

STORIES · GESCHICHTEN  
Directors · Direktoren

aus:

**STORIES FROM 55 YEARS OF  
A TRANSATLANTIC FRIENDSHIP**

**GESCHICHTEN AUS 55 JAHREN  
TRANSATLANTISCHER FREUNDSCHAFT**

Smith College · Universität Hamburg 1961 – 2016

Edited by Jocelyne Kolb & Rainer Nicolaysen

S. 19 – 47

Hamburg University Press  
Verlag der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg  
Carl von Ossietzky

## IMPRESSUM

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek  
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <https://portal.dnb.de> abrufbar.

ISBN 978-3-943423-44-0 (Printausgabe)

**Online-Ausgabe** Die Online-Ausgabe dieses Werkes ist eine Open-Access-Publikation und ist auf den Verlagswebseiten frei verfügbar. Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek hat die Online-Ausgabe archiviert. Diese ist dauerhaft auf dem Archivserver der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek (<https://portal.dnb.de>) verfügbar.

DOI 10.15460/HUP.176

URN urn:nbn:de:gbv:18-3-1764

**Lizenz** Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Das Werk steht unter der Creative-Commons-Lizenz Namensnennung 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode.de>). Ausgenommen von der oben genannten Lizenz sind Teile, Abbildungen und sonstiges Drittmaterial, wenn anders gekennzeichnet.

**Gestaltung, Satz** Christine Klein, Hamburg

**Schrift** Garamond/Neutra Text; alle Rechte vorbehalten

**Papier** PROFImatt 115g

**Druck und Bindung** Hansadruck, Kiel

**Verlag** Hamburg University Press, Verlag der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky, Hamburg (Deutschland), 2017 · <http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de>

- PREFACES ·** 9 Jill Ker Conway  
**VORWORTE** 11 Peter Fischer-Appelt

- INTRODUCTION ·** 13 Jocelyne Kolb &  
**EINFÜHRUNG** Rainer Nicolaysen

**STORIES ·**  
**GESCHICHTEN**

**Directors**  
**Direktoren**

- 19 **Hans R. Vaegt**  
“Das Tor zur Welt” – Hamburg  
1969–71
- 24 **Margaret Skiles Zelljadt**  
Permanence in Change
- 27 **John M. Connolly**  
Two Years Directing in Hamburg,  
1978–79 and 2012–13
- 30 **Gertraud Gutzmann**  
Begegnungen
- 36 **Joseph McVeigh**  
Witnessing History’s Footnotes
- 39 **Jocelyne Kolb**  
Hamburg in Silver and Gold
- 45 **Joel Westerdale**  
Cultural Buoyancy: Immersion in  
the Age of Social Media

**Instructors in Hamburg ·**  
**Dozenten in Hamburg**

- 48 **Jutta Gutzeit**  
You’ll Never Walk Alone –  
Studienprogramm von Smith  
College in Hamburg: So viele  
Menschen!
- 52 **Rainer Nicolaysen**  
Das Beste aus beiden Welten

**Students from Smith College**  
**at the University of Hamburg ·**  
**Studentinnen und Studenten**  
**vom Smith College an der**  
**Universität Hamburg**

- 57 **Krishna Winston**  
Coming Full Circle:  
Smith in Hamburg
- 59 **Deanna Gaunce Nebert**  
Dreaming in German
- 61 **Sarah E. Thomas**  
Luise Müllerin in Hamburg:  
You Can Take the Girl out of the  
Country, but You Can’t Take the  
Country out of the Girl
- 64 **Frank Lehmann**  
Culture Shock at its Best
- 66 **Leslie A. Adelson**  
What the Smith College Junior  
Year Abroad Program in  
Hamburg Has Meant to Me
- 69 **Jane L. Carroll**  
Beyond Books: How I Learned  
to Love Germany
- 72 **Michael Joseph Beiser**  
Hummel Hummel, Who’s He?
- 75 **Rachel Getzoff Thoma**  
How the Smith JYA Influenced  
My Life...
- 83 **Eliza Garrison**  
Coming Home:  
My First Year in Germany
- 85 **Susannah Ewing &**  
Michelle Pucci  
Dialogue Overheard Between  
Two Smithies in Hamburg
- 88 **Seth Peabody**  
Photos Not Taken
- 92 **Bryn Savage**  
An Embarrassment of Riches

94 **Christina Arrison**  
Small Talk and Big Changes

96 **Dinah Lensing-Sharp**  
Gathering

**Students from the University  
of Hamburg at Smith College ·  
Studentinnen der Universität  
Hamburg am Smith College**

99 **Susanne Gommert**  
Reflections on Paradise Pond –  
What if...?

101 **Christiane Thurner &**

**Christine Koglin**  
Zweimal C, ein Job –  
und mittlerweile sieben Kinder

106 **Helga Bechmann**  
So Long and Thanks for  
All the Smith

108 **Ania Ferstl**  
Dekonstruktion nach Smith

**Faculty from the University  
of Hamburg at Smith College ·  
Dozenten der Universität  
Hamburg am Smith College**

111 **Andreas Kleinert &  
Christoph Scriba**  
Bericht über einen Lehr- und  
Forschungsaufenthalt am Smith  
College (1989)

116 **Marie-Elisabeth Hilger**  
Vor über 25 Jahren: das Erlebnis  
des Smith College

119 **Bettina Friedl**  
Meeting the Adas

122 **Susanne Rohr**  
Dressed to Kill on Campus

**Faculty from Smith College  
at the University of Hamburg ·  
Dozenten vom Smith College  
an der Universität Hamburg**

125 **Joan Afferica:**  
Hamburg Memories

127 **Donald F. Wheelock**  
Altes und Neues in Hamburg

129 **C. John Burk**  
Upstream / Downstream

132 **Låle Aka Burk**  
A Tale of Two Cities  
136 Craig R. Davis  
Discovering America in Hamburg

138 **Dennis T. Yasutomo**  
A Statement on the  
Commemoration of the 50th  
Anniversary of Smith's Study  
Abroad Program at the University  
of Hamburg

141 **Len Berkman**  
A Universität Hamburg-Smith  
College Faculty Exchange  
Memoir of Sorts

**Summary Lists · Übersichten**

148 **Smith College Directors ·**  
Direktoren in Hamburg

149 **Long-Term Faculty Exchange ·**  
Langzeit-Dozentenaustausch

150 **Short-Term Faculty Exchange ·**  
Kurzzeit-Dozentenaustausch

**DOCUMENTS · 153 Editorial Preface · Vorbemerkung der Herausgeber****DOKUMENTE**

- 155 • Marie Schnieders to Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, June 9, 1960
- 157 • Marie Schnieders an Richard Münzner, 12. September 1960
- 158 • Richard Münzner an Marie Schnieders, 4. Oktober 1960
- 159 • Marie Schnieders an Richard Münzner, 10. Oktober 1960
- 160 • Richard Münzner an Marie Schnieders, 14. Oktober 1960
- 161 • Marie Schnieders an Richard Münzner, 31. Oktober 1960
- 162 • Thomas C. Mendenhall to Richard Münzner, November 9, 1960
- 163 • Vermerk Richard Münzner, 15. Dezember 1960
- 165 • Marie Schnieders an Richard Münzner, 9. Januar 1961
- 168 • Thomas C. Mendenhall to Dorothea Warburg, February 13, 1961
- 169 • Richard Münzner an Reinhard Lettau, 20. März 1961
- 170 • William A. Bodden to Brinckmann, Wirts & Co, April 13, 1961
- 171 • William E. Sexton to Marie Schnieders, April 18, 1961
- 172 • Reinhard Lettau to William A. Bodden, November 27, 1961
- 174 • Thomas C. Mendenhall to Reinhard Lettau, November 28, 1961
- 176 • Thomas C. Mendenhall to the Parents of the Students on the Smith Junior Year in Hamburg, November 30, 1961
- 177 • Parody of letter to parents sent by Thomas C. Mendenhall as a “copy” to Reinhard Lettau, November 30, 1961
- 178 • Paul G. Graham to Reinhard Lettau, January 9, 1962
- 179 • Thomas C. Mendenhall to Reinhard Lettau, January 30, 1962
- 180 • Thomas C. Mendenhall to Directors of the Junior Year Abroad, March 28, 1962 (Memorandum and Proposal)
- 183 • Klemens von Klemperer an Reinhard Lettau, 28. Mai 1962
- 185 • List of Participants in the Second Year of the Hamburg JYA Program in 1962–63 / Liste der Studentinnen des zweiten Smith-Jahrgangs in Hamburg 1962/63
- 186 • Agreement concerning Faculty Exchange between the University of Hamburg, Bundesrepublik Deutschland, and Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA, March 16, 1979  
Vereinbarung über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Universität Hamburg, Bundesrepublik Deutschland, und dem Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA, 16. März 1979
- 190 • Carol T. Christ to Jobst B. Mielck, April 28, 2006
- 191 • Deanna Gaunce Nebert '69: Fiftieth-Anniversary Celebration of the Program in 2011: A Report / Bericht über das 50-jährige Jubiläum des Programms 2011

## HANS R. VAGET



b. 1938, Magister Universität Tübingen 1964 • Ph.D. Columbia University 1969 • Helen and Laura Shedd Professor of German Studies and Comparative Literature emeritus, Smith College • Director of Smith College Junior Year at the University of Hamburg 1969–1971, 1981–82 • long-term Hamburg exchange, Summer 1992, short-term Hamburg exchange, 1984, 1987, 1991.

### “DAS TOR ZUR WELT” – HAMBURG 1969–71

In the groves of academe, institutional and personal histories do not always neatly align. In my case, quite unexpectedly, they became intertwined to an unusual degree in 1969 when I was sent to Hamburg as the director of our Junior Year Abroad program and handed the task, more or less, of revamping the program.

Having joined the Smith faculty, in 1967, as an Instructor of German Language and Literature, I was – with only two years of Smith under my belt – woefully unprepared to take on such an assignment. Given the magnitude of the task and the seriousness of my responsibility, I should have been quaking in my boots. Instead, with the foolish self-confidence of the greenhorn, I trusted implicitly my ability to learn on the job. I decided to approach the Hamburg directorship as one big adventure, as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for both learning and fun. In the event, it turned into a two-year adventure – a most exciting and rewarding one at that.

The proud Hanseatic city of Hamburg, with its sprawling harbor, likes to be thought of as “Das Tor zur Welt.” Over the centuries, to the Germans, and to most of Central Europe, the harbor of Hamburg served indeed as the “gateway to the world.” In the opposite direction, it also served as a gateway to the world for the many Smithies who spent their Junior Year there, and helped them become the kind of “Women for the World” that is the college’s avowed educational aim. In an oblique and surprising way, it also had a significant impact on my own outlook on the world.

Beyond my Smith duties, I also had a more personal incentive to go to Hamburg. Just six weeks prior to our departure, my wife Nicole and I had become parents of a beautiful baby girl, Melanie. Being stationed in Hamburg meant that

Melanie's German and French grandparents would get to see more of her than they would have on the other side of the pond. As a first-time father and a first-time JYA director, with Nicole teaching French full-time in the Romanisches Seminar at Hamburg University, and with no administrative assistant, I had my work cut out for me. Most of the time during those years, I felt as though I were swimming upstream against a steady current of unanticipated problems.

Smith, for a number of years, had been sending its JYA students to various Goethe-Institutes in Bavaria in order to prepare them for the routines and requirements of the German university, thereby filling the time gap between the start of the academic year in America and the *Wintersemester* at the German universities. At those Goethe-Institutes, together with young people from other countries, our students – a group of fourteen (five from Smith, four from Yale, one each from Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Hood) – were supposed to hone their language skills. My first assignment, then, was to visit our students in Ebersberg, Grafrath, and Kochel – small places in rural settings – and to find out if their experience was as unsatisfactory as the feedback from earlier groups had suggested. It clearly was. Smithies expected, and needed, a more tailor-made and effective program.

Having received the green light from College Hall, my colleagues and I began to devise a new Orientation Program. It was to take place in Hamburg itself, in our facilities in the University *Gästehaus*, starting the following year. This basic arrangement is still in place today. To make up for the loss of the Bavarian experience, just prior to the start of the *Wintersemester*, the '70-'71 group took a one-week trip to Munich and Upper Bavaria to cap those several weeks of orientation. My memory of that fabulous excursion has become somewhat hazy over the years, but, in sum, I remember it as a joyful bonding experience, and as the beginning of a beautiful camaraderie.

I was extremely fortunate in being able to hire for the core courses of our program two first-rate teachers, Ulrich Bubrowski and Peter Borowsky, who taught German literature and German history respectively, and who for many years remained the academic pillars of the Hamburg program. We also became good friends. Ulrich had actually taught at Smith for two years prior to my arrival there. He knew the college and knew what it was to teach Smithies. He also came along on that trip to Bavaria and helped with the organization and the driving. In the ensuing years, Peter came to Smith on several occasions as visiting professor of History; he, too, was perfectly sensitized to the skills and needs of our students.

The two semesters proper presented a much bigger staffing problem than the Orientation program because of the many different fields in which our students majored. For each course counting towards the major they were given a tutor hired by Smith. Finding qualified tutors in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology was a particular challenge. So I was fortunate to find assistance in the person of Klaus Nagorny, a

.....

member of the Hamburg Chemistry department, who was unfailingly cooperative and extremely helpful in recruiting suitable tutors, and who did so for many years thereafter. Among the other tutors, Heinrich Breloer, a friend of Ulrich's, stands out in my memory. A Germanist by training, he worked for several years for us as a tutor in German literature. I also remember him as a soccer player, a rather slick one, too, as everyone realized when, in a legendary game in the Stadtpark, a team of tutors played a team of students. In due course, Heinrich left academe and became a filmmaker, winning fame and many awards for his docudramas and adaptations, among them *The Manns* and *Buddenbrooks*.

In the larger scheme of things, the changes in our Hamburg program were a trifling matter compared with the profound transformation taking place at the *Universität Hamburg* itself, as it transitioned from an old-style form of governance, with a short-term *Rektor* at the helm, to a more democratic constitution with a president serving for nine years. That transition took place in the wake of the wide-spread student protests, and demands for reform, that swept campuses from Berkeley to Columbia, and from Paris to Hamburg.

When I arrived in Hamburg, the *Gästehaus* in the Rothenbaumchaussee housed, on the ground floor, a small faculty club, open for lunch only, where some of our students found jobs as waitresses. One of the back rooms, I noticed, was repeatedly used for a caucus by some somber-looking gentlemen, who, rumor had it, were plotting to avert the election as president of a certain Peter Fischer-Appelt, a young Protestant theologian, because he was reputed to be a radical. The backroom caucusing was to no avail. Fischer-Appelt was elected president, he was twice re-elected, and he served with distinction a total of twenty-one years as the head of Hamburg University.

No one could have known at the time that President Fischer-Appelt, who made the expansion of the university's international relations one of his signature achievements, would be a huge bonus for Smith College. He simply fell in love with the place when he first visited the campus in 1975 for the inauguration of President Jill K. Conway. Over the years he proved to be a staunch friend of Smith and of our Hamburg program. Most importantly, from my point of view, he was not only receptive to the idea of creating a faculty exchange program between Hamburg and Smith but also saw to it that it was successfully implemented. When I first floated this idea with my colleagues in the department, after my return from Hamburg, I was told that it was unrealistic and that I should forget about it.

Not long thereafter I mentioned my disappointment to Betty Bodine, a member of our Board of Trustees. Betty listened carefully, and, without telling me, decided to pursue the matter. She happened to be the mother of Lucy Bodine, who had been a delightful and sparkling presence in my 1970–71 group. In due course, in 1979, Smith decided to establish a faculty exchange program. This began during the 1980/81 academic year, and, over the years, it offered some one hundred colleagues



from both sides of the ocean an opportunity to get to know their partner institution. In 2013, when Hamburg decided to discontinue the exchange, a wonderful and mutually beneficial program came to a sad, abrupt end.

As for the 1970–71 JYA, two additional group excursions turned out to be highlights of the program. In February of 1971, I took the group to Berlin which, at the time, was still divided by the infamous wall. I was still a citizen of West Germany at the time, and since I had no relatives in East Germany, I had never set foot on the other side of the Iron Curtain. But as a leader of a group of American students, I somehow qualified for entry. I can still recall the unsmiling, intimidating inspections carried out by the Border Police at Bahnhof Friedrichstraße. Today this is a very busy and lively place; in 1971 it struck me as a barricaded fortress. But I also remember a refreshing incident in the bus that took us to the monumental Soviet War Memorial, in the East, a visit to that site being part of the deal. As we drove past drab, Stalin era housing developments, one of our students, Melinda Moore, piped up to ask our East German guide: “Ist es wahr, dass die Menschen hier nicht frei sind?” (“Is it true that people here are not free?”) I forget how our guide – a forty-something, dour-looking lady in a severe uniform straight out of central casting – dodged this unexpected curve ball. But I do remember feeling very proud of my student’s no-nonsense attitude, and courage.

Melinda had caught my attention prior to coming to Hamburg when she wrote me a polite letter of inquiry from her home town, Pacific Palisades – a name that rings all kinds of bells in the ears of every student of German literature because it was in that posh suburb of Los Angeles that Thomas Mann and other notable exiles landed during World War II. In her letter, Melinda assured me that despite her “barrage of questions” she would not be “a problem child.” Not only was she not a problem child, she did the group proud by actually articulating what all of us were thinking on that somber bus ride through East Berlin.

The other group excursion was a day-long boat ride “im wunderschönen Monat Mai” (as Heine famously put it) on the mighty Rhine. It took us from Mainz down the river all the way to “holy” Köln, with its imposing Dom, past the Loreley, that fateful rock of German folklore and poetry. I do not remember much of that excursion, which I take to mean that a good time was had by all.

What was it, finally, that made my first tour of duty in Hamburg such a rich, enjoyable experience, particularly in the second year? In retrospect, several factors come to mind. There was, to begin with, a wonderful chemistry among the seventeen participants. That good chemistry was undoubtedly facilitated by the co-educational composition of the group, something that in those years provided a welcome change from life on the campus in Northampton. The eleven Smithies were visibly enjoying the presence of six young men: five from Yale, and one from Amherst. Most gratifying to me was the palpable curiosity they all displayed about all aspects of their host culture. They also shared an exhilarating sense of adventure,

.....

apparently aware, with remarkable maturity, that they were living one of the most exciting years of their young lives.

Another key factor was the cumulative bonding effect of the group excursions, producing, as they did, a wealth of shared memories. I may be wrong about this, but the fact that the age gap between the students and the director of the program was a mere ten years, give or take a year or two, made for what I recall as easy, uncomplicated interactions.

Looking back now, after more than four decades, it seems to me that those two years as director of the Hamburg program, without my realizing it at the time, immeasurably strengthened my attachment to Smith – an attachment I still feel to this day, even years into retirement. In Germany I am occasionally asked if I really feel at home in America, and if I still feel any attachment to the Fatherland. I like to surprise my interlocutors by giving them what I know to be a puzzling answer – puzzling because they are not familiar with the unique biotope that is a first-class American college. I like to tell them that I no longer feel at home in Germany, nor do I yet feel fully at home in America. I do, however, feel at home at Smith College.

## MARGARET SKILES ZELLJADT



b. 1941, A.B. University of Michigan 1963 • M.A. Indiana University 1967 • Ph.D. University of Massachusetts 1976 • Professor Emerita of German Studies, Smith College • Director of Smith College Junior Year at the University of Hamburg 1972–73, 1979–80, 1986–87, 1987–88, 1994–95, 2001–02.

### PERMANENCE IN CHANGE

In 1972–73 I first directed the Smith College Junior Year Abroad program at the University of Hamburg. We had a total of twenty-two Smith and guest students, the most that ever took part in our program. Life as director was quite different from what it is today: we had no secretary, no office, no classroom, no computer, no fax, no photocopy machine. In the *Gästehaus der Universität* we had only the director's apartment and the so-called "Smith Rooms" in the basement. I needed to go to the post office on an almost daily basis, because there was absolutely no such thing as email and to make a telephone call was prohibitively expensive. All of my communication with Smith in Northampton took place on thin onion-skin *Luftpostpapier*, but even then there were often so many pages of correspondence that added postage was necessary. Although there was a yellow *Bundespost* letter box right across the Rothenbaumchaussee in front of the Curio-Haus, I preferred to take the letters directly to the post office so as not to lose valuable time.

I'm not really certain why I thought the time was "valuable." It normally took at least one week (often 10 days) for my letters to reach College Hall. It was fortuitous that during that year (and during subsequent pre-email years well into the mid-nineties, when we finally started experimenting with CompuServe) we didn't have any truly pressing or seriously urgent matters. I could, in fact, assume that once my letter had arrived in College Hall, it would sit on the addressee's desk for a day or two before being dealt with. And often it had to be passed on to another office on campus (no email in Northampton either). This meant that the letter might well go unanswered for more than a week, and then the response would

make its way back via airmail to Hamburg. I learned rather quickly that once I had sent off a missive I would usually wait at least three weeks before a reply arrived. In those days, however, there was no alternative, and as director I was essentially dependent on myself. In retrospect, I can see a distinct advantage to the length of time it took for a reply: whatever had been my major concern clearly needed to be dealt with on-location in Hamburg in a timely fashion prior to a response coming back from Northampton. We directors, and students as well, resided in the city in considerable isolation from home and were therefore compelled to live our lives truly in Germany, making decisions and coming to conclusions without the assistance and the support that directors of today enjoy.

In those earlier years of the Hamburg program, all of us who were there lived totally immersed in Germany and, for the most part in German. We read German newspapers, watched German television, listened to German radio, went to German movies, plays, and operas, ate German food, drank German beer. By virtue of our choice to leave the U.S. for a year for what seemed like a real adventure, we were, in essence, transported to a different type of existence where our lives were transformed by our host culture. For the majority of students, living in Hamburg was their first exposure to customs and traditions (not to mention daily contact with another language!) outside the United States. Although we all at some time or other felt the need to express ourselves in English, our daily lives revolved around what was happening in Germany and in Hamburg in German.

I directed the program for the sixth and last time in 2001–02, the year of the September 11th tragedy. By then we had an extremely competent associate director, a spacious office in the *Gästehaus*, computers, a fax, a photocopy machine with scanner, a larger, well-equipped apartment. We could watch everything unfold on CNN, either via computer or on television. Our very own email – @smith.edu – was available to everyone, laptops were relatively inexpensive and easy to transport, the student telephone could be used at no cost to call home, students each had their own “Handy” (cell phone) provided on loan by Smith, friends from other Smith programs or from Northampton came to visit, the director could easily telephone someone at Smith with questions or concerns, we could purchase American food almost anywhere. All of this has made life in Hamburg seem considerably easier in many ways. But I think it simultaneously gave us a sense that we had never really left Northampton (or the United States), that we were merely occupying space temporarily in another place with many of the same familiar and now essential commodities and customs. We no longer needed to seek adventure and we could adapt more easily.

This same easy bridging of cultures now also occurs from Northampton, where I can read the *Spiegel* or the *FAZ* or the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* daily online, watch a streaming *Tatort* every Sunday or one of the *SOKOs* every evening. Colleagues at Smith or friends or family can phone Hamburg whenever necessary, and email and Facebook have become essential means of communication. The nature of study

and life abroad and its impact on our lives has changed: we are all clearly more globalized and can become more fully bi-cultural. This can also mean, however, that the absence of exclusive immersion in the German world makes acquisition of the language considerably more challenging.

Through all these years of change in the program, some things have nonetheless remained constant in Hamburg. First of all, adjusting to the weather and the climate takes some practice: we can expect rain at some time almost daily, so carrying an umbrella is essential. During the long winters it is still always pitch dark, as it was in the morning when my husband would take our younger daughter to *Kindergarten* while the older one biked to the *Gymnasium*, and it was dark again when they all returned in the evening. But the *Weihnachtsmärkte* continue to light up that darkness and tempt us with their warming *Glühwein*. Every year the swans are out once again on the Binnenalster for almost eight months from spring through fall, and the sidewalk cafés, where one can sit all afternoon, offer typical German *Kaffee und Kuchen*. And in summer, the clear blue sky always glows brilliantly until after 10 p.m. As always, the city's infrastructure is constantly being improved, sometimes to one's consternation: at any time of year there is always construction somewhere in Hamburg that causes re-routing of busses or even *U- or S-Bahnen*; sidewalks are often blocked because of scaffolding for new or improved buildings. The unique presence of water and green is still paramount in the city: small sailboats dot the Außenalster and the *Alsterschiffe* transport workers and tourists across the lake and through the locks; large container ships and cruise ships leave the Landungsbrücken, swim past Blankenese and the Willkommenhöft out into the North Sea and beyond. Trips with the students to Lübeck, Lüneburg, Berlin or Munich or to cities in the East since the *Wiedervereinigung* continue to be an essential component of the study abroad experience.

I could never document how the experience of living in Hamburg has shaped the lives of individual students for more than 50 years. Many former participants have returned to live in Germany, others use their language skills professionally. But I can confidently say that my husband Igor and I actively tried to make Germany and German an essential part of our lives within our own nuclear family. Our two daughters have taken all this to heart: not only did each marry a German, but both are raising bilingual offspring.

## JOHN M. CONNOLLY



b.1943 · B.A. Fordham University 1965,  
M.A. Oxford University 1967, Ph.D.  
Harvard University 1971 · Sophia Smith  
Professor Emeritus of Philosophy,  
Smith College · Director of Smith  
College Junior Year at the University  
of Hamburg 1978–79 and 2012–13.

### TWO YEARS DIRECTING IN HAMBURG, 1978–79 AND 2012–13

I came to Smith in 1973 and spent 41 years in the philosophy department (10 of those on leave to the College administration). But I had learned German, am married to a German woman – Marianna Kaul Connolly since 1969 – and have devoted much of my research to German philosophy. So the German Studies Department and the College had enough trust in me to send me to Hamburg twice as director. Both years were filled with important and memorable experiences. I pick out just a few here for the record.

1978–1979 – Our first group had 16 students in the *Wintersemester*, 15 in the spring (one finished her Smith career after that first term). Three of that group were Yalies, one from Mt. Holyoke, and one from the now defunct Kirkland College. We are still in touch with many of them, and enjoyed a lovely reunion dinner at our home with many of them in May 2015. They were/are a good bunch, quite cooperative and more or less cohesive. In those days there were three week-long excursions financed by Smith or by the University or the German state: to the *Oktobertfest* in Munich, to Berlin, and to Bonn. For the director, the program was in those days very demanding, since there was no associate director, no office help of any sort, indeed no office (aside from a desk in the apartment). The long-term head tutor, Ulrich Bubrowski, provided much of the continuity, and a variety of University administrators and professors (notably Peter Borowsky, Klaus Hansen, and Klaus Pätzold) were very helpful.

The highlight of the year was the visit near the end of the first semester of Jill Ker Conway, who came to sign the faculty exchange agreement with the University.

I was asked by College Hall to pick Mrs. Conway up at the airport. It was an early a.m. arrival, and I was startled when I got to the airport to find the University President, Peter Fischer-Appelt, and two of his senior administrators also waiting to greet Mrs. Conway: such was the respect shown to Smith in those days by high-ranking officials in the Hansestadt! For our students too it was a great treat to meet their own president on foreign soil and to show off their newly gained cosmopolitanism.

The faculty exchange went on to be a shining success for 35 years. Scores of Smith and Hamburg professors crossed the Atlantic for either a month or a semester, often making fruitful connections with other scholars, and enjoying the amenities that each of the two very different settings offers. One of our participants, Ileana Streinu, who did an exchange semester, speaks of her “tender memories from my visit a few years ago to Hamburg, from the elegant Rothenbaumchaussee and the surrounding area, the university, the life in the city, its art and music.” The exchange also enriched the JYA program in a variety of ways.

2012–2013 – But, alas, my second tour of duty as director was overshadowed by the University’s sad decision to terminate the faculty exchange. All attempts to persuade the current Hamburg administration to reconsider had proved futile, and in the *Sommersemester* of 2013 my philosophy colleague, Jay Garfield, was (for now, at least) the final Smith participant.

The warmth shown in past decades by Hamburg administrators to Smith College is now just a fond memory. But the warmth was, at least for one day, revived in May 2013 at one of our periodic program receptions in the grand rooms on the first floor of the *Gästehaus*. This was for me the highpoint of my second stint in the *Hansestadt*. Scores of guests came, including some current instructors of our students as well as past participants in student and faculty exchanges. Among the guests were Peter Fischer-Appelt and his wife Hildegard. Our students (a total of twelve, of whom five came in the spring, two of those from Bucknell) were at their best, with one of them – Karla Faber – delivering a short and effective address about her academic and social experience in Hamburg, and the ensemble sounding almost professional in a rendition of “Der Mai ist gekommen.” Our wonderful Associate Director and German instructor, Jutta Gutzeit, talked about the language program and presented the prize for best student. I spoke briefly about the history of Smith in Hamburg, and in a special surprise Prof. Andreas Kleinert, who came all the way from Halle for the event, took the podium and spoke glowingly of his various visits to Smith. He presented to the Mortimer Rare Book Room – represented by Jocelyne Kolb – a 1588 copy of Michael Eytzinger’s *Nova Rerum in Europa Gestarum Historia* as an expression of his gratitude to Smith and for the help he received there from Martin Antonetti and others. This lovely and rare volume will be a valuable addition to the Mortimer and should be accessible to our German studies majors.

All in all, my second and last tour of duty in Hamburg was very different from the first in many ways. The now tech-savvy students have changed in all the ways

.....

one would expect after more than three decades, but the participants in both groups loved the city of Hamburg and were uniformly positive about their experience. It is a joy to see them grow over the course of their time in Germany.

The university is unfortunately at some levels now a less welcoming place for our program administration (something our students hardly noticed at all), but the quality of our program is better than ever, with more attention to language instruction and the vast improvement in our physical plant (the added office, a seminar room, as well as the “Smith Center” in the basement). Rainer Nicolaysen does a fine job continuing the tradition of offering two semesters of modern German history in the Center. And the Germany of the 21st-century, for all its technological advance, is a friendlier, more relaxed, and prosperous democracy that, despite (or perhaps because of) its prosperity, has clearly accepted the considerable challenge of confronting its own dark past. My wife and I were both very grateful to have a “second go” with the program, and – this time unencumbered by preschool children – enjoyed the experience a great deal more. I hope that the Smith Program, now 55 years old, will have a long future.



## GERTRAUD GUTZMANN



b. 1938, B.A. Middlebury College 1965, M.A. Middlebury College 1969, Ph.D. University of Massachusetts 1979 • Professor Emerita of German Studies, Smith College • Director of Smith College Junior Year at the University of Hamburg 1980–81, 1990–91, 1995–97, 1998–99, 2004–05, 2008–09.

### BEGEGNUNGEN

Anfang Dezember 1993 fuhr ich mit der Schriftstellerin und Freundin Helga Schütz von Potsdam-Babelsberg nach Berlin-Wannsee. Der Aufbau-Verlag hatte Schriftsteller, Kritiker und Lektoren zu einem Empfang im Literarischen Colloquium Berlin (LCB), der früheren Villa Guthmann, eingeladen. Da begegnete ich geschätzten Bekannten und Freunden wie Christoph Hein und Dieter Schlenstedt, zu deren Gesprächsrunde sich u. a. Walter Höllerer gesellte, der Schriftsteller und Literaturprofessor, der das LCB gegründet hatte als einen Ort der Begegnung für Literaturschaffende. Als Schlenstedt und Hein von den USA zu sprechen begannen – beide hatten sich länger im westlichen Massachusetts aufgehalten, dabei auch am Smith College Lesungen und Vorträge gehalten –, meinte einer der Gesprächspartner, ich könne da ja wohl kaum mitreden. Über Amerika zu sprechen sei man erst dann befähigt, wenn man länger dort gelebt habe.

Ich hatte in diesem kritischen Gesprächspartner unschwer Reinhard Lettau erkannt, den Autor schöner, eigenartiger Prosatexte und den ersten Direktor des im Jahre 1961 gegründeten Smith College Junior Year Programms an der Universität Hamburg. Zwar war ich Lettau bisher nicht persönlich begegnet, hatte jedoch in den Unterlagen über die Anfangsjahre von „Smith in Hamburg“ so manches über ihn erfahren. Daher entgegnete ich also: „Ach, Herr Lettau, Sie kennen mich zwar nicht, aber ich kenne Sie, denn ich habe Einblick in Ihre Akte nehmen können.“ – „Was denn, welche Akte meinen Sie“, fragte er sichtlich alarmiert. (Es war immerhin die Zeit kurz nach der „Wende“, in der das Wort „Akteneinsicht“ im öffentlichen

Diskurs häufig fiel.) Darauf klopfte ihm Christoph Hein, dem ich von Lettaus Anfängen als Direktor des Smith College Junior Year der Jahre 1961 bis 1963 erzählt hatte, dem Schriftstellerfreund auf die Schulter und erklärte ihm, dass ich als Professor of German Studies am Smith College des Öfteren das Hamburg-Programm geleitet hätte.

Lettau sprang auf, umarmte mich und begann von Smith College zu schwärmen wie von einer alten Jugendliebe. Er wollte vor allem wissen, was aus seinem „Baby“, dem Junior Year in Hamburg, geworden sei. Lettau war jener „faculty member from Smith College who will be in charge“ (Letter Mendenhall to Syndikus Münzner), eine harmlose Umschreibung all jener unterschiedlichen Aufgaben, die Lettau und alle Junior-Year-Direktorinnen und Direktoren nach ihm wahrzunehmen und auszufüllen hatten. Es freute mich, ihm versichern zu können, dass sich im Grunde wenig an den Vermittler-Aufgaben geändert habe.

Lettau war 1990, dem Jahr der Vereinigung beider deutscher Staaten, aus den USA nach Berlin remigriert. Seine Rückkehr wurde im Fernsehen gefeiert. Drei Jahre später jedoch, wie er mir auf dem Schriftsteller-Empfang in Berlin-Wannsee beteuerte, vermisste er sein amerikanisches Leben. Er empfand das, was Wolf Biermann in einem seiner Songs als „ich möchte am liebsten weg sein, und bleibe am liebsten hier“ dramatisiert hat.

Auch ich war in jenem ereignisreichen Jahr 1990 in Hamburg, das zweite Mal in der Direktorinnenrolle des Smith College Junior Year Programms. Als dreifacher Flüchtling, der in drei Riesenschritten von Osten nach Westen und in die USA gelangt war, erlebte ich nun, aus Amerika kommend, die Feierlichkeiten zum Tag der deutschen Einheit mit unseren Studentinnen auf dem Hamburger Rathausmarkt. In der Folgezeit fand ich mich wiederholt in der Rolle einer Vermittlerin, und zwar nicht nur des deutschen Alltags an unsere „Smithies“, sondern auch um Verständnis werbend unter Gesprächspartnern aus der „alten“ Bundesrepublik mit ihrer Ablehnung ostdeutscher Gewohnheiten und Denkweisen. Adaption, Akkulturation, Integration, Abgrenzung und Eingemeindung galt es zu leisten auf verschiedenen Ebenen. Smith College hat mit seinen JYA-Programmen seit 1925 an dem Projekt internationaler transkultureller Verständigung und des Verstehens fremder Lebenswelten Teil gehabt. In diese Tradition wollte auch ich mich einbringen als Direktorin des JYA-Programms, über die verschiedenen Aufgabenbereiche dieses Amtes. Dabei habe ich im Laufe vieler Jahre erlebt, dass mir die jungen Amerikanerinnen häufig neue Sichtweisen auf das Land meiner Herkunft nahegelegt und mein Verständnis amerikanischer Denkweisen und Lebensart geändert haben.

Die Vermittlerrolle der JYA-Direktoren hat sich freilich gewandelt, insbesondere im 21. Jahrhundert mit seiner Vielfalt an medial oder virtuell zugänglichen Einblicken in andere Kulturen. 1980/81, mein erstes Jahr in Hamburg, gab es weder Handys noch iPads, weder Fax noch Skype. In den Wohnheimen stand den Studierenden lediglich ein Telefon auf ihrem jeweiligen Flur zur Verfügung. Die

17 Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer jenes Studienjahres waren in ihrem Einleben in der Fremde aufeinander angewiesen, woraus sich viele lebenslange Freundschaften bildeten. Zur 30-jährigen „Reunion“ des Studienjahrgangs 1982 waren elf der Gruppe JYA 1980/81 an das Smith College zurückgekehrt, einige sogar aus Australien und Deutschland.

Zu den Höhe- und Krisenpunkten meiner Erfahrungen als Junior-Year-Direktorin zählt die Irak-Krise, damit verbunden die Massendemonstrationen in vielen deutschen Städten. Auch in der Rothenbaumchaussee sammelten sich die Demonstrierenden fast täglich und machten keinen Hehl aus ihrer feindseligen Einstellung gegenüber den USA. Unsere Studierenden mussten – wie es ja auch im umgekehrten Falle ist – für ihr Land ein- und geradestehen! (Auch ich war 1961 bis 1965 in meinen vier Studienjahren am Middlebury College nur allzu häufig in die Verantwortung genommen worden für das nationalsozialistische Deutschland und seine Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit.) Vom Office for Study Abroad am Smith College sowie vom US-Konsulat in Hamburg wurde ich beauftragt, unsere Studierenden zu äußerster Vorsicht zu ermahnen. Sie sollten in der Öffentlichkeit kein Englisch miteinander sprechen (was mir sehr gefiel!), sich nicht „amerikanisch“ verhalten. Ich musste das Schild „Smith College“ vom Eingang zum Smith Center entfernen, „safe families“ finden, die im Falle von Angriffen auf Amerikaner unsere Studentinnen aufnehmen würden; gleichzeitig war ein „buddy system“ zu organisieren – vier Gruppen von je drei Studentinnen –, von denen eine mich dreimal pro Tag anzurufen hatte. Gleichzeitig wurde ihnen frei gestellt, in die USA zurückzukehren, ohne das Semester in Hamburg abgeschlossen zu haben. Keine der Teilnehmerinnen entschied sich für diese Option, auch der Gaststudent von der Columbia University nicht. Die größte Herausforderung war der Auftrag, Exit-Routen in die USA oder nach Kanada über Orte zu organisieren, die den Verantwortlichen im U.S.-Außenministerium am sichersten erschienen, beispielsweise Warschau, Tallin oder Oslo! All diese Bemühungen waren zum Glück unnötig; es kam zu keinen Terror-Anschlägen, sodass unsere Studenten in den Semesterferien Reisen in andere europäische Länder unternehmen konnten. In diesem schwierigen Monat wurde mir bewusst, wie betroffen mich anti-amerikanische Slogans, Spruchbänder und Aufrufe machten. Anscheinend war ich innerlich zur Amerikanerin geworden, ohne es mir eingestehen zu wollen.

Die Jahre 1995/97, 1998/99, 2004/2005 sowie 2008/2009 waren insgesamt schöne, ertragreiche Zeiten. Das gilt für curriculare und administrative Neugestaltungen, denn das sechswöchige Orientierungsprogramm wie auch die studienbegleitenden Sprachveranstaltungen erhielten ein neues Profil. Dank der Zusammenarbeit mit Hartmut Delmas aus dem Bereich Deutsch als Fremdsprache der Universität konnten wir diese Sprachkurse selbst gestalten und dann der pädagogischen Weitsicht und Erfahrung unserer jetzigen Associate Direktorin Jutta Gutzeit anvertrauen. Christine Koglin und nach ihr Christiane Thurner, die sich ein Jahr am Smith College im

Rahmen des Programms „Diploma of American Studies“ aufgehalten hatten und mit amerikanischen Lebensweisen und Studiengegebenheiten vertraut waren, waren nicht nur im Büro-Alltag für jeden Direktor und jede Direktorin unersetzliche Ratgeber, Mitgestalter von Exkursionen sowie extra-curricularen Veranstaltungen. Sie vermochten, da sie ihr Magister-Studium bereits abgeschlossen hatten, den „Smithies“ aus der Sicht ehemaliger Studierender so manche Studiengänge, Fächer oder akademische Vorgehensweisen erklären.

Wie wäre es mir wohl in Hamburg ergangen ohne Manfred Bonus, „meine feste Burg“ in meinem Wirken in der mir zur vierten Heimat gewordenen Hansestadt! Er war mir in den Jahren von 1995 bis 2015 ein geschätzter Kollege und Freund, mit dem ich so manche Touren und „Irrfahrten“ unternommen habe. Unsere Gespräche über Inhalte, Praktiken und Ziele der Sprach- und Kultur-Vermittlung waren stets offen, fordernd, manchmal sogar anstrengend, führten jedoch in der Mehrzahl zu den von uns allen angestrebten Ergebnissen. Er war es auch, der Rainer Nicolaysen 1996 für unser Orientierungsprogramm gewinnen konnte. Peter Borowsky, Historiker an der Universität Hamburg, den Generationen von Smithies als Lehrenden und als Wissenschaftler geschätzt und verehrt haben, hatte uns seinen ehemaligen Doktoranden ebenfalls eindringlich empfohlen. Rainer, inzwischen Professor für Neuere Geschichte an der Universität Hamburg, ist unserem Junior Year Programm verbunden geblieben und bietet für unsere Studierenden seit 1998 Seminare zur neueren deutschen Geschichte an. Jutta Gutzeit ist eine der „drei Musketiere“ – Bonus, Nicolaysen, Gutzeit! Ihre Lehrveranstaltung „280 Theater in Hamburg: Topics and Trends in Contemporary German Theater“ zählt zu den „Highlights“ vieler Teilnehmerinnen unseres Studienprogramms in Hamburg. Als Associate Direktorin hat Jutta Gutzeit dazu beigetragen, dass ich die Aufgaben der Direktorin gelassener und zuversichtlicher wahrnehmen konnte als in meinen Anfängen 1980/81 sowie 1990/91, Zeiten, die mir rückblickend wie die „dark ages“ erscheinen.

Umdenken – anders disponieren – *winging it*: Das sind für mich amerikanische Verhaltensweisen, das „Anders-Sein!“. Manfred, Rainer, Jutta und ich haben diese „Tugenden“ häufiger einsetzen müssen, als wir geplant hatten. Wenn Jutta beispielsweise Anfang September am Flughafen Fuhlsbüttel auf eine Studentin aus den USA wartete, die nach einer Zwischenlandung in Irland nicht mit dem angegebenen Flugzeug oder zur genannten Ankunftszeit erschien, hat Sohn Johannes auf dem einen Ankunfts-Terminal, Jutta auf dem anderen Wache gehalten. Zwischendurch telefonierten wir, arbeiteten wie Scotland Yard, um Verbleib und Weiterflug unseres anscheinend verloren gegangenen Schützlings herauszufinden (à la „j'ai perdu ma Eurydice...“). Zum Glück hatten wir bereits Handys, sodass ich Juttas Warten beenden konnte, als selbige „Eurydice“ im Smith-Büro in der Rothenbaumchaussee erschien und ich sie freudig und erleichtert in meine müden Arme nehmen durfte.

Manfred und ich dagegen forderten den neu dazugekommenen Rainer Nicolaysen während des Orientierungsprogramms 1996 auf unnachahmliche Weise heraus. Auf

dem Programm stand eine Wochenend-Exkursion auf die Nordseeinsel Pellworm. Ich hatte mir diesen Ausflug ausgedacht als Alternative zu Stadt, Architektur, Kultur. Norddeutsche Landschaft, Meeres- und Inselkultur erschienen mir nach einem NDR-Film über Pellworm überaus lohnenswert. Im Jahr davor hatten wir bereits einen Tages-Ausflug auf die Insel gemacht, mit Fahrradtouren, inklusive Verfahren und nahezu Verfehlen der letzten Fähre (ohne Übernachtungs-Reservierungen, falls wir die Fähre verpasst hätten). Also beschlossen wir, beim nächsten Ausflug im September 1996, auf Pellworm zu übernachten. Vorfall Nr. 1: Manfred Bonus, sieben Programm-Teilnehmerinnen und ich finden uns früh morgens auf dem Bahnhof Dammtor ein. Rainer Nicolaysen und zwei weitere Studentinnen wollen am Bahnhof Altona zusteigen. Alle sind da: Ein Zug fährt ein und Manfred sagt: „Das ist unser.“ Ich frage: „Bist du sicher?“ „Na klar“, erwidert er; und wenn Manfred „Na klar“ sagt, erübrigt sich gewöhnlich eine weitere Rückfrage. Ungefähr drei Minuten nach Abfahrt des Zuges mit uns verirrt Neun wird mir klar, dass wir uns in einem Zug nach Kiel und nicht nach Husum befinden! Alarm im Zugabteil! Der Schaffner erklärt uns, wir könnten lediglich in Neumünster aussteigen, dann mit einem Bummelzug, der an jeder Milchkanne hält, nach Heide weiterfahren und von dort aus doch noch nach Husum gelangen! Ich bitte daraufhin den Zugführer, mit seinen Kollegen am Bahnhof Altona zu telefonieren, Rainer dort ausrufen zu lassen, unser Missgeschick mitzuteilen und ihn zu bitten, auf dem Husumer Bahnhof auf uns zu warten!

Gesagt, getan: der freundliche, arg belustigte Zugführer tut das Seinige. – Wie aber soll ich je wieder das Vertrauen unserer Studentinnen in meine „Leiter- und Planungs-Fähigkeiten“ zurückgewinnen? Zum Glück sind sie immer noch müde genug, um die Fahrt von Milchkanne zu Milchkanne durch das holsteinische Flachland zu verschlafen. Umso größer die Freude, als wir schließlich in Husum eintreffen, Rainer und die zwei anderen Studentinnen wiederfinden, sodass wir gemeinsam die Reise nach Nordstrand fortsetzen können und sogar noch die Fähre nach Pellworm erreichen.

Weitere „Irrfahrten“ auf Pellworm behalte ich für mich. Erwähnenswert ist jedoch Vorfall Nr. 2 gleich nach der Ankunft: Wir holen die vorbestellten Fahrräder ab und begeben uns auf die Tour den Deich entlang zu unserem Hotel. Dabei werden wir von einem Wolkensturz und Windböen überfallen, die mir – so dachte ich – die schlimmste Evaluierung meiner Direktorinnen-Tätigkeit einbringen würden! Aber Rainer saved the day, indem er nach unserer Ankunft im Hotel und der Zuweisung der jeweiligen Zimmer die durchnässten Jeans aller Exkursions-Teilnehmer/innen einsammelt und in die Trocken-Trommel im Wäscheraum des Hotels befördert. The rest is history!

Dieses mein „Nachdenken über meine Zeit in Hamburg“ ist selektiv und unzureichend. Ich kann den vielen Menschen, Begegnungen, Orten des Erlebens, der Schönheit dieser einmaligen Stadt und ihrer Geschichte keineswegs gerecht

.....

werden. Dankend sei jedoch jener Freunde und Förderer unseres Auslands-Studien-Projektes gedacht, die als Universitäts-Präsidenten, als Leiter und Mitarbeiter des Akademischen Auslandsamtes sowie des Studentenwerks unser Bestreben um Gedeih und Weiterwirken internationaler Lern- und Lebenserfahrungen über mehr als fünf Jahrzehnte mitgetragen und mitgestaltet haben.

Bleibt mir nur noch – ähnlich wie John F. Kennedy über Berlin – zu gestehen: „Ich bin ein Hamburger.“

## JOSEPH MCVEIGH



b. 1952, B.A. LaSalle University 1974 ·  
 Ph.D University of Pennsylvania 1984 ·  
 Professor of German Studies, Smith  
 College · Director of Smith College Junior  
 Year at the University of Hamburg  
 1988–89, 1989–90, 1999–2000, 2005–06,  
 2006–07, 2009–10, 2013–14.

### WITNESSING HISTORY'S FOOTNOTES

When students plan to spend a year abroad, most do not envision the undertaking as a life-changing adventure, nor do they anticipate being witness to historic changes of global significance. Nevertheless, such was the case for the Smith College students who accompanied me to Hamburg during the years 1988 to 1990. By any account, this period was a momentous watershed moment in both German and European history. The major events of those years are certainly well known and often recounted: the large but peaceful protest movement in East Germany in 1988 and 1989, the opening of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, the first democratic elections in the East, the so-called “2 Plus 4 Agreement” of 1990 that paved the way to the reunification of Germany, and so many more. Not to be forgotten in this time of surprises was the German victory in the soccer World Cup in 1990. Would anyone venture a guess as to which of these heady events was celebrated the loudest in the streets of then West Germany?

As the events of 1988–89 were unfolding it was unclear whether the students on the Smith JYA Program grasped the import of what was happening, at least before the tempestuous evening of November 9, 1989. Once the once-unthinkable happened and the Berlin Wall was opened, it was clear to everyone that history appeared to have taken on a will – and direction – of its own, but where it was headed, one could only guess at that time. Needless to say, Smith students being a curious folk, most immediately headed for Berlin. Classes be damned! There was history to be made...or at least witnessed, and pieces of that history could be chiseled

from its primary symbol, the Berlin Wall, or, sans hammer and chisel, purchased from one of the vendors of painted concrete mementos small and large mushrooming along the boundary between East and West.

As director of the Program at the time and father of three small children, I could not accompany the students to Berlin right away. Disappointed at the time, I found that in retrospect from the new century, my most indelible memories of that time were not the main event of November 9th or the political decisions that followed over the next year, but rather those events that did not quite make it into the headlines. Some were tinged with humor, like the German TV-interviewer who on the evening of November 9th breathlessly announced to his viewers that he was about to interview one of the first people to cross into West Berlin from the East on this historic occasion. His first question to the confused-looking 20-something: How does it feel to be in West Berlin for the first time? The answer from the smartly dressed guest: I'm a West Berliner.

Other footnotes to the events of that time were of a more serious nature and perhaps even somewhat tragic, as I witnessed during my first trip to Berlin in December 1989. Although a month had passed since the "Mauerspechte" first began their work, chipping away souvenirs from the Wall, East German border guards were still making their rounds on the Western side of the Wall attempting to confiscate the tools destroying their now-defunct "antifascist protective wall" (*antifaschistischer Schutzwall*) and reminding the vandals that they were standing in the territory of the sovereign nation of the German Democratic Republic and could be arrested if they did not desist. Needless to say, once the guards moved a safe distance down the Wall, new tools appeared and the chiseling continued.

Even before the events of November 1989 started to take shape our JYA Program made its yearly trip to the still-divided city of Berlin in early October of that year. As part of the excursion, the group would take a bus-tour of East Berlin and Potsdam. On this occasion – the last of its kind for the Smith Program – we had to make an obligatory stop inside the Brandenburg Gate in order to hear a lecture by an East German border guard on why the Wall existed. There were also some young, male American students with us on the bus tour, perhaps from one of the other Hamburg-based American JYA Programs from Cornell University or from the consortium program of Indiana, Ohio State or Purdue Universities. In any case, the lecture came to an abrupt – and tense – end when, during the question-and-answer session following the lecture, one of the young men asked how one could reconcile the guard's claim that East Berlin was the sovereign capital of a sovereign nation with the fact that military personnel from the U.S., U.K. and France could hold inspection trips through these sovereign entities unannounced and without requesting permission. The guard, visibly upset, declared the meeting over without answering the question and we were hustled back to the bus, not sure what would happen next. What did happen was an otherwise uneventful trip to Potsdam.



.....

Once they had returned from their visits to Berlin, students resumed their studies in Hamburg, not knowing that even there the aftermath of November 1989 would soon be manifest. The West German government's declaration that citizens from the East would receive DM 100 in "welcome money" (*Begrüßungsgeld*) upon visiting the West for the first time led to a flood of citizens on weekends from the East to downtown Hamburg, the largest city in close proximity to the border. Students frequenting the downtown area during that time noted the long lines of parked "Trabis" from the East and the throngs of people window-shopping while weighted down with bags filled to the brim with groceries. The raucous celebrations in Berlin of a few weeks earlier now gave way to the sober reality of those who were both the main actors and the footnotes of history. For the students who witnessed these things in person, their time in Hamburg was indeed life-changing in ways they never anticipated, nor will ever forget.

Did I mention that Germany won the soccer World Cup the very next summer?

## JOCELYNE KOLB



b. 1951 · B.A. Smith College 1972 ·  
Ph.D. Yale University 1979 · Professor  
of German Studies, Smith College ·  
Director of Smith College Junior Year  
at the University of Hamburg  
1992–93, 2002–03, 2007–08, 2010–11,  
2014–15, 2016–17.

### HAMBURG IN SILVER AND GOLD

One of my most productive mistakes was the decision not to study in Hamburg during my junior year at Smith College. Headstrong and with a streak of independence foolish in its fierceness, I chose to spend a semester abroad rather than a year, in Freiburg rather than in Hamburg. The bouts of loneliness during my first two months were so strong and my misperceptions of the country so great that it was nine years before I again set foot on German soil. This self-imposed exile did not extend to German books and music and films or keep me from writing a dissertation on Heine and teaching German at Bard, Amherst, Smith, and Dartmouth Colleges (places that today would scarcely look at someone with so little experience in Germany). Yet that cloud of student foolishness contained one of the silver linings that my colleagues always tease me for seeking – and finding. Because of my mistake, I can speak with authority to my students about the advantages of spending a full year abroad rather than only a semester; of studying in Hamburg rather than elsewhere; and of coming to Germany with a foreign studies program rather than solo (full disclosure: I was not entirely solo, because I went to Freiburg to work on Rilke's translations of Valéry at the suggestion of Judith Ryan, whose husband Lawrence Ryan was overseeing the UMass program).

There were other benefits to my mistaken decision. When I finally returned to Germany it was with an expert guide, because, like generations of students before me, I had fallen in love with a man from Hamburg. Had I gone to Hamburg on Hans Vaget's program in 1970–71, I would have met Konrad Kenkel too soon to

.....

qualify as his colleague at Dartmouth or for him to qualify as my husband. Another benefit was the arrival in Freiburg of my Smith classmate Sarah Thomas at the beginning of April. She solved the loneliness problem and offset my negativity with her wit and quick-wittedness. It did not hurt that Sarah and I both appreciated the excellent and affordable food in Freiburg (would the food in Hamburg have appealed to me as much?). Then, too, there was the intellectual stimulus of working under Judith Ryan's guidance and the satisfaction of typing out 100 pages (DINA 4, let it be noted) on the heavy manual typewriter that my friendly *Wirtin* gave me to use in my chilly garret room. During the first lonely months, I read a lot, perversely more in French and English than German, which gave me pleasure and sustenance: Balzac novels, a poem from Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* each night before going to bed, George Eliot, and – as preparation for a Henry James pilgrimage with my parents at the end of the summer – Leon Edel's biography of James, the final volume of which had just appeared.

In 1992–93, I was finally in Hamburg with a group of 16 students to direct the program that I had shunned when I was a student myself. Things look different from the director's perch, to be sure, but students and directors share what has become Smith's fulcrum in Hamburg: the *Gästehaus der Universität* at Rothenbaumchaussee 34, which for many decades has seen dozens of faculty and hundreds of students come, go, work, and socialize. The *Gästehaus* is directly across from the Curio-Haus (as we always say to taxi drivers) and a site of memories in no need of silver linings. It is in the *Gästehaus* that the director lives and shares an office with the associate director Jutta Gutzeit (who is herself the personification of progress). It is here that we have a classroom for Smith courses upstairs and the Smith Center in the basement (the students' "club house," as one clever visiting colleague from Smith called it), with a library in one room and computers and a place for classes and meetings in another, as well as a kitchenette for tea and coffee. Classes were held in the Smith Center for some 40 years, and I still expect to encounter our dear colleagues Peter Borowsky and Manfred Bonus when I am there. Their spirit lives on in the Smith Center and in other rooms of the *Gästehaus*, as does that of Marie Schnieders, the formidable founding mother of the program whom I remember from a class on medieval epics but unknown to most people now associated with the program. Bustling from one room to the other until she retired in December of 2015 was Annelie Lange, the cheerful and indefatigable person who for 25 years cleaned the rooms twice a week and took note of everything.

This home away from home is within walking distance of all that matters: the University; the *Staatsoper*; the Laiszhalle (modeled after Symphony Hall in Boston and a satisfying example of cultural transfer from new to old); the Abaton movie theater; the Alster, Hamburg's magnificent lake in the center of the city; the Jungfernstieg; *Planten un Blumen* next to the Dammtor train station, the glorious park bearing a low-German name; the outdoor market on the Turmweg each Thursday

and, for the past ten years, the market every Saturday in front of the *Völkerkundemuseum*. Some things in the neighborhood have vanished, like the excellent bakery in the Dillstraße and Mohr's butcher shop on the Grindelhof, which cooked and delivered our turkey in the days when we served an elaborate Thanksgiving dinner in the *Gästehaus* rather than sensibly taking students and faculty to a restaurant. But here, too, there is a silver lining: we now shop at Niemerszein, two deluxe supermarkets on the Hallerstraße and the Milchstraße that provide an invigorating ten-minute walk through our elegant neighborhood. Americanization, perhaps, but transfigured and very efficient.

That we can afford such elaborate digs in a central and swanky neighborhood is thanks to the *Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft*, the foundation that sponsors and manages the *Gästehaus* and that awarded Smith College its medal – in this case truly silver, the “Silber Tympanon” – to celebrate the symbiosis between our institutions. The *Stiftung* and the thriving state of the *Gästehaus* owe much to the foresight and convictions of another staunch friend and ally of Smith College, Peter Fischer-Appelt, the president of the University of Hamburg from 1970 to 1991 and Hamburg's signatory for the faculty exchange agreement between Smith and the University of Hamburg in 1979. Changes in the *Gästehaus* over the years have all been for the better, with refurbished apartments and a staff as gracious and helpful as it is professional. Each month there is a Social Hour in the grand rooms on the ground floor or in the garden, where some Smith faculty have gotten to know each other better than on campus (we no longer have a faculty club at Smith, after all). Directors have lived in the same apartment for nearly 30 years, Apartment 210, which is more spacious and has more light than earlier quarters. Changes in the apartment resemble archeological layers and provide a historical record of fashions and personalities. Friendly ghosts of directors and colleagues from the past keep us company and keep watch. On the bookshelves I find a Fontane edition with Hans Vaget's pencil notations and a copy of his edition of the correspondence between Thomas Mann and Agnes Meyer (for which he received the *Thomas Mann Medaille*). The Rilke edition is a reminder of Judith Ryan. Gertraud Gutzmann looks out through the works of Anna Seghers and Joe McVeigh through those of Ingeborg Bachmann. Traces of Margaret Zelljadt and Judith Keyler-Mayer are evident in dictionaries, grammars, and learned studies of linguistics. We have Rainer Nicolaysen's many books on the shelves but no longer the *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* acquired by Nelly Hoyt in 1991, before the internet made it obsolete, or nearly. There are cookbooks and *Krimis* and children's books and travel guides and maps that bespeak generations of directors and their families. The prints on the walls are a traveling exhibition that reflects the likes, dislikes, and prejudices of directors and their families. Some things disappear – a favorite knife or a favorite mug or a favorite picture – but rise to the surface after an archeological dig through closets and drawers and the backs of armoires.

For my own family, the apartment marks the bilingual, bicultural development of what for us is the brightest of all silver linings: my son Jonathan, who would not exist if I had come to Hamburg in 1970–71 as a student and met Konrad Kenkel too early. I can picture Jonathan at each stage: in the second grade, when all jumping needed to be constrained to the bedroom and to times when Jutta was not in the office directly below; in the seventh grade, when he spread his wings and learned to use public transportation alone, a healthy antidote to the occasional grumpiness of adolescence; in the tenth grade, when he sped off to school on his bicycle each morning, sometimes forgetting to wave to us standing like *Kaiser und Kaiserin* in the window, or when, after a soccer injury, he converted his crutches into *Siebenmeilenstiefel* and seemed to fly down the street. At the beginning of each of the three years two burly men would huff and puff and curse as they lugged a piano for him up the stairs and deposited it in what even some of my colleagues call “Jonathan’s room.” My stepson Kai had just started college when I directed my first program. His cameo appearances in the apartment likewise mark stages of his development, and I think of his brief visit in June of 1993, when he was on shore from his summer job working on a freighter and provided an unforgettable glimpse of the harbor and of his ship. More recently I think of 2014, when he and his Brazilian wife Silvia came from Rio de Janeiro to spend Christmas vacation with us and we all walked down the Rabenstraße to the Alster and ushered in 2015 with fireworks and champagne. Vivid and joyful memories all, as are the many visits from family and friends over the years and the many dinners with Hamburg friends and colleagues in Apartment 210.

The apartment has seen brilliantly practical changes in the form of a new kitchen designed by Margaret Zelljadt in 2002 (a dishwasher had been introduced ten years earlier by Nelly Hoyt), with improvements and a more strict organization contributed by Judith Keyler some ten years later. Thanks to Gertraud Gutzmann we have more light and therefore better mental health: she introduced lamps and moved the dining room table into the living room so that we sit looking out on the Curio-Haus (and more recently Joel Westerdale and Sarah-Jane Poindexter improved on the improvement by turning the table and putting it directly in front of the window). The furniture is so retro that it has become valuable, and the china and table linens have witnessed dozens of opening luncheons and coffee hours with students and colleagues. During the days of the faculty exchange – initiated by Joachim Stieber from Smith and Martin Warnke from Hamburg in 1980–81, followed the next year by Nelly Hoyt and Peter Borowsky – the *Gästehaus* was like a Smith dormitory for grown ups, with many happy and stimulating dinners and other gatherings, especially in Apartment 210, twice when Carol Christ and Paul Alpers were in Hamburg. During the celebrations for the program’s 40th and 50th anniversaries, we truly had Smith in Hamburg, and the party for Margaret Zelljadt’s retirement in 2011 nearly warranted Joe McVeigh’s offices as College marshal: besides Margaret, her

daughters Katja and Lisa and their husbands (and Igor in spirit), there were three of us from German Studies (Gertraud Gutzmann, Joseph McVeigh, and I) and Smith colleagues from each of the three divisions: John and Låle Burk from the sciences, Craig and Jad Davis from the humanities, and Dennis Yasutomo from the social sciences. The dissolution of the faculty exchange in 2013 is something for which I can find no silver lining, but perhaps it will be rekindled.

With a bit of effort I can, however, find a silver lining even for Skype, which kept the McVeighs together while Joe was directing the program and Sue was at home. Skype also allowed the McVeighs and the Connollys to watch their grandchildren grow while the ocean separated them. I nevertheless hold fast to the conviction that Skype is harmful to students' progress, psychologically and linguistically, and I urge my groups to drop it into the Atlantic on their way to Hamburg and to write letters that will preserve their accounts of adventures and misadventures in Hamburg and demonstrate their stunning development throughout the year. Such urgings are as retro as our furniture, I realize, although there are signs that the value of letters, too, is increasing.

At the center of my Hamburg memories is naturally the contact with students, some of it in the apartment but most of it in the other *Gästebaus* rooms and on excursions to places like Lübeck, Berlin, the North Sea, and Leipzig, or at concerts, the opera, and the theater. Yet the apartment acquires an anthropological as well as an archeological dimension when students come for tea with their families. Meeting parents and siblings and speaking with the students in what has by then become the exotic or rather the forbidden English language ("die verbotene Sprache") is invariably pleasant, sometimes surprising, and often revelatory. The least amount of time I spend with the students is in the classroom (except informally for optional sessions on phonetics), which I regret, but in silver-lining-speak I consider Hamburg and the environs a gigantic classroom. It is one of the director's most satisfying jobs to help students interpret and master what they see in Hamburg and at the University. If Smith is a "bubble," then that bubble bursts for students in Hamburg, despite the coziness and convenience of our rooms in the *Gästebaus*. Willing, curious, and good-humored students are the norm, but not one of my six groups completely resembles another. An affection for the students springs promptly into being and outlasts the year, as does admiration for their hard work and for their willingness to embrace life in Hamburg – and to do so in German, which is easier said than done, despite our language pledge.

But why speak only of silver linings? What Smith College has in Hamburg is gold, whether the study abroad program for our own and guest students; the fellowships for students from the University of Hamburg to study at Smith and earn a diploma in American Studies; or the faculty exchange program, which with luck, effort, and patience will reemerge. In reading the testimonies of program participants contained in this volume, I have realized that to speak of silver is an example

.....

of Hamburg's characteristic understatement. For me personally, having thoroughly corrected my mistake as a student by directing the program six times, gold is closer to the mark. Having returned to direct the program for the last time in 2016–17 (and the last year in which there will be a faculty director in residence), I again marvel at the vibrancy of a study abroad program so faithful to its origins but rich in changes and improvements. Perhaps we should speak of platinum?

## JOEL WESTERDALE



b. 1971 · B.A. University of Michigan 1994, Ph.D. Harvard University 2004 · Associate Professor of German Studies, Smith College · Director of Smith College Junior Year at the University of Hamburg 2015–16.

### CULTURAL BUOYANCY: IMMERSION IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Not till we are lost, in other words not till we have lost the world, do we begin to find ourselves, and realize where we are and the infinite extent of our relations.

(Thoreau, *Walden*)

The notion of immersion has long been the mainstay of Smith College's study abroad program in Hamburg. Our students are directly enrolled at the University, they live in student dormitories, and they conduct their business entirely in the language of their host country. While the wide array of courses offered at the University surely entices them to Hamburg, we should not fool ourselves: the promise of linguistic and cultural immersion has always provided a far more romantic enticement. Yet today that experience of immersion is very different from what it was twenty – even ten years ago. Not so long ago aerogrammes offered the most economic option for communicating with loved ones back home. For the less patient there was the telephone, but one paid for the indulgence. Communication was inconvenient, but this inconvenience was also a blessing, one that encouraged students to seek out new relationships, explore their new surroundings, and familiarize themselves with the culture of the city that would be their home for the year.

Of course, immersion was never as simple as merely bringing the student to Hamburg. Students may be enrolled at the University, but their schedule is supplemented by courses at the Smith Center; they may live in dorms, but these also house



other international students; and while yes, they still take the notorious “language pledge,” what language they speak on their own time is entirely at their discretion. All these elements nevertheless aim to integrate students into the local culture. Some students might resist, but up until recently the system was rigged against them. If they wanted to socialize or seek out entertainment, it would be on Hamburg’s terms, often with Germans, and likely in German. But now it seems the system is rigged in the other direction, and immersion as we have known it has become ever more elusive.

Before ever coming to Hamburg, students already live a good part of their lives on their screens. The devices with which they conduct their research and write papers and lab reports is the same one with which they entertain themselves using streaming apps like Netflix and Spotify. And perhaps most significantly for their study abroad experience, it is the same device with which they maintain personal relationships, whether it be through social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter or communication applications like Skype and Whatsapp. The same options for research, entertainment, and communication that they know from home remain at their disposal when they go abroad. Beyond the minor inconvenience of the time difference between Europe and the US, there is little need for Smith students in Hamburg to alter their habits of production, consumption, or communication. When confronted with discomfort or loneliness or vulnerability – which they inevitably will be as students living abroad – they can always retreat to their own digital island that is familiar and stable and comforting. To be sure, an island is a wonderful thing when you’re drowning, but we want our students to swim, and what’s more, we want them to dive deep. Leaving the island is scary and involves risk, and that can be hard to stomach when so many of one’s needs are already being met. With the help of today’s online media options, students can avoid many of the hardships that conventionally accompany study abroad. While one might see this as a positive development, it can also compromise the study abroad experience, which in many ways is really an extended exercise in finding new ways to navigate discomforts.

Once a student came to me with a problem. It turns out the problem was with a friend who was back in the US. With my antiquated sense of immersion, I counseled the student to stop living with one foot in the US and one foot in Germany, to which she replied that, with the help of social media, both her feet were still firmly planted in the US. This is symptomatic of more than just the much maligned FOMO (fear of missing out) that afflicts those supposedly riveted to their Facebook page. It exhibits the kind of “absent presence” long associated with social media: one’s body may be in Hamburg, but the mind floats in an unlocalized digital ether. In the case of study abroad, this severing of the self from the surroundings cuts particularly close to the bone, for one’s physical presence in the foreign country is integral to the entire undertaking.

All that said, social media have also in many ways augmented the experience of study abroad for our students. Beyond simply helping them stay in touch with

.....

friends and family, the opportunity to share images and experiences online can help intensify their appreciation for the opportunities they enjoy, whether it be a good meal or an engaging class, a crazy party or a quiet moment. Social media also provide access to information about events, clubs, and general goings-on about town. And lest we forget, social media are also part of the German experience, too. Just as they provide students a connection from Germany while abroad, they also promise students a connection to Germany from the US – before, during, and after their time in Hamburg.

Social media may threaten our old sense of immersion, but they also hold the potential for an even more vibrant and sustained relationship between Smith College and the University of Hamburg. When I first chose the epigraph for this piece, Thoreau's words seemed to extol the benefits of cultural immersion, of getting lost in another culture, of losing the world in order to find ourselves, and I lamented that future Smith students might never enjoy – or suffer through – such an enriching experience. But we are in a time of technology-driven transition, and what we are transitioning to is still unclear. What is clear is that the ideal of immersion that so long guided our understanding of study abroad can no longer be taken for granted, and without it, we might be the ones who are lost. But perhaps we are also beginning to find ourselves, so that we, too, may “realize where we are and the infinite extent of our relations.” Smith College and the University of Hamburg have a long history together, as this book attests. Perhaps those reading this book may seek each other out with the aid of social media, and come together to create new opportunities for students and alums, opportunities that augment rather than compromise their study abroad experience. Study abroad has always been about adapting to new cultural and social patterns. The patterns established by social media are still emerging. Determining what those patterns will be – and how they might best enhance the enduring bond between Smith and Hamburg – is the challenge that now lies before us.