The current year is another exciting one for the Department of German and Scandinavian at the U of O. Here are some highlights:

**New Faculty**
We have another excellent new faculty member this year, Dr. Amanda Doxtater, a full time Instructor of Swedish, teaching language, literature, and culture, especially film. She comes to us directly from the Ph.D. program in Scandinavian at the University of California, Berkeley, where she defended her dissertation last year on melodrama and the early twentieth century films of Carl Th. Dreyer. In addition to Dr. Doxtater, we have searched for a new Assistant Professor of German, whom we will be hiring to start in the Fall 2013. Sadly, the reason for this hire is that Professor Alexander Mathäs will be entering phased retirement next academic year. Happily, he still plans to teach two courses annually here for several more years!

**Conference**
In addition, in spring quarter 2013 (May 2-3) Professor Mathäs hosted our annual German Studies Conference, which in this case is entitled: “Defining the Animal and the Human.” For this interdisciplinary Conference on a very timely theme, several distinguished scholars from outside the region came and presented their research, alongside several scholars from within the University of Oregon.

**Contributions**
In fundraising, likewise, we have happy news. Emeritus Professor of German Helmut Plant established an endowment for an undergraduate scholarship based on scholarly performance and financial need, and Herbert Merker this fall graciously augmented his previous gift to the Department, so that we will have an even larger scholarship than before in his name, on an annual basis going forward. We are incredibly grateful for each of these spectacularly generous gifts, which help support our German Majors in a crucial way!
Book Publications and Research Grants

While all of our faculty regularly produce research publications, particularly deserving of special mention this year are two new book contracts. Professor Kenneth S. Calhoon’s book, Affecting Grace: Theatre, Subject and the Shakespearean Paradox in German Literature from Lessing to Kleist will be coming out with University of Toronto Press, and Professor Dorothee Ostmeier’s book, Gender - Sex - Liebe in Poetischen Dialogen des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts will be appearing this winter with Aisthesis Verlag. Further, we have no less than three faculty who received grants to do research for one quarter at the Oregon Humanities Center—Gantt Gurley, Michael Stern, and Katharina Loew.

Global Scholars Hall:

Deutsch erleben! New German Language Immersive Community

German is one of five language programs that are sponsoring immersive residential communities in the UO's Global Scholars Hall (GSH), a new, state-of-the-art residence hall on campus. The GSH seeks to promote global citizenship through its language communities (in Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish) and through a wealth of activities, such as the campus United Nations, international virtual summits, and language-specific events. Matthias Vogel and Susan Anderson serve on a committee of UO language faculty staff, led by Marilyn Linton, who helped plan the building's design, created the different immersive language programs, and continue to oversee them. Vogel and Anderson selected the inaugural cohort of ten first-year students to live on the same floor in the GSH and to commit to communicating only in German with each other and with faculty in German. The students have various majors but are all interested in improving their proficiency in German. They also hope to gain knowledge of other languages and cultures by interacting with the Global Scholars residents who are in different programs.

Matthias Vogel is coordinating an exciting set of events this year at the GSH, including a film series, a lecture series, lessons on cooking German food in the GSH.
Prof. Alexander Mathäs will start teaching a reduced course load as of AY 2013-2014 as he (slowly, we hope) starts to retire. The Department also conducted a Search in 2011-2012 to locate the perfect Career Instructor of Swedish to run our Swedish Language Program. Dr. Amanda Doxtater was hired and began teaching in Fall, 2012. Since then, Swedish enrollments and student interest in Swedish has risen quite rapidly.

Professor Alex Mathäs’s German Studies Conference, 2013 titled, “Defining the Human and the Animal”, was a wonderful success! We are all celebrating Professor Ostmeier’s promotion to Full Professor (which begins in September, 2013) and Professor Ken Calhoon’s newly published book, “Affecting Grace: Theater, Subject, and the Shakespearean Paradox in German Literature from Lessing to Kleist” to our Department and Friends. We are also looking forward to the publication of Professor Dorothee Ostmeier’s new book. Thank you all for your contributions to the Department and I’ll ‘see’ you next year!

Barbara Ver West
Office Coordinator
Dept. of German & Scandinavian

The first Deutsch Erleben! cohort in the Global Scholars Hall
Celebrating our undergraduates

Undergraduate Scholarship Recipients

Daniel O’Neil:

“Daniel O’Neil is a senior majoring in both German and Economics. His interest in the language began in high school and, motivated to improve his language skills, declared a double major and studied abroad in Mannheim. He plans to graduate this spring and is interested in pursuing a job that would ideally allow him to utilize both of his majors.”

Kiley Plass:

“Kiley Plass is a senior majoring in German and minoring in Italian with “an intense love for German” that she “can’t explain.” She has been taking literature and culture courses with professors Mathäs, Loew, and Stern – to name just a few – and loves to read anything that she can get her hands on. She plays drums for a band called Mars Water in Eugene and Portland, and her dream is to open an Italian-German-French fusion restaurant in Portland.”

Tawny Phillips:

“Tawny Phillips is a senior majoring in International Studies and German, minoring also in Business. Her professional concentration lies in international relations and diplomacy with Europe as her geographical region of interest. She would like to work abroad at the U.S. embassy in Germany or for an international business on developmental projects, but primarily aims at “living and leading an exciting and happy life.” She has taken on many challenges at the University of Oregon, from teaching kindergarteners Germans last spring to currently working as the campus representative for the U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Office, where she helps to connect student interests in foreign policy to current events. “Studying in Tübingen my freshman year really changed my worldview,” she says, “and I couldn’t imagine living a life that didn’t include traveling and engaging with different cultures.”

Jessica Montgomery:

“Jessica Montgomery is studying abroad this year at the Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen with the help of her scholarship. “Studying abroad gives me an opportunity to not only improve my language ability, but also to be exposed to a different culture.” She enjoys meeting students from all over the world and discussing the differences and similarities in their experiences in their home countries and abroad. “My dream is to research German culture and how Americans perceive German culture. With the help of my DAAD scholarship, I will be doing research this year for my Psychology Honors thesis. By the end of this year I hope to learn more about myself, my culture as well as other cultures. This would not have been possible without the support of the German and Scandinavian Department at the University of Oregon, OUS study abroad as well as the international department here in Tübingen.”

“
**Jacob Barto:**

Jacob Barto has embarked on the journey to write his dissertation after successfully completing his exams in Spring 2012, focusing his work on developing and connecting attitudes toward music and existential philosophies from Romanticism to encounters with Buddhism in the works of Hermann Hesse. In April he presented “Zarathustra’s Eternal Return: Hesse’s Historical Appeal” at the “Spaces of Encounter” conference at the University of Minnesota.

**Alexis Smith:**

During Fall 2012, Alexis Smith presented her Work-in-Progress paper entitled, “Haunted by the Absolute Reality of the Unreal: Adorno’s Phantasmagoria.” She presented “Jakob Grimm: Truth and the Power of Poetic Language” in “The Language of German Romanticism” panel at the NeMLA Convention in Boston at the end of March. Alexis also passed her preliminary exams and will begin work on her dissertation this Spring.

**Rob Mottram:**

Rob Mottram is continuing work on his dissertation on a materialist approach to Novalis’s writings and thought via Nietzsche. The scientific-philosophical notebooks of Novalis have become an inexhaustible well of insight and curiosity, rivaled only by Nietzsche’s notebooks. His current other areas of interest are descensional logic, the problematic of self-dissolution and self-consciousness, and the nature of music in the Romantic.

**Nick Reynolds:**

Nick is currently working on the second part of his dissertation on Rilke’s prose works, addressing Rilke’s Geschichten vom lieben Gott. At the end of March, Nick presented at the “Wo Beginnen die Dinge? The Poetics of the Thing” conference at Cornell University, reading from his first chapter on Rilke’s essay “Ur-geräusch.” He continues to translate the correspondence between Horkheimer and Grossmann in conjunction with Rick Kuhn of the Australian National University. Nick, alongside occasional vigilante work, maintains a commitment to cruising and keeps his ears perked for the subtle vibrations of the universe.

**Eva Hoffmann**

Returning from a summer sojourn in Germany, Eva Hoffmann launched into her second year in the PhD program enthused to continue courses and teaching. In April she attended the annual convention of the American Comparative Literature Association in Toronto, and presented a condensed version of her portfolio paper on Elsa Asenijeff on a panel concerning mothers as “parental guidance.” As the year comes to an end, she is preparing for her exams in the fall and beginning work on her dissertation - another new beginning, exciting just a little bit daunting.
Kierkegaard and German Thought:

Last year’s German Studies Conference availed itself of the potential inherent in a department staffed by scholars specializing in both the German and Scandinavian traditions through exploring a comparative theme, “Kierkegaard and German Thought.” The event was co-sponsored by the Department of German and Scandinavian, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Oregon Humanities Center, the German Studies Committee, and the departments of Comparative Literature and Philosophy. It took place in the Knight Browsing Room on May 10th and 11th and included several distinguished guests and four University of Oregon faculty. The first day’s proceedings featured talks by Gantt Gurley, Charles Scott, Michael Stern, Michele Koch, Daniel Conway, and Marilyn Piety. The second day featured presentations by Leonardo Lisi, Rocio Zambrana, David Kangas, Vanessa Rumble, and Jeffrey Librett.

The idea of the conference emerged from the realization that engagement with the work of the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard promoted a subsequent engagement with the German intellectual tradition in at least two distinctive moments when German thought found itself at a crossroads: the junction where idealism was challenged by more existentially based notions of human existence, and the subsequent moment when ontological conceptions were inflected by an analysis of power relations construed both metaphysically and psychologically. This conference was organized with these two themes in mind. However, there was a pleasant surprise. The presentations both addressed and exceeded the imagined conceptual framework. The attendees heard talks that explicated historical, philosophical, literary, theological concerns that ranged from the Kierkegaard’s engagement with German philosophers and mystics to the love his contemporaries had for Lord Byron to the relationship between power and faith. The range, the quality, and the thought provoking nature of the presentations were truly remarkable.

German Studies Conference: Redefining the Human and the Animal, May 2 and 3, 2013:

During the high point of German idealism from the end of the eighteenth through the first half of the nineteenth century German philosophers and writers imagined the human as a mixture between angel and animal. They emphasized the spiritual qualities of the human over the base instincts of the animal. Such efforts to preserve the reign of the spirit over the body are particularly pronounced in the German context and can be seen as reactions to the materialist and empiricist assumptions of the emerging life sciences. The ideological implications of such attempts to safeguard human sovereignty were the focus of the conference.

The conference explored literary, scientific, and philosophical endeavors at defining and redefining the borders between the human and the animal from the late eighteenth century up to the twentieth century. The conference has found widespread interest across campus and was sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences, the Oregon Humanities Center, the Department of Philosophy, Department of Comparative Literature, the Journal of Comparative Literature, the German Studies Committee, the Department of German and Scandinavian, and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).
**Susan Anderson:**

Susan Anderson taught, among others, a freshman seminar on metaphors of disease in literature and the arts; a large lecture course on love stories in East, West, and united Germany; a senior seminar on representations of the Red Army Faction in literature, art, and film; and a graduate course on reworkings of ancient epics in 20th-century novels. An article on Austrian writer Christoph Ransmayr’s “translation” of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* appeared in the journal *Gegenwartsliteratur*. She presented a paper on Yoko Tawada’s notion of the in-between at the PAML conference in Seattle, co-organized the session “The Monolingual International” for the MLA conference in Boston, and is coordinating the interdisciplinary Healing Arts Research Interest Group on campus.

**Alexander Mathäs:**

Alexander Mathäs is organizing a German Studies conference at the UO on May 2 and 3, 2013. The conference, entitled “Redefining the Human and the Animal,” is connected to his research project on the reception of German neo-humanist legacies. The interdisciplinary conference will host scholars of Philosophy, History of Science, History, Comparative Literature, and German Studies to examine various aspects of the human-animal distinction. His contribution to the conference examines Hermann Hesse’s *Steppenwolf* from a posthumanist point of view. Also connected to this project is an article on “The End of Pathos and of Youthful Innocence” in dramas by Frank Wedekind and Arthur Schnitzler.

**Dorothee Ostmeier:**

Dorothee Ostmeier’s monograph „Poetische Dialoge zu Liebe, Gender und Sex im frühen Zwanzigsten Jahrhundert: Else Lasker-Schüler, Peter Hille und Gottfried Benn, Lou Andreas-Salomé und Rainer Maria Rilke, Bertolt Brecht und Margarete Steffin“ is in production and forthcoming with Aisthesis. She will present further aspects of this work in the context of the Department’s conference „Defining the Human and the Animal“ in May. Her lecture is entitled “The Feminine Beast: Exploitation vs. Liberation in Early 20th Century Literature.” In December 2012 she was invited to present her research on the politics of the Grimms’ fairy tales by the University of Kassel, at a conference in honor of the 200 year anniversary of the first edition of the Grimms’ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. For her new study “Traumatizing and Healing Fictions in Tales of German Romanticism” she has been
awarded the Provost’s Senior Humanist Research Fellowship by the Oregon Humanities Center for 2013-2014.

Martin Klebes

In October Martin Klebes presented a paper at the German Studies Association meeting in Milwaukee titled “Homo Oeconomicus, Outside and In (Broch, Gaddis),” which dealt with the role of economic theory in Hermann Broch’s Die Schlafwandler and William Gaddis’s J R.

Michael Stern:

Last year Stern continued to research and draft his manuscript The Singing Socrates, which constructs a comparative reading of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche’s engagement with Socrates to construe an ethics that considers aesthetic production. He also gave three talks: “Staging the Modern” at Oregon State University, “The I is Material and Motion” at the annual meeting of The American Comparative Literature Association, and “Clouds: The Tyranny of Irony Over Philosophy” at a conference that he organized “Kierkegaard and German Thought.” Stern also was awarded an Oregon Humanities Center Fellowship. He will be in residence there during the Spring of 2013.

Katharina Loew

Katharina Loew grew up in Munich, where she studied Theater Studies, Art History and Psychology. Having received her M.A. there in 1999, she went on teaching German for the Goethe Institute in Warsaw and Berlin before moving to Chicago to pursue a joint Ph.D. in Cinema and Media Studies and Germanic Studies. Katharina focuses on silent film in the context of 19th and 20th theater, literary and cultural studies. She has published on the Schüfftan process, 3D cinema of the 1910s and various German silent films including Faust (1926) and Der Golem wie er in die Welt kam (1920). Her current book project investigates the impact of special effect technologies on German film during the silent era. Katharina is grateful for the warm welcome she has received at the Department of German and Scandinavian and excited to be part of such a vibrant and inspiring community.

Kenneth Calhoon

Kenneth S. Calhoon has published Affecting Grace: Theatre, Subject, and the Shakespearean Paradox in
Introducing...

Amanda Doxtater
Dr. Amanda Doxtater teaches courses on Scandinavian cinema, culture, literature and drama in addition to first and second-year Swedish language courses. She completed a PhD project entitled Pathos, Performance, Volition: Melodrama’s Legacy in the Work of Carl Th. Dreyer. Her research interests include: melodrama theory, performance, Scandinavian Naturalist Theater, issues of gender and representation, intermediality, and existential intersections between popular culture and arthouse cinema in Scandinavia.

Corinne Bayerl
A recipient of the Bourse Chateaubriand in 2008, Corinne studied comparative literature and philosophy in Munich, Paris, and Geneva before coming to the U.S. Working at the intersection of early modern literary and religious studies, her current research focuses on Port-Royal, a hub of French 17th-century dissident thought.

Corinne has published in the field of early modern philosophy, as well as German translations of 20th-century American and Italian poetry.

Jeffrey Librett

Yasmin Staunau
Yasmin has an Oregon teaching license and has over 10 years of teaching experience. Before coming to the U of O she taught German at South Eugene High School, completed various translation projects, and worked as a Certified Master Grader of German standardized tests for Avant Assessment.

Yasmin is especially interested in second language acquisition and the communicative approach to teaching.
In Memoriam:
Peter Gontrum

We announce with great sadness the death of Peter Baer Gontrum, Professor Emeritus of German, who died on May 24, 2013, of pneumonia.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, on February 13, 1932, Peter was the only child of Mildred Baer, a nurse, and Edwin K. Gontrum, a lawyer.

Peter attended Haverford College near Philadelphia where he became interested in German language and literature. Following graduation from Haverford, he went on to receive an MA from Princeton University in German and French literature. During the summer of 1954, aboard a student transport ship headed to Europe, he met his future wife, Margaret Martin Dandy, also of Baltimore, and at that time, a junior at Wellesley College. Soon after marriage in 1956, Peter and Maggie moved to Munich where Peter enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Munich. Peter completed his dissertation on the German/Swiss novelist and poet Hermann Hesse in 1958.

Upon return to the U.S., Peter first joined the faculty at the University of Chicago in 1959 and then in 1961 moved to the University of Oregon. He received several Humboldt grants to study the writers Max Frisch, Friedrich Durrenmatt, and Rainier Maria Rilke and received the University of Oregon’s Ersted Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1969. In 1974, he was selected as a Fulbright Scholar to conduct research in Germany.

During his tenure as Department Head from 1979 to 1984, the Department of German and Russian became the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures. Peter was instrumental in shaping the Department into its current configuration. He was a strong supporter of study-abroad programs and helped establish long-standing student exchanges with the state of Baden-Württemberg and the University of Regensburg, from which our students continue to benefit. Peter was also one of the co-founders of the Western Association for German Studies, which later evolved into the German Studies Association, the most significant professional organization of the discipline.

Although he endured the health challenges of MS in his later years, Peter continued to teach until 1994. Peter was a born teacher; he loved sitting around a seminar table exchanging ideas with his students. He loved his family, listening to the music of the Bach Festival and the Mozart Players, meeting old friends and discovering new ones, immersing himself in Oregon’s streams, cold lakes, and the Eugene YMCA pool. All who met him were left with the feeling of being appreciated and understood. In his last year at Fox Hollow Residential Care, his life was enriched by thoughtful and loving caregivers who could laugh with him and recognize the warmth in one another.

Survivors include his wife, Margaret, two daughters, Catherine Tibbitts and Elsa Gontrum, a son, David Gontrum, and seven grandchildren.

Peter was a kind and erudite human being with a wonderful sense of humor. He has left a lasting impression on his students and colleagues. He will be sorely missed.
Reflecting and Looking forward

This year has been very exciting for the German and Scandinavian Department at the University of Oregon, and we could not do it without the help of all of our supporters, and donors, all of our faculty members, Barbara Ver West and the student workers in the office, Kaisha Gauderman, Joshua Heath and Emma Sackinger. Though some members of our staff are retiring or leaving, this year, the department will continue to thrive.

We bid farewell to our dedicated, long-time instructor of Norwegian, Ben Lode, and the coming year also marks the beginning of Alexander Mathās’ phased retirement. That said, we are excited to be able to welcome Corinne Bayerl, Yasmin Staunau and Amanda Doxtater to our family, and we look forward to seeing them continue to grow here. In the coming autumn we will welcome Sonja Boos to Eugene, and we look forward to getting to know her and the next group of ambitious students who will arrive this September.

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