new South Side tourists as “damn outsiders.” They bring economic prosperity, but the negative consequences of their arrival are far too devastating to be compensated by economic advantages. With more and more capital flooding the neighborhood, club owners will soon no longer be able to pay their rent. The arrival of high-class stores forces locals to relocate to neighborhoods where they can afford to buy food and clothing. This situation poses particular challenges for musicians who find themselves in a dialectic of fear and hope. The clubs offer them food, shelter, and secure their survival; without them, many musicians would be homeless and deprived of their status in society. Moreover, gentrification strains interpersonal relationships; band members sometimes spend weeks ignoring each other over a financial argument. Club owners become ambivalent figures, struggling between material survival and emotional investment. However, while fighting the same enemy, musicians and the public form powerful bonds, energized, faithful, and trusting, to resist the changes together. The question is how long these bonds will last. David Wilson concluded that political resistance at a low level can be powerful. When asked whether the developments on the Chicago South Side were inherently good or bad, he did not come up with a definite answer because the changes gentrification brings are too manifold. Gentrifiers bring capital and opportunity to the impoverished South Side and are accepted by musicians to some extent while, on the other hand, they displace social groups that have lived there for decades.

David Wilson



EXHIBITION: "SUFFRAGE – PICTURES OF A MOVEMENT"

Planned for March 19 to April 29, 2020

The exhibition poster



Suffrage
Bilder einer Bewegung

Kurator: Reinhard Schultz

19. März - 29. April 2020

Curt und Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais
Hauptstraße 120
69117 Heidelberg
www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Öffnungszeiten
Mo - Fr, 9 - 17 Uhr
Eintritt frei

HCA
Heidelberg Center
for American Studies

The HCA had planned to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of woman suffrage in the United States with an exhibition on the "pictures of the movement." Many photographs featured in this exhibition remembered the "Woman's Suffrage Procession" of 1913 that produced some iconic images like Inez Mulholland on a white horse leading the parade and hundreds of women and children clad in white as allegorical figures of "charity," "liberty," and "justice." Activists encouraged supporters of woman suffrage to dress in white which not only symbolized innocence but also female integrity that would civilize male politics and "cleanse" it of corruption. One hundred years later, women politicians reinstated this symbolism: In 2016, Hillary Clinton wore a white pantsuit both at the Democratic Party convention that nominated her as presidential candidate and at the third televised debate with Donald Trump, inspiring the hashtag #WearWhiteToVote. But even before Hillary Clinton, female politicians embraced this textile tradition of the first

women's movement: The first African-American member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Shirley Chisholm, wore white when she was sworn in in 1969, as did Geraldine Ferraro, who was chosen as the vice presidential nominee at the 1984 Democratic National Convention. And in 2019, Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez did likewise when the youngest congresswoman in the history of the House of Representatives appeared for her swearing-in ceremony, also in white.

Unfortunately, this exhibition, curated by Reinhard Schultz, had to be canceled just a few days before opening night because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

CONCERT: "IPSE VENINA BIBAS"

On December 6, 2019, the Student Committee and the HCA Forum were delighted to host the poetry performance "Ipse Venena Bibas," featuring Texas-based poet Bill Moran and HCA master student Brian Sain. They briefly introduced their work to the large audience in the HCA Atrium. The title's allusion to the Catholic exorcism formula, which roughly translates to "you may drink the poison yourself," foreshadowed a performance whose aesthetics reflected a process of healing, said Bill Moran. He aspired to write poetry that could make sense of traumatic experiences, encouraged readers to face emotional confusion, and eventually enabled them to emerge stronger on the other side. To achieve this intensive examination of an experience, Bill Moran and Brian Sain included photography, music, and screaming into their show, a flickering multi-media spectacle. The guests soon found themselves immersed in a performance that equally demanded their attention and their stamina. Bill Moran and Brian Sain pulled their audience out of their comfort zones and guided them through a deep experience of confusion. The sudden changes between everyday words and deep spiritual questions soon nourished a deeper empathic understanding among the audience. Eventually, the artists led their viewers back into a world of newfound order and stillness and concluded their performance on a quiet tone. After a brief moment of pause, the audience came to and awarded the two performers with their well-earned applause. Yet, for many, the end of the performance was only the beginning of their personal examination of what they had witnessed, a process they gladly continued with each other and the two performers over drinks and snacks, feeling, if nothing else, a little less alone with their inner darkness.

“NATURAL CATASTROPHES IN THE UNITED STATES”

From November 2019 to January 2020, true to its interdisciplinary tradition, the HCA invited an author, a historian, and an economist for a mini series of events that put a focus on natural catastrophes in the United States. On November 5, the audience in the HCA’s Atrium welcomed Joy Castro for a reading from her crime novel *Hell or High Water* and other works. Joy Castro is the Willa Cather Professor of English and Ethnic Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she teaches creative writing, literature, and Latinx Studies. She has published a memoir, an essay collection, a collection of short fiction and two literary thrillers, one of them *Hell or High Water*. She is currently spending a sabbatical at the American Academy in Berlin.



Joy Castro

Joy Castro began her reading with “Grip” and “No Más Monkey” from *Island of Bones*, an autobiographical collection of highly personal stories that deal with her childhood, adoption, abuse, and poverty. Her stories of violence and loss stood in stark but captivating contrast to Castro’s calm, smooth voice with which she recounted her memories. She then moved on to introducing her crime novel, *Hell or High Water*, published in 2012. The novel, set in 2008 New Orleans, deals with the still noticeable aftermaths of Hurricane Katrina. When the government evacuated New Orleans in 2005, in the midst of the greatest natural catastrophe the city has ever experienced, hundreds of registered sex-offenders slipped through the hands of the criminal justice system and into freedom, subsequently continuing their lives among New Orleans residents. After the mysterious disappearance of two women, 27-year old journalist Nola Céspedes begins to conduct interviews with the sex-offenders who are still living in the city. Before long, she herself, grown up in New Orleans’ Projects, is drawn into the under world. For Castro, the meaning of the book goes deeper than its mere character as a crime tale. Rebuilding a city at the same time signifies “rebuilding” one’s body and soul after traumatic, violent experiences, a theme central to *Hell or High Water*. She continued her reading with “A Notion I Took” from her 2015 short story collection, *How Winter Began*. There she constructs the story of a woman who is waiting tables at San Antonio’s River Walk and wonders, “Who the hell knows anything about me?” Joy Castro ended her reading with a recent publication, “Betrayed”, published in *Gulf Coast’s* Winter/Spring

2020 edition. In all of her readings, “water” worked as a reoccurring motif. The author explained she had always been drawn to water; it runs through her whole body of work, as do the themes of injustice, violence, and trauma. In most cases, women have to deal with these issues, which gives her stories a steady undertone of female strength and survival. Her characters are incredibly well crafted and, despite their extreme experiences, oddly relatable. Joy Castro draws inspiration and material from her own experiences growing up in Miami, England, and West Virginia, adopted into a Cuban-American family and living with an abusive stepfather. After her reading from “Betrayed,” she happily answered questions on her writing process, style, and routine. A writer from an early age on, she first published at age twenty-three. Writing always made sense as a natural counterpart to reading, something she has been enjoying all her life. Today writing exerts a healing quality on her, which she is constantly trying to explore further by trying out a range of genres. After Joy Castro’s compelling reading, the audience got together for a glass of wine to continue their conversations.

Eleonora Rohland



For the first public event of the new year, the HCA welcomed historian Eleonora Rohland, Professor for Entangled History of the Americas and director of the Center for InterAmerican Studies at the University of Bielefeld. Welf Werner briefly introduced the speaker whose research he considers “highly relevant in times when we are struggling with climate change.” Her research focus lies on the environmental and climate history of North America and the Caribbean. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and caused one of the greatest humanitarian disasters the city has ever experienced. Almost three hundred years after the city’s founding in 1718, devastating effects of this magnitude seem surprising. To find out why the city had not been better prepared for this, Professor Rohland consulted New Orleans history with astonishing results. In her view, political caesurae in New Orleans over the past centuries lead to a loss of environmental knowledge and thereby to an increased social vulnerability to natural hazards. Eleonora Rohland focused on three political phases and the corresponding major natural disasters: the Spanish regime from 1768 to 1802 and a very active hurricane period; the Spanish-

American War of 1898 and Hurricane Galveston; and the 1960s “Liberal Hour” and Hurricane Betsy. Before New Orleans became Spanish territory, the French ruled in Louisiana between 1718 and 1762. The settlers, already highly mobile, relocated often and moved Louisiana’s capital three times in this period. The European colonists knew nothing about hurricanes and due to their mobility never took the time to closely observe the land and its climate. The first recorded hurricane struck New Orleans in September 1722 and took the unprepared population by surprise. When the Spanish began to govern New Orleans, they faced hardships right away: an especially active hurricane phase haunted the city, and in 1776, the Revolutionary War broke out.



Niels Viggo Haueter

In order to safeguard the city against enemy attacks, the Spanish began to bring in people native to the Canary Islands and the Caribbean, the “islenos.” With centuries of knowledge about natural disasters and hurricane control, the islenos could have been the colonists’ chance to understand the rough climate. But New Orleanians failed to cooperate with the new settlers, and the islenos eventually left the city, taking with them their expertise on natural disasters. Over the course of the following centuries, either international conflicts or domestic disparities prevented adequate cooperation and, consequently, comprehensive protection of New Orleans’ population from natural disasters. Repercussions of the Spanish-American War of 1898 prevented another opportunity to learn from a disaster-experienced nation. Like the islenos, the Cubans had acquired in-depth knowledge of hurricane control. The work of Jesuit Padre Benito Vines stands out: He had been able, with the help of the telegraph and hourly monitoring, to forecast hurricanes and save countless lives. Hurricane Galveston hit the American coast on September 8, 1900 with stronger force than anticipated. While the Cubans had been prepared, the U.S. Weather Bureau reported the storm as an atmospheric disturbance “scarcely worth mentioning.” At this point, Cuban-American relations had been too deeply strained to enable institutional cooperation. Professor Rohland fast-forwarded her talk to the year 1965, when “Billion Dollar Betsy” hit the U.S. coast and caused the costliest natural disaster to that date. The hurricane forced the U.S. government to think about a national protection program. The 1960s “Liberal Hour” with its idealistic sentiment offered a chance for development in domestic disaster control. Various programs were proposed to Congress, and President Lyndon B. Johnson could

have introduced a mandatory flood insurance program to contain future humanitarian disasters. But independence and self-reliance proved to be too deeply rooted in American society; Congress eventually decided on the less restrictive, but retrospectively much criticized, National Flood Insurance Program. According to Eleonora Rohland, today's governments can still learn from New Orleans' three-hundred year history. Her research emphasizes the disparity between the temporality of the social sphere and the permanence of the natural world. Industrialization and technological development do not guarantee a successful adaptation to the forces of nature and were not able to protect humanity from natural catastrophes. To sustainably protect society, it takes institutional longevity and knowledge, rather than mere technology and capital, Professor Rohland concluded.

On Tuesday, January 14, 2021, the HCA welcomed the third guest speaker in the lecture series "Focus on Natural Catastrophes," Niels Viggo Haueter. Welf Werner welcomed the Manager of Corporate History at Swiss Re warmly and emphasized his pioneering work in the field of history of insurance as well as the significance of the Corporate History Department as a link between corporate data and academic research. Niels Haueter commenced his lecture by explaining that reinsurance was a special contract for insurance companies with which they aimed at minimizing effects of major claims events. He pointed out that, while traditionally such contracts were between insurance companies and reinsurance companies, governments too had begun to use reinsurance to balance effects of natural and man-made catastrophes in the last century. Insuring citizens against mainly weather related agricultural losses had been an issue during the nineteenth century already, so Haueter, but back then was managed with systems that bore great losses to the insurers and respective government agencies. With the twentieth century not only showing more significant weather changes due to climate change but also a growing amount of affected people in increasingly densely populated areas, insurance companies were forced to redesign or otherwise abandon their policies. Here, they turned to reinsurance companies to share costs of payouts that exceeded a company's financial means. During the twentieth century, the U.S. government became interested in similar insurance plans for natural as well as man-made catastrophes in order to release some of the financial burden of the national disaster relief program. It had created this program in 1914 as a four-part process that included both the Army and the Red Cross. Following such relief missions, the government adapted this process to new data and experiences collected during the previous operation. After the Mississippi Flood in 1927, for example, both the Flood Control Act (1928) and the Federal Disaster Relief Act (1950) were passed. Eventually, following the detrimental losses of the Kansas River Flood (1951), the U.S. government under Harry Truman designed a reinsurance plan that would share the financial burden with a third party. However, insurance companies were skeptical, especially about flood reinsurance, since it was connected to high losses and effectively created competition with community-based risk mitigation like the Red Cross. In his closing statement, Niels Haueter explained that the growing demand for reinsurance plans led to Swiss Re reopening this option in 1980 under the condition that any plan had to rely on state support as well in order to balance out risks for the reinsurance company. After a round of applause, Haueter welcomed the questions from the audience who were interested to discuss the relationship between reinsurance companies and governments and critically assess their impact on other systems of disaster relief.

MEDIA COVERAGE

During the past year, these reports on the HCA and its activities, as well as contributions by its faculty have appeared in:

„Die US-Präsidenten: Von Lichtgestalten und Gruselfiguren – Roosevelt, Nixon, Ford, Obama und Trump: Vier Amerikaexperten stellten Porträts von fünf Staatschefs vor“
(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, January 10, 2019)

„US-Botschafter Grenell droht deutschen Firmen: Was tun gegen diese diplomatischen Fehltritte?“
Radio interview with Martin Thunert
(SWR „Aktuell“, January 14, 2019)

„Donald Trumps State of the Union Address“
Radio interview with Martin Thunert
(SWR, February 6, 2019)

“Dismay in Berlin after Mike Pompeo scraps first trip to Germany”
Comments by Martin Thunert
(Financial Times, May 8, 2019)

„‘In einigen Bereichen ist die Konfrontation unumgänglich’: Der frühere Weltbank-Chef Robert Zoellick über den wirtschaftlichen Aufstieg Chinas“
(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, June 13, 2019)

„Eine Demokratie in Gefahr: Diskussion heute im HCA“
(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, June 19, 2019)

„USA-Experte: Weitere Amtszeit für Trump nicht sicher“
Radio interview with Martin Thunert
(SWR „Aktuell“, June 19, 2019)

„Stärkung der Enteigneten und Unterdrückten: Pennington Award der Universität Heidelberg an den US-Religionshistoriker Paul Harvey verliehen“
(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, July 8, 2019)

“Trump's Feindbildpolitik in den USA: Twitter-Tiraden gegen vier weibliche Kongressabgeordnete”
Radio interview with Martin Thunert
(hr-iNFO, July 19, 2019)

„'Ein Akt der Bilderstürmerei': Kontroverse um Fresken an einer High School in San Francisco“

Radio interview with Detlef Junker

(SWR2, August 19, 2019)

„Trump 'verhält sich mit Absage von Dänemark-Besuch kindisch““

Radio interview with Martin Thunert

(SWR „Aktuell“, August 21, 2019)

„Besonders teuer sind junge Afrikanerinnen: Vor 400 Jahren werden in der britischen Kolonie Virginia erstmals Menschen verkauft“

Article by Manfred Berg

(Die ZEIT, August 22, 2019)

„Haben die USA die Folgen der Sklaverei wirklich überwunden?“

Radio interview with Manfred Berg

(SRF 4 News, August 30, 2019)

„Impeachment gegen Donald Trump: 'Das Vergehen des Präsidenten ist diesmal klarer und leichter darstellbar““

Interview with Martin Thunert

(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, October 11, 2019)

„US-Kongress stimmt über Impeachment ab: Trumps Wutbrief - taktisches Manöver“

Radio interview with Martin Thunert

(SWR „Aktuell“, December 18, 2019)

„Schwarz, stolz und bewaffnet: Vor 50 Jahren erschoss das FBI Fred Hampton, einen Anführer der Black Panther“

Article by Manfred Berg

(Die ZEIT, November 28, 2019)

„Kanadas Premier Trudeau hat Vertrauen verloren“

Interview with Martin Thunert

(Deutsche Welle, October 21, 2019)

„Das Wahljahr 2020 in den USA“

Radio interview with Martin Thunert

(Deutschlandfunk Kultur „Studio 9 kompakt“, January 1, 2020)

„Weg mit dem Teufelszeug!: Vor hundert Jahren führten die USA die Prohibition ein“

Article by Manfred Berg

(Die ZEIT, January 3, 2020)

“For a Europe With Little Leverage, Dangers Abound in US-Iran Conflict”

Interview with Gordon Friedrichs
(Courthouse News Service, January 8, 2020)

„‘Trump wird unberechenbar bleiben, also ist alles denkbar’: Experte zu USA-Iran-Konflikt“

Interview with Martin Thunert
(Sputnik, January 8, 2020)

„USA-Experte rechnet mit Rückzug der Amerikaner aus dem Nahen Osten“

Radio interview with Martin Thunert
(SWR „Aktuell“, January 8, 2020)

„Was hat das Impeachment-Verfahren überhaupt gebracht?“

Radio interview with Martin Thunert
(rbb radio eins, February 8, 2020)

„Donald Trump und die Zerstörung einer Demokratie: Der Amerika Historiker Detlef Junker über den ‘großen Ruinierer’ Trump und die verheerenden Folgen seiner Präsidentschaft“

Article by Detlef Junker
(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, March 3, 2020)

“What a Puritan Leader Learned About Disease Control from the Man He Enslaved”

Podcast interview with Jan Stievermann
(Christianity Today, May 15, 2020)

“How response to George Floyd’s death reflects ‘accumulated grievance’ of black America”

Interview with Eddie S. Glaude Jr., Princeton University/James W. C. Pennington Fellow 2018, Heidelberg University
(PBS News Hour, May 29, 2020)

„Die Welle der Gewalt könnte Trump in die Hände spielen“

Interview with Martin Thunert
(Deutschlandfunk Kultur, June 2, 2020)

„Historiker über US-Unruhen: ‘Todesröcheln eines sterbenden Amerikas’“

Interview with Eddie S. Glaude Jr., Princeton University/James W. C. Pennington Fellow 2018, Heidelberg University
(SPIEGEL Online, June 7, 2020)

„Fall George Floyd: Steht den USA ein Bürgerkrieg bevor?“

Comments by Martin Thunert
(web.de Magazin, June 8, 2020)

Radio Interview with Martin Thunert about racism in US-society
(hr-iNFO, June 9, 2020)

“Withdrawing U.S. Troops From Germany Is Simply Bad Strategy”

Article by John R. Deni, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, and former visiting scholar at the HCA

(Newsweek, June 10, 2020)

„‘Die USA bleiben in einer Vor-Bürgerkriegssituation’: Der Amerika-Historiker Detlef Junker analysiert die Lage der Vereinigten Staaten im Wahljahr“

Article by Detlef Junker

(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, June 16, 2020)

„Politikwissenschaftler Martin Thunert: Erforscht Rassismus und Polizeigewalt in den USA“

Interview with Martin Thunert

(SWR1 „Leute“, June 19, 2020)

„Wie soll der neue Stadtteil heißen? Patrick-Henry-Village soll 2021 neuen Namen bekommen“

Comments by Manfred Berg and Detlef Junker

(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, July 2, 2020)

„US-Wahlen 2020: Was, wenn Trump eine Niederlage gegen Biden nicht akzeptieren würde?“

Comments by Martin Thunert

(web.de Magazin, July 21, 2020)

„Kulturkrieg und Rassenspaltung: Um sich die Wiederwahl zu sichern, setzt US-Präsident Donald Trump auf Polarisierung“

Article by Manfred Berg

(Mannheimer Morgen, July 25, 2020)

„Warum die Vizepräsidentschaft so wichtig ist wie nie“

Interview with Manfred Berg

(Tagesspiegel, July 28, 2020)

„Wenn es ums Ganze geht: Immer wieder wurden Präsidentschaftswahlen zu Wendepunkten der US-Geschichte. Steht das Land erneut vor einer historischen Zäsur?“

Article by Manfred Berg

(Die ZEIT, September 10, 2020)

„Trump-Biden-Debatte war ‚Peinlichkeit nationalen Ausmaßes‘“

Radio interview with Martin Thunert

(SWR „Aktuell“, September 30, 2020)

„Briefwahl bei der US-Wahl 2020: Wie berechtigt ist die Angst vor Manipulation?“

Comments by Martin Thunert

(Merkur.de, October 1, 2020)

„Trump wirkt wie ein wütender Boxer“

Interview with Martin Thunert

(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, October 1, 2020)

„Faktencheck: Droht bei einer Briefwahl in den USA Betrug?“

Comments by Martin Thunert

(Trierischer Volksfreund, October 23, 2020)

„Politikwissenschaftler: Trump hat noch Chancen Präsident zu bleiben“

Radio interview with Martin Thunert

(SWR „Aktuell“, October 23, 2020)

„Die lange Nacht zur US-Wahl: Rassismus“

Interview with Manfred Berg and Sudha David-Wilp

(ARD „Weltspiegel“, October 25, 2020)

„Die lange Nacht zur US-Wahl: Wahlsystem“

Interview with Manfred Berg and Sudha David-Wilp

(ARD „Weltspiegel“, October 25, 2020)

„US-Wahl 2020: Nach der Präsidenten-Wahl die Verfassungskrise?“

Interview with Manfred Berg

(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, October 31, 2020)

„‘Trump, der große Zertrümmerer’: Detlef Junker zu Internationalen Beziehungen der USA“

Radio interview with Detlef Junker

(SWR2, November 4, 2020)

„US-Wahl: Darf Trump die Auszählung der Wahlzettel stoppen?“

Radio interview with Manfred Berg

(NDR Info, November 5, 2020)

„US-Wahlen 2020: Stimmen aus der Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar“

Comments by Martin Thunert

(Mannheimer Morgen, November 5, 2020)

„Es bleibt sehr viel Donald Trump“

Interview with Detlef Junker

(Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, November 5, 2020)

„ARD-Brennpunkt: Kampf ums Weiße Haus“
Interview with Manfred Berg
(ARD, November 5, 2020)

„Der böse Geist Trumps wird bleiben“
Radio interview with Manfred Berg
(Deutschlandfunk Kultur, November 9, 2020)

„Sorge um die Weltmacht – Was wird jetzt aus der USA?“
Radio interview with Detlef Junker
(SWR2 „Forum“, November 9, 2020)



HCA ANNOUNCEMENTS

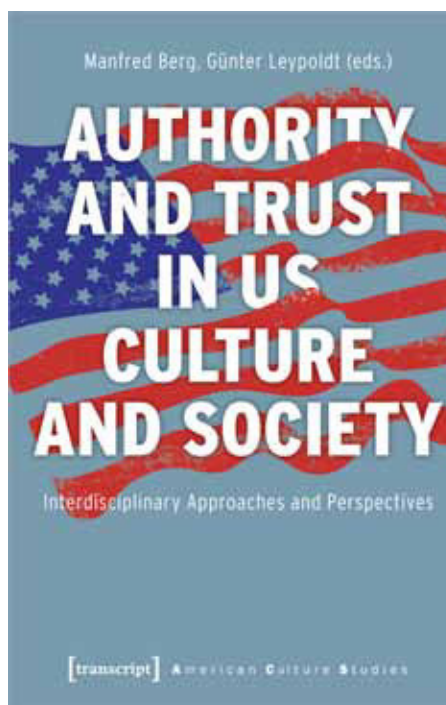
Authority and Trust in US Culture and Society Interdisciplinary Approaches and Perspectives

Günter Leypoldt & Manfred Berg (eds.)

transcript Verlag, 2021

Release: February 27, 2021

In the past two decades, a discourse of crisis has emerged about the democratic institutions and political culture of the US: many structures of authority which people had more or less taken for granted are facing a massive public loss of trust. This volume takes an interdisciplinary and historical look at the transformations of authority and trust in the United States. The contributors examine government institutions, political parties, urban neighborhoods, scientific experts, international leadership, religious communities, and literary production. Exploring the nexus between authority and trust is crucial to understand the loss of legitimacy experienced by political, social, and cultural institutions not only in the United States but in Western democracies at large.



American Freethinker

Elihu Palmer and the Struggle for Religious Freedom in the New Nation

Kirsten Fischer

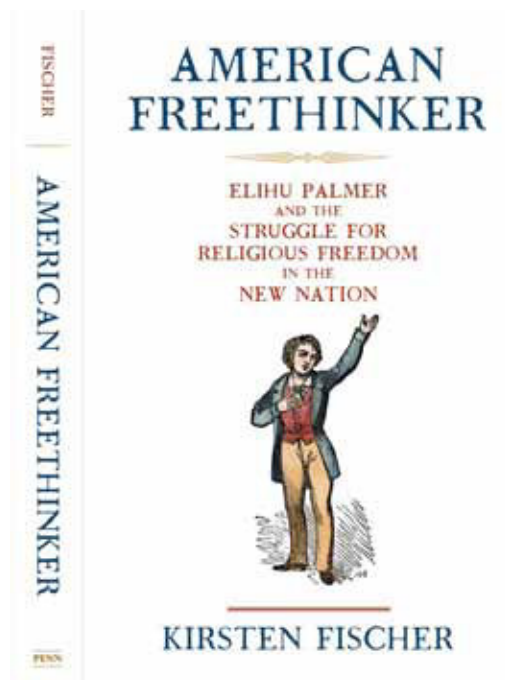
University of Pennsylvania Press/PennPress, 2020

Kirsten Fischer is Associate Professor of History at the University of Minnesota.

“With crystalline prose, Kirsten Fischer rescues Elihu Palmer from obscurity and, more importantly, sets his ideas against the broad religious and intellectual contexts of the early United States. Her investigation extends beyond one iconoclastic freethinker to show the vibrancy of the period’s intellectual climate and the dynamism of freethought. This is a book of enduring significance.” — *Erik R. Seeman, author of Speaking with the Dead in Early America*

When the United States was new, a lapsed minister named Elihu Palmer shared with his fellow Americans the radical idea that virtue required no religious foundation. A better source for morality, he said, could be found in the natural world: the interconnected web of life that inspired compassion for all living things. Religions that deny these universal connections should be discarded, he insisted. For this, his Christian critics denounced him as a heretic whose ideas endangered the country.

Although his publications and speaking tours made him one of the most infamous American freethinkers in his day, Elihu Palmer has been largely forgotten. In this first comprehensive biography, Fischer draws on extensive archival research to tell the life story of this outspoken freethinker whose ideas put him at the heart of the nation’s first protracted contest over religious freedom and free speech — a debate that continues to resonate today.

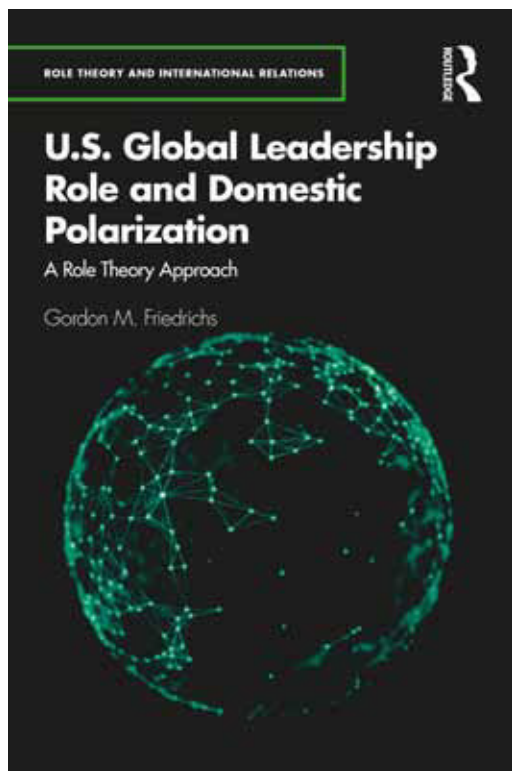


U.S. Global Leadership Role and Domestic Polarization

A Role Theory Approach

Gordon M. Friedrichs

1st Edition, Routledge, 2020



In this book Gordon Friedrichs offers a pioneering insight into the implications of domestic polarization for U.S. foreign policymaking and the exercise of America's international leadership role. Through a mixed-method design and a rich dataset consisting of polarization data, congressional debates and letters, as well as co-sponsorship coalitions, Friedrichs applies role theory to analyze three polarization effects for U.S. leadership role-taking: a sorting effect, a partisan warfare, and an institutional corrosion effect. These effects are deployed in two comparative case studies: The Iran nuclear crisis as well as the negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. Friedrichs effectively exposes the drivers of polarization and how this extreme divergence has translated into partisan warfare as well as institutional corrosion, affecting direction and performance of the U.S. global leadership role.

Through advancing role theory beyond other studies and developing the concept of "diagonal contestation" as a mechanism that allows us to locate polarization within a "two-level role game" between agent and structure, *U.S. Global Leadership Role and Domestic Polarization* is a rich resource for scholars of international relations, foreign policy analysis, American government and polarization.

"This book is indispensable reading for understanding the dynamics of US foreign policy in an era of polarization within American society. It is also a major contribution to the latest scholarship applying role theory to the study of foreign policy and international relations." – *Stephen Walker, Arizona State University*

"A great contribution to the role theory literature in that it connects domestic processes of role contestation and political polarization with the ability of the United States to perform its role as global leader." – *Klaus Brummer, Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany*

Begin Again

James Baldwin's America and its Urgent Lessons for our own

Eddie S. Glaude jr.
Crown, 2020

New York Times Bestseller

Shortlisted for the Goddard Riverside Stephan Russo Book Prize for Social Justice

James Baldwin grew disillusioned by the failure of the civil rights movement to force America to confront its lies about race. In our own moment, when that confrontation feels more urgently needed than ever, what can we learn from his struggle?

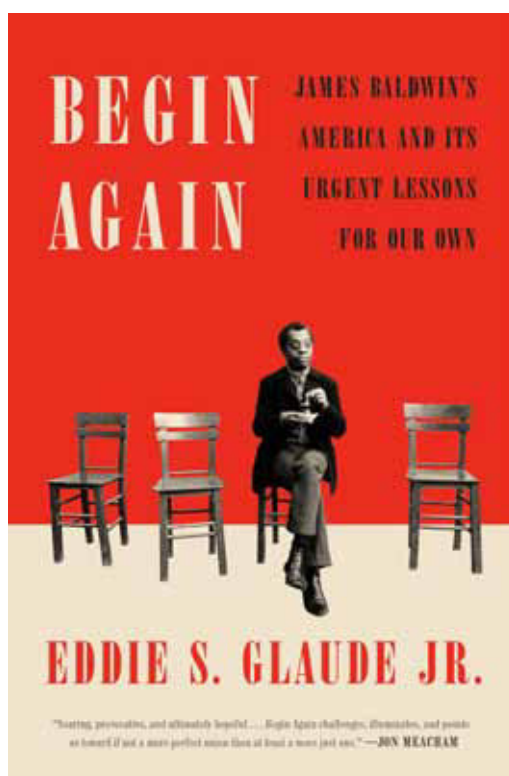
"In the midst of an ugly Trump regime and a beautiful Baldwin revival, Eddie Glaude has plunged to the profound depths and sublime heights of Baldwin's prophetic challenge to our present-day crisis." — Cornel West

"A penetrating study of how the words of James Baldwin continue to have (often painful) relevance today. Baldwin's genius glimmers throughout as Glaude effectively demonstrates how truth does not die with the one who spoke it." — *Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

"Even if you don't agree with Glaude's interpretations, you'll find yourself productively arguing with them. He parses, he pronounces, he cajoles. He spurs you to revisit Baldwin's work yourself." — *The New York Times*

"*Begin Again* is a groundbreaking and informative guide to Baldwin and his era." — *Washington Post*

"This book is, undoubtedly, the best treatment we have of Baldwin's genius and relevance." — Cornel West, author of *Democracy Matters and Race Matters*



Hegemonic Transition

Global Economic and Security Orders In the Age of Trump.

Florian Böller & Welf Werner (eds.)

Palgrave Studies In International Relations, Palgrave Macmillan.

The current international order is unraveling. Its traditional hegemon, the U.S., has ceased to unequivocally support the multilateral institutions it helped to foster, a process that Trump's "America First" policy has exacerbated in recent years.

This book provides a systematic analysis of the ongoing hegemonic transition of the international order – in the realm of economic policies and in terms of security regimes. It offers an analytical framework to address whether, to which extent, and in which regional and policy specific setting the traditional hegemony enacted by the United States has begun to change.

The analysis inspects three key developments: First, the consequences of the changing role of the traditional hegemon, the U.S. Second, the reactions among allies of the U.S. adapting their foreign and security policies, and third, the question how other states beyond North America and Europe position themselves towards the ongoing hegemonic change and contribute to its manifestation.

Based on an examination of long-term developments and the interdependence of domestic and international affairs, this volume is not an attempt to describe a potential "Trump effect" in global politics but rather to make sense of the shifting patterns of hegemonic politics in various regions and policy fields that have been significantly accelerated since 2016.



For more information on the HCA and its B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. in American Studies programs, as well as on its other activities in the areas of higher education, interdisciplinary research, and public forum, please log on to our website at www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de and subscribe to our newsletter.



Ruprecht-Karls-Universität
Heidelberg, est. 1386

⋮ HCA
Heidelberg Center
for American Studies

Curt und Heidemarie
Engelhorn Palais

Hauptstraße 120
D-69117 Heidelberg

T +49 6221/54 37 10
F +49 6221/54 37 19

www.hca.uni-hd.de