

German-Canadian Studies Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 4

April 2003

For Your Calendar:

Nach einer Moderne?" Dr. Christer Petersen (Univ. Manitoba) illustriert die Prinzipien einer postmodernen Ästhetik am lyrischen Werk Paul Wührs: Donnerstag, 1. Mai 2003, 19 Uhr. Univ. Winnipeg, Faculty Club (Wesley Hall).

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Writers and Women

Scholarships awarded for research on German-Canadian writers and Kanadier women

Two young scholars of German-Canadian Studies have been awarded research scholarships for their work on German-Canadian writers and Kanadier women.

Each year, the Chair in German-Canadian Studies at the University of Winnipeg awards two scholarships for research in the field of German-Canadian Studies. In 2003, six highly qualified applications were received, three from M.A. students and three from Ph.D. stu-

dents, from Canada, Germany, and France.

Ms **Myka Burke** (German Studies, University of Leipzig) received a Ph.D. scholarship for work on her dissertation about "German-Canadian Cultural Identity, Language, and Literature." Her research involves both an analysis of contemporary German-Canadian literature and interviews with German-Canadian authors. For more information on Ms Burke and her research, see page 3.

Ms **Tina Fehr Kehler** (Sociology, University of Manitoba) received an M.A. scholarship for work on her M.A. thesis on the "Role of the Mother in the Preservation and Transmission of Ethnic Culture Among the Kanadier Mennonites of Southern Manitoba." Her findings will be based on an analysis of interviews with Kanadier women she has been conducting. For more information on Ms Fehr Kehler and her research, see page 2.

Das Ende der Moderne?

Christer Petersen zum lyrischen Werk Paul Wührs

Der Frage, was nach der Moderne kommt, geht Dr. Christer Petersen am Donnerstag, dem 1. Mai in einem Vortrag an der Universität Winnipeg nach. Dabei wird er anhand ausgewählter Gedichte des Münchner Hörspielautors Paul Wühr (geb. 1927), der auch mehrere einflussreiche Prosa-

und Lyrikwerke geschrieben hat, die zentralen thematischen und formalen Prinzipien einer neuen Kunstform, die sich in den 1970er und 80er Jahre in Europa und Nordamerika entwickelte, beschreiben. „Zwar gehört Wühr, der im selben Jahr wie der Literaturnobelpreisträger Günter Grass

geboren wurde, nicht zu den bekanntesten Autoren der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur, jedoch steht Wührs Werk – auch im Gegensatz zum Oeuvre Grass – für eine neue nach- oder postmoderne Kunstform in Deutschland,“ erklärt Dr. Petersen. „Diese Kunstform findet ihr internationales

Kanadier Women: Preserving Culture

M.A. Scholarship Recipient Tina Fehr Kehler

"I graduated with a B.A. from Providence College in 1994 and with a B.A.H. in Sociology from the University of Winnipeg in 1999. I received



Fehr Kehler: Kanadier Women

the Frank H. Epp Memorial Scholarship from the University of Waterloo in 2002 and the C. A. DeFehr Memorial Scholarship in Mennonite Studies at the University of

Winnipeg in 1997.

"My current project is borne out of several coordinating factors. First, my interest in the Kanadier population results from my experience as a child of Kanadier immigrant parents. Second, my engagement with feminism has led me to explore the nature of women's lives. Third, courses in Mennonite Studies and my Honours thesis led me to conduct initial primary research with the women in this community.

"Presently, my research seeks to uncover the role of the maternal in the transmission and preservation of ethnic identity and culture among the Kanadier Mennonites in Southern

Manitoba in an effort to understand the social position of these women in Mennonite society. Though the task of transmission and preservation is important to the continuation of all ethnic groups, it is largely relegated to women who are generally relegated to subordinate social roles. This research will investigate this contradiction by exploring Kanadier women's personal stories.

With the help of this scholarship, I will be able to continue the collection and analysis of primary data from the women of this population. It will also be used to facilitate the writing of my M.A thesis and dissemination of its discoveries."

Ende der Moderne?

(Continued from page 1)

Pendant lediglich in den Romanen des US-amerikanischen Autors Thomas Pynchon oder den Spielfilmen des britischen Autors und Filmemachers Peter Greenaway."

Dr. Petersen studierte von 1993 bis 1999 Neuere deutsche Literaturwissenschaft, Philosophie und Psychologie an der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel und am University College of London. Nach dem Magisterabschluss war er Doktorand und Dozent am Institut für Neuere deutsche Literatur und Medien der

Universität Kiel. Seit seiner Promotion im Fach Neuerer deutsche Literatur- und Medienwissenschaft Mitte 2002 lehrt er als Assistant Professor am Department of German and Slavic Studies der Universität Manitoba.

Der Vortrag „Nach einer Moderne? Prinzipien einer postmodernen Ästhetik illustriert am lyrischen Werk Paul Wührs" findet am **Donnerstag, dem 1. Mai 2003, um 19 Uhr im Faculty Club (Wesley Hall) an der Universität Winnipeg** statt (auf deutsch). **Alle Interessierten**



Petersen: Postmoderne?

sind herzlich eingeladen. Es wird um **Voranmeldung** unter (204) 786-9009 oder gcs@uwinnipeg.ca gebeten.

Postmoderne
Ästhetik

German-Canadians: Writing Culture

Ph. D. Scholarship Recipient Myka Burke

"After completing my Honours Degree at Carleton University in Ottawa and hearing that the German programme had been cancelled, I was compelled to go back to the University of Leipzig, where I had previously studied on exchange, to pursue further studies. The University's Zentrum für höhere Studien and their interdisciplinary approach to doctoral projects appealed to me since the subject of my dissertation is interdisciplinary in nature.

"The naissance of my project transpired from my academic interests and undergraduate seminars. Professor Dr. Peter Porsch, my supervisor, offered a seminar on German in the United States when I was in Leipzig the first time. When I approached him about my doctoral project, he immedi-

ately confirmed his role as supervisor.

The working title of my dissertation is: 'Cultural Identity, Language, and Literature: Using the Example of German Language Canadian Literature.' The topic suggests that it is a descriptive project and it will be through the empirically based descriptive research that a theoretical concept will emerge. This scholarship will enable final research in the areas of linguistic relativity and Canadian literature.

I hope that I will have answers to the following questions when my project is completed: How does one begin a journey into the realm of German inscriptions on the Canadian literary landscape? What are the signifiers of "Germanness"? Who are the German-Canadian writers? Where are

they located on the Canadian literary landscape? What is the nature of the relationship between Canadian literature and its German counterpart that evolved out of Canadian experience and history? How should their work be read?



Myka Burke with German-Canadian writer Wolfgang Franke (l.) and Prof. Hartmut Froschle

What do they reveal about ethnicity, about multiculturalism, about language and audience?"

*Journey
into the
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Interethnic Relations

(Continued from page 4)

Hans Werner of the University of Winnipeg has been conducting since last spring.

Last summer he was assisted by Robin Dyck, an undergraduate student at the University of Winnipeg majoring in History and German, who spent many hours reading *Der Nordwesten* and other local papers. She also searched extensively for memoirs at the Jew-

ish Historical Society Archives and the Mennonite Heritage Centre. The papers of Valentine Winkler have also been examined at the Provincial Archives. Some additional sources for both the Jewish and German sides of the story were identified but still need to be located and examined.

Dr. Werner is continuing this research and would like to recruit the help of the *Newsletter's*

readers. If anyone knows of memoirs, papers, or letters that might shed further light on this important part of Manitoba and German-Canadian history please contact Dr. Werner at 1-204-786-9765, fax 1-204-774-4134, or email h.werner@uwinnipeg.ca.

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The Chair in German-Canadian Studies was established in 1989 with grants from the Secretary of State's Program for Canadian Ethnic Studies and a group of private philanthropists within the German-Canadian community of Winnipeg. It is located in, and affiliated with, the History Department at the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Chair promotes the teaching of, and research into the history and culture of German-speaking immigrants and their descendants in Canada. It interacts with the German-Canadian community in Winnipeg, Manitoba and the rest of Canada through public lectures and the newsletter. The Chair promotes regional, national and international research through conferences, grants and publications.

Editor/Producer: Alexander Freund

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(Unless otherwise stated, all articles were written by Alexander Freund)

Submissions of articles, news, reports, and reviews as well as artwork and photos for publication in this newsletter are welcome.

Germans, Jews, Mennonites: New Research on Ethnic Relations

Many immigrants who began arriving in Manitoba in large numbers in the 1890s were German speaking, or had been living in close contact with Mennonites in Eastern Europe. It was natural for some of these to find their way into Canadian life by settling close to the East and West Reserve Mennonites who had established their farms and villages some fifteen years earlier. By 1900 Jewish merchants and peddlers, ethnic German farm workers from Eastern Europe and Ontario German station agents and implement dealers were found living among the



Werner: Interethnic relations

otherwise exclusive Mennonite reserves. It is the relations between these ethnic groups at the time of their settlement in pioneer Manitoba that are at the centre of research the historian Dr.

Dear Readers

We are continuing the spring cleaning of our mailing list. If you wish to receive the *German-Canadian Studies Newsletter* in the future, please let us know. If we don't hear from you, we will assume that your reading priorities have changed and honour your decision (in other words, take you off our mailing list). Please, give us a quick ring at 1-204-786-9009, fax us at 1-204-774-4134, or email us at gcs@uwinnipeg.ca. Thank you!
P.S. An asterisk (*) to the left of your name on the address label indicates that you have already informed us.

