

Acknowledgments

The spark of an idea for this book began over a decade ago in Vienna, Austria. With multiple zigzags and border crossings along the way, the idea traveled back and forth with me across continents, oceans, and cities near and far – from Los Angeles and Palo Alto, to Ankara and Istanbul, to Cologne and Berlin, and finally, to Richmond, Virginia. The idea and the book that emerged from it transformed along the way, as I wrote, revised, and revised again, each time incorporating new tidbits of information, grand ideas, and constructive feedback from colleagues and friends. This may be the “final” version, but, as this book ultimately concludes, the very concept of finality is itself elusive. After all, to paraphrase Jonathan Petropoulos, my mentor at Claremont McKenna College and the person who first inspired me to become a historian, “Our writing is never done. We just give up on it.”

At Stanford University, I began putting this idea on paper. My doctoral advisor, Edith Sheffer, both grounded me and encouraged me to “chase rainbows,” as I have often quipped. She infused this project with empathy and humanity, modeling how to center the history of everyday life and the power of ordinary people to shape geopolitical change. Ali Yaycıoğlu pushed me to tell a Turkish story, not only a German one, and to think in broader terms about space, place, landscapes, and journeys across layers of time. J. P. Daughton introduced me to transnational history, expanding my narrow idea of what “Europe” means, who “Europeans” are, and where the boundaries of “Europe” lie. Tara Zahra generously joined my committee from afar, helping me place my story within the larger histories of European migration, gender, sexuality, and the family.

Many others at Stanford pushed me to think across geographic, temporal, and disciplinary borders. In our quest to find new narratives for German history, our tight-knit cohort of Germanist doctoral students – Ian Beacock, Benjamin Hein, and Samuel Huneke – found intersections among topics as diverse as migration, sexuality, emotions, and capitalism. The History Department faculty – particularly Laura Stokes, Estelle Freedman, Ana Minian, and Steven Press – infused my work with insights from the Early Modern period to the present, and from Europe to the Middle East, Latin America, and the United States. Members of the European History Workshop, Gender History Workshop, Program in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and the Haas Center for Public Service offered feedback on the early stages of my writing and helped me conceive of this project within the broader scope of feminist and community-engaged scholarship.

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Two subsequent talks at the GHI elicited lively audience questions that enriched this book. One of those talks occurred in November 2019, when I was fortunate to be awarded the Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize of the Friends of the GHI. I thank the members of the prize committee and the Friends in general for their support for and endorsement of my work. David Lazar and Richard Wetzell first encouraged me to publish my book in the Publications of the GHI series. Simone Lässig and Kelly McCullough have been fantastic editors; their enthusiasm, intellectual engagement, clear communication, and logistical guidance have enriched the book itself and made the publication process smooth and enjoyable. I would also like to thank GHI intern Jacob Forbes and indexer Christine Brocks for their contributions.

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