

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures,
University of Virginia
Fall 2024



Dear Friends of the German Department,

Academic year 2023-2024 was an exciting, productive one for the German Department at UVA. Our Faculty continues to publish and bring innovation to their research and teaching. We welcomed new faculty member Chrisann Zuerner and said a sad good-bye to a dear friend, long-time instructor Janette Hudson. Professors Julia Gutterman and Paul Dobryden coordinated the Department's series of Germany on Campus events, co-sponsored with the German Embassy. And following many years of service, Jeffrey Grossman stepped down as Department Chair; we welcomed Acting Chair Anna Brickhouse. You may read these stories and more inside.

We wish all of you a great 2024-2025.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Cora Schenberg, Editor

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PHOTO: STUDENTS IN UVA'S SUMMER
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE ENJOY STRUDEL
NIGHT WITH FRAU PARKER

FACULTY NEWS

Introducing Interim Chair Anna Brickhouse!

Anna Brickhouse has been appointed the interim chair of the German department for academic years 2023-2025. Anna joins us from the departments of English and American Studies, where she has prior experience as a director of undergraduate studies in English and as a director of American Studies before it became a department. She is a former French major and student of Spanish (as an undergraduate at UVA) and has spent much of her career as a scholar of American literature advocating for the importance of multilingual approaches to her field. Both her books—*Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere* and *The Unsettling of America: Translation, Interpretation, and the Story of Don Luis de Velasco, 1560-1945*—drew on research in French and Spanish. The latter won the annual James Russell Lowell Prize for an outstanding scholarly book from the Modern Language Association in 2015. Her current book—*Elsewhere Catastrophe: Earthquake and the Invention of America*—is forthcoming from Oxford UP and was supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship. She hopes to learn much about German literary, cultural, and historical studies over the next two years.



Five Faculty Members Receive Promotions

Five members of the German faculty recently received promotions.

Paul Dobryden was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.

Julia Gutterman's general faculty appointment was converted, and she looks forward to continuing her career at UVa as an Assistant Professor in the tenure-track.

Stefanie Parker and **Cora Schenberg** have both been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor General Faculty.

Finally, **Marcel Schmid** was promoted to Associate Professor General Faculty and will start the fall semester as the German Department's new Director of Undergraduate Studies.



FACULTY NEWS, CONT'D.

Manuela Achilles was on sabbatical leave during the 2022-2023 academic year after having served two terms as the director of the Center for German Studies. She held a residency at the *École des hautes études en sciences sociales* (EHESS) in Paris, France, and delivered a series of invited talks. Upon her return in the 2023 fall semester, Manuela taught her popular “Neighbors and Enemies in Germany” and “Nazi Germany” courses. She also directed the European MA program as well as the Center for German Studies and was an active participant in (and contributor to) the “Learning Together Lunch Hour Series of the Jewish Studies program.

Manuela published an article, “The Israel-Hamas War: Where is Europe?” in *EuropeNow Daily*, and a review of “Laura Hilton and Avinoam Patt (eds), Understanding and Teaching the Holocaust” in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. In addition to these two pieces, she completed and submitted to Cambridge University Press her book manuscript titled *Invisible Fatherland: Constitutional Patriotism in Weimar Germany*. Based on her series of presentations at the EHESS in Paris, she has started a new book on *Hitler and the Holocaust: History, Responsibility, Legacy* for Bloomsburg Academic Press. Finally, Manuela has turned her 2023 GSA paper, “Nazis into Victims: Holocaust Fiction Without Perpetrators. John Boyne’s ‘The Boy in the Striped Pajamas,’” into an extended article that was published in a special issue on “Fascist Fantasies” of *literaturkritik.de* in February 2024.



Ben Bennett's book manuscript, *Gender Ascendant: The Dawn of Feminist Theory in Eighteenth-Century German Writing*, is forthcoming from de Gruyter. Meanwhile, Ben has completed about one-third of his next book, *The Case against Literature: A Chapter in the Politics of Intellect*. An article titled “Experimental Reading: For the Anarchic Reading of Poetry” is forthcoming in *Mosaic*.



In August, 2023, **Paul Dobryden** was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. (Congratulations, Paul!) During academic year 2023-2024, Paul presented new research on the film productions of Weimar-era disability advocacy organizations at the German Studies Association and Modernist Studies Association conferences in Montreal and New York. In collaboration with Julia Gutterman, Paul coordinated the Department's series of Germany on Campus events, co-sponsored with the German Embassy (see p. 8). Paul has recently returned from Europe where, this past summer, he conducted research in Leipzig and Berlin and presented at a conference on the “Future of German Screen Studies” at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

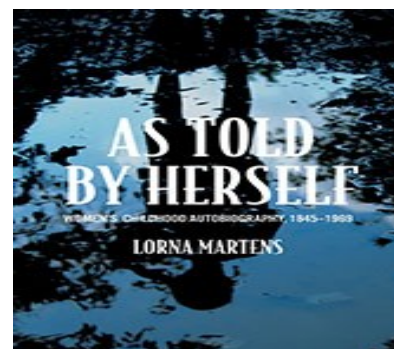


FACULTY NEWS, CONT'D.

Julia Gutterman taught a new seminar on “Lyric Poetry” in fall 2023 and, in collaboration with her students, organized two poetry events featuring the work of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, Heinrich Heine, Gertrud Kolmar, and Sharon Dodua Otoo, among others. Together with Paul Dobryden, she organized the “Germany on Campus” initiative of the German Embassy in Washington D.C. and set up the exhibition “Bertolt Brecht’s Paper War. Exile in America 1941-1947,” designed by curator and artist Grischa Meyer and supported by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. In fall 2023, Julia also saw the publication of her article “A Secret Thing: Forgetting the Author in Annette von Droste-Hülshoff’s “Das erste Gedicht” in the *German Quarterly*. Finally, this summer Julia’s general faculty appointment was converted, and she looks forward to continuing her career at UVa as an assistant professor in the tenure-track. In light of this development, Julia stepped down as Director of Undergraduate Programs and Language Coordinator, in order to concentrate on her research and teaching. Congratulations, Julia!



Lorna Martens’ book, *As Told by Herself: Women's Childhood Autobiography, 1845-1969*, published by University of Wisconsin Press, was named as one of Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles in 2023. In April, Lorna gave a paper at the International Society for the Study of Narrative 2024 Conference in Newcastle, England. Lorna’s paper, with the title “Kafka as Play Dough Artist: Rolling Out, Cutting Up, Compacting,” was part of a panel on “The Strangeness of Franz Kafka.” In addition, Lorna recently reviewed an anthology titled *Short Diary Fiction: A New Global Anthology*, for Bloomsbury Press.



Bill McDonald writes, “In January, I will have reached my 50th year of teaching at UVa. Hard to believe!” Bill remains an extremely popular instructor; both sections of his “Medieval Stories of Love and Adventure” course are currently full. Alongside teaching, Bill has recently published two Arthur-related articles. “*Licet plura magis sint fabulosa, quam conformia ueritati*: Trithemius (d. 1516), King Arthur, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the Reception of a Latin Locution from circa 1150” was published in *Latomus: Revue d’Etudes latines*. Bill’s “A New Version of the Nine Worthies: King Arthur, the Ottoman Turks, and a Call for a Crusade in a German Poem, ca. 1459” appeared in *Wolfenbütteler Renaissance-Mitteilungen*. Finally, Bill is continuing his work with Richmond’s Second Baptist Church and its pastor, Rev. Dr. James Henry Harris (M.A., UVA 2011). Bill highly recommends Rev. Harris’s book, *Black Suffering: Silent Pain, Hidden Hope*.



FACULTY NEWS, CONT'D.

Marcel Schmid published the co-edited volume *The Case of Christian Kracht: Authorship, Irony, and Globalism* in May 2024 with the British series *German Monitor* (Brill). This introduction to Christian Kracht—the bestselling, contemporary Swiss author—suggests locating Kracht’s writings in discourses that go beyond the labels that traditionally have been assigned to them, namely “postmodernism,” “camp,” and “Popliteratur.” Instead, this volume considers Kracht’s work through the lenses of “authorship,” “irony,” and “globalism.”

In August 2024, Marcel was promoted to Associate Professor General Faculty and will start as the new Director of Undergraduate Studies in the German Department.



Chrisann Zuerner joined UVa in fall 2023. She received her PhD in German (Literature & Culture concentration) and Visual Studies from the Pennsylvania State University in 2023 under the supervision of Dr. Bettina Brandt. Her doctoral research focused on female, contemporary German language authors with multilingual backgrounds and examined the usage of literary objects (such as photographs) in disrupting and reimagining traumatic memory on familial and national scales. She is currently working on an article that looks at inter- and paratextual references in Maja Haderlap’s novel, *Engel des Vergessens* (2011) and how they open the landscape for minority memory discourses related to the Holocaust. This fall, she is offering a German literature course that draws from her doctoral research. It looks at genocides from the 1890s to today as represented in literature and film and focuses on the Herero and Nama Genocide in Namibia, the Holocaust, and the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. She is also leading a January-term 2025 course in Hamburg and Berlin, “Urban Memorial Archives” that will explore the lasting implications of memory projects in Germany related to minority memory/perspectives, placing an emphasis on the urban projects that are readily accessible to the public – from museums, streets, placards, sites of memory/memorials. In her free time, she enjoys jogging and visiting new coffee shops. Welcome, Chrisann!




FACULTY MEMBER EMERITA:

FAREWELL TO JANETTE HUDSON

This past June, our department lost a beloved colleague and friend, Janette Hudson. Janette, who taught in the German Department from 1978 to 2012, was, in the words of her daughters, “a devoted and dedicated teacher,” who “built strong relationships with the graduate [teaching assistants] she mentored and the undergraduates she coached.” The former Janette Caton was born in Stuttgart, Germany on August 9, 1940. From 1946 to 1951 she lived with her family in Belgium and attended a French-speaking school, then moved back to Germany where she earned an Abitur in 1959. Entering Northwestern University as a junior, she graduated with highest distinction with a BA in 1961, then went on to earn her MA from Stanford in 1963, and her PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1973. Her dissertation, which she wrote on a manual typewriter with two young children underfoot, is titled *Achim von Arnim and André Breton: Zur Verwandtschaft der deutschen Romantik und des französischen Surrealismus* and runs 308 pages. Janette is missed by all who knew and loved her.




UNDERGRADUATE NEWS



WALTER H. SOKEL PRIZE
DEADLINE
APRIL 22, 2024

Thanks to a generous grant from Prof. Walter H. Sokel (1917-2014), the German Department is offering a prize of \$350 to the best essay of at least 3,500 words on German Literature or Culture. The essay may be in English or German. Students may submit revised and/or expanded essays completed for classes taught by the German Department.

SUBMIT ENTRIES TO PROF. LORNA MARTENS

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Students Win Essay Prizes

This year's Walter H. Sokel Essay Prize was awarded to **Lincoln Day** for his paper titled "Stefan George's Dutch Translations and his European Project." This annual prize comes from a bequest by Professor Walter Sokel (1917-2014) and awards \$300 to the writer of the best student-written essay of at least 3,500 words on German literature or culture. Lincoln also received book prizes for excellent work in his GERM 3000 (Advanced German) and GETR 3730 (Modern Poetry) classes.

An additional Sokel prize was awarded this year, on the occasion of the centenary of Franz Kafka's death, for an essay on Kafka. **Eli Boone** claimed this prize for his paper entitled "Fitting Together Mismatched Pieces: Interpretation in Kafka's *The Trial*."

Pictured: Sokel Kafka Essay Prize Winner Eli Boone.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

In collaboration with the German Embassy, Paul Dobryden and Julia Gutterman organized a series of events called “Germany on Campus.” For Paul, a highlight of the series was a screening, last November, of the recently restored 1923 silent film **THE ANCIENT LAW**. Ewald André Dupont’s 1923 silent film is the story of the rupture between a rabbi and his son in a Polish shtetl, when the young man abruptly leaves to become an actor in Vienna. The renowned klezmer violinist **Alicia Svigals** and the celebrated silent film pianist **Donald Sosin** were present to perform their newly composed score live at Old Cabell Hall.



Last year, our Department revitalized an old tradition. Our former Kaffeestunde, now called **Deutsch-Treff**, is a weekly get-together for German speaking students, faculty, and Charlottesville community members, hosted by members of the German faculty. Thanks to a generous grant from the Max Kade Foundation, we’re able to serve yummy food, coffee, and sweets for attendees to enjoy while conversing in German. Weather permitting, we meet in the courtyard between Old and New Cabell Halls. If you’re in Charlottesville on a Wednesday afternoon, please join us there!



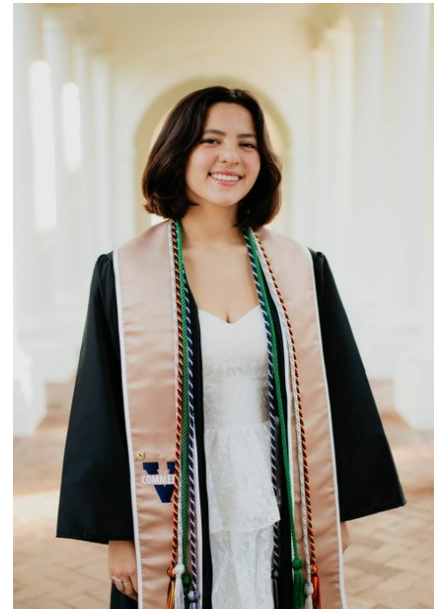
OUR GRADUATES

Recent (2024) graduate **Montana Showalter** sent the following message: “I am thrilled to have graduated with a double major in German and Commerce, and even more so for the incredible international experiences I had during my time at UVA. During the spring of 2022, I assisted the Center for German Studies with the Böll-UVA Memory and Democracy Tour, and later that summer, I had the opportunity to return to Germany attending the University of Leipzig on a DAAD grant. I was also lucky enough to embark on non-German language learning for an entire semester in Barcelona, Spain, and a J-Term in Kilifi, Kenya.”

Some of Montana’s favorite German memories include attending the department’s weekly DeutschTreff; hosting the CBYX-sponsored DeutschFest with Pamela Green, and greeting the Austrian and Swiss Ambassadors during their visits to Grounds. She takes pride in helping the German Society grow from 3 members during COVID-19 to now 60+ members, including international students from all German-speaking countries.

Montana extended a special thank you to Professor Stefanie Parker for her guidance on her thesis, titled *Understanding the Vietnamese-German Diaspora Through Varying Artistic Mediums*. She writes that “Researching this topic as a Vietnamese-American was extremely impactful, and I am so grateful for [Prof. Parker’s] help in the process.”

This July, Montana travelled to Austria, Germany, and Switzerland before moving to San Francisco.



Rachel Cressell, B.A. 2019, returned to UVA in 2023 for an M.A. in Linguistics. As a native of nearby Southwest Virginia, Rachel found it easy to make Charlottesville home. She adjusted quickly to Grounds, in large part aided by the friends and faculty she met in the German Department. Having immersed herself in the culture of German at UVA, Rachel was loath to leave after graduation. In the fall of 2023, she found her way back, matriculating as a Masters student in Linguistics. While she has thoroughly enjoyed her studies in the Linguistics program, Rachel still finds time to pay homage to her undergraduate experience by attending the German Department’s weekly Deutsch Treff, regularly dropping in on beloved former professors, and working as the program assistant for the graduate program in European Studies. She hopes that the next year brings further opportunity to explore new academic possibilities while engaging even more deeply with the German Department.

