

# German Studies

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## Message from the Chairs



Hiram Maxim, Peter Höyng

We in German Studies at Emory are happy to bring you our eighth annual departmental newsletter. The 2013–2014 academic year was another busy one for the department. Perhaps most noteworthy is the award for best published article on foreign language teaching techniques from the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages that the faculty received for its jointly written article on the department's recently revised curriculum. This award marks the second time in three years that a national organization has recognized the department for its outstanding work in foreign language education. In addition to its jointly written article, the faculty has maintained an active research agenda that includes 8 published articles and 12 conference presentations.

This past year was also a successful one for our students. Recently graduated German studies major Abby Weisberger is currently serving as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Germany, marking the eighth year in a row that German majors have received this prestigious award. In a case of a student coming full circle, former German studies major and Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Abby Kahn returned to the department this past

year as an instructor of first-year German. The department also is excited to report that this past year a record number of students declared a German Studies major or minor, seven of whom were selected to participate in the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany Internship Program last summer.

Once again the department was fortunate to host a Fulbright Teaching Assistant. A native of Graz, Austria, Nina Schumann taught the one-credit conversation courses and lived in the German House, where she organized a range of exciting extracurricular events. Assisting her, as well as the rest of the faculty and the students, was the indispensable Terez Whatley-White, who completed his first full year as lead staff person in the department.

Beyond these individual contributions, the department also hosted various programs and events, which are described in more detail in the following pages: the 41st consecutive summer program in Vienna; a series of guest lectures by scholars, authors, and professionals; and the revival of the German Studies Roundtable.

In closing, we encourage you to read more about the program in the following pages, visit our website for additional information, contact us with any questions or news, or, best of all, stop by the department to visit with us. Thank you for your continued support of the department.

*Hiram Maxim, Professor and Chairperson, 2013–2014*

*Peter Höyng, Associate Professor and Interim Chairperson, 2014–2015*

Newsletter of  
the Department  
of German Studies  
at Emory University

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

# Faculty News



**Nick Block** is in his second year of a three-year post-doctoral position at the rank of visiting assistant professor. He is working on a project titled *The Jewish Gaze: German and Eastern European Jews in Front of the Mirror*,

which details the transnational influences on the half century between the 1880s and 1930s, when the mass westward migration of Eastern European Jews radically reconfigured the way in which Western and Eastern Jews constructed their Jewish sense of self. The American Association for Teachers of German and *The German Quarterly* awarded part of the forthcoming manuscript with the Best Graduate Student Paper Award. The essay, "Ex Libris and Exchange: Immigrant Interventions in the German-Jewish Renaissance," was published in *The German Quarterly* in August 2013. Block has other journal articles accepted for publication in the *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* and in *Nexus: Essays in German Jewish Studies*. In fall semester 2013 he taught an advanced German-language course on Race, Religion, and Citizenship in Germany, which engaged students in his research. He also advised Abby Weisberger on her honors thesis in German studies.



**Peter Höyng** enjoyed a sabbatical year after completing his second term as department chair. While he developed a new course on the history of the vener-

able *Burgtheater* for the Vienna Study Abroad Program that he once again co-directed, the two-semester retreat from teaching and administrative duties allowed him to complete five essays, all showing how his research interests grow out from one another, building an ever-growing and intertwined body of text. Whereas his ongoing project on Beethoven's interest in literature dabbled on the one hand with the composer's devilish sting of Goethe's "Flohlied" from *Faust I*, it led, on the other hand, to a closer look at the life of Eulogius Schneider, who played a crucial role with the young Beethoven by arguing for the ethics of reading literature. Höyng stayed within the long 18th century when he interpreted Goethe's most classical play, *Iphigenia*, by arguing that the author scarified

the bloodiness of victimhood, and therefore negates the very genre for which she stands, the tragedy. Moving forward 200 years but returning to Austria, Höyng wrote two essays that dealt with the ever-present Austrian writer Thomas Bernhard: one dealing with his critical account of the Salzburg Festival in *Der Ignorant und der Wahnsinnige* and another by looking at his last novel, *Auslöschung* (Extinction, 1987), in analyzing the funeral of Otto Habsburg in July 2011, the very last heir of the Habsburg dynasty.



**Marianne Lancaster** coordinated and supervised the five first-year German sections and organized the peer tutors for these classes. She also served as faculty liaison to the German House and worked closely with the Ful-

bright Teaching Assistant living in the house. She represented the department at the State German Convention, making contact with high school students of German in Georgia, and she served once again as the departmental representative on the Executive Committee of the Emory College Language Center. In cooperation with the Goethe Center Chicago, she offered the intense examination for the certificate *German for the Profession* for the Southeast at Emory and tested students in April. Along with her colleagues, she received the Freeman Award for a jointly written article in *Die Unterrichtspraxis* that appeared in 2013. This past summer she directed the second half of the Vienna Summer Study Abroad program and taught for the first time the course on immigration and integration in contemporary Austria.



**Hiram Maxim** completed a busy year as both chairperson of the German Studies department and director of the Emory College Language Center. Within the department he continued his multiyear investigation into second-language

writing development within the department's curriculum and presented the first set of results from this study at the annual meeting of the American Association of Applied Linguistics. An article detailing the curriculum,

which was written jointly by German Studies faculty, was awarded the 2014 Stephen Freeman Award by the Northeast Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages as the best published article on foreign language teaching. He also has an article forthcoming on the collaboration between linguistics and literary studies faculty that resulted from the curricular reform. In his role within the Language Center, he has an article in press on the role of language centers in facilitating useful assessment practices across campus. During the 2013–2014 year he also served on Emory University's Commission on the Liberal Arts as co-chair of the subcommittee on innovation. He will be on sabbatical during the 2014–2015 academic year.



**Caroline Schaumann** presented papers at the Rachel Carson Center in Munich and the German Studies Organization Annual Meeting in Denver as part of the Environmental Studies Network funded by the Alexander

von Humboldt Foundation. Her interest in environmental humanities sparked several publications: a co-edited special volume of *Colloquia Germanica* on "Dirty Nature," which appeared in spring 2014; an article, "The Return of the *Bergfilm*: *Nordwand* (2008) and *Nanga Parbat* (2010), which is forthcoming in the *German Quarterly* (2014); an article on pure and dirty nature in texts by Luis Trenker, Heinrich Harrer, and Hans Ertl forthcoming in *Literatur für Leser*; and a co-written article on human and non-human agencies in the Anthropocene that is currently under review. She continued to work on her monograph on the cultural history of mountaineering during her research leave in fall 2014, also funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. In addition, together with her colleague Heather Sullivan (Trinity University), Schaumann embarked on another book project on German Ecocriticism, a co-edited volume that is to provide ecocritical models for German studies and an introduction to environmental issues in German literature and film for a broader audience. Addressing the growing need for environmental awareness in an international humanities curriculum, the book is one of the first to complement ecocritical analyses emerging from North American and British studies with a specifically German studies perspective.



**Miriam Udel** launched her second scholarly project, a study of Yiddish children's literature, during a leave last spring. Concluding her term as a translation fellow at the National Yiddish Book Center, she complet-

ed translations of about 20 children's stories and poems. Two pieces were published in *Pakn Treger*, and one of these formed the basis for an exploration of how secular Jewish writers used the motif of traditional Sabbath observance in writing for children. She was invited to present on this material at Columbia University in March. A resulting article, "The Second Soul of the People: Secular Sabbatism in Yiddish Children's Literature," has been accepted by *Jewish Social Studies*.

During her leave, she completed her first book, *Never Better!: The Modern Jewish Picaresque*, which will be published by the University of Michigan Press. In fall 2013 Udel taught a new version of her freshman seminar on Yiddish modernism and anti-modernism as well as a Yiddish culture course on Parents, Children, and Generational Change.

## Vienna 2014

Perhaps it does not come as a surprise that our venerable Vienna Summer Program, in its 41st year, was marked by continuity. Yet some changes and welcoming aspects are noteworthy. To begin with, thanks to the program's outstanding reputation, there was a record number of applications this year. In the end, 23 students—four as recipients of the Max Kade Foundation Scholarship—landed in Austria's vibrant and impressive capital in June. A different kind of novelty was reached when our former student Abby Kahn taught the first-year courses after she completed her MA thesis at the University of Vienna in summer 2013 and after having taught German last year on our home campus. Another first was that a former participant in the program, Clara Scharhag, who now lives and works in Vienna, was host to one of our students. The department is also delighted that the entire curriculum in the Vienna Summer Program now adheres to the goals, structure, and approach of the home curriculum. To this end, Peter Höyng, as one of the co-directors, designed a new course for the third-year level. Taking a cue from Timothy Albrecht's much-liked music class, which is based on attend-



One of the excursions in summer 2014 was the annual trip to the top of the Schneeberg, the tallest mountain in Lower Austria.

ing concerts and opera performances, Höyng taught a class on the renowned *Burgtheater*—founded in the same year as the Declaration of Independence—which focused on reading, discussing, and seeing productions at one of Europe's largest theater stages. Senior Lecturer Marianne Lancaster, who co-directed the program during the second semester, also taught a new course,

adapting last year's newly developed third-year class by Hiram Maxim on the topic of immigration and integration. The course included a visit to the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and a discussion with the author Melih Gördesli about his latest book on an ethnically diverse Vienna.

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



# Yiddish at Emory



Yiddish students enjoy a children's story by Yankev Fichmann with Professor Udel.

Yiddish language studies were on hiatus at Emory during 2013–2014 due to Professor Miriam Udel's research leave in the spring. However, in the fall 2013 semester several new students were introduced to Yiddish modernism and anti-modernism by studying the fiction of Sholem Aleichem and Isaac Bashevis Singer in a first-year seminar. The Yiddish culture course during the same term focusing on Parents, Children, and Generational Change boasted an enrollment of almost 40—a record for Yiddish at Emory. Highlights of the semester included a Skype interview with the novelist Myla Goldberg (*Bee Season*) as well as a final session during which students' creative projects were presented. These included works of fiction, drama, visual arts, and even a cooking demonstration (see photo).

This year, language courses have resumed with gusto. In fact, this is the first year that Yiddish is being offered at Emory on two levels. Intermediate students are reading stories and poetry that Udel has selected from among the research materials for a new project on Yiddish children's literature.

Approximately 30 students are also enrolled in a Piedmont Project course designed to foster teaching and learning about sustainability: *Nature and the Jewish Imagination*.

## Yiddish in the German Studies

### Department? Yo! Ja!

In the spring of 2015 Professor Nick Block will be offering a one-credit course, Yiddish Language and Culture for German Speakers. This will introduce students to the linguistic similarities of German and Yiddish as two English cognate languages. Students who have completed two years of German study can rapidly learn Yiddish, as the biggest challenge they face is simply learning the Hebrew alphabet. Beyond linguistics, this course also teaches students about the cultural contacts between German and Yiddish through reading works by Sholem Aleichem and Franz Kafka.

## Yiddish beyond Emory

During summer 2014, Miriam Udel taught a compressed introduction to modern Yiddish literature for the Steiner Fellows at the National Yiddish Book



A cooking demonstration on American Jewish food in Miriam Udel's Yiddish Culture class

Center. Among her students was Abby Weisberger, one of our majors. In January 2015 Udel will teach a three-session mini course on her research topic of children's literature at the YIVO Institute in New York.

# An Intellectual Feast

## Departmental Events throughout the Year

In addition to the teaching and research that took place during the 2013–2014 academic year, the department also was home to several events that drew audiences from across campus. In the first week of the fall semester the department welcomed author Anant Kumar to campus for a reading from his recent work as well as a visit to Nick Block's upper-level class, "Race, Religion, and Citizenship."

Later in the semester, Ben Brumfield, a member of the department's Advisory Council and Newsdesk Editor at CNN.com, captivated a large audience of students, faculty, and community members with his autobiographical account of life as a reporter in the US and Germany over the last 25 years. Another highlight of the fall semester was the revival of the German Studies Roundtable after a three-year dormancy. The department's own Miriam Udel presented her ongoing research into Joseph Roth's novel *Hotel Savoy*, and in the spring Peter Höyng presented on his examination of Eulogius Schneider and the notion of a radical Enlightenment.

Also in the spring semester the department was delighted to welcome Dr. Sonja Niederacher to campus to present her work as a provenance researcher for the Leopold Museum in Vienna, Austria. She is well-known to many German Studies faculty and students because she taught in the Vienna Summer Program for several years before moving full time to her position at the Leopold Museum. The spring semester also marked the inauguration of the Maximilian Aue Memorial Lecture to commemorate the contributions of the late faculty member to the department. Katherine Arens from the University of Texas–Austin, a longtime colleague of Dr. Aue in the Austrian Studies Association, delivered the inaugural lecture on the Kasperl figure as a reflection of changing Austrian identity. One final event in the spring was a guest lecture by Dr. Karen Körber from the Jewish Museum in Berlin on recent Russian Jewish immigration to Germany and its effect on German Jewry.

Anant Kumar



Ben Brumfield



Sonja  
Niederacher

# Student and Alumni News

**Jeanette Juran 14C** is working at an elementary school in Boston as a math tutor for fourth grade through a company called Blueprint Schools Network.

**Matt Niebes 14C** is in his first year in the master's program in American studies at the University of Heidelberg, Germany.

**Abby Weisberger 14C** received highest honors for her thesis written under the direction of Professor Nick Block, "Jewish Chronotopes: Sites of Memory in the Autobiographies of Gershom Scholem and Walter Benjamin." She also was selected as a Fellow by the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry for the 2013–2014 academic year. This past summer she attended the summer program at the Amherst Yiddish Book Center and is currently in Offenbach, Germany, as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant. Following her year in Germany, she plans to return to the US and enroll in a PhD program in German studies.

**Robert Cooper 13C** was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Nuremberg, Germany, in 2013–2014 and is now a first year master's student at Berklee College of Music's program in Valencia, Spain.

**Sarah Corrigan 13C** is a second-year student at the Candler School of Theology, pursuing a master's of divinity.

**Ari Frankel 13C** completed his first year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Krems, Austria, and will stay in Austria for a second year as a teaching assistant in Innsbruck.

**Jeff Guo 13C** is a second-year doctoral student in statistics at University of California–San Diego.

**David Trac 13C** is in his second year as an MD/PhD student at the Emory School of Medicine.

**Lucia Lorenz 12C** is in her second year of law school at Northwestern University.

**Callie Jordan 12B** has finished her two years as a Fulbright Teaching Assistant in Vienna and is currently pursuing a master of science in marketing management at the Università Bocconi in Milan, which will complete her double degree with the Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien.

**Caroline Maness 11C** is in her second year of study at Emory School of Medicine.

**Clara Scharhag 11N** is a teacher's assistant at the Danube International School in Vienna, Austria. A former participant of the Vienna Study Abroad Program, she served as a host this past summer and was recently married.

**Abby Kahn 10C** was an instructor of German this past year in the Department of German Studies and is now in her first year as a PhD candidate in applied linguistics at Penn State.

**Michael Cover 09C** is in his second year of an emergency medicine residency and recently married in early September.

**Sarah Richards 09C** received her MA in film studies from Emory and served as the program assistant to the Emory in Vienna Summer Program for the second year in a row. She is currently an instructor of German in the German Studies department.

**Jessica Cohen 09B** is a CPA and financial adviser at Merrill Lynch in Las Vegas. She teamed up with her father in his practice at Merrill Lynch after spending almost four years as a CPA at Ernst & Young.

## Former Fulbright Teaching Assistant News

**Max Trapp** (2010–2011) will complete his thesis by early October, and then will start his traineeship or *Referendariat* as a teacher in a school in Baden-Württemberg in January.

**Michael Kramer** (2011–2012) completed his MA thesis in August and also will start his *Referendariat* at a gymnasium in Baden-Württemberg in January. Currently he is working as a teaching assistant and saxophone teacher at the University of Stuttgart.

**Belona Berchtaler** (2012–2013) is starting her second year at the University College London as a German OeAD *Lektorin* after joining the department for a second year with the Summer Study Abroad Program in Vienna.

## Join us

German Studies @ Emory University



## German Studies

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# Updates

## On our Award-Winning Curriculum

The reform of the undergraduate curriculum continues to engage the faculty while also garnering national attention. After being cited as one of the reasons for the department's selection as a **Center of Excellence** by the American Association of Teachers of German in 2012, the curriculum was the focal point of the article jointly written by the German Studies faculty that received the **2014 Stephen Freeman Award** by the Northeast Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages as the best published article on foreign language teaching. A link to the article can be found on the department's homepage.

From a research perspective, the curriculum has now been in place long enough that student performances can begin to be analyzed to ascertain the type and degree of language learning that is taking place within the curriculum. To that end, students' final writing performances at the end of each of the curricular levels were collected in April 2012, 2013, and 2014 and are being analyzed by an undergraduate research team led by Professor Hiram Maxim.

The first results of this research were presented by student researchers at the Emory Undergraduate Research Symposium as well as by Hiram Maxim at an international conference on applied linguistics, and point to both the impressive gains that students make over the course of the four-year curriculum but also to specific areas that merit further investigation. An additional curriculum-based undertaking involves the department-wide development of a series of new 400-level courses that reflect both the current research interests of the faculty and the learning goals of the most advanced curricular level. One final curricular project is the gradual implementation of an electronic portfolio as an option for German Studies majors and minors to document and showcase their progress and achievements within the curriculum.

## On the "AmCham" Internships

For the fifth year in a row the department was able to offer internships to qualified undergraduates through the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany. Growing each year in popularity, the "AmCham" Internship Program now is made available to 13 colleges and universities in the Southeast. This past summer seven German majors and minors from Emory were selected to participate in the program and were offered paid, three-month internships in a range of industries such as consulting, electronics, insurance, accounting, hospitality services, and biotechnology. In addition to the internship, the American Chamber of Commerce invited the participants to weekend excursions to Berlin and Munich. The German Studies department is extremely grateful for the efforts of the Advisory Council, particularly the work of Council President Christoph Rückel, to make this wonderful opportunity available to Emory undergraduates. This year the program also was aided by the addition of Violetta Noor as the new coordinator of the Internship Program. She has her office in the German Studies department but works with all 13 participating universities and the AmCham office in Frankfurt to coordinate the program.



US-German Internship Program orientation

## On our Efforts toward Sustainability

Organized by Professor Hiram Maxim and our administrator, Terez Whatley-White, a team of Modern Language Building faculty and staff received an award from the Sustainability Incentives Fund in October 2013 to start compost-



Our Fulbright TA Nina Schumann in action at the new composting bin

ing in the Modern Language Building. The goal is to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill produced in our building and to convert the Modern Language Building into a zero-waste building. With the help of Emory Recycles, we placed receptacles in areas where compostable waste is commonly accumulated. Signage also was updated and placed by Emory Recycles. In conjunction with this effort, several faculty members incorporated the topic of sustainability in their classes.



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- German Studies Scholarly Enrichment Fund
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