

# NEWSLETTER

## Department of Scandinavian Studies

*University of Wisconsin–Madison*

### Message from the Chair

It is our pleasure to send out the spring 2015 department newsletter compiled during the last hectic weeks of the semester.

With the huge financial cuts to the University of Wisconsin–Madison, it has been a somewhat challenging semester filled with worry and uncertainty. Fortunately, this has not affected the morale in the Department of Scandinavian Studies in any significant way: faculty, staff, and students soldier on.

A great mood-lifter has been the appointment of Dr. Dean Krouk, who will join the Department of Scandinavian Studies as assistant professor of Norwegian in September 2015. Dean has a very solid background in Norwegian language, literature, and culture, and both students and faculty will benefit from his expertise. We are greatly looking forward to having Dean as a colleague and consider ourselves very lucky to have been able to attract such a fine teacher and scholar. Dean plans to move to Madison in the early summer and take advantage of the quiet summer months to plan his courses for the fall semester and make progress on his book project.

Several of our students, both graduates and undergraduates, have spent the academic year in various parts of Scandinavia taking courses or doing field work for theses and dissertations. In this newsletter, they share their experiences and adventures.

On behalf of the Department of Scandinavian Studies, I wish you a pleasant and restful summer.

- Professor Kirsten Wolf

### SPRING 2014

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## New Norwegian Professor, Dean Krouk



Dean Krouk will join the faculty in fall 2015 as an assistant professor of Norwegian. Krouk's proven record and significant promise make his coming a cause for celebration. Happily, his hiring also ends seven long lean years without a Norwegian specialist on our faculty.

Research and teaching on Norwegian topics has been central to the department since its founding in 1875 by Rasmus B. Anderson, the son of Norwegian immigrants. And until the recent era of triple-F austerity—fiscal cuts, furloughs, freezes—we have never lacked a professor of Norwegian. Thanks to strong support from alumni and the community, persistent petitioning by the department's faculty, staff, and students, the administration's eventual response, and Dean Krouk's emergence from a field of excellent applicants, we are whole once more.

Dean offered his perspective: "I am excited to join a department with such a long and impressive history. I find the research the professors have been doing inspiring, and everyone was very welcoming and hospitable during my visits."

Dean earned a B.A. in Comparative Literature, with honors, from the University of Chicago in 2003, then went on to the Department of Scandinavian at the University of California, Berkeley, from which he received both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. Since 2005 he has taught a wide range of literature, language, and culture courses at Berkeley, University of Oslo, Pacific Lutheran University and, most recently, St. Olaf College.

His challenging yet engaging instructional style, evident in a guest classroom session during his campus visit, has consistently won such accolades as "witty," "organized," "insightful," and "hard working" from prior students. Looking ahead to UW, Dean reckons: "I'm excited to teach courses related to Norwegian and Scandinavian modernism and the inter-war period, as well as Ibsen (always a favorite to teach)."

An active member of both the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study and the Ibsen Society of America, as well as a specialist on the literary intersection of modernism and fascism in Scandinavia and beyond, Dean has produced a steady, impressive spate of conference papers, essays and book chapters, reviews, and encyclopedia entries. A pair of books-in-progress critically examine "modernist writers who supported the Nazi invasion of Norway and the fascist regime under occupation: Knut Hamsun, Åsmund Sveen, and Rolf Jacobsen."

No stranger to Madison—where his sister, brother-in-law, and niece make their home—Dean confessed that he "loved the lakes and parks, so I'm looking forward to exploring the scenery more by bike." Look for him at department events, in the classroom, and on the bike trails.

## Scandinavian Retreat



No blizzards to keep anyone at home this February, the annual Scandinavian Retreat at Beaver Creek was well-attended with over one hundred participants gathering from across the country. This year's retreat, hosted by Nordenfolk, featured a presentation on environmental performance art in Finland by Cherie Sampson, professor at the University of Missouri-Columbus. Other presentations included a history of nyckelharpa construction, and a workshop by Minneapolis based folk dance group SVIKT on Norwegian folk dance. Good weather this year meant clear skies, which in turn meant the observatory was open to the delight of many stargazers. Finally, we are proud to report that Madison was well represented in the ever-popular kicksled races and axe throwing competition. Our own Travis Witt and Kiana Asada took home the 2nd and 1st places in men's and women's kicksled races, and Derek Johns placed 2nd in the axe throwing competition. We hope to see you at Beaver Creek next year!

## Fun and Adventures for Danish Students Studying at UW-Madison



The generosity of Scan | Design has yet again enabled Danish students to spend a semester at the UW-Madison and to get a taste of life in Madison and the Midwest in general. Together with their American mentors (UW-Madison students, who have studied in Denmark) and faculty and staff with expertise in Danish (Julie Allen, Kirsten Wolf, Nete Schmidt), they participated in numerous activities. For the students, who spent the fall 2014 semester here, a picnic hosted in a city park in August 2014 served as a welcome to Madison and to UW-Madison. Other activities included a visit to House on the Rock followed by a play at the American Player's Theater, kayaking on Lake Monona, a trip to Wollersheim and Devil's Lake, a show at the Overture Center to watch *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and a Danish *julefrokost* at the Idun Lodge. A highlight of the semester was a weekend in Chicago, where the students really enjoyed The Second City, the Architecture River Cruise, and the opportunity to shop in a big city. At a farewell dinner held at Union South, the students expressed their gratitude for having had this wonderful experience.

The number of Danish students studying at the UW-Madison in the spring semester is typically somewhat smaller. The students met with their American mentors and faculty and staff over dinner at Porta Bella in January. Since then, they have been introduced to winter activities, such as ice-skating at the Shell, and enjoyed cozy pizza and



movie nights. Upcoming events include an evening at the Overture Center to watch *The Book of Mormon* and another trip to Chicago, where this semester a visit to the Art Institute will be added. Plans are already underway for the Danish students, who will be studying at UW-Madison in the fall of 2015, and we look forward to meeting and hosting them.



## Department Revives Class on Reading and Understanding All Three Contemporary Scandinavian Languages

After a 7-year break, "Scandinavian Studies 401: Contemporary Scandinavian Languages" was revived this spring semester. 401 is the department's 7<sup>th</sup> semester language course which allows students of Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish written and spoken exposure to the contemporary Scandinavian languages. The course texts and discussions are conducted in the target languages. 401 has a wonderful balance of students, two students from each language are enrolled! Kirsten Wolf (Old Norse and Linguistics), Nete Schmidt (Danish), Scott Mellor (Swedish), and David Natvig (Norwegian) co-taught the course, each responsible for 4-weeks in their respective language and/or specialty. Kirsten Wolf started the course off with an introduction to Scandinavian linguistics, highlighting the main differences between East Norse (Danish and Swedish) and West Norse (Norwegian) using Einar Haugen's *The Scandinavian Languages* in our WITS series as the linguistic course text. Scott Mellor, Nete Schmidt, and David Natvig then provided textual examples, both historical and contemporary, of each language. Scott Mellor's Swedish section exposed the students to news, pop music, game shows and Selma Lagerlöf's ghost murder mystery *Herr Arnes penningar*. Lagerlöf's short novel was selected as it is a delightful read, but more importantly it contains some past linguistic oddities that help students read pre and post 1920s reform Swedish. David Natvig's Norwegian section provided readings in both Norwegian languages, nynorsk and bokmål. Maria Amelie's *Ulovlig norsk* served as the bokmål text and Frode Grytten's *Oppe i treet* and *Syng meg i sønn* were used to explore nynorsk. Nete Schmidt's



Danish section consisted of Danish songs, poetry, news by a variety of authors and short stories by Bjarne Reuter, Helle Helle, Jan Sonnergaard, Karen Blixen, and H.C. Andersen. Even though the three languages are incredibly similar, students were shocked by certain differences, and the instructors of the course enjoyed re-discovering these differences with the students. 401 is a thrilling opportunity for students of Scandinavian languages, and the department looks forward to offering it again in the future!

Students from 401



## Undergraduate Students Abroad

This spring we have undergraduate students in Copenhagen, Aarhus, Stockholm, Umeå, and Bø in Norway. Lauren Schwark and Meghan Radka wrote us postcards to let us know how things are going in Umeå.

I'm taking Swedish history classes at Umeå this semester, and I have to say, it's pretty interesting to learn about Swedish history from a Swedish perspective. I've been really lucky to not have culture shock that bad since I've been here. The climate is very similar to home and the people are also very similar, but it's been kind of difficult getting used to using my Swedish as my first reflex, but it's been a good challenge.

I'm pretty involved with my Buddy Group (which connects Swedes and international students), so I've been to a lot of events through that (such as watching a hockey game in Skellefteå, going above the Arctic Circle to the winter market in Jokkmokk, watching Melodifestivalen, etc.). I think there's something to be said, though, for just recharging in your room by yourself. I think there's a misconception that when you're studying abroad you have to be travelling all over the country or attending events all day, every day, which can get exhausting. I spent a week in Stockholm with one of my best friends and it was amazing, but I also couldn't wait to get back home to Umeå and relax in my bed with Netflix. And it was good to recharge, because when I got back to Umeå most of the snow and ice had melted and it's been sunny! Now I'm excited to be able to do things outside, like bike and play sports. What is one thing I will miss? I don't think I'll ever be able to get used to not having the chai lattes that they have here. I like that the chai lattes here in Sweden are spicier and will really miss them when I come home. – Lauren Schwark



Lauren Schenk at the Arctic Circle



Sámi Market at Jokkmokk



Meghan Radka barbequing with her buddy group.

I'm studying Swedish history and Swedish in Umeå this spring. Class seems to melt away here, and connecting with people became so much more important. I am going to events with my Buddy Group and the international student community here. We've gone to a Skellefteå hockey game, Jokkmokk for the Sami market, and next week we're going to a moose farm. I'm also going out at night to the pubs and dance clubs here.

I don't think I went through culture shock -- I think the Scandinavian studies classes helped me know what to expect. It's not really culture shock, but I feel like I'm playing with Monopoly money when I buy things since the crown is something like 8 to a dollar and math is too hard to do every time I go grocery shopping.

The winter was surprisingly warm -- much warmer than Wisconsin, actually! Now the snow is melting and spring is in the air. Today was the first day I didn't need to wear a jacket and boots! I really love the serenity of the woods here. I know Madison isn't a big city, but it's still bustling all the time. Umeå is incredibly relaxed in comparison. I will miss the other students and the international community. The university did a really great job of connecting us all, and when I come to campus, I almost always will see another student I know and get to chat. I really love everyone I've met, and I'll be sad to go home. I miss my family, and I'll be glad to see them, but every moment of this experience is a treasure. – Meghan Radka

## Help Us Save Postage and Printing Costs!

If you would like to receive an electronic version of our newsletters and have not received notification from our administrator, Tammy Bartels, kindly write her at [tbartels2@wisc.edu](mailto:tbartels2@wisc.edu) and ask to be added. You will save postage and printing costs and help the environment a bit. Thanks!

## Graduate Students Abroad



Samantha enjoying the hills in Sweden

**Samantha Brown:**

I am spending my second year of graduate school studying and doing research in Denmark at the University of Copenhagen. The focus of my time here has been on asylum seekers in contemporary Denmark and the political discourse surrounding their presence. Beyond that, I'm writing as the politics and immigration expert at a student newspaper, teaching Danish to asylum seekers, learning Arabic, sharing a kitchen with 14 Danes at a student dorm, and eating lots of delicious Danish food, all of which I love. I would like to give a special thank you to the Scan|Design Foundation and the Gudrun Gytel Fund for providing me the opportunity to come here and professors back at UW-Madison that have been supportive, despite being so far away.

**Marcus Cederström:**

Thanks to generous funding from the Fulbright Program and the American Scandinavian Foundation, I've been in Stockholm, Sweden, conducting research for my dissertation. It's been almost a year now of friends and family, research and writing, stress and uncertainty—all things that seem to be a part of the PhD process. But between reading 100-year-old America letters and digging through archives and libraries in Stockholm, I've had the opportunity to head north to Kiruna and south to Malmö with plenty of travel to places along the way. It hasn't just been travel in Sweden though. There was the Nobel Prize Ceremony in December, the Swedish Indoor Track and Field Championships where I watched my brother compete in the weight throw in February, and a Fulbright conference in Berlin in March. It's been a wonderful stretch abroad, but I'm looking forward to being back in Madison and finishing my dissertation.

Marcus with an interviewee, Per Ragnarson



**John outside the Norwegian Sámi Parliament**



**John Prusynski:**

I am studying at the Sámi University College in Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino, Norway for the spring semester 2015. Here, I am attending classes in Sámi linguistics and literature, and am also using my time to improve my North Sámi language skills and become more familiar with Sámi culture. In my spare time I have visited the Sámi parliaments in Kárášjohka/Karasjok, Norway and Anár/Inari, Finland, visited a Sámi handicrafts market, attended an indigenous film festival called Skábmagovat, and seen the northern lights nearly every night. Despite the sometimes -40°F temperatures and days without sun, it has been an enjoyable time, and an extraordinary experience. I hope to use what I am learning here to help me better understand and research government policies towards minority and indigenous languages. Thank you to the Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship and to the Mellon Foundation for funding my study here!



**Want to Keep Up with News in the Department beyond the Newsletter??**

**Like us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ScandinavianStudiesUWMadison](http://www.facebook.com/ScandinavianStudiesUWMadison)**

## Congratulations to Award Winners and Graduates

### Graduations:

#### PhD – Spring 2015

Susanne Arthur, Philology

Jenny Aune, Philology

Ayako Yoshimura, Folklore

#### Bachelors Degree – Spring 2015

Derek Francour

Ryan Gesme

Emily Malone

Benjamin Pflughoeft

#### Undergraduate Certificate – Spring 2015

Kyle Bakken, Alexis Blakey, Marissa Hojnacke, Brendan Moriarty, Erin Rieder, Linnea Rock, Kirstina Wogstand

### Awards:

#### Grad Students

**Tim Armstrong-Cochrane**, Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

**Marit Barvke**, Vera Cronor Grant, Nortana, October 2014; Torske Klubben Fellowship 2014; NORTANA Norgessemnaret Graduate Student Travel Grant 2014; NORTANA Travel Grant, Royal Norwegian Embassy 2014; Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

**Samantha Ruth Brown**, FLAS for Arabic (in Europe), 2015-2016

**Marcus Cederström**, Humanities Without Walls Pre-Doctoral Fellow, Chicago, IL, July–August 2015

**Colin Connors**, Vera Cronor Grant, American Folklore Society meeting, November 2014; Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015; Department Service Award; Public Humanities Exchange (HEX) Grant; Society of Historians of Scandinavia Graduate Paper Award; SASS Aurora Borealis Prize in Area Studies

**Kenny Lull**, American Scandinavian Foundation Fellowship, Umeå, Sweden, 2015-2016; Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

**Todd Michelson-Ambelang**, Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

**David Natvig**, Vera Cronor Grant, GLAC 21, May 2015; American Scandinavian Foundation Fellowship, Norway, 2016; Torske Klubben Foundation Award, Norway, 2016

**Lauren Poyer**, Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015; Department of Scandinavian Studies Travel Grant, ISS, Oslo, Summer 2015; FLAS, Oslo, Summer 2015

**John Prusynski**, Mellon Fellowship, Kautokeino, Norway, Jan-Jun 2015; FLAS, Kautokeino, Norway, Jan-Jun 2015

**Amber Rose**, Vera Cronor Grant, American Folklore Society meeting, November 2014; Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

**Jason Schroeder**, Vera Cronor Grant, American Folklore Society meeting, November 2014; Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

**Kyle Swenson**, Vera Cronor Grant, SASS, May 2015

#### Undergraduates

**Eva Shelton**, Cecil Cullander Fund, Study abroad in Stockholm, Summer 2015

**Derek Johns**, Cecil Cullander Fund, Study abroad in Stockholm, Summer 2015

**Colin Anderson**, Larsen Fund, Study abroad in Norway, Fall 2015

**Alexis Dunnum**, Larsen Fund, Study abroad in Norway, Spring 2016

**Johanna Weissing**, Sons of Norway, Idun Lodge Scholarship, Study abroad in Norway, Spring 2016

#### Scan | Design Awards to Study in Denmark

**Summer 2015** - Clara Docter, Alexandra Lindstrom, Erica Olson, Gracia Bonesho, Andrea Moyer, Jennifer Ablanalp

**Fall 2015** - Ryan O'Connor, Jaclynn Scott, Emma Krauska, Tyler Pinter, Erik Elliot

## Faculty Profile: Professor Kirsten Wolf

Dear Readers,

As an editor contributor for the newsletter for the last seven years, I have tried to bring you different aspects of life in the Department. This article is the second of a series, which started last spring with Jim Leary, and focuses on faculty and staff and their achievements. In the Department of Scandinavian Studies, our faculty, staff and students are very diligent workers. Despite the financial climate and speculations about the future of the humanities and higher education, we continue onward. Although diligence can be found throughout the Department, it is through the leadership of the Department, where it is most admirable. For the last seven years, Professor Kirsten Wolf has been the chair of the Department and has continued uninterrupted with her teaching and advising duties, as well as researching and publishing.

In the last five years Kirsten has supervised the dissertations of six students—four who plan to defend in the next year—as well as a number who are in various stages of their studies. She leads the departmental area of philology, works with colleagues in Medieval Studies, and attracts students interested in Old Norse-Icelandic from around the country and the world. She teaches a rotation of over 10 courses, so that students may be able to receive a well-rounded education in philology at the undergraduate and graduate level.

In addition to her teaching and advising duties, Kirsten has conducted a staggering amount of research; her exceptional efforts in research and publishing have not gone unnoticed in the greater university community. In the nearly 30 years that have transpired during her tenure as a professor, Kirsten has published constantly and consistently. She has published over seventy articles and book chapters, several notes, numerous entries in dictionaries and encyclopedias, hundreds of book reviews, over ten translations of sagas and other writings, and over fifteen books and monographs.

In 2001, she was hired as full professor, and in 2004 she became the Torger Thompson Chair. She came to Madison after 13 years of work at the University of Manitoba, a brief time at the Arnemagnæan Collection in Copenhagen, and a year teaching as a lecturer here in Madison in the late 1980s. She came here as a full professor, a title she earned at the almost unheard of age of 34.

From 2005-7, Professor Wolf was a Vilas Fellow. With the funds given for the award, she was able to focus on producing her book, *A Female Legendary from Iceland: "Kirkjubæjarbók"* (AM 429 12mo), Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2011. This project required extensive time working at the Arnemagnæan Collection in Copenhagen. In 2010, she received a Kellett Mid-career award for excellence in research in the humanities section. With the funds from the Kellett, Kirsten was able to research and write her book, *The Legends of the Saints in Old Norse-Icelandic Prose*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. She also was able to write a number of articles on color terms and non-verbal communication in Old Norse-Icelandic literature.

Starting next fall, Kirsten will be the Kim Nilsson Professor of Scandinavian Studies. The title comes through a WARF Named Professorship, an award given only to the most distinguished faculty at UW-Madison. Kirsten chose to honor Kim Nilsson, a former professor in the Department, because of his fairness and unparalleled personal integrity as a leader and administrator in the academic and departmental community. In addition, he is honored for his great service, teaching and scholarship in the areas of Finnish and Fenno-Swedish.

At the moment, Kirsten continues to research in Old Norse-Icelandic philology, focusing on the areas of religious texts and hagiography, as well as color and color terminology. Together with Carole Biggams at the University of Glasgow, she is general editor of Bloomsbury Publishing's six-volume *A Cultural History of Color*, as well as serving as volume editors of the second volume in the series, *A Cultural History of Color in the Medieval Age*. There is no evidence that Kirsten plans to slow down at all in the near future.

Todd Michelson-Ambelang



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*Edited by Kirsten Wolf, Jim Leary, Susanne Arthur, Marit Barkvøe, Colin Connors, and Todd Michelson-Ambelang*

Andrew, (right) with two  
friends from UW, in Oslo



## In Memoriam: Andrew Jensen

We are sorry to announce that one of our students, Andrew Jensen, passed away on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Andrew began taking Norwegian in Fall 2009 as a high school student through the Youth Options program. He returned in 2011 to continue his studies of Norwegian and Scandinavian Studies. Andrew was passionate about his studies of the language and made it his goal to attend the International Summer School in Oslo, Norway. He was able to attend the summer program in Oslo two summers – the second year as a recipient of a FLAS scholarship.

Andrew loved to speak Norwegian and he took a leadership role in his language classes by insisting on speaking it. In addition to his studies in our department, Andrew was an Economics Major. He wrote for the Badger Herald and studied several other languages including Portuguese. He recently completed an internship in Washington, D.C. with the Small Business Development Administration.

Samantha Brown, one of the department's graduate students, expresses very well how many of us felt about Andrew "I had a couple of courses with Andrew and was able to experience his enthusiastic and energetic personality that was contagious in both the classroom and around the department. His ability to make all of us feel welcome will be missed and we were incredibly lucky to have a student like Andrew in our program."

Gifts in memory of Andrew Jensen can be made to the Mayo Clinic Depression Research Program c/o Mayo Clinic, Department of Development, 200 First Street SW, Rochester, MN 55905.

The department would like to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathies to Andrew's family. Andrew will be missed by his teachers and friends in the department. A full obituary can be found at [http://host.madison.com/news/local/obituaries/jensen-andrew-emjellem/article\\_5462219e-0ea6-57c5-931a-7149c146ed7f.html](http://host.madison.com/news/local/obituaries/jensen-andrew-emjellem/article_5462219e-0ea6-57c5-931a-7149c146ed7f.html)