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The early 1980s were transformative for the field of American art—and particularly for the pre-World War II contingent. In the spotlight and afterglow of the United States Bicentennial celebrations, museum storerooms and received histories were dredged for evidence of the nation’s creative past. The field was in an early stage of development, absorbed in information gathering and short on critical depth. AHAA’s formation provided a space for “Americanists” at a time when there were few other welcoming venues in the greater field of art history. With the founding of the Henry Luce Foundation’s American Art Program in 1982, targeted support incentivized graduate students and museum directors alike to recognize the field’s potential. A cohort of academics simultaneously devoted their energies to minting new scholars.

AHAA has served as the most welcoming and productive community for academic and museum-based Americanists across four decades. It has increasingly led in the effort to expand what the term “Americanist” can mean, seeing in that expansion the field’s only future. AHAA now does some of its most important work through its reconceived digital journal, *Panorama* (enthusiastically supported by the Luce Foundation), which serves as a dynamic conduit for information from all corners of the field.

Panorama’s Bully Pulpit* has begun and must continue to provide a forum to address the towering challenges and necessary work that face us today. How does a field whose roots we now know to have taken hold in American historical blindness find a way to celebrate the achievements of creative minds and hands while calling out racism and profound historical injustices? How should we study all art produced on this continent across centuries? What should our galleries represent? Who do we work for? Our reckoning with these questions will determine the viability of our discipline.

***Editors’ note:** *Bully Pulpit* was renamed *Colloquium* beginning with issue 6.2.