Friday, 8 November 2013

4:00 – 6:00 pm • UNC Chapel Hill • Institute for Arts and Humanities • Hyde Hall

MISCHA HONECK
(German Historical Institute, Washington D.C.)

“For the Preservation of German Honor and Manhood”: Gender and the German-American War for the Union

Many German-speaking migrants fought in the American Civil War. This lecture argues that a particular construction of masculinity motivated them to fight against slavery and secession. The transnational legacy of the European Revolution of 1848 and the divisive politics of the 1850s and 1860s devalued compromise, militarized German-American culture, and nurtured an ideal of manhood that flaunted ethnic honor, principle, and sacrifice as its defining characteristics. Emotional and cultural factors pertaining to gender were at least as important in shaping the meaning of military service as “ideology” in the abstract.

MISCHA HONECK is a research fellow for North American history at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. His main research interests are the histories of race and ethnicity, gender, and youth. He is the coeditor of Germany and the Black Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250-1914 (2013), and the author of We Are the Revolutionists: German-Speaking Immigrants and American Abolitionists after 1848 (2011).

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