



Spring 2008
Newsletter

UW GERMANICS

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends and Alumni:

I am writing to you at the end of a very busy winter and spring quarter in Germanics at the University of Washington. We have lots of news that we are proud of and that we would like to share with all our friends and supporters. This issue features updates on our graduate students, an article about our Max Kade Distinguished visitor, Professor Inge Stephan from the Humboldt University in Berlin, a tribute by Professor Jane Brown on the occasion of Professor Hellmut Ammerlahn's retirement, and a brief report on my book on colonialism and masochism.

We are very proud of our graduate students. Not only are they well-trained and dedicated teachers, they also pursue really interesting projects, participate in overseas exchanges, receive grants for their research, and contribute to the intellectual life in the department in substantial ways. Several students completed their graduate degrees and are moving on to teaching positions elsewhere.

We reluctantly said good-bye to our colleague visiting from Berlin, Inge Stephan, who taught a seminar on after-images of terrorism. Inge is one of the central figures in

German feminist studies and it was an honor to have her as a visitor.

Hellmut Ammerlahn decided to retire after over forty years of full-time teaching. He will return as professor emeritus, teaching two courses per

culture. One of our graduate students, Gabi Eichmanns, accompanied them and offered an intensive course on contemporary Austria. For those upper-classman in Seattle, we offered our spring drama/performance course. This year, graduate student Elizabeth Standal directed



year, a course in Comparative Literature and a course in Germanics. Jane Brown wrote a tribute to his scholarship for this newsletter that highlights Hellmut's role in the profession.

You will also have a chance to read about my book on colonialism and masochism that appeared last year with a Tübingen publisher.

Many of our undergraduates studied abroad in spring term. One group went to the University in Tübingen with our German Express program. Another group went to Vienna to study language and

students in performances of "Grimm's Märchen."

We are all looking forward to the summer and to an invigorating new academic year starting in September. You will hear from us again in December. If you want to keep up to date and receive monthly electronic newsletters, please let me know.

Enjoy your summer,

Sabine Wilke
wilke@u.washington.edu

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Germanics Newsletter designed and edited by Heidi Tilghman. Please direct questions to uwgerman@u.washington.edu.

GRADUATE STUDENT UPDATES

Tommy Bell came to UW after completing his B.A. at Wheaton College in 2000 and M.Div. at Princeton Seminary in 2003. He studied in Tübingen through the UW while working on a Post-baccalaureate in German. He started his Master's studies in German Literature last fall focusing on German philosophy and theology, specifically Kant, Nietzsche and Schelling. He enjoys hiking, climbing and biking.

Seth Berk is off to Berlin for the Sommersemester at Humboldt Universität. Classes and lectures at the UW German Department have been great thus far, and being back in an academic environment after several years working in New

York City has done wonders for the spirit. Not to mention a much needed rejuvenation provided by all of the trees and green out here in Seattle! It is nice to see the return of sunshine and to have the chance to enjoy the awakening of the cherry blossoms before leaving. And even though the winter was a bit dreary, a rain-soaked walk down the Burke-Gilman was still superior to the rectilinear confinements of the Big Apple! In terms of intellectual

work, Marshall Brown's Hegel course provided plenty of food for thought, particularly when relating the "Phenomenologie des Geistes" to the Pantheismusstreit, which was a hugely significant philosophical debate that was previously unknown to me. Particularly, the focus has been upon the exploration of the relationship between Enlightenment humanism its

ties and contradictions to the animistic mysticism of Romanic nature cults. Fichte, Schelling, Kant, Spinoza, and Feuerbach also provide varied programs for interpreting the essence of God, nature, and humanity, each providing unique psychological and theological insights, which then help to identify currents of thought embedded within the narratives of the late 18th and early 19th century.

Heidi-Marie Clemens is a native Californian. She grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and attended UC Berkeley for her undergraduate degrees, completing a B.A. in both German and Art Practice. Her focus on the art front was oil painting. She then spent two years in Austria with a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship, first living in a small town in the province of Lower Austria, and then spending her second year in Vienna. She relished in several free-lance translation jobs for museum audio-guides there. Heidi-Marie moved to Seattle last fall to begin her graduate studies in Germanics at the University of Washington. Her interests lie in Romanticism as well as turn-of-the-century Austrian arts and literature. Heidi-Marie also teaches German language at the UW. Aside from her academic goals, some day Heidi-Marie wishes to play the guitar, run a marathon, snowboard on 5 different continents, and revisit her love of painting.

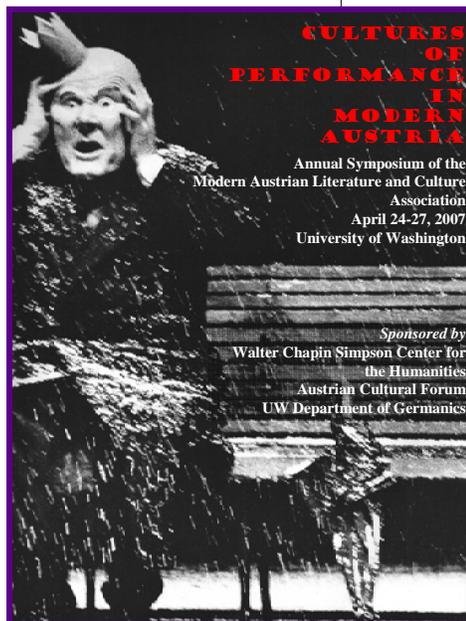
In the fall quarter, **Elisabeth Cnobloch** was given the opportunity to teach the language trailer class for Richard Block's "Jewish-German Writers" course. The chance to design the German 307 curriculum and to select the teaching material was a highly rewarding challenge. Last quarter, she was the TA for Heidi Tilghman's

course "Vienna 1900" and Brigitte Prutti's course "Classics of German Literature and Thought" which provided her not only with new knowledge and inspiration but also with deeper insight into teaching approaches and course design. At the moment she is teaching German 203 which makes the first steps away from the textbook and into literature.

Gabi Eichmanns has been a Ph.D. student in Germanics since 2003. She received her M.A. in Comparative Literature from the University of Washington in 2002 and spent a year in Copenhagen as an exchange student. Her main interests are travel writing, intercultural communication and the impact globalization has had and still has on German identity formation after the Wende. Gabi will defend her dissertation in summer 2008 and has accepted a job at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh where she will start working in early August.

At the beginning of the winter quarter, **Jan Hengge** successfully completed his Ph.D. exams. He is currently working on the first chapter of his dissertation, which deals with language, citation, and notions of violence in Georg Büchner's *Dantons Tod*. Over spring break, Jan presented a paper on terrorism and communication in film at the annual American Culture/Popular Culture Conference in San Francisco. He also presented his dissertation project at the Graduate Research Symposium on campus in April. For the 2008-2009 academic year, he will participate in the Humboldt University exchange and conduct research in Berlin.

Before coming to the University of Washington in the fall of 2006, **Rachel Herschman** received her B.A. in German Studies and Philosophy from McGill University. She is completing the require-



Germanics sponsored the annual symposium of the Modern Austrian Literature and Culture Association in April. The theme of the conference was "Cultures of Performance in Modern Austria." (Poster design by Heidi Tilghman.)

UPDATES, CONT.

ments for the M.A. degree and is looking forward to continuing in Germanics as a Ph.D. candidate. Rachel is currently on exchange in Germany, where she teaches essay and speech writing. She was this year's recipient of the Jewish Studies Program Scholarship.

Kevin Johnson spent fall quarter 2007 teaching a film course for the East and Central European Studies program at the Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. Also in the fall, he went on the market for a university job in the United States, but did not have any luck beyond two interviews at the MLA convention. He did, however, receive an offer to return to the film studies department at the Charles University to teach German and Central European film and to function as chief coordinator for their new Ph.D. program in English. The professional-track position begins in fall 2008. In addition to working on his dissertation (defense projected for winter 2009), Kevin has also been preparing multiple projects for publication, including a journal article, several book chapters, and an anthology of film theory by Czech authors (for which he translated all essays from Czech into English). He has been working on the translations for this anthology for two years and is delighted that they will finally reach publication this summer. In other life-altering news: Kevin will be getting married this summer to his Czech girlfriend of many years, Anna.

Japhet Johnstone completed his M.A. degree in January. He has also been busy with work on two publications: "Oppressive Tolerance: A Queerer Reading of the X-Men Trilogy" in *Queer Studies. Eine Frankfurter Ringvorlesung*, edited by Andreas Kraß (forthcoming 2008), and three entries on Hemmingway's *The*

Old Man and the Sea for the reference work, *General Themes in Literature*, edited by Jennifer McClin-ton-Temple (forthcoming 2009). Japhet will also be presenting a paper on Brecht's *Mutter Courage* at this year's graduate conference for interdisciplinary studies at the University of Washington. Next year, Japhet will be teaching and studying in Münster.

Verena Kuzmany passed her general exams in Comparative Literature in December and is working on her dissertation. She recently spent two quarters at Humboldt University in Berlin and almost got lost on a detective hunt for marginalia at the German Literature Archive in Marbach am Neckar. She will present her research on writing and photography at two conferences this spring, the CCLA in Vancouver and the Graduate Conference for Interdisciplinary Studies at UW. She is looking forward to teaching in Germanics next year, and to co-chairing a panel on figurations of skin in German literature and culture at the Women in German Conference in Utah in October.

Nathan Magnusson joined the program last autumn after teaching German at the secondary level in the UK and New Jersey. His main interests include German literature of the early nineteenth century, in particular the works of Kleist, Novalis, Tieck, and Hoffmann. In February he presented a paper on urban space in Tieck's *Liebeszauber* at the University of Pennsylvania's annual graduate student conference. He is currently writing seminar papers on animal cruelty in Storm's *Schimmelreiter* and representations of food and drink in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre*. Nathan anticipates sitting for his M.A. exams in January 2009.

Gloria Man joined the Department in fall 2007. She is cur-

rently working towards her M.A. degree. This being her first year in Seattle, she is still amazed at the city's display of luscious vegetation and melancholic skies. Every day, as she walks to campus, she contemplates the blossoming trees, and ponders about questions of art and nature.

Sabine Noellgen received both her Master's degree and a certificate to teach "Deutsch als Fremdsprache" at the Freie Universität Berlin in 2001. She has taught German at CSU Long Beach, the Qingdao University (China), Ramkanghaeng University Bangkok, (Thailand), Universität Mannheim, and Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam (Malaysia). Sabine joined the Department in 2006 and is planning to complete her class work next quarter. While her first PhD paper dealt with ambiguous desire in Dorothea Veit-Schlegel's novel *Florentin*, she is currently planning an eco-critical reading of Werner Herzog's "Grizzly Man."

After passing the Masters exams in January, **Eric Scheuffer** is finishing his first full quarter in the Ph.D. program this spring. In the fall, Eric presented a paper on music in Kleist's short fiction at the University of London's Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies. He served on the planning committee for the University of Washington's annual Graduate Conference for Interdisciplinary Studies, which took place May 8th and 9th. He will spend the 2008-09 academic year on the Muenster exchange, where he will teach English and begin research into a dissertation topic.

FILM & OPERA
A NEW COURSE OFFERING FOR SPRING 2008
MWF 1:30-3:20, MGH 231, 5 CREDITS

PROFESSOR JANE K. BROWN
jkbrown@u.washington.edu

PROFESSOR ERIC AMES
eames@u.washington.edu

GERMAN 390 B	C Lit 497 A	CHID 498 E
SLN 13518	SLN 11257	SLN 18523
VLPA	VLPA	IRS

This course explores the rich interrelations between film and opera: how opera contributes to the shape, plots, and visual luxury of film, the ambiguous status of both as high and low culture, the competition between image and voice in both media, the relations of time and space in both. Students can expect to learn about opera as a theatrical form, about the musical stage at the turn of the 20th century, films of operas, films based on opera, films that reflect on opera, and the ties between opera and cartoon animation. Assignments will include reading, screenings, attending live performances, written reports, and in-class presentations. **In English.**

Professors Eric Ames and Jane Brown led a new course on Film and Opera in the Spring quarter. The course was open to students in Germanics, Comparative Literature and Comparative History of Ideas. (Poster design by Stephanie Welch.)

Faculty Publications: Sabine Wilke's *Masochismus und Kolonialismus: Literatur, Film und Pädagogik*



In 2000, Sabine Wilke began work on a study tentatively entitled “White Women in Furs and African Women in Atlas Silk: Intersections of European Male Masochism and German Colonialism.”

As the work developed over the next several years, she received a local grant for a quarter-long residency in UW’s Simpson Center for the Humanities (2001), a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation (2003) and a senior fellowship from the German Fulbright Commission (2004). The study expanded from a focus on the German involvement with Africa to include other regions in the world as well, most significantly the Pacific Islands (and China to a lesser extent).

In the finished manuscript, which was published in German as *Masochismus und Kolonialismus: Literatur, Film und Pädagogik* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2006), she explores the discursive dimension of modern German literary and cultural documents of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She argues that these documents are informed by the history of German and European colonialism and should be interpreted with the help of post-colonial theory. Specifically, the book discusses the central function of colonial images for the construction of German cultural modernity and offers a systematic investigation of the construction of the white woman as the cruel woman in furs in the

masochistic imagination and the role of (male) masochism in the context of German colonial discourse. The history of modern German culture, according to Wilke, is deeply intertwined with references to the colonial past—actual as well as fantasized—on a rhetorical as well as metonymic level. This necessitates the revision of the traditional cultural-historiographical trajectory mapped out for German culture of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries which was made possible only on the basis of repressing the essential role played by masochism in the sexually fantasized encounter between colonizer and colonized.

While the book’s introductory chapter deals with the significance of the female African servant in the tradition of literary masochism as it was inaugurated by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch’s novella “Venus in Furs” (1869), chapter two turns to a discussion of the principles displayed in the pedagogical literature that was used in the training of colonial settlers and administrators. In 1898, representatives from trade, banks, and industry succeeded in establishing the “German Colonial School Witzenhausen” in northern Germany as a place where prospective settlers and administrators were trained for their future tasks in the colonies. Wilke shows that the real focus of the pedagogical principles used in instruction had more to do with constructing a certain kind of person, i.e., someone who would accept orders

from above and, at the same time, be an authoritative leader vis-à-vis the natives who work for him. Her thesis is that the figure of the masochistic male and the cruel woman analyzed in the introduction were translated programmatically into pedagogical ideals for the new settler types. For women in particular, the entrance into the colonial institute and the training received there prepared them for tasks and experiences abroad that would not have been considered an option at home in their bourgeois households. But these freedoms came with the prescribed role of the cruel woman who was feared by the masochist male settler and handled with great suspicion as is shown in the chapter on the example of literary reflections of life in the colonies.

The subsequent chapters investigate a series of literary texts from the colonial period and the postwar era, specifically literary texts that engage in colonial fantasies, and show how the paradigm of an alliance between masochism and colonialism continues to determine contemporary drama and fiction. Even the postwar German writer is enmeshed in “triangulated visions” in which the liberal German author envisions a non-hegemonic mode of encounter with the non-German of the Third World without critically investigating their own culture’s involvement with the history of European expansionism and colonial fantasizing.

DEPARTMENT HOSTS MAX KADE DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR INGE STEPHAN

The Department of Germanics has been pleased to welcome Prof. Inge Stephan as the Distinguished Max Kade Professor for Spring 2008. On May 2 she gave a fascinating lecture entitled "Eisige Helden: Kältekult und Männlichkeit in der Moderne" as part of our traditional Friday lecture series. Afterwards, we had a very lively and inspiring discussion that ended on a humorous note which connected the *Kältekult* with Seattle's North Face - dominated fashion scene.

Prof. Stephan comes to us from Humboldt University (Berlin) where she is Professor of Modern German Literature and "Geschlechterproblematik im literarischen Prozess." She was the driving

force behind the establishment of the Department of Gender Studies at Humboldt University. Her scholarly work has focused on female literature and cultural traditions, female and male images, construction of gender in literature from the 18th century to the present, as well as feminist theory and current gender research. In her research she concentrates on marginalized and repressed traditions in a literary-historical context.

Recently Prof. Stephan has been working on a *NachBilder* - trilogy together with her colleague Alexandra Tacke. The first volume is "NachBilder des Holocaust", the second "NachBilder der RAF" and the last volume that will be published soon is entitled "NachBilder der Wende". The

seminar she is offering this quarter deals with the topics of "NachBilder der RAF" and is embedded in the context of the German discourse on remembering. The wealth of knowledge, excellent material and the personal engagement that she has brought to the seminar has been impressive and highly appreciated by the graduate students. The students also commented that it was a unique opportunity to work not only with literary texts and film but also with paintings and photography.

For more information on Prof. Stephan's work, projects and publications go to: <http://www2.hu-berlin.de/literatur/mitarbeiter/stephan/stephan.htm>.



PROFESSOR HELLMUT AMMERLAHN RETIRES

Hellmut Ammerlahn retires this spring, forty-five years from the time he first joined the faculty of the Department of Germanics at UW as an instructor in 1963. When I came twenty-five years later, I felt honored to become the colleague of the man whose influential essays on *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* had long been familiar to me. For it would be difficult to overestimate Hellmut's standing as a scholar on the *Lehrjahre*. Long before he published his widely acclaimed *Imagination und Wahrheit. Goethes Künstler-Bildungsroman Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre: Struktur, Symbolik, Poetologie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003), he was regarded both in the US and Germany as a scholar whose work must be taken into account whenever

one works on this novel. He achieved this reputation on the basis of his very first two published essays (1968, 1972), but continually enhanced it with the succeeding essays, and with his book on *Torquato Tasso* (1990). His work is famous for its exacting standards of clear analysis, its control of the scholarship on the texts, and a precise knowledge of the primary texts that is unsurpassed in the discipline. It is admired and cited equally by older scholars who share Hellmut's definitions of our discipline as the close study of literary texts and by younger scholars in cultural studies to whose approaches Hellmut himself is not always fully sympathetic. I have yet to meet a colleague in Goethe studies here or in Europe (or in Australia), whether older or

much younger than I, who did not immediately recognize Hellmut's name and call to mind his work on *Wilhelm Meister*. And also, who did not tell me how lucky I was to be his colleague.

This last, however, was something I already knew for myself. To have colleagues who share work with one another, who will read colleagues' work, who teach undergraduate and graduate students all with profound commitment to rigor is the greatest pleasure of being in this department, and Hellmut has been for me at the center of that culture in Germanics. What good fortune for all of us to have had such a colleague and teacher!

—Professor Jane Brown



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