



# DUKE GERMAN

## FALL 2014

CREATED BY PAUL BOSONETTO

ABOVE: BERLIN WALL WEST CAMPUS PROJECT

TOPICIS: RESEARCH VISTAS, NEW BOOKS

## GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

### Heidi Hart

Heidi is writing a dissertation on 19<sup>th</sup>-century poetry set to the activist music of Hanns Eisler.

Eisler is known for composing the “Solidarity Song” and the East German national anthem. His text-settings reflect changing political pressures in Berlin from the time after the First World War to the Nazi era, which Eisler spent in exile in Hollywood, and from the founding of the German Democratic Republic to Eisler’s own personal and political disillusionment in the early 1960s.

Heidi’s two-way adaptation analysis looks at Eisler’s fragmenting and re-voicing of poems by Heine, Hölderlin, and Goethe, returning to the poems to see how they might be read differently as a result. Her guiding concern is Eisler’s combination of protest with mourning as it reveals postwar masculine



vulnerability and critically reclaims musical forms appropriated under fascism.

While in Berlin on a Duke-Freie Universität exchange fellowship this year, Heidi will continue her writing while rehearsing and singing some of the music featured in her dissertation. In addition to this project, Heidi’s interests include other forms of intermediality, such as film music and contemporary opera.

### Lindsey Brandt

Lindsey Brandt’s dissertation looks at the intersection between scientific discourse and German-language literature of the 1830s and 1840s. In particular, she is exploring how literature understands the relationship between humans and nature during the rise in popularity of empirical science in Germany. Her research focuses primarily on literary texts by Annette von Droste-



Hülshoff, Adalbert Stifter, and Georg Büchner, but it also draws from theories of landscape aesthetics, contemporaneous scientific writing, and history of science scholarship.

### Claire Scott

Claire’s research deals primarily with representations of pregnancy and abortion in post-WWII literature and film. She is interested in how the pregnant female body is figured as both an individual subject and as a member of larger “bodies” (for example the body politic or women as a general category). Furthermore, she is interested in how Feminist discourses on pregnancy and abortion work both with and against contemporaneous discourses on eugenics, genocide, and the Holocaust.



## GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

### Annegret Oehme

Annegret's research interests include medieval and early-modern German and Yiddish literature and cultural transfers within a German-Jewish context. Last year, she published an article on identity in the Yiddish



novel *Paris un Viene*. For her dissertation project, she is researching the adaptations and transformations of *Wigalois*, a text that describes the adventures of an Arthurian knight across different languages (Yiddish and German) as well as across different media (including manuscripts, prints, wall paintings, and comics) from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

### Bethany Bowen-Wefuan

Bethany Bowen-Wefuan is in her fourth year in the CDG graduate program, and is just beginning her dissertation-writing adventures. Her research focuses on Poetic Realism, a period of 19th century German literature. More specifically, she is interested in novels and novellas that include depictions of paintings and sculptures.



### J. Christian Straubhaar

Christian writes of his research, "My doctoral project is a study of visuality and gender in the works of Heinrich Seuse, fourteenth century mystic author and student of Meister Eckhart. Where much of the research on Seuse



indicates his strong reliance on images

and image symbolism in his texts, previous scholars have failed to address the impact of the scientific understanding of vision in Seuse's time and how this fits within the theological framework he develops in his texts, nor how this then affects his concepts of identity and gender. But I demonstrate that his understanding of the fluidity of human gendered identity in pursuit of the divine is dependent on his understanding of the corporeal fluidity of sight organs, including the external eye and the internal mind's eye, the *ymagnatio*."

### Tres M. Lambert

Tres writes, "My research examines the novels of two prominent Austrian modernists, Hermann Broch and Robert Musil against the turbulent backdrop of late Viennese modernism. In the years leading up to the inter-war period, dramatic breakthroughs in the fields of



medicine, psychology, physics, and philosophy--not to mention WWI itself--altered the relationship between the individual and the world around them, giving rise to a classically cited modern ailment of "disorientation." Literature was not exempted from this chaos: uncertainty about the state of the world percolated into a general skepticism about the suitability of language (and therefore literature) to express anything at all.

"My dissertation views the major novelistic works of Broch and Musil as "experiments" that seek to overcome the modernist crisis of experience. I argue that Broch and Musil both strive to recuperate literature as a sort of safe harbour where human experience can and should be taken seriously. I am further interested in using their works as examples to think more generally about the way in which experience and literature interact in German-language modernism more generally. "

## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

### Paige Newhouse

Paige spent the summer in Berlin, researching how German museums present immigration and integration and how this impacts public understanding.

Paige noticed a particularly compelling contrast: "While nationally funded museums present migration and integration as separate from German history and immigrants as distinct from ethnic Germans, district funded and/or nonprofit museums show immigrants as part of the community and a component of society."

"Presentation is everything," Paige says. "Every aspect, every minute detail of the exhibit or museum affects the viewer... the set-up is intentional and deliberate." In order to interpret the theme or the message presented by these museums, historians must closely analyze physical space to consider the ideas and biases presented by the space.

### Nora Gerien-Chen

Nora's research project examines discourses on sex work in Germany, focusing especially on the 2002 Act Regulating the Legal Situation of Prostitutes and the opposition of legal prostitution by the feminist activist journal EMMA.

Nora explains, "My project aims to deconstruct the EMMA's abolitionist campaign through a historical lens that examines the dynamics of sex work discourse in Germany." She argues that the exclusive focus on abolition of prostitution and on human trafficking denies sex workers (migrant or otherwise) agency and protection as laborers.

# UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONTD.

## Nora Gerien-Chen contd.

She concludes, “I used to be an advocate for the Swedish model (criminalize the buying of sex, not the selling) because it acknowledged that the prostitution industry is rife with abuse and aims to eliminate the industry without punishing exploited sex workers. However, under the Swedish Model sex workers are still treated like criminals.... I have come to learn that, first and foremost sex work need to be recognized as labor.... As laborers, sex workers experience a unique denial of social and economic rights that must also be recognized as systematic violence against sex workers.” She is excited to be continuing her research this fall while studying in Berlin.

## Marquese Robinson

As a recipient of the Mapping Multiculturalism grant, Marquese chose to focus on racial multiculturalism in Germany, particularly the experience of black Germans. Marquese describes his motivation for this project, “I set out to put the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel’s words to the test that Germany was indeed a multicultural society.”

Marquese interviewed many professional Afro-Germans, and he found that the development of black consciousness in Germany is not even thirty years old. He found that the most commonly reoccurring themes were feelings of alienation and how various shades of blackness influence these feelings of alienation.

Marquese concluded through extensive research that very different histories, Germany has many parallels with America in terms of race relations.

## Dominique Guillory

Dominique researched German public opinion concerning racism in children’s books.

The project was originally intended to analyze popular children’s books from after the fall of the Berlin wall, which contained racist language or depictions specifically of



character of African descent. Books fulfilling these qualities proved quite difficult to find, so Dominique adjusted her project.

Over the past few years there has been some debate about whether to remove the word “Neger” from a few classic German language children’s books like “Pippi Langstrumpf” and “Die kleine Hexe.” Dominique decided to specifically focus on the word “Neger” in more classic German language children’s books and public opinion about the debate mentioned above.

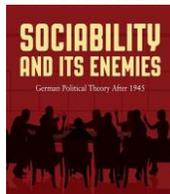
She describes her research: “...I analyzed three articles from the German newspaper “Der Spiegel,” three from “Die Welt” and three from “Die Zeit.” Some of the articles were poorly written, although often still provoked significant response. Some authors put more thought into the article that they wrote. Many of the authors expressed strong emotion towards the subject.”



Based on this small research project, she concluded that there is a strong public preference for keeping the word “Neger” in children’s books.

# NEW BOOKS

JAKOB NORBERG



**SOCIABILITY AND ITS ENEMIES:**

*GERMAN POLITICAL THEORY AFTER 1945* (Northwestern University Press) 2014.

[Sociability and Its Enemies](#)

Jakob Norberg argues that the writings of Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas, Carl Schmitt, and the historian Reinhart Koselleck present conflicting responses to a hitherto neglected question or point of contention: whether bourgeois sociability should serve as a therapeutic practice and politically relevant ideal for postwar Germany.

THOMAS PFAU



**Minding the Modern:**

*Human Agency, Intellectual Traditions, and Responsible Knowledge* (University of Notre Dame Press) 2013.

[Minding the Modern](#)

Thomas Pfau sheds light on previously neglected historical and conceptual connections among political theorists, and enriches established narratives of postwar intellectual history.

“A book of transcendent vision, and one that deserves to be studied in depth.” – *The Sun News Miami*

“The The ensuing debate, and the intellectual traditions it will engage, could help restore seriousness and urgency to the humanities.” – *The Hedgehog Review*

“[A] learned, deeply important, and accomplished study...” “The sweep and comprehensiveness of the work are remarkable.” *James Engell, Harvard University*