

PREFACE

As readers of the *Bulletin* know, the German Historical Institute Washington is not an institute for the study of German history but a German institute for the study of history. From its foundation, the Institute has sought to support not only the study of German history in North America but also the study of North American and transatlantic history in Germany — by connecting German academics studying North American and transatlantic history with the rich archival and academic resources of the United States and Canada as well as their colleagues on this continent. Beyond that, the Institute has, for some time now, also supported and conducted research in Atlantic and global history, some of which will be featured in our next issue. This issue of the *Bulletin* presents recent research in American and transatlantic history by junior historians who have recently published their first research monographs in the GHI's peer-reviewed "Transatlantic Historical Studies" (THS) book series; in one case, the book is forthcoming next spring. This special thematic *Forum* on "New Research in Transatlantic History" is edited and introduced by Axel Jansen, the GHI Deputy Director, and Claudia Roesch, GHI Research Fellow.

In the *Forum's* first article, Julius Wilm, whose book *Settlers as Conquerors: Free Land Policy in Antebellum America* (THS, 2018) recently won the University of Cologne's 2020 Offermann-Hergarten Prize, and who held the GHI's Gerda Henkel Postdoctoral Fellowship during the 2019-2020 academic year, deploys digital history methods to examine the 1862 Homestead Act in order to determine the extent to which homesteading was connected to the displacement of North America's Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands. In the second article, Patrick Gaul, whose book on the impact of the American Civil War in German-speaking Europe will be published in the THS series next spring, draws on the material turn and the methods of transnational economic history to reveal that, despite political rhetoric voicing support for the cause of the Union or, at least, strict neutrality, in fact, the German states continued to conduct trade with and ship arms to the Confederate states during the U.S. Civil War.

The *Forum's* third contribution presents the research of Elisabeth Piller, whose book *Selling Weimar: German Public Diplomacy and the United States, 1918-1932* was awarded the 2019 Franz Steiner Prize for Transatlantic History and has just been published in the THS series

(and is available in open access). Piller's article focuses on the role of Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University from 1902 to 1945, in U.S. cultural diplomacy with Germany in order to reveal not only the importance that this leading academic had for cultural relations between the two countries, but also the tortuous path of Butler's relations with Germany in an era marked by the First World War, a difficult period of recovery, and the rise of Nazism. In the *Forum's* final article, Sophia Dafinger presents research drawn from her book *Die Lehren des Luftkriegs: Sozialwissenschaftliche Expertise in den USA vom Zweiten Weltkrieg bis Vietnam*, also recently published in the THS series (and available in open access), which is based on her dissertation, for which she was awarded the Mieczyslaw Pemper Research Prize. Dafinger uses the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey conducted after the Second World War as a point of departure for examining the emergence of American experts and expertise in aerial warfare, which, she argues, was closely connected to the increasing influence and prestige of quantitative empirical research in the social sciences.

Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GHI's conference program was suddenly and drastically curtailed, so that this issue can only report on one conference from the spring of 2020, namely the conference "Recreating Separate Spheres Across Not-So-Separate Worlds: Gender and Reeducation in Japan, Germany, and the USA after World War II," reported on by Claudia Roesch.

While the pandemic continues to make in-person academic meetings impossible, the GHI has begun to make the switch to virtual formats, both for seminars, such as this fall's Young Scholars Forum (on which we will report in the next issue) and a number of panel discussions — including panels on "Rethinking Memory and Knowledge during Times of Crisis," on "Rethinking Health and Power During Times of Crisis" as well as a conversation with the author Ingo Schulze on his recent book *Die rechtschaffenen Mörder* — video recordings of which you can access on our website.

Please turn to our news section for recent GHI news. For up-to-date information on upcoming (virtual) events, publications, fellowships, and calls for papers, please consult the GHI website (<http://www.ghi-dc.org>), Facebook page, and twitter account. Please stay safe. We look forward to the day when we can welcome you again in both Washington and Berkeley.

Simone Lässig (Director) and Richard F. Wetzell (Editor)