



Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic

# Scandinavian Studies Newsletter

Fall 2019

Volume xxiii, Issue 1



## A Message from the Program Chair

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Season's greetings and happy holidays to our friends, alumni, and donors from students, staff, and faculty in Scandinavian Studies. As always, we are very, very busy—so busy that we were unable to find room for all of our news and endeavors in this newsletter. We have focused on our outreach efforts (for example, the UW-Madison presence at the Scandinavian Fest in New Berlin, WI, and a UW-Alumni trip circumnavigating Iceland); our team effort to make the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study here in Madison last spring a true success; the stories that our graduate students could tell about their summer in Scandinavia; and some of the visits by lecturers, politicians, and musical bands from abroad. I'm happy to announce that two graduate students joined us this year: Holly McArthur and Elliott Brandsma, both Ph.D. students. You'll find their profiles in this newsletter along with those of other graduate students as well as, of course, faculty and staff members. In addition, we are very pleased to have Meri Lindeman as a colleague teaching Finnish language and Mattias Pirholt as a visiting scholar. Both Meri and Mattias are featured in this newsletter. We hope that with this newsletter, we have provided good and interesting reading material.

- *Program Chair, Kirsten Wolf*

### Photo credits

Cover photo: The snow-covered, central University of Wisconsin-Madison campus is pictured as dusk falls to nighttime during winter on Feb. 11, 2014. At center is the DeLuca biochemistry complex. Major facilities in the background from far left to right include the Animal Science Building, Bacbock Hall, Russell Laboratories, Microbial Sciences, Agricultural Hall, Nancy Nicholas Hall, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene, 445 Henry Mall and the Genetics-Bio-technology Center Building. At far right is the McArdle Cancer Research Building and Van Hise Hall. The view is from the roof of the Engineering Research Building looking north toward frozen Lake Mendota. (Photo by Jeff Miller/UW-Madison)

Above: An iconic W banner rustles in the wind on a colorful tree-lined sidewalk on Bascom Hill in fall at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on Nov. 4, 2016. (Photo by Bryce Richter / UW-Madison)

## In This Issue

Fall 2019

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[gns.wisc.edu/gns-newsletters](http://gns.wisc.edu/gns-newsletters)**

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*You are cordially invited to the:*

## Annual Scandinavian Studies Glöggfest

**Thursday, December 12th  
4:30 PM - 7:30 PM  
Van Hise Hall, Room 1418  
1220 Linden Drive  
Madison, WI 53706**





*Else Bigton and Phillip Odden speak to a full house about their woodcarving.*

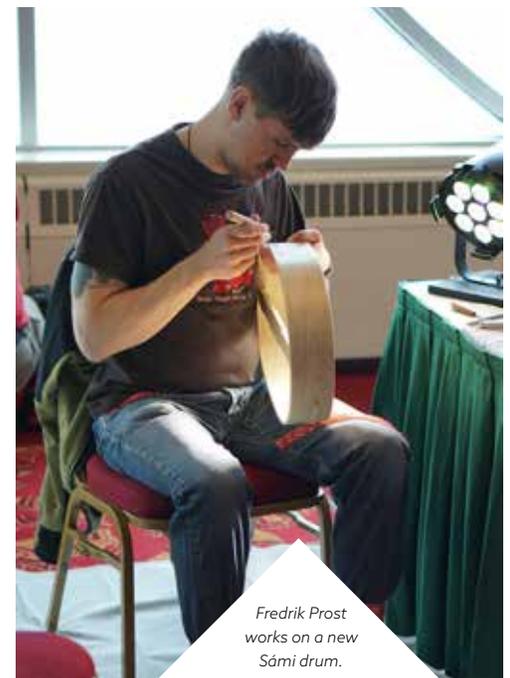
## Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study

From May 1 through May 4, 2019, the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic (GNS) hosted the annual meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study (SASS). Scholars from across the United States and Europe presented their research on culture, literature, art, and music; took part in workshops on language pedagogy; discussed best practices for the public presentation of research; and shared information regarding various professional development opportunities. The conference organized cultural tours, including a tour of Indigenous sites on the UW–Madison campus and a visit to Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin. Evening events featured local food and music.

Held at the Monona Terrace, attendees were able to enjoy the downtown Madison culture. The public venue also facilitated collaboration between faculty and staff from GNS, the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, and the Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest project, which

worked to ensure a robust public-facing element to the conference. The Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts team organized a symposium-within-a-symposium, free and open to the general public, and focused on the theme of Nordic folk art in Scandinavia and the Upper Midwest. Called “Show of Hands: Art in Education,” this symposium brought together 13 Nordic and Nordic-American folk artists, 12 community partners from cultural organizations around the region, and a number of scholars and community members, all of whom also had access to the various SASS panels and presentations. The symposium included artist demonstrations of paper cutting, fiber arts, woodcarving, rosemaling, Sámi drum making, as well as presentations covering topics such as apprenticeships, sustaining traditions, and folk arts in education. In partnership with Wisconsin Teachers of Local Culture, the event attracted teachers and K-12 students. An additional 300 people attended the panels, on-stage interviews, and artist demonstrations.

The two conferences—SASS and Show of Hands—allowed us to show the many facets of Scandinavian Studies at UW–Madison. Academics and artists and community members came together to take part in a variety of presentations, cultural activities, and artistic demonstrations to learn more about what Scandinavian Studies is, has been, and can become.



*Fredrik Prost works on a new Sámi drum.*

## Finnish Folk Band Tallari and *Songs of the Finnish Migration*

Early in the semester, Tallari of the Finnish Folk Music Institute in Kaustinen, Finland, joined us in Madison for a series of presentations and live music. Band members Katri Haukilahti (fiddle), Sampo Korva (guitar), and Jimmy Träskelin (harmonica) performed songs from their new album *Lähtölaulu—Songs of Departure*. Drawing from the same original collection of Finnish immigrant folk songs as Tom DuBois’s and Marcus Cederström’s book *Songs of the Finnish Migration*, students, co-workers, and community members from around the region took part in an evening that was part concert, part history lesson, and part sing-along. The band led the audience in a bilingual version of Arthur Kylander’s “Siirtolaisen ensi vastuksia/The Immigrant’s First Difficulties,” a song that tells of the language difficulties for immigrants in a new country, the experience of misunderstanding, being misunderstood, and the frustrating, but sometimes entertaining moments that were surely a common occurrence for many Finns in the United States.

Katri Haukilahti, Jimmy Träskelin, and Sampo ▶  
Korva of Tallari perform in Madison.

In addition, members of the band presented in DuBois’s Folklore of Central, Eastern, and Northern Europe class and joined Cederström’s course on Cultures of Sustainability for a discussion about innovative ways to sustain Scandinavian folk music through video games. The event, like so many that we are proud to host, introduced our students and our community to international experts who made their work—both their research and their music—accessible to a broad audience.



## Näbbeboda Fellowship for Grad Student Elliott Brandsma

Elliott Brandsma, a first-year Ph.D. student on the literature track, spent last summer in Olofström, Sweden, as one of six Näbbeboda Fellowship recipients. This research residency, sponsored by Olofström municipality, honors the legacy of Nobel Prize-winning poet Harry Martinson, who attended Näbbeboda skola during his childhood. Every year, selected artists and writers from across Sweden travel to the schoolhouse to participate in the program, which offers a relaxing, creative retreat in the countryside. During his time there, Elliott received several literary tours of the area, collaborated with a Swedish sculptor on an art project related to Martinson, participated in interviews with local news outlets *Sydöstran*, *Blekinge Läns Tidning*, and Sveriges Radio, and hosted a workshop for

“Skrivsommars,” a summer writing camp for local teenagers. He also spent time in Stockholm meeting with members of the Harry Martinson Society and interviewing Harriet and Eva, Harry Martinson’s daughters. He intends to leverage the experience to write essays about the writer’s artistic legacy in hopes of expanding knowledge of his poetry within the English-speaking world.



## Circumnavigating Iceland with UW-Madison Alumni

In late July and early August, Kirsten Wolf took a group of 32 UW-Madison alumni on a 10-day trip to Iceland. Upon arrival in Reykjavík, the group boarded the chartered small ship Le Champlain and arrived the next day at the awe-inspiring Westfjords, where among other things the group toured Ísafjörður's Westfjords Heritage Museum. During the night, the group sailed further north and then east and spent the day in Siglufjörður before continuing to Grímsey. This is a beautiful, treeless island, which straddles the Arctic Circle and provides thriving populations of puffins. The ship continued further east to Húsavík, where the group made a stop to see, for example, fields of boiling, sulfurous mud pots. From Húsavík, the ship rounded the island and made stops on the east coast, at Seydisfjörður and Djúpvogur, before sailing all the way along the south coast to the Westman Islands, where the group stopped for the day. On the way back to Reykjavík, there were lots of whales swimming next to the ship. It was an amazing trip, and what was even more amazing is that the weather was wonderful throughout the trip. Initially, the plan was that Kirsten's son, Sune, would accompany her, but since he had a conflict in terms of the timing of the trip, Associate Professor Natalie Van Deusen (who received her Ph.D. in Scandinavian Studies from UW-Madison in 2012) stepped in and took his place. Both Kirsten and Natalie gave lectures along the way. Next summer, Kirsten will serve as the faculty host of a UW-Alumni arranged trip along the Fjords of Norway. If you are interested in the trip and would like to travel with Kirsten, please contact the UW-Madison Alumni Association.



Photos:

Above:  
Le Champlain

Left :  
Circumnavigating Iceland

Top Right:  
Natalie lecturing.  
Photo credit: Heidi Wilde

Bottom Right :  
Kirsten lecturing.  
Photo credit: Heidi Wilde



## Visiting Scholar Mattias Pirholt

Mattias Pirholt is a Professor of Comparative Literature at Södertörn University in Stockholm, where he is also the Head of the Department for Aesthetics and Literature. Originally from Norrköping, he now lives with his family on the Åland Islands and commutes every week to Stockholm. In 2005, he defended his Ph.D. thesis at Uppsala University on the works of the Swedish novelist Birgitta Trotzig and has since then alternated between Swedish and German literature, focusing on the eighteenth century and the Romantic era as well as on the twentieth century. He has previously been a visiting scholar at Freie Universität Berlin, Columbia University in New York, and Universität Tübingen.

Mattias' visit during the fall semester is sponsored by the research project Reassessing the Rise of Aesthetics: Aesthetic Heteronomy from Shaftesbury to Schelling (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond) as well as by Södertörn University, The Wenner-Gren Foundations, The Åke Wiberg Foundation, and The Sven and Dagmar Salén Foundation. Through this project, he conducts research on both German and Swedish literature. The German part focuses on the works of Johann Gottfried Herder and Karl Philipp Moritz, whereas the Swedish part examines the work of the Romantic multi-artist Carl Jonas Love Almqvist, his multi-modal 1834 novel *The Queen's Tiara*, in particular. During the fall, Mattias gave a presentation on how he and his colleagues work with this novel in the literature courses at Södertörn University and also provided an interpretation of the novel's visual discourse. Both the critical edition of the novel and the English translation are available online, at [litteraturbanken.se](http://litteraturbanken.se).

Mattias also has a special relationship to Finland-Swedish literature and literature from the Åland Islands. These traditions of Swedish literature are habitually ignored in Sweden, and Mattias strives to raise the awareness in his home country of literature written in Swedish outside its borders. In the near future, he will introduce courses about Finland-Swedish modernism and contemporary Finland-Swedish literature, and he is also outlining a research project on the contemporary Swedish-language novel in Finland.



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## UW-Madison at the Scandinavian Fest in New Berlin, Wisconsin

For the third year in a row, Dr. Marcus Cederström and Professor Tom DuBois attended the annual Scandinavian Fest in New Berlin, Wisconsin, along with a group of graduate students and undergraduate students. Faculty, staff, and students taught 30-minute language and culture lessons to festival goers and community members.

This year, however, was bittersweet as we mourned the passing of Todd Michalek. Todd was an amazing advocate for Nordic and Nordic-American history and heritage. He was a member of the Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin and also played an integral role in organizing the Scandinavian Fest. Every year, Todd announced our language lessons by marching through the festival with the corresponding flag. Whether it was Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Sámi, or Swedish, Todd walked through the venue with a smile, advocated for the importance of language learning, and brought a new group of community members to the classroom, where he joined in to learn a few new phrases. His enthusiasm and dedication was infectious. We miss him.



## Repatriating Signe's Songs

On November 10, 2019, Maja Heurling and Ola Sandström performed a concert in front of a sold-out crowd at Stallet in Stockholm, Sweden, to celebrate and advertise the release of their new album, *Irrbloss*. The album shares its name with its inspiration, a book of poetry by a Swedish writer and labor activist, Signe Aurell, who immigrated to the United States in 1913 and returned to Sweden in 1920. The album represents a culmination of an ongoing collaboration between the musicians and the Nordic unit's Community Curator of Nordic-American Folklore, Marcus Cederström, who reintroduced Signe to both academia and the wider world by writing his dissertation on her in 2016.

Marcus first met Maja while conducting dissertation research in Stockholm in 2015 and introduced her to Signe's self-published book of poetry. Thereafter Marcus, Maja, and Maja's creative partner Ola remained in communication and have worked together to reinvigorate Signe's words. Marcus traveled to Stockholm for the release of the album and, two days prior to the concert, spoke at a community center in Västerås. His lecture, which focused on the life and work of Signe, was followed by a brief performance given by Maja and Ola, and all three were interviewed by Sveriges Radio. The community center is dedicated to helping new immigrants to Sweden acclimate, find work, and adjust, and one recently arrived Iranian immigrant expressed his gratitude, after the mini-concert, for hearing some of his own emotional experiences reflected in the poetry of a different immigrant from 100 years ago. Ola and Maja tell us this is not unique; every time they perform they hear from recent immigrants expressing similar sentiments.

At Stallet, Maja and Ola's musical expression of Signe's poetry received a standing ovation. In attendance was Signe's grand-nephew and grand-niece, with whom Marcus had also been in touch during his dissertation research. The nephew, Anders Aurell, had since located a box of papers that included—among other things—a record of Signe's school grades, an original manuscript of a songbook authored by Signe, and a poem that Marcus confesses was new to his eyes. "It's wonderful to see the community respond to Signe's work," Marcus says. He is hoping to bring Maja and Ola to the States for a brief tour next year, in a fitting cross-Atlantic tribute to Signe's own adventures.



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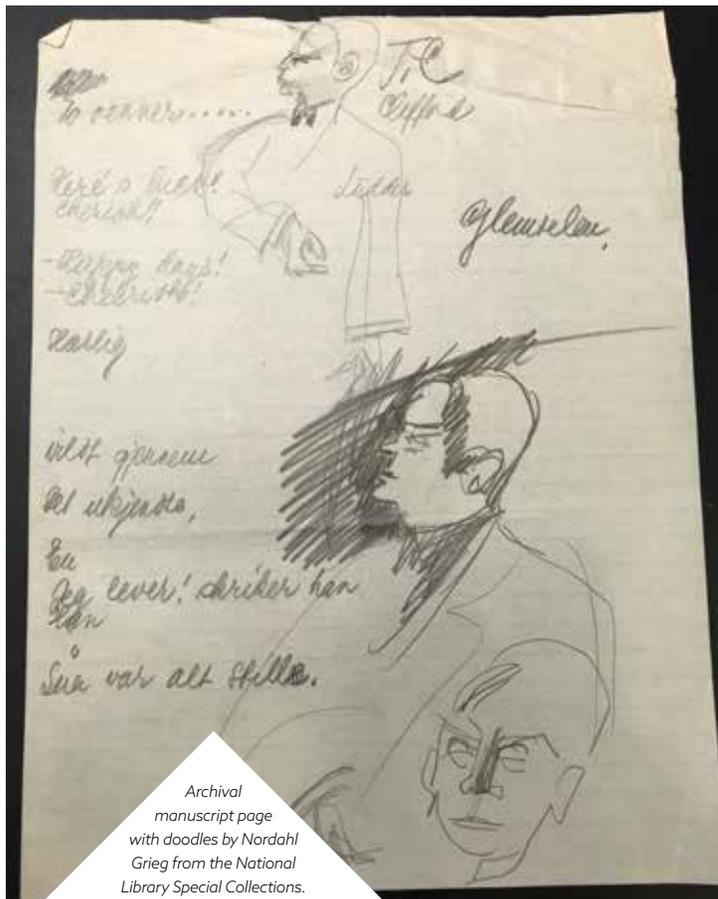
## Danish Politicians Visit Madison

Who will win the presidential election in 2020? What are the most important issues in the minds of voters? And will Wisconsin once again decide the outcome of the election? These were some of the questions asked by a delegation from the Danish Parliament's Committee on Foreign Policy when they visited Wisconsin and UW–Madison in September. The delegation, led by former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martin Lidegaard, began their visit with a public talk on campus where students had the opportunity to ask questions. A lot of the debate focused on climate change and Denmark's ambitious goal of a 70% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> by 2030. As a reminder of the summer's debacle, in which President Trump offered to buy Greenland, two of the nine politicians in the delegation represented Greenland in the Danish Parliament. Interestingly, the two Greenlandic politicians were the ones who seemed to disagree the most both when talking about how Greenland should respond to the climate crisis and when talking about Greenlandic independence. After the debate, the delegation gathered in the Madsen Reading Room, where the Nordic Unit had organized a small reception and where students, faculty, and community members talked with the politicians and discussed the upcoming election with the members of the delegation. Everyone present was asked their opinions about the upcoming election in the United States. The reception concluded with an invitation to our students to visit the Danish Parliament. It was a fun and engaging event that those present will surely remember for a while.

## New Research on Anti-Fascism in Norwegian Literature and Culture

Dean Krouk spent a month in Norway this summer, with research funding from UW–Madison and the American Scandinavian Foundation. His current research project is about the varieties of anti-fascism in Norwegian literature and culture in the 1930s and 1940s. The project asks how authors of varying political and religious persuasions criticized and rejected fascism and Nazism, from 1933 until the end of the occupation in 1945. Krouk seeks to analyze fictional, dramatic, poetic, and journalistic articulations of anti-fascism across the rapidly shifting historical context of the inter-war and occupation years. The authors on which

he has been focusing so far include central figures such as Nordahl Grieg and Arnulf Øverland, but also lesser-known writers such as Ingeborg Reeling Hagen and Ronald Fangen. In Norway, he was able to access exciting archive materials in the special collections at the National Library in Oslo and the Theater Archives at the University of Bergen. After sorting through this new mass of (photographed) materials, Krouk will continue researching, reading, and teaching about the period, with the ultimate goal of writing a book and journal articles on the subject.



Archival manuscript page with doodles by Nordahl Grieg from the National Library Special Collections.



Dean Krouk with the Nordahl Grieg statue in the theater park in Bergen.

## Capital Punishment in Early Modern Iceland

On November 21, Professor Már Jónsson, Professor of History at the University of Iceland, presented a lecture on “Capital Punishment in Early Modern Iceland.” Professor Jónsson noted that the death penalty was abolished by law in Iceland in 1928, and that for quite some time it had not been used. The last two executions (for murder) took place in 1805 and 1830. In the period 1580–1760, however, more than two hundred Icelanders had been burnt, drowned, hanged, and beheaded for murder, theft, incest, infanticide, and witchcraft. Indeed, in 1678 alone, four men and three women were executed. However, in his lecture, the emphasis was on the arguments for executing people as they appear in legislation and verdicts, not least when certain crimes came to be considered harmless to society or even irrelevant. Despite the gruesome topic of the lecture, Professor Jónsson managed to make it entertaining and had a very attentive audience of students and faculty.

# FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES



**Above:** Marcus and Amber at Olbrich Botanical Gardens following their marriage in May.

## ◀ Marcus Cederström

It's been another year of outreach and public programming for Marcus Cederström as he finished up his third year of the "Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest" project. This year, Marcus, along with co-workers Nathan Gibson and Anna Rue, headed to the Driftless Area to teach the summer field school, interviewed nearly a dozen musicians at Nisswastämman, and hosted 20+ artists and cultural leaders as part of the Show of Hands symposium on folk art and education. Marcus also taught several courses on folklore. In addition, he collaborated with folk musician Maja Heurling of Stockholm, Sweden, as she and other musicians put to music the poems of Signe Aurell, who Marcus has researched for several years. With Tom DuBois, he also co-authored the book *Songs of the Finnish Migration*, a bilingual translation of Finnish immigrant songs due out with the University of Wisconsin Press in early 2020.

## Susan Brantly ▶

Nineteenth-century Scandinavia has been a leit motif of Susan Brantly's year. Last winter she gave the Alrik Gustafsson Memorial Lecture at the University of Minnesota on August Strindberg's *Ett drömspel*. Just recently, her article on Verner von Heidenstam's *Hans Alienus* appeared in *Nordic Literature of Decadence* (Routledge Press). This fall, she has lectured in the Beyond the Plays series (pictured here) for American Players Theatre, which is putting on both *A Doll's House* and *A Doll's House, Part 2* this season. In October, she delivered a lecture at ASTRA in Washington DC about listening to women's voices from the past on the road to gaining the vote in Sweden. Last spring, she made a quick visit to Copenhagen and the Karen Blixen Museum and her travels over the summer included visits to Faith Ingwersen in Wyoming (where women had the right to vote first!), as well as Sweden and Finland.



**Right:** Susan Brantly contemplates the eternal question: "What happened to Nora?" at APT.



### ◀ Kirsten Wolf

Kirsten is this year teaching courses within the field of Scandinavian (Nordic) linguistics (she alternates between Old Norse and linguistics). She is excited about teaching “Topics in Scandinavian Linguistics” in Spring 2020, which will involve fieldwork for her and her students in Winnipeg and Gimli, Manitoba. Together with Carole Biggam (University of Glasgow), she continues to work on the 6-volume *A Cultural History of Color*, but can begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel; if all contributors pull through, it will be published in 2020. Kirsten spent most of the summer doing research, though she did pay close attention to her yard (a favorite hobby) and took a ten-day trip to Iceland as a faculty host for the UW–Madison Alumni Association. She also spent a bit of time helping her son move from Chicago to Milwaukee and getting to know Milwaukee. Kirsten has recently taken up yoga as a way to relax and exercise and is now a huge fan of yoga.

### Claus E. Andersen ▶

Claus Elholm Andersen is interested in the novel and in questions of fiction and fictionality: what it is, how it works, and what it implies. His current work focuses on contemporary Scandinavian literature. In 2018, he co-edited a special issue of the periodical *Spring* on the Danish author Helle Helle. He has also edited and co-edited two volumes on Karl Ove Knausgård’s *My Struggle* (one, forthcoming as a special issue of *Scandinavian Studies*, with Dean Krouk), and he is currently working on a book-length project called “Reading My Struggle.” His most recent publication is an article on Helle Helle’s 2018-novel *de*, published in *Edda*, 2019. In addition to his scholarly work, he has been a book critic and columnist for the newspaper *Hufvudsstadsbladet* in Finland since 2013. Through the Badger Talks Program, he has given numerous talks around Wisconsin on *hygge* and happiness.



### ◀ Dean Krouk

In 2019, Dean Krouk continued to make progress on research for his second book project, about anti-fascist literature and culture in Norway in the 1930s and 1940s. Over the summer, he spent about a month in Norway, which included research time in the special collections at the National Library in Oslo and the Theater Archive at the University of Bergen. He and his partner, Nick, visited relatives in Stockholm, including the uncle and Swedish aunt who first brought him to Scandinavia back in the 1990s. As the president of NORTANA, Dean has helped organize this year’s Norway Seminar, which is hosted by the University of North Dakota and has the theme “Oslo: Democratic Public Space.” Dean’s first nephew, Elliott, was born in April, and his niece Sofie finished third grade. They live in Middleton.



Left: Dean enjoying the summer by Lake Mendota in Madison.



### ◀ Todd Michelson-Ambelang

Todd Michelson-Ambelang continues his work in the library, among other things, as the bibliographer of Scandinavian Humanities. He is also the liaison for accessibility to our libraries for patrons with impairments and disabilities. He is currently taking Finnish and North Sámi courses, so that he can better access resources on those topics and in those languages. This summer he will be traveling, with a colleague and expert on indigeneity, to Norway and Sápmi, specifically the Oslo and Kautokeino areas, to collect items in North Sámi language and on topics of Nordic indigeneity. This trip is sponsored by the Friends of the UW–Madison Libraries. He continues to teach library classes for students, to work with faculty and staff of the department, and to guest lecture in courses on the topics of historical linguistics and representation, specifically pertaining to the LGBTQ+ and disabled communities in the North as well as in the US.

### Thomas DuBois ▶

Tom DuBois worked this past year to finish some book projects and gear up for work as the incoming chair of the Department of German, Nordic and Slavic. With Marcus Cederström, he completed the co-authored work *Songs of the Finnish Migration* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2020). With Coppélie Cocq, he completed the co-authored *Sámi Media and Indigenous Agency in the Arctic North* (University of Washington Press, 2020). Tom is also excited that his work as an advisor to the Disney film *Frozen II* came to fruition with the release of the film in November. One of the exciting aspects of the collaboration that Tom helped work out between Sámi people and Disney was the agreement to dub *Frozen II* into Sámi. It will be the first foreign film ever dubbed into Sámi, an act that in part commemorates 2019 as the United Nations Year of Indigenous Languages.



### ◀ Scott A. Mellor

Scott Mellor spent a good deal of this year working on his Åland folk life and identity project. He was on Åland, as well as at the Universities of Lund and Helsinki, for much of the spring and part of the summer. The project expanded to include not only ship narratives, but also other aspects of border and minority language identity. As such, he found himself in the Åland newspaper, as well as the Swedish language newspapers in Helsinki and Vaasa. Scott is the incoming president of the Association of Swedish Teachers and Researchers in America (ASTRA). He continues to be active in the International Learning Community as the director of the Norden Language floor and the Bradley Learning Community, the only all first-year dorm. His interest in helping first-year undergraduates start down the right path for their college careers has manifested itself in teaching a First-year Interest Group this Fall.

Left: Scott Mellor giving a lecture at the Åland University of Applied Science.



### ◀ Peggy Hager

This summer, GNS again offered beginning intensive online Norwegian. Eight students participated in the course, which covers a full year of Norwegian language. A unique feature of the course is the required weekly face-to-face chat sessions with the instructor which are designed to build oral and aural skills. Peggy presented a paper at the SASS conference in Madison in May on teaching an online Norwegian language course. This fall, Peggy is participating in a DoIT pilot project called Learning Analytics Engagement Dashboard (LEAD). As more material is moved online, it is helpful for instructors to know what materials are most useful for students and what students are engaging in. LEAD displays information about students' activity in the instructor's Canvas course. For example, one map visualization shows what time of day students are accessing course materials. Another visualization compares time spent in the course with grades. The results of the study will help instructors know what activities students engage in and how this relates to learning outcomes.

### Nete Schmidt ▶

Nete Schmidt, Faculty Associate, is working on implementing name changes to some of the courses she teaches, hoping to make them more appealing to incoming students. As always, she is teaching three classes and enjoying the challenges and students tremendously. She participated and presented in Madison at the annual SASS conference, she participated in the annual seminar in Denmark, she gave a talk to the Danish Sisterhood in Milwaukee through Badger Talks, she went to Copenhagen in November to participate in Book Forum, she participated in the Study Abroad Fair and Majors Fair in her capacity as Undergraduate Majors and Certificate Advisor, and she had an article published in *The Bridge* in September 2019. She is a member of various committees and the happy host to visitor Rikke Cortsen in the fall, an expert on comic books and graphic novels, and the renowned author Svend Aage Madsen in the spring.



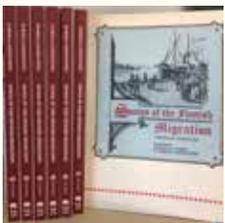
Above: Nete at the Academic Kickoff, Sept. 12.

"I was bathed in the light of the Heisman Trophy awarded to Ron Dayne in my first year at UW-Madison."

### Coming Soon!

Don't miss Thomas A. DuBois's and B. Marcus Cederström's upcoming publication *Songs of Finnish Migration*. Copies will be available for purchase at the UW Press.

[uwpress.wisc.edu](http://uwpress.wisc.edu)



# GRADUATE STUDENT UPDATES

## Graduate Students Abroad

### Bridgette Stoeckel:

With a generous grant from the department, I was able to participate in a Danish language program in Copenhagen. I attended the Studieskole in Copenhagen for three weeks and lived with a Danish family in the Østerbro neighborhood for the duration of the class. The program included morning language instruction and afternoon lectures on various topics. At one of the afternoon lectures, I was fortunate to meet Søren Ulrik Thomsen and discuss his poetry in Danish with other students. The program also took us on a historic tour of Copenhagen, where we learned about the barriers around the old city of Copenhagen and visited several famous churches. I had a wonderful time in Denmark improving my language skills and learning more about the culture. I am extremely grateful to the department for this opportunity.



▲ Bridgette Stoeckel with several classmates during her summer study in Denmark.

### Ailie Westbrook:

This summer, with a generous grant from our department, I attended Askov Højskole, one of the oldest folk high schools in Denmark, to improve my Danish. Askov is a small town in south Jutland with only a few shops and a small church. I love being in Jutland, and the course allowed me to visit several of my favorite historic areas, including Ribe, Jelling, and the old German border. As well as working on my grammar and pronunciation, we sang every morning (and some evenings) from the Højskole song-book, and the teachers also organized several cultural activities for us, including visits from politicians and folk dancing.



### Holly McArthur

Holly is a first-year Ph.D. student. This past spring, she completed her M.A. in Viking and Medieval Norse Studies from the University of Iceland. Her M.A. thesis dealt with gender construction in Old Icelandic romance. She has also recently started working as an acquisitions assistant at the University of Wisconsin Press.



### Tristan Mueller-Vollmer

Tristan is excited to be at Uppsala University in Sweden this year, where he is taking part in the runic milieu and continuing work on his dissertation on personal names on Swedish Viking Age runestones. He is also serving remotely as a project assistant for the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*.



### Richelle Wilson

Richelle is a Ph.D. candidate specializing in contemporary literature and culture. She is currently on a Barbara Morgridge Fellowship to support her dissertation project, which is an interdisciplinary study of IKEA as a site of Swedish nation-building and a cultural “text” in global circulation. She works part-time as a talk radio producer at WORT 89.9 FM.



### **Elliott Brandsma**

Elliott is a first-year Ph.D. student on the literature track. Before moving to Madison, he worked as a public school teacher and community college instructor in Miami. His research focuses on 20th-century Swedish and Icelandic literature, particularly the works of Halldór Laxness and Harry Martinson. He has earned degrees from Texas State University and the University of Iceland.



### **Michael Knudson**

Michael is a Ph.D. Candidate on the Philology track and a medievalist. His dissertation research examines the monastic influence in medieval Icelandic literature. He is teaching first-year modern Icelandic and is also the Senior Researcher at the Norwegian American Genealogical Center and Naeseth Library here in Madison.



### **John Prusynski**

John is a third-year Ph.D. student focusing on North Sámi literature and culture, and is particularly interested in issues of travel, migration, and globalization. This fall, he is a TA for the course Folklore of Central, Eastern, and Northern Europe and is studying for his preliminary exams.



### **Hayden Godfrey**

Hayden is a first-year Ph.D. student in Scandinavian Philology, having earned the corresponding M.A. in May 2019. Hayden is currently a facilitator of the department's Swedish sequence and is working to experiment with project-based learning in the Nordic context. Hayden's research pertains mostly to Old Icelandic phonomorphology, particularly in regard to how neologism may reflect cultural understanding.



### **Laura Moquin**

Laura passed her M.A. exam this summer and completed her thesis on the topic of language ideologies in Norwegian-American newspapers. She is currently working on projects about stereotypes of Scandinavian American English and discourse markers in American-Norwegian. Laura is also teaching introductory Norwegian, and hosting the weekly Norwegian conversation group.



### **Mirva Johnson**

Mirva is a Ph.D. student conducting linguistic and folkloristic research and fieldwork with Finnish Americans. She received a Public Humanities Exchange (HEX) grant to work with the Wisconsin Humanities Council this past spring and summer, creating a website to accompany their exhibit on Latinx immigration to Wisconsin.



### **Ailie Westbrook**

Ailie Westbrook is an M.A. student in Scandinavian Studies. Her research languages are Danish and Old Norse. Ailie is interested in the Middle Ages and is currently researching childbirth, pregnancy, and gynecology in medieval Denmark. She is also interested in medieval church paintings and depictions of motherhood.



### **Kyle Swenson**

Kyle is a Ph.D. student concentrating on 19th-century literary conceptions of the Vikings and of the sagas. He is a member of the Colloquium Committee and a TA for the 19th-century Scandinavian Fiction class. This summer he completed a translation of Kristofer Uppdal's poem in Nynorsk, 'Isberget.'



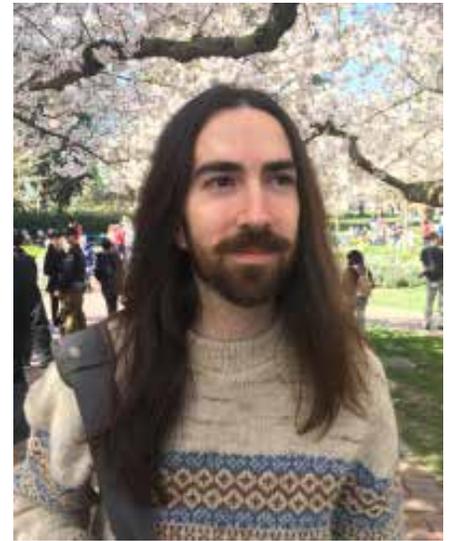
### **Bridgette Stoeckel**

Bridgette is an M.A. student in her second year. She is from northern Wisconsin. Bridgette received her bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2017. Her research focus is on Greenlandic and Faroese literature in the modern period.



### **Amber Rose Cederström**

Amber (formerly Amber J. Rose) is a Ph.D. candidate on the folklore track. Her research focuses on Nordic legends of witchcraft and her dissertation is titled "Poisoner, Shape-shifter, Adulteress, Thief: The Legend of the Witch in Finnmark and Gotland." She is also an assistant acquisitions editor at the University of Wisconsin Press.



### **Colin Gioia Connors**

For the past year Colin has produced *Crossing North*, an ongoing podcast about Scandinavian culture. As he continues his dissertation, Colin recently submitted an academic chapter about his digital translation of Hrafnkels saga for a publication about public folklore.



### **Lauren Poyer**

This year will be Lauren's second year as a full-time lecturer in the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington. Lauren spent the summer exploring the Pacific Northwest and planning two upcoming pedagogy projects: a summer 2020 study abroad in Iceland and Sweden for undergraduates, and a new course, Vikings in Pop Culture, which she looks forward to teaching in the spring quarter.

## Fulbright Finnish Language and Culture Teacher

Born and raised near Tampere, Finland, Meri Lindeman (pronouns they, them, theirs) has been appointed the department's Fulbright Finnish language teaching assistant this year. In this position, they are tasked with helping UW–Madison students expand and refine their knowledge of Finnish language and culture. Meri earned an M.A. in Finnish from Tampere University, and is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Turku. They not only specialize in teaching Finnish to non-native speakers but also have research interests in queer linguistics.

When asked about their time in Madison and at UW so far, Meri reports that they received a warm welcome from students and staff: “I really admire the generosity and hospitality that greeted me when I arrived here in August. Greetings and thanks to everyone who stopped by our office to introduce themselves, helped me find places and figure out how things work, and even gifted me all sorts of things from bath bombs to furniture!”

Meri hopes to use their time in Madison to learn instructional techniques that can be applied to their teaching at home. “As a Finnish-as-a-second-language teacher in Finland, I am in close contact with immigrants and the problems that they face,” they explain. “Finland is still a new immigration country, and I feel like we can learn tremendously from countries that have longer histories of large-scale immigration.” Of particular interest to Meri is observing how the university supports historically-underrepresented students so that they can

take the most effective strategies home and apply them in a Finnish context. The greatest joy they've had since arrival, though, has been interacting with students in a classroom setting. “I have the privilege of teaching an exceptionally dedicated and driven group of students here at UW,” they add. “I genuinely enjoy meeting them every day and watching them learn and grow.”



**Scandinavian Studies  
T-Shirts! \$20**

Interested in getting a Scandinavian Studies t-shirt?

The Nordic Graduate Student Association (NGSA) is giving out t-shirts as thanks for any donation of \$20 or more. T-shirts are available in black, blue, and red from S to XXL. For more information, email Mirva Johnson at [mjohnson52@wisc.edu](mailto:mjohnson52@wisc.edu). All donations go to the NGSA and support graduate students in their research, teaching, and professional development.



## Support Scandinavian Studies

Our sincere thanks to the many alumni and friends who have generously supported Scandinavian Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Private gifts are increasingly critical to ensuring that we maintain our stature as one of the nation’s best Scandinavian Studies programs. Your donations help us attract top faculty and graduate students, support our amazing undergraduate majors, and host a stimulating series of lectures, symposia, and other scholarly activities. Gifts of any size are most welcome and gratefully received.

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for past newsletters and our upcoming issues.

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