

Current Issues

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**NORTH
AMERICAN
STUDIES
PROGRAM**

Dr. Juliane Braun
North American Studies Program


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“Strange Beasts of the Sea”: Captain Cook’s Last Voyage and the Transoceanic American Empire”

Tuesday, November 3, 2015 | 6:00–8:00 pm
Room A, IAAK, Regina-Pacis-Weg 5



On July 12, 1776, Captain James Cook and his crew left England in search of the famed Northwest Passage which was thought to link the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans and promised to open up a new, more direct trading route with Asia. The public records of Cook’s last voyage alerted a vast reading public, both in Europe and the early United States, to the commercial opportunities emerging from the exploitation of the North Pacific’s rich natural resources. Using the example of the sea otter and other “strange beasts of the sea,” Dr. Braun’s talk explores how new knowledge of the natural world and its dissemination through print culture helped the newly independent United States establish itself as a transoceanic empire.

Juliane Braun is a postdoctoral Gielen-Leyendecker research fellow at the University of Bonn. Her first book, *Creole Drama*, shows how the franco-phone population of New Orleans used the theater to maintain their sovereignty in the face of growing Anglo-American dominance. For her second book, she investigates the connections between nature writing, translation, and print culture in the eighteenth-century Pacific.