

German Studies

Fall 2019, Volume 13, Number 1



Dear Friends of German Studies,

Instead of pointing to the past year's academic highlights, such as our faculty's scholarship going public or the achievements of our students—which you will, among other topics, find presented on the following pages—I would like to share with you some of our departmental discussions toward

addressing core questions that we face as the faculty of a small undergraduate foreign language department.

Over a decade ago, the German Studies Department began, guided by the expertise of Prof. Hiram Maxim, a concerted and collaborative effort to redesign the undergraduate curriculum so as to match the process of learning a foreign language with the intellectual scope and depth of the German-speaking cultures. Beginning students of German engage with intellectual content at the earliest phases of their language study, while those who major and minor at the advanced level continue to study increasingly intricate grammatical and lexical features as the texts under study demand. The overhaul of our curriculum garnered national attention and awards and helped secure our students' prospective career options within and beyond academic pursuits—but it did not deflect the pressure faced throughout the humanities to justify why a student should learn a foreign language, and why German specifically. In a notably monolingual country, students, parents, colleagues, and administrators continue to question the value of investing the time and resources that it takes to learn additional languages well.

And while we in the department can quickly rattle off a number of very pragmatic reasons in answering this worthwhile question, we paused at our semi-annual retreat last year to discuss and reflect once again on a) what it is that distinguishes our educational value, and b) why higher education and thereby society at large should

invest in having young women and men learn another culture via the arduous process of language acquisition. The urgency of these questions mounts along with the cost of higher education, which in turn results in an increased pressure to find employment that will justify the expense (in money and time) of a liberal arts education. In short, the very concept of a liberal arts education faces a further crisis with respect to its own legitimacy.

Candidly entertaining these foundational questions, our faculty articulated an understanding of its work within this larger context that might surprise many of our constituents for its boldness and unapologetic answers. A deep mastery of a foreign language and its culture, including but not limited to the German and Yiddish we teach, offers two distinctive rewards: *travel* and *immediacy*. An experience of *travel* is an important facet of German Studies because it takes the student to new physical, intellectual and temporal spaces, where the familiar is rendered unfamiliar and where different cultural norms beckon to be negotiated. These experiences of travel are marked by a sense of *immediacy*: that is, by the direct and unmediated encounter with new and unfamiliar cultural artifacts, texts, and spaces. In other words, studying German is not a merely cognitive but experiential and in fact very personal way of learning. This 'immediate' engagement with cultural history is epitomized by the cultural encounters enabled in our Vienna summer program, but it is also a facet of the everyday classroom experience when students come face to face with texts from German-speaking cultures.

With this conceptual framework in mind, all of us in the department will continue striving to facilitate our students' very personal journeys within and adjacent to German-speaking cultures. Their hard-won sense of immediacy within those cultures stands to enrich their personal and professional lives in ways beyond what we can anticipate.

Peter Höyng
Chair and Professor

Newsletter of the
Department of
German Studies at
Emory University

IN THIS ISSUE

Faculty news

German Studies

Department Events

Student Awards

Editors

Miriam Udel

Terez Whatley-White

Send all inquiries to:

Department of German Studies
Emory University
Modern Languages Building
532 Kilgo Circle
Atlanta GA 30322
T 404.727.6439; F 404.727.2903

Help sustain our
Vienna Program by
giving to the Westbrook
Scholarship Fund

Faculty News

Paul Buchholz In the 2018-19 academic year, Paul Buchholz continued to work on his next monograph, tentatively entitled *The Relations of Desolation: Collectivity in Narratives of Environmental Crisis*. Taking a transnational focus that considers German and Austrian literature alongside American cinema, this book will consider how the proliferation of environmental discourse around 1970, on both sides of the Atlantic, gave rise



to a wave of artistic and narrative works that addressed fears that the planet would become uninhabitable because of pollution, degradation and depletion of natural resources.

The book will show how creative writers and artists fashioned new models of community out of the disastrous scenarios forecasted by environmentalists. In 2019, two articles associated with this project were accepted for publication by the German Studies journals *The German Quarterly* and *Monatshefte*. Additionally, Dr. Buchholz completed a translation and critical introduction of the environmentalist text "The Dam" by the Austrian graphic artist Max Peintner, which will feature in the forthcoming volume co-edited by Prof. Caroline Schaumann, *Mountains and the German Mind: Translations from Gessner to Messner, 1541-2009*. For his research on this project, Dr. Buchholz has been awarded a Fulbright fellowship for four months in the Spring of 2020, when he will be Senior Fellow in Cultural Studies at the Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften in Vienna. At a time when trans-Atlantic relations are strained by resurgent nationalism and collaboration on environmental protection between the United States and Europe has stalled, Dr. Buchholz sees this research as a way of re-asserting the importance of environmental thought for creating community across national and cultural boundaries.

Peter Höyng This past year, Peter Höyng presented at six different venues his work on Hugo Bettauer's *The Blue Stain. A Novel of a Racial Outcast* (originally in German: *Das blaue Mal. Der Roman eines Ausgestoßenen*), a rediscovered novel of miscegenation starts and ends in Georgia but takes the reader also to Vienna and New York. This plot of international sweep, first published in 1922, tells the story of Carletto, son of a white European academic and African-American slave girl, who resists being seen as "black" before he ultimately joins the NAACP after witnessing the race riots in Atlanta in 1906.

Höyng presented his work on the novel to mainly undergraduate students at Emory's Oxford College and Lafayette



College, PA but to graduate students and faculty at Penn State and to colleagues at a conference on decolonization of the German studies curriculum at St. Olaf

College, and to students and the general public on Emory's Atlanta campus as the sixth annual Maximilian Aue Lecture, and for graduate students at the University of Freiburg, Germany.

Irrespective of his varied audiences, Höyng argued that our engagement with Bettauer's novel is worthwhile for mainly three reasons: *First*, given that the author Hugo Bettauer, who was born a Jew but converted to the Protestant faith at eighteen, was well aware of anti-Semitism in his native country and was murdered by a young Nazi three years after the novel's release, the *Blue Stain* is a powerful, if partially painful, tale of learning to stand up against racism in whatever guise it reveals itself. *Second*, the historical nature of this tale of racial matters allows us to see Bettauer's own racial blind spots more clearly, helping to raise our awareness of how intellectuals were and still are unable to cope with differences as something that might not be mitigated by their own supposedly superior views and universalist humanism. *Third*, while the historical

distance may proffer some reassurance regarding today's more sophisticated and progressive views on diversity, justice, equality, and inclusiveness, Höyng argues that the novel's own contradictions help to bring into sharper focus a greater self-reflexive approach towards a dialogue about racial matters. Ultimately, Höyng strives to search for a balance between fighting against all forms of racism while not abusing his own privileged position vis-à-vis others.

Marianne Lancaster Invited to speak by Emory University's Language Center (ECLC), Senior Lecturer Marianne Lancaster presented on February 27, 2019 in the Modern Languages Building to faculty from Emory and the Greater Atlanta area.

Based on many years of experience teaching Business German, Lancaster shared issues she has encountered and insights she has gained in teaching business language courses. Her two-course sequence, focused on students in the third-year level of language learning, has become a staple in the curriculum of the German Studies Department. Discussion focused



on integrating business related issues and everyday economic life in other languages and cultures into courses, with the pedagogical goal of enabling students to function well in the target language and culture. Important questions included: what content works best for a very diverse group of students who may attend business school or others who just want to know the cultural and linguistic norms of economics and business? What skills and knowledge are necessary? How can such learning increase students' skill sets for internships and entry-level professional positions? Which forms of teaching assignments are best? What knowledge can the faculty safely assume the students to have about their own business culture if they have never

worked or lived on their own? Lancaster showed how she uses up-to-date graphs as basis for student presentations, information and discussion and teaches a special section on job applications and interviews. Ultimately, this session focused both on the specifics of such teaching as well as broader issues regarding the importance of intercultural communication - the need for students to be aware of their own and others' culture and how language and values will impact business and economic interactions.

The audience reacted with vivid interest and several insightful questions and comments. Lancaster's PowerPoint presentation will be made available on the ECLC website.

Hiram Maxim Professor Hiram Maxim spent the 2018-2019 academic year in Vienna, Austria where he was the Fulbright-Botstiber Visiting Professor of Austrian-American Studies at the University of Vienna for the fall semester and an Emory University Research Committee-Halle Institute International Research Fellow in the spring semester. During that time, in addition to teaching introductory courses in Systemic Functional Linguistics in the English Department, he had the opportunity to share his research with a wider audience on several occasions. In the fall semester he gave a guest lecture on genre-based pedagogy in a graduate seminar on teacher education for *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*. In the spring semester at a meeting of educational linguists at the University of Vienna he presented a case study of a beginning learner of German's writing development in the Emory German Studies curriculum. Later in the semester he gave a presentation on the influence of Systemic Functional Linguistics on the Emory German



Studies curricular reform to University of Vienna students of teacher education. Most recently he has been working with instructors in the English for Special Purposes section of the English Department at the University of Vienna to consider the possible applications of a functional genre-based to their pedagogical and curricular practices.

Caroline Schaumann In February, Caroline Schaumann was invited to present the keynote address at the 2019 Germanic Graduate Student Association Conference at Ohio State University, one of the largest German programs in the country. Entitled "Environ-mentangled," the event included a faculty roundtable discussion, a workshop, two graduate panels, and one undergraduate panel.

Schaumann's address, "The Tangled Web: Alexander von Humboldt and the Anthropocene" elucidated the search for fitting narrative genres in an age of climate change before analyzing Humboldt's various depictions of his ascent of Mount Teide on the Canary Islands in 1799 as creative explorations of our enriching entanglements with living beings and things on this planet earth. Then in June, on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Humboldt's birth, Schaumann was invited to contribute to the international conference "Alexander von Humboldt: The Whole World, the Whole Human Being," sponsored by the Berlin Academy of Sciences, the University of Potsdam, the Ibero-American Institute, and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Her presentation "Alexander von Humboldt and the Anthropocene Challenge" focused on the contemporary importance of Humboldtian thinking for 1) its emphasis on interconnection and interaction, 2) its systems approach in which human activity is part and parcel of an ecosystem, and 3) its acceptance of dynamic



change and uncertainty. The conference was widely received in the media and is available online in its entirety.

Miriam Udel Professor Miriam Udel spent the past academic year as a Senior Fellow at the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, where she continued to progress on her critical study of Yiddish children's literature and its role in shaping twenty-first century Jewish culture. She took advantage of the opportunity to deliver several talks on other campuses and for the public.

She gave the keynote address at a March symposium at the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley on Childhood in the Jewish Imagination. While in Berkeley,

she also offered several talks on Yiddish literature and culture at Congregation Beth Israel. She also visited the University of Minnesota, where she delivered a paper on American communist and Soviet Yiddish children's literature as well as a large community lecture on socialist Sabbath tales. She spent a week at the Yiddish Book Center's TENT Program, teaching contemporary Jewish children's authors about Yiddish kidlit and how it can be a creative resource for their work. Udel was also named a Translation Fellow at the Yiddish Book Center for 2019 and is completing a translation of the *Labzik* stories, a series of linked tales set during the Depression, about the adventures of a left-leaning puppy and the proletarian Jewish family that adopts him. After three years of study in a low-residency program for mid-career learners, she received rabbinical ordination in June 2019 from Yeshivat Maharat, the first institution to ordain Orthodox Jewish women in North America.



German Studies Department Events

During the past academic year, German Studies organized and hosted six events that both complemented the curricular offerings for our students and created opportunities for dialogue with colleagues from around campus. Ranging over a wide variety of topics, the events shared three invigorating

characteristics: invitations to the presenters emerged out of specific courses in our department, they actively intersected with the interests of other departments, and all were well attended. We are grateful for the generous support from the cooperating departments including English,

Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies, Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies, Theater, and the Tam Institute for Jewish Studies. And, as it so often does, a special thanks goes to Emory College's speaker funds from the Robert E. Hightower Sr. Endowment, which made some of these events possible.



Lecture by D. Phil. Reyhan Şahin

On October 17, 2018, D. Phil. Reyhan Şahin, a German-Turkish scholar at the University of Hamburg, addressed current debates about racism and multiculturalism in Germany sparked by soccer player Mesut Özil's resignation from the German national team during last year's World Cup. Şahin is an academic linguist who also enjoys a wide following as the rapper "Lady Bitch Ray," and it came as no surprise that many students were keenly interested in her hybrid profile as a scholar-artist. She discussed Özil's case as a paradigm for how anti-Islamist sentiments can be disguised by valid political criticism.



Kirloskar-Steinbach Makes Case for Adorno's Thinking in World Philosophy

On January 24, 2019, Prof. Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach made the case for exploring Theodor W. Adorno's critical thinking in support of the burgeoning field of world philosophy. Professor of philosophy at the University of Konstanz and visiting

faculty at Emory's Oxford campus for the past year, Prof. Kirloskar-Steinbach is a leader in the field of world philosophy. While Adorno might seem, at first blush, to (re) present the very type of a white male philosopher against which world philosophy tries to establish itself, the talk argued for how Adorno's own dialectical thinking can actually open up the traditional canon of Western philosophy.



Kovacs On the Theater of Jelinek

On March 21, Prof. Teresa Kovacs gave a lecture on the theater of Elfriede Jelinek, the Austrian feminist writer who was awarded the 2004 Nobel Prize in Literature. Jelinek's texts written for the stage defy the traditional concept of a drama with clearly delineated characters or a dramatic plot. The audience appreciated how

Dr. Kovacs, a visiting professor from Vienna, Austria at the University of Michigan, outlined Jelinek's multi-layered texts for the stage. Her talk was part of Profs. Höyng and Weiner's course on post-war Austrian drama as an important form of intervention in Austria's collective amnesia regarding its own Nazi past.

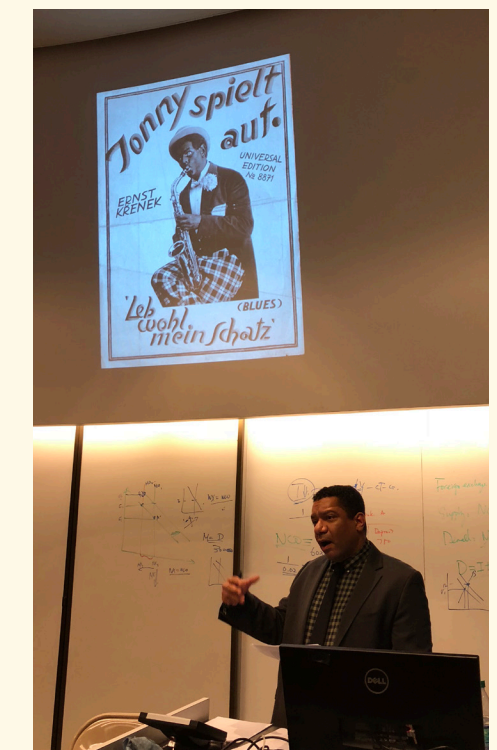


Thompson Lecture On the Role of African-American Jazz Music in German Culture



On November 14, 2019, Prof. Mark Christian Thompson, Chair of English at Johns Hopkins University, delivered a lecture on the paradoxical role of

African-American jazz music in German culture and politics in the early twentieth century. While leftist intellectuals understood jazz's popularity as an outgrowth of capitalist consumer culture, the authoritarian right saw jazz as a cultural and racial threat that would destabilize the German national community. And while the Nazis initially condemned jazz as the height of modern decadence, they eventually appropriated and incorporated it into the spectacle of totalitarian rule, fashioning a form of jazz syncopation allegedly rooted in Germanic music. Prof. Thompson's visit connected to Prof. Buchholz's seminar on travel literature, and he also met with students to discuss the aesthetic significance of racial blackness in Franz Kafka's story "In the Penal Colony," drawing on his recent monograph *Kafka's Blues: Figurations of Racial Blackness in the Construction of an Aesthetic*.



Vienna's Portrait Theater

Anita Zieher and Brigitta Waschnig of Vienna's Portrait Theater offered a kindred artistic presentation on April 3, featuring excerpts and an audience talkback on their latest production "Women at Work." Wrought in a highly artistic documentary style, the play engages the work of two pioneer women from Vienna: the socialist feminist Käthe Leichter (1895-1942) and social psychologist Marie Jahoda (1907-2001).



Student Awards

Max Kade Scholarship

In 2019, four students were selected to receive a prestigious Max Kade scholarship to support their study abroad in the 46th year of Emory's Vienna summer program. Jesse Steinman, a sophomore from Bexley, Ohio, and Anudeep Venapally, a freshman from Suwanee, Georgia, have received grants for the study of second-year German while in Austria. Brooke Daly, a freshman from Orlando, Florida and Kristin Wadsworth, a freshman from Tampa, Florida, have received grants for the study of third-year German. This marks the 13th consecutive year that the Max Kade Foundation has generously supported participants in the Vienna program.

Two 100-Level Awards

Alexis Roberson is a freshman chemistry major who excelled in all aspects of our demanding first-year language sequence and plans to pursue German as a minor or major. She was a top participant in her class, always willing to raise her



Max Kade recipients (Left to right: Anudeep Venapally, Jesse Steinman, Brooke Daly, and Kristin Wadsworth)

hand to venture an answer or pose a thoughtful question. Her written work was notable for going beyond what was required to express sophisticated ideas and meaningful personal experiences, as well as applying and extrapolating rules. Ms. Roberson ended the year with an impressive grasp of German language and culture; we are glad to recognize her achievements and support her as she continues along this path.

Jennifer Hou started with Ger 101 as a freshman in fall 2018 and continued with

Ger 102 in the spring. She stood out with her truly exceptional participation, based on thorough homework and her courage to try something new. In her writing she successfully used new vocabulary and grammar concepts to express herself. She was always interested to learn more about German culture and decided to continue her German studies by participating in the Vienna Study Abroad Program in 2019. Her continued work and progress deserve this recognition and we expect to see further progress in the future.

to pursue German studies at Emory presented, Jason was eager to do so. During his first German class in sophomore year, Jason found himself impassioned not only about learning the language, but also yearning to study more of everything German. Jason delved into studying German history, taking as many German courses as his schedule allowed. During Jason's 3 years of participation in the German program, which included the Summer Study Abroad Program in Vienna; his passion and commitment allowed him to attain a remarkable understanding of the language in a short time and he was able to navigate through challenging works written in German. German studies became Jason's passion; an area of deep interest that he found combined his values and abilities into something that he ardently pursued and has turned into a desire to further pursue a future creative career with.

in the ninth grade. Born and raised in Greece, Jason's family traveled extensively throughout Europe and he spent a good deal of time in Austria while growing up. Hearing German as a young boy he became very intrigued by the language, so when the opportunity



Jason Ginnis, ECLC Award recipient with Department of German Studies faculty

Emory College Language Center Award

Jason Ginnis came to Emory University in 2014 from Greece via Vermont, where he relocated when he was

German Studies Award for Excellence

Robert Wilson started with German in German 101 and 102 class (Fall 2016 & Spring 2017) and stood out as a serious student who was eager to receive all information and tried building complex sentences early on. He continued to make the most of every lesson and asked pointed questions. Outside of class, he used his time wisely to study and review, and his German very early on showed exceptional correctness. He strived to use the exact phrase a German would use, not just to be understood. Bobby continued with German 201 and 202 (F17/S18), and took the Business German sequence Ger 320 and 301 (Buchholz) and Fall Ger 321 and 470 (Höyng) upon his return, a great combination of his interest to double major in Business and German. He finished with a new record: a 100% in the final. So when we thought of German Studies excellence, we thought of him immediately.



Robert Wilson, German Studies Award for Excellence winner

Terez Whatley-White



Terez Whatley-White (right) at Grillfest, spring 2019

It was the chocolate. One late fall evening while waiting to be picked up after high school swim practice, Decatur/Atlanta native Terez Whatley was introduced to German culture by a new friend, a foreign exchange student. She offered him some of the chocolate from her "Paket aus Deutschland". Milka was its name. One could call it the bite that redirected his life. When it came time to enroll in a foreign language course at Emory University, German was the obvious choice. Not only was he persuaded by the faculty, he reflected on that piece of chocolate and his friends, and it was decided.

other German-speaking country? Zotter answered.

Back on campus, he was able to immerse in the language at the German House and as a work-study student in the department. Attempts were made to cook Käsespätzle with his roommates and Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant. Die Etikettiermaschine was often used. However, nothing made him feel more immersed than receiving packages of chocolate goodies from his friends abroad.

After one semester learning German, he decided to save money toward his first international trip: to Germany. Liebe auf den ersten Blick war es einfach. After three semesters and some weeks, he was easily persuaded to apply to the department's study abroad program in Vienna, Austria. Would there be chocolate in this

Terez continued to work for the department after graduating with Deutsch as his Hauptfach. Having been so inspired by his professors in college, he wished to teach and spread the joy of cultural exchange. He took advantage of an opportunity to teach for English as a Second Language in South Korea for a year. Unfortunately, they don't do chocolate, so Terez opted to rejoin the Department of German Studies at Emory University, where he feels loved and well supported. He has been able to nourish his love of other cultures by learning Brazilian Portuguese at Emory, even attending the occasional Bate Papo on Fridays.

As a sustainability representative for the Modern Languages building Terez happily works on making the building and department more "nachhaltig". Low-key brag: he might be partially responsible for bringing composting to the building before it was a campus-wide policy. Terez achieves bursts of fame when grilling bratwurst at one of the department's many sustainably hosted events. After, who knows? It might be another student's first taste of authentic bratwurst that changes everything.

Emory University
Department of German Studies
Modern Languages Building
532 Kilgo Circle
Atlanta GA 30322

EMORY



German Studies

Visit our website at www.german.emory.edu

To make a gift to support German Studies at Emory:

Contact the Office of College Development and Alumni Relations at artsandsciences@emory.edu.
The web address is <http://college.emory.edu/home/giving/index.html>.

Please indicate your support for German Studies with your contribution.

Gifts will be used for:

- German Studies Scholarly Enrichment Fund
- The Westbrook Endowed Scholarship Fund

Thank you for your support.