

Wat's In-Sight

News from

and the



Germanic and Slavic Studies
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

WATERLOO CENTRE FOR
Germanstudies



Dear readers,

On behalf of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies and the Waterloo Centre for German Studies, I wish you a happy and healthy 2012! Behind us lie an eventful term and many opportunities to learn, teach, and exchange ideas. We celebrated the Department's 50th anniversary with a day-long event that brought together GSS students, professors, and alumni. And what better way to begin the new year than with the arrival of Prof. John H. Smith, our first Diefenbaker Chair?

Enjoy the 5th edition of our joint newsletter!

Myriam Léger, editor

Highlights

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GSS In-Sight



Welcome, Professor John H. Smith!

A few days ago, Dr. John H. Smith arrived at the University of Waterloo to take up the Diefenbaker Chair in German Literary Studies. Its mandate is to stimulate interest in matters German on local, national, and international levels through public intellectual activism and educational innovation. Read about his research and teaching interests, his ideas about the mandate of his position, and his personal interests.

In what way do you find the mandate of the Diefenbaker Chair significant?

I consider my role as Diefenbaker Chair to be a stimulator of dialogues. I think I can make the case—and believe me, I intend to—that the German intellectual tradition allows us to think about dialogue in special ways. I want to spread both that message and the practice of engaging people in dialogue. I would envision conferences on topics like Germany, Europe, and Islam, or what is dialectical thinking today? (in honour of the coming 200th anniversary of the publication of Hegel's *Logik*). I hope that together with the Waterloo Centre for German

Studies we will sponsor writers and public figures to speak *with* (not *at*) both the academic and wider communities. I'm looking forward to working with colleagues and students at UW, in the greater region, across Canada, and beyond the borders.

Which aspect of your research on German philosophy and culture fascinates you the most?

Historically, I'm drawn to the 1790s, what must be the greatest decade in terms of game-changing creativity: Mozart is still alive at the beginning; Kant publishes his third *Critique* and important work on religion; Fichte comes on the scene; Goethe and Schiller begin their friendship; Beethoven, Hegel, Schelling, Hölderlin, and the young Romantics are all coming of age. Absolutely amazing. Conceptually, I'm drawn to the complexities of dialectical thinking. It is rooted in the principle of dialogue: real knowledge and truth emerge out of exchanges and human interactions that can't be mapped out in advance, or determined by a strict methodology, and that necessarily involve moments of negation (where the partners realize they must change their minds on a previous view and open up to something different).

Which role do you think the teaching of philosophy plays with regard to the teaching of literature and linguistics?

Following on what I just said about dialectics, I'd say that my teaching is informed by my firm belief in dialogical interaction—and that my interest in dialectics grows out of my love of the

unpredictability of the classroom experience. Talking with students about literary texts is one of the best ways to pursue *Bildung*, a formative education that opens up new ways of thinking, new senses of oneself and one's world. Talking about texts in a foreign language, and learning to speak a foreign language (as I did when I began German in college), just makes the dialogue all the richer and more exciting. Learning a foreign language at the college level involves more than adding a tool to a "skill set." It means coming to understand more about how language acquisition and language itself *work*. That's why linguistics in foreign language departments is important: it fosters self-reflection on language, allows students to enter a "dialogue" with their own language, so to speak.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I'm an addict. I'm a distance runner (Berlin is my favourite city in general and my favourite marathon race) and a big swimmer. If I can't exercise, I get withdrawal symptoms. But it's at least a healthy addiction.

Interview by Myriam Léger

GSS In-Sight

In June 2011, **Mareike Müller** successfully defended her dissertation entitled *Learners' Identity Negotiations and Beliefs about Pronunciation in Study Abroad Contexts*. Congratulations!



Her dissertation explores learner beliefs about pronunciation and their interaction with identity negotiations in a study-abroad context and examines five case studies of Canadian learners of German. The results of her study indicate that unidirectional cause-and-effect relationships cannot be drawn between learners' beliefs about pronunciation and their abilities to approach their roles as intercultural speakers in sojourn environments. Instead, her study underlines the importance of illuminating individual learning experiences in their idiosyncrasies and complexities, which may lead to a stronger consideration of learners' subjective stances in both research and teaching practice.

Dr. Mareike Müller is currently Clinical Assistant Professor and Director of the German Basic Language Program in the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

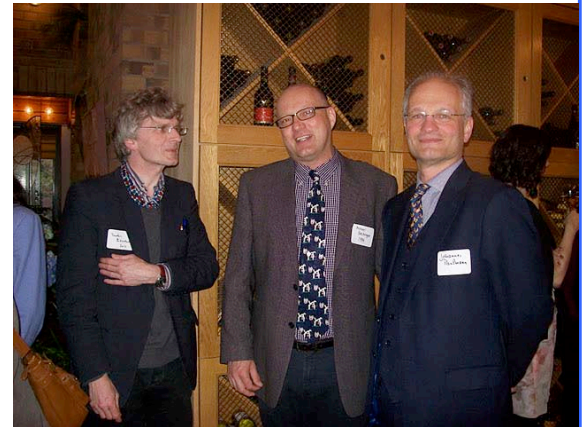
Myriam Léger

Happy Birthday, GSS!

As the University of Waterloo is approaching its 60th anniversary, the department of Germanic and Slavic Studies had a milestone of their own to commemorate this year: its 50th anniversary. On April 28th the department held a day-long event to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and history of Germanic and Slavic Studies, one of the oldest departments at the University of Waterloo. Organized by Dr. David John, the event joined students and professors with alumni spanning the fifty-year history of GSS.

A colloquium started the day with students and faculty, some coming from the University of Mannheim, presenting papers and research, demonstrating the academic strength of the members Germanic and Slavic Studies.

Concurrently held throughout the day were events designed to allow alumni and past professors to see how much the department and the University of Waterloo has changed over the years. Walking tours of campus and a large poster display of our history highlighted the morning and afternoon of the celebration. Continuing into the evening, the primary focus of the day began with a grand celebration at the University Club. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks, catching up with old friends, and a grand slideshow depicting the first fifty years of Germanic and Slavic Studies highlighted the evening. It was wonderful to see all of the people who have made the department what it is today and we thank everyone who was a part of this special celebration.



Dr. Justus Fetscher, Dr. Michael Boehringer, and Dr. Johannes Paulmann.

Kyle W. Scholz

Oktoberfest ist wunderbar!

On October 15th, Dr. James Skidmore, Chair of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies, shared his 'Oktoberfest Past and Present' presentation regarding the origins and cultural development of this world-renowned German tradition to the students of the German Language School Concordia. Students from kindergarten to grade five experienced a collage of photos from the early beginnings of town gatherings and horse racing to the modern day celebrations found both in Munich, Germany and Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. Thanks to Dr. Skidmore's insightful commentary students left with an enriched understanding and appreciation of this beloved German tradition. Vielen Dank!

Veronica Naas (OCT, Teacher at the German Language School Concordia)



GSS In-Sight



9th Annual Conference of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies

This year, the Annual Conference of the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies fell on a special day: the celebration of our Department's 50th anniversary. True to its theme "Intercultural Encounters," the conference was an excellent cross-section of the varied and exciting research taking place in our department and beyond. Presenters and moderators ranged from current Master's and PhD students to current and former professors of our department, as well as special guest speakers from the Universität Mannheim. Similarly, the paper topics encompassed history, literature, film, and applied linguistics, making for a diverse and stimulating day.

Following opening remarks, two special guests from Mannheim, Dr. Justus Fetscher, Chair of Germanistik, and Dr. Johannes Paulmann, Dean of International Programs, spoke on images, discourses and myths of cultural transposition and on the history of German social policy respectively. Both were instrumental in the development and implementation of the new Joint Master's Program between the University of Waterloo and the Universität Mannheim and we were honoured to welcome them on this special occasion.

After a short coffee break, professor emeritus Dr. Robert Karpiak and Dr. Zina Gimpelevich shed light on intercultural encounters between Russia and Germany. While Dr. Karpiak's focus was on the baroque era and representations of Muscovy in Johann Mattheson's opera "Boris Goudenow", Dr. Zina Gimpelevich investigated contemporary fiction and reflected on a new perspective on Hitler and Stalin in Timothy Snyder's book "Bloodlands."

The lunch break in the foyer of the Modern Languages building gave all conference attendants a chance to take a look at the poster display of the history of the Germanic & Slavic Studies Department at Waterloo before splitting into a session on theatre and a session on Applied Linguistics and Second Language Learning. The first session included presentations by professor emeritus, Dr. Alexander Zweers on Tolstoy, as well as German PhD candidate Viktoriya Melnykevych on Goethe's "Faust." The second session included presentations by PhD candidates Kyle Scholz on foreign language learning anxiety and Christine Kampen Robinson on narrative identity construction in elementary school language learners.

The conference was rounded out by a last joint session, which included presentations by three PhD candidates that spanned in time from the Middle Ages to the present. Jujian Xiong presented on a reinterpretation of the quest of Erec by Hartman von Aue, Allison Cattell on animal representations in Kafka's short stories, and Tanja Scherer on the Turkish-German identity in film and literature.

The conference planning committee, consisting of Jujian Xiong, Christine Kampen Robinson and David G. John, would like to thank everyone who participated in making this year's conference engaging, relevant, and a huge success. It was fitting to have an event filled with such a variety of interesting scholarship fall on the day that our department celebrated its 50th anniversary. It truly was a day of intercultural encounters.

Christine Kampen Robinson

Joint In-Sight

On the interactional import of self-repair in the courtroom

Can truth and credibility be shaped in the courtroom? In the past, linguists have used Conversational Analysis to study interactional practices in the courtroom: lexical choices, whose turn it is to speak, how sequences are organized. Now, Professor Susan Ehrlich and her PhD candidate Tanya Romaniuk have turned to the phenomenon of self-repair in the courtroom, instances where witnesses or lawyers correct their own words in their testimony or cross-examination. The researchers presented their findings to an interested audience at the University of Waterloo. They showed how through this feature witnesses position themselves in ways that “enhance their credibility as careful and reliable observers”. Lawyers use self-repairs to reformat the form of their questions “in ways that conform to a constraint on leading questions in direct examination.” Based on trial data from an American rape trial the researchers have analyzed more than eight hours of audio-recorded testimonies. Professor Ehrlich and Tanya Romaniuk show that indeed, by reformatting, aborting, replacing or inserting information both witnesses and lawyers used self-repair to change their utterances in a way that supported their version of events. Furthermore, they found that the kind of self-repair used was determined and shaped by the constraints of the courtroom setting.

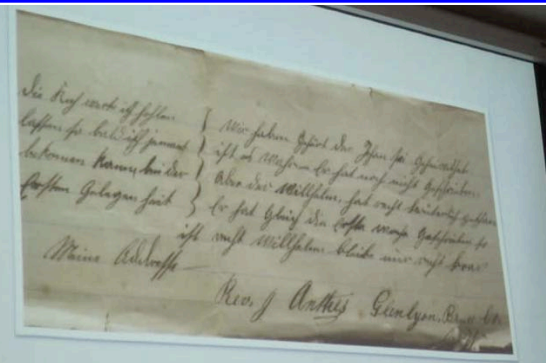
Following this presentation, the audience showed a keen interest in the findings and engaged the researchers in a lively discussion. Many stayed to join the guest speakers for their next presentation in Professor Grit Liebscher’s Conversation Analysis graduate class GER 613 on conversational analysis in the public domain of political speech.

Gerlinde Weimer-Stuckmann

Affen, Wölfe und Tanzbären: Tiermetaphorik in Thomas Manns frühen Erzählungen

On October 25, Dr. Regine Zeller from Universität Mannheim ended her 8-week stay in the Department as visiting professor with a lecture about animal metaphors in Thomas Mann’s stories. Inspired by a graduate course she taught during her stay, Dr. Zeller’s presentation discussed the use of animal metaphors for the purpose of establishing power relations and hierarchies between the stories’ characters. In her insightful analyses of Mann’s “Der Weg zum Friedhof”, “Wälsungenblut”, and “Luischen”, Dr. Zeller also explored the role and power of the narrator whose sympathizing or merciless stance towards the animal-like characters and its implied moral judgment should not remain unquestioned by the reader.

Myriam Léger



“Die Kuh werde ich hohlen lassen...”

The Anthes Papers: From Manuscript to Ontario’s German Legacy

In February 2009, a special letter collection totalling 78 pages written during 1867 - 1872 by Jacob Anthes was discovered in Kitchener and Waterloo. This reinforces the deep historical connection between Kitchener and Waterloo and its German heritage.

On September 29th, the University of Waterloo had the honour and privilege to welcome scholar and freelance translator Dr. Suzanne Thorn from Queen’s University who presented her work to a large audience. She explained and described her challenges with the form of the letters. This occurred due to the mixed systems of the old German Scripts and Roman Lettering while also borrowing English words, said Thorn. Furthermore, Thorn explored the content of Jacob Anthes’ letters within her work, which provides the audience with an inside to the daily life of a hard-working German evangelical preacher without the influence of technology and banks.

Suzanne Thorns’ efforts allowed the second presenter Dr. Georg Hayes, history professor at the University of Waterloo, to place Jacob Anthes’ importance within German-Ontarian History. Thorns’ research opens up new avenues on discovering similar German historical heritage in Canada as a whole.

Jelena Srdjenovic

In-Sight Centre

Immigration to Canada – an Austrian Perspective

On September 16, 2011 Dr. Andrea Strutz from the University of Graz provided an in-depth look into her research on migration from Austria to Canada from 1938-1970. Shedding light on past Canadian immigration policies from an Austrian perspective, Dr. Strutz highlighted the characteristics of Jewish and non-Jewish Holocaust survivors, who came to Canada via displaced person camps – mainly to Ontario and Quebec, and the state-sponsored labour migration of the forties and early fifties. Most interesting were her findings on state-controlled migration of middle-aged women with nursing background, who were difficult to place in the struggling Austrian post-war labour market. Unemployed men with skills in farming, construction and mining were also coerced to move to Canada. Due to major investments into Canadian infrastructure and building projects, e.g. the construction of the Trans-Canada Highway, Canada suffered from a shortage of skilled workers. Under this labour programme immigrants were directed to communities where their skills were needed. Dr. Strutz's research methodology primarily draws on two sources: personal interviews with immigrants and findings from Austrian and Canadian state archives. Often the official data is insufficient for research purposes. Canadian documents, for example, do not indicate the exact place of migrants' origins. Here, 'oral history' can fill gaps. With diverting insights into the technical, ethical and social implications that apply when 'oral history' is collected, as well as into its academic value and analysis, Dr. Strutz intrigued university students, faculty, and community members alike.

This event was organized by the Department of History, co-sponsored by the Centre for German Studies and the Department of Jewish Studies.

Susanne Kallweit



Jacob-and-Wilhelm-Grimm Lecture 2011:

Citizenship in Germany: From Mono-Cultural to Multi- Cultural Society

On November 10, the Waterloo Centre for German Studies proudly welcomed Dr. Christiane Lemke, Max Weber Chair in German and European Politics at New York University, Professor of Political Science at the Leibniz University of Hannover, and Co-Director of the Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence, to present the second annual Jakob-and-Wilhelm-Grimm Lecture. Addressing a large audience of students, professor, and community members, Dr. Lemke shared interesting insights into Germany's struggle to cope with its status as immigration country. For her analysis, she compared Germany to other immigration countries, such as France or the UK, and also examined Germany's internal development from the Social Democratic-Green government under former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic-Liberal coalition. Dr. Lemke also addressed some recent issues in the area of immigration jurisprudence in Germany. After the lecture, the audience had the opportunity to question Dr. Lemke not only on the lecture's topics but also on current issues like the Euro-Crisis.

Anton Baranov

Wat's Upcoming

Dream of the Other Europe: Rethinking Germanistik through the Balkans

Saturday February 4th, 2012

Sponsored by the Waterloo Centre for German Studies and Croatian Studies at the University of Waterloo, this conference examines how Germananophone writers from the Balkan countries contribute to recent discussions of migration, displacement, impermanence, and what Azade Seyhan calls the “geographies of memory.” The invited speakers will investigate how this new body of writing attempts to come to terms with the history of South-Eastern Europe in the 20th century, especially post-1989 development, and how it enters into dialog with the problem of historical and national amnesia.

This conference will be inaugurated by a reading (in Croatian, German and English) by the Swiss-Croatian poet, Dragica Rajčić, the evening of Friday, February 3rd at 7pm. This special event will be held at the home of Professor Alice Kuzniar, followed by a wine-and-cheese reception sponsored by the Swiss Consulate.

A light breakfast and lunch will be provided on the day of the conference.

Please register

For further information please contact: Alice Kuzniar akuzniar@uwaterloo.ca.

On February 27th from 3pm to 5pm, we will welcome **Dr. Paola Mayer** from the University of Guelph. Her talk is entitled “**What do Beethoven and the Sandmann Have in Common? Exploring Hoffmann’s Aesthetic of Terror.**” The location of the talk is Modern Languages (ML) 245.

Contact information

Katja Czarnecki katja.czarnecki@uwaterloo.ca

Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies

Waterloo Centre for German Studies

200 University Avenue West

Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1

Canada

Editor Myriam Léger mmfleisc@uwaterloo.ca

Contributors: Anton Baranov, Susanne

Kallweit, Christine Kampen Robinson,

Elisabeth Kopp, Myriam Léger, Veronica

Naas, Kyle Scholz, Jelena Srdjenovic, Gerlinde

Weimer-Stuckmann