



Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic+

Scandinavian Studies Newsletter

2021-2022

Volume xxv, Issue 1



A Message from the Program Chair

Greetings and happy spring to friends and supporters of Scandinavian Studies here at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We hope this newsletter finds you well.

This academic year has been no less interesting than the previous two years. After we had adjusted to online teaching due to the pandemic, we went back to teaching in-person in the fall. That was an adjustment as well, but I believe we were all relieved not to have to rely solely on computers for teaching and communication. The pandemic (and the various lock-downs as a result of it) has been hard on incoming students, who were unable to meet other students and make friends with them. Also, it must have been hard on our new faculty/staff members—Liina-Ly, Benjamin, and Ida. We are a hospitable and sociable unit, and it was difficult not to be able to socialize with them. Yet, the three have been amazingly resilient, and we are so grateful to have them here.

Several faculty/staff members made good use of time not spent on commuting to and from campus to work on courses, books, and articles. This newsletter features three new book releases, a new course (created by Liina-Ly and Benjamin), and a revision of an existing course (Scott). You might also be interested in reading about Nete Schmidt's National Danish Book Club and Literary Event Series. Nete retired in the spring of 2021. We're happy to report that we have been able to hire a new lecturer of Danish, who will be joining us in the fall. We will introduce her in our next newsletter.

Our alumni are important to us, and so many of them keep in touch. In this newsletter, four alumni tell us about what they have been up to since they graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Finally, Emily, a graduate student, put together a list of songs recommended by faculty/staff for you to listen to—if you are so inclined—over the summer months.

We wish you all the best. Stay safe and stay healthy.

- Program Chair, Kirsten Wolf

Photo credits

Cover photo: A street lamp glows with light as snow begins to fall on Bascom Hill at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during a winter dawn on Dec. 11, 2021. In the background is Bascom Hall with graphic banner panels of UW-Madison mascot Bucky Badger hanging between the building's columns. (Photo by Jeff Miller / UW-Madison)

Above: Bascom Hill is flanked by trees changing colors with Bascom Hall showing the "W" banners "Forward has no finish line" with Van Hise Hall rising in the background during an autumn day on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus on Oct. 27, 2021. (Photo by Althea Dotzour / UW-Madison)

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gns.wisc.edu/gns-newsletters

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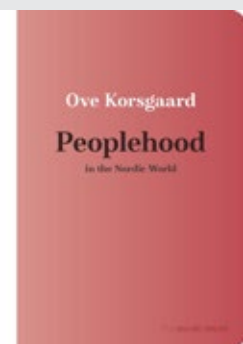
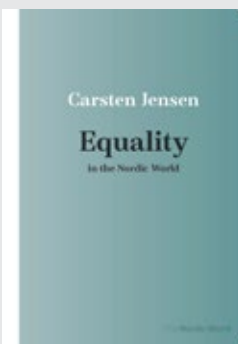
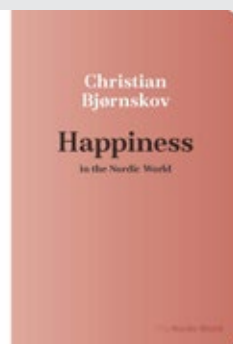
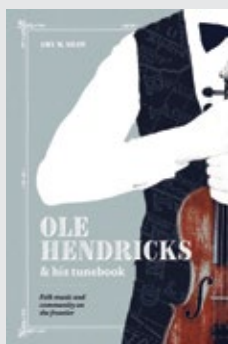
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New in Scandinavian Studies from Wisconsin



<https://uwpress.wisc.edu/>

Part of The Nordic World series.
Copublished with Aarhus University Press

Vikings and Video Games

Can Video games really teach us history? Our own Scott Mellor decided to try to find out in his First-year Interest Group (FIG) World of the Vikings. This FIG is linked with Introduction to Folklore and a Scandinavian language of their choice. Students come to his class from a variety of backgrounds and Dr. Mellor used to teach the class from front to back, that is, starting with the oldest text about the North, like Tacitus' *Germania*, and moving through the historical record, ending the term by looking at the 19th-century images of the Viking Age and how they influence our own 21st-century ideas of that period. However, this year, in order to give the students a sense of intellectual confidence (part of the Wisconsin Idea), he started the class with a conversation on those aspects of Viking imagery with which they are familiar; images they have seen in popular culture. TV shows about the Vikings like *The Vikings* and *The Last Kingdom* loom large in popular culture today. However, many students come to these images of the past through gaming, a multi-billion-dollar industry, that is arguably more influential than the TV and movie industry. Games like *Skyrim*, *Assassin's Creed: Valhalla*, and even *Minecraft* are popular games that reference the medieval period, and students have frequently heard of and played them. By starting with conversations centered around these TV shows and games, Dr. Mellor hoped to create an aspect of intellectual confidence, since the students often know these games better than he, and promote intellectual curiosity (another aspect of the Wisconsin Idea) as a jumping off point for the course. Using gift funds appropriate to the endeavor, he gave each student a copy of either *Skyrim* or *Assassin's Creed: Valhalla*, which they were to play, taking note of certain themes during the semester. He then used this curiosity to explore issues of the past, including social, historical, race and gender imagery found in the games and the relationship of these images with the medieval North (or Viking Age, if you will) and its relationship to the historical past. Though there were logistic issues, the trial was even better than expected. Students were excited to explore the past in this way. Indeed, it gave them the intellectual confidence and curiosity Dr. Mellor was hoping for. As a result, the papers written by the FIG students were better than in the past. Dr. Mellor is very grateful to the Department and the College of Letters and Sciences for their support on this measure and he hopes to do it again in the future. Finally, the FIG students were able to play the game throughout the semester, which also acted as a community building exercise and, after COVID, this was another very desirable side outcome.



Above: Image from the game *Skyrim* featured in Scott's course.

Cultural Connections and Wahlstrom Workshop

Students from UW–Madison, including Sydney Mueller (Scandinavian Studies) and Mattigan Mott (Nursing), teamed up with Maya Berens (Geography) and Molly Larson (Geography and German) from UW–Eau Claire, to host an undergraduate research conference. Titled “Cultural Connections: Languages and Cultures of the Upper Midwest,” this undergrad-led conference brought in students from around the Upper Midwest to present their work on the diverse cultures and languages of the region.

The event took place April 8 on the UW–Eau Claire campus and was held in conjunction with this year's Wahlstrom Nordic Workshop from April 8–10, which was postponed from its usual February date due to the pandemic. Thanks to generous funding from, among others, the American Scandinavian Foundation, the students were able to host folk artists James Miller and Tara Lynn Austin to teach flat-plane carving and rosemaling, respectively, along with the regularly taught folk arts.

By partnering with the Wahlstrom Nordic Workshop, students were able to expand their understanding of the history and heritage of the Upper Midwest through hands-on activities, presentations from peers, and informal

conversations with students, faculty, and community members. Featuring posters, papers, and a host of activities and performances from folk artists in the region, the weekend-long combination of Cultural Connections and the Wahlstrom Nordic Workshop brought together nearly one hundred students, faculty and staff, and community members.

In addition, the student organizers, like Sydney Mueller, gained valuable experience in working to host an event like this one. Sydney notes, “organizing the conference has been a great yet challenging experience. Before this project, I had never worked on something like this before and it is exciting to build this conference from the ground up and see all the parts come together. It is great to be able to provide a space for students around the Midwest to share what they are working on and to hear new and interesting ideas. This knowledge that I have gained so far from organizing the conference will be applicable in many aspects of life including organization, collaboration, and many others.”



We're excited to see our students doing such amazing work in the region!

NEW BOOK RELEASE

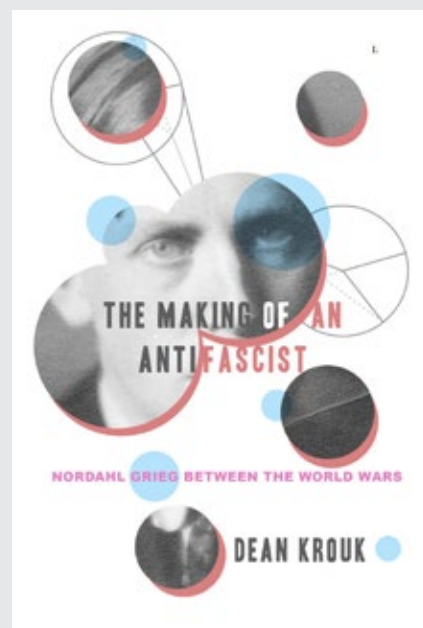
The Making of an Antifascist: Nordahl Grieg between the World Wars

Dean Krouk

In the spring of 2022, the University of Wisconsin Press will publish Dean Krouk's second book, *The Making of an Antifascist: Nordahl Grieg between the World Wars*. This monograph is the first comprehensive treatment in English of the major writer Nordahl Grieg, a poet, journalist, novelist, playwright, and icon of the Norwegian resistance during the occupation. In many ways, Nordahl Grieg has become more of a national legend than a real person since his death as a war reporter in Berlin in 1943. This book examines Grieg's intellectual development during the dynamic interwar period and sheds light on the political and cultural ideologies that competed in Grieg's time and within his works in various genres. Although Grieg is often remembered in Norway with an emphasis on his humanistic and patriotic positions, Krouk's analysis reveals a more complex antifascist figure of layered allegiances, including an unsavory period as a rigid Stalinist.

Krouk has aimed to write an accessible book that introduces Grieg through original readings of the political, ethical, and gender issues in his works. The book follows the wanderlust-stricken Norwegian on travels to Moscow, China, Spain, northern Norway, London, Canada, and the United States, explaining how his visits to these places influenced his writings as a journalist, dramatist, novelist, and propagandist. By situating Grieg in the historical context of antifascism, defined as a meeting point of varying ideological and cultural engagements, Krouk's book encourages readers to reflect on the interwar era and its reverberations in the context of today's challenges to democracy.

Available in May of 2022 from the University of Wisconsin Press.



Musician-in-Residence Beth Hoven Rotto Comes to UW-Madison



This semester, the Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest project, under the auspices of the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, is hosting Musician-in-Residence Beth Hoven Rotto, a Decorah, Iowa-based fiddler. Beth is a prominent and active musician in the larger Decorah area, having founded the popular old-time dance music band, Foot-Notes, in the early 1990s. Well before that, however, Beth grounded herself in the music of the Norwegian American settlers of that area through an apprenticeship with renowned fiddler, William “Bill” Sherburne of Spring Grove, Minnesota, and through the friendships she made with women musicians who carried the fiddle tunes of their fathers when no one else did. This was the music of the house parties, “kitchen sweats,” and open-air bowery dances from the turn of the century. It’s the music that aired on local radio and was played at weddings, anniversaries, and Saturday night dances. It was the music that folks played when the neighborhood got together and if you couldn’t play, you danced. Beth Hoven Rotto’s residency is focused on this body of music, the unique blend of primarily Scandinavian tunes, popular American songs, and English and Irish melodies that made up the musical landscape of the Driftless area and was shared throughout the Upper Midwest.

This is a notable residency for a variety of reasons. First, it doesn’t often happen that the University selects folk artists for residencies, but opportunities like this are important because they emphasize and place value on artistic expressions that are generated and nurtured in and by communities. Folk arts often suffer from being “hidden in plain sight,” and residencies like this highlight and celebrate the amazing skills, creativity, and rich traditions that exist within all communities, among all people.

Another reason that this residency is remarkable is that Hoven Rotto is not teaching an academic course to students while she is on campus. Instead, she formed the Scandinavian American Old-time Dance Music Ensemble, which meets once a week and is open to both students and community members. (<https://folklife.wisc.edu/2022/01/28/scandinavian-american-old-time-dance-music-ensemble/>) Beth has been teaching participants her repertoire of Scandinavian American old-time tunes common to the Decorah area and Scandinavian American communities throughout the Upper Midwest. Ensemble members are learning tunes by ear and will perform on campus as a group later this spring. Plans are also underway to host a community barn dance after the semester ends. After all, these are tunes that are meant to be danced to, and Beth, in collaboration with her husband and Foot-Notes band member Jon Rotto, has been teaching performance techniques specific to playing for dancers.

Finally, Beth Hoven Rotto's work on campus is noteworthy because of her work with relevant music collections in the Mills Music Library. The Arnold Munkel Collection, in particular, is a body of largely Scandinavian American old-time dance music from the Decorah and Spring Grove area that reflects the source of Hoven Rotto's repertoire. (<https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AMunkel>) She is uncovering tunes in that collection that may have not been played for 40 or 50 years and she is actively teaching them to the ensemble she formed here at UW.

You might say that the heart of Beth Hoven Rotto's residency here at UW-Madison is the act of remembering. Remembering the tunes that made up the musical lives of communities in the Driftless Area, remembering the people who cared for and passed those tunes on, remembering the purpose of the music itself, which is to get people dancing and bring them together in community. As Beth Hoven Rotto makes her mark on the UW community, our project hopes to support the making of new memories as well, with the help of team members and graduate students Caitlin Vitale-Sullivan and John Walker, who are also committing their time and talents to documenting the residency's activities. If you are interested in following these events, please visit our website (<https://folklife.wisc.edu/2022-musician-in-residence/>) for more information and email our project at folklife@lets.wisc.edu if you'd like to be put on our mailing list.



Above: Beth Hoven Rotto visits the class Ethnicities of Wisconsin, taught by the Director of the Mead Witter School of Music, Dr. Susan Cook. Hoven Rotto and Cook are pictured here, demonstrating the difference between duple and triple meter using Norwegian American old-time dance tunes familiar to the Upper Midwest.

Facing Page Top Left: Beth Hoven Rotto leads an online session of the Scandinavian American Old-time Dance Music Ensemble

NEW BOOK RELEASE

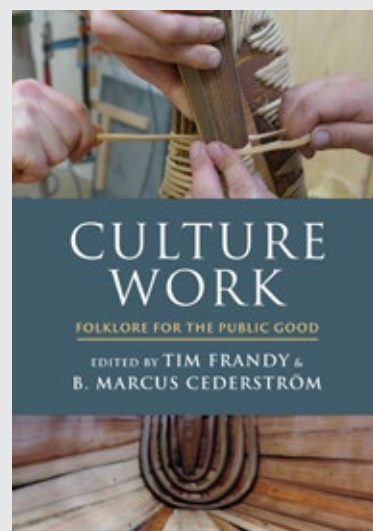
Culture Work: Folklore for the Public Good

Edited by Tim Frandy and B. Marcus Cederström

How do culture workers construct public arts and culture projects that are effective and transformative? How do we create public humanities projects of the community, for the community, and with the community? How can culture work make a concrete difference in the quality of life for communities, and lead to the creation of a more just world? Why do the public humanities matter? Culture Work explores these questions through real-world examples of cultural and public humanities projects. The innovative case studies analyzed in the book demonstrate the vast numbers of creative possibilities in culture work today—in all their complexities, challenges, and potentialities.

Thematically arranged chapters embody the interconnected aspects of culture work, from amplifying local voices to galvanizing community from within, from preservation of cultural knowledge to its creative repurposing for a desired future. These inventive projects provide concrete examples and accessible theory grounded in practice, encourage readers to embark on their own public culture work, and create new forward-looking inspiration for community leaders and scholars in the field.

Available in July of 2022 from the University of Wisconsin Press.



New Norwegian Lecturer: Ida Moen Johnson

In the fall semester of 2021, the program in Scandinavian Studies welcomed a new Lecturer in Norwegian: Ida Moen Johnson. Ida's main responsibility will be to teach courses in Norwegian language and Nordic literature and culture. Her scholarly interests are in childhood studies, children's literature, animal studies, and climate change in a Nordic context.

Ida earned her PhD in 2020 from the Department of Scandinavian at the University of California, Berkeley, with the dissertation, "The Barn and the Beast: The Queerness of Child-Animal Figurations in Scandinavian Children's Literature and Culture." In this dissertation, she argues that child-animal encounters in a variety of Nordic texts can be highly charged sites for testing the limits of development, subjectivity, power, and species. During her time as a PhD candidate, Ida received the Birgit Baldwin Fellowship for dissertation research. In addition, she has published articles in the *Journal of Scandinavian Cinema* and *Scandinavian Studies*.

Ida's approach to teaching Norwegian is to integrate language skills and culture topics. She finds students are most engaged when they can link their study of vocabulary and grammar to current events, arts and culture, and their own interests and experiences. She also aims to help students build awareness of language as a system, which she hopes will deepen students' appreciation for the complexities of their own languages. In the literature-focused classroom, Ida uses a variety of materials—fiction, film, news, and pop culture—to help students interpret life in the Nordic countries. She enjoys teaching courses on Nordic childhood, on humans and animals in Nordic literature and film, and on how questions of social welfare get represented in literature and culture.

Prior to beginning work on her PhD, Ida worked as an elementary school educator. She also spent an academic year as an English teaching assistant in Bergen, through the Fulbright program. Originally from Minnesota, Ida now lives in Madison with her partner. The Scandinavian Studies program is thrilled to have Ida join our team!



NEW BOOK RELEASE

Vikings: An Encyclopedia of Conflict, Invasions, and Raids

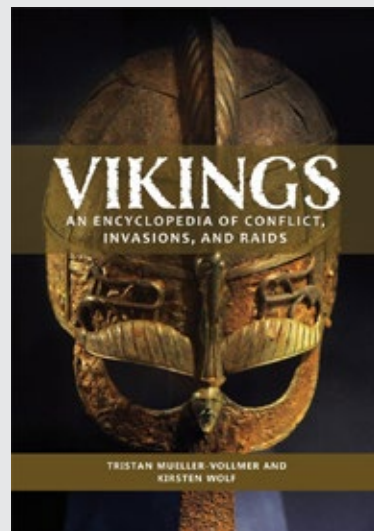
Tristan Mueller-Vollmer and Kirsten Wolf

For three centuries, the Vikings changed the political world of northern and western Europe. This encyclopedia explores exactly how they did it in a highly readable and informative resource volume.

How did the Vikings know when to strike? What were their military strengths? Who were their leaders? What was the impact of their raids? These and many more questions are answered in this volume, which will benefit students and general readers alike.

The only encyclopedia devoted specifically to the topic of conflict, invasions, and raids in the Viking Age, this book presents detailed coverage of the Vikings, who are infamous for their violent marauding across Europe during the early Middle Ages. Featuring extracts of poetry and prose from the Viking Age, the book provides cultural context in addition to an in-depth analysis of Viking military practices.

Available now from ABC-CLIO



Graduate Student Abroad - Mirva Johnson

I write this while sitting on the train from Turku to Helsinki to visit an archival library, which only a year ago sounded like a crazy dream amidst continuing COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Thanks to the generous support of Fulbright-EDUFI and American Scandinavian Foundation Fellowships, I have spent this academic year conducting dissertation research at the University of Turku in Turku, Finland. I was fortunate to arrive as vaccination rates rapidly rose and Finland started slowly easing restrictions. Though there have been periods of tighter restrictions, on the whole, life has continued in a hybrid model.

It is hard to explain how meaningful this time in Finland has been both professionally and personally. On the professional side, I've had the opportunity to collaborate with Finnish linguists and participate in the Department of Finnish and Finno-Ugric languages' research seminars. I presented my first guest lecture in Finnish for an undergraduate course and was invited to give guest lectures at research seminars in linguistics and folklore. I have worked with researchers and archivists at the Migration Institute of Finland and read through decades old fieldnotes housed at the Institute for the Languages of Finland's library in Helsinki. I am collaborating with my host, Dr. Ilmari Ivaska, on an article using a machine learning model and their LA corpus (Lauseopin arkiston murrekorpus) to compare the Finnish of heritage speakers in Wisconsin to Finnish dialects spoken in Finland. So far, it looks promising.

I've also been fortunate to connect with some of our department's previous visitors like Dr. Elizabeth Peterson at the University of Helsinki, as well as not one, not two, but three of our department's previous Fulbright Finnish FLTAs (Meri, Kristiina, and Ilkka). I currently share an office space with Meri, which was a pleasant surprise, since we shared an office during their time in Madison.

On the personal side, I have visited friends and relatives in Joensuu, traveled north to Oulu with a group of Fulbrighters, and have plans to visit family in Hamina. I have attempted to cross-country ski, gone to a public, seaside sauna, learned the Finnish words for kettlebell (kahvakuula) exercises and ultimate frisbee defenses (kämmenpakko and rystypakko), and baked quite a lot of pulla. It has been a whirlwind of excitement and uncertainty, doubt and fulfillment. I am grateful for how much has been possible even while taking precautions against COVID-19 and look forward to returning to Madison to finish my dissertation.



Above: Mirva admiring the lights in Oulu, Finland's market square. Photo by Claire Ramsey.

SSFAUM Capacity-Building Grant

The Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest (SSFAUM) project recently received a \$350,000 capacity-building grant to continue work with artists, community members, and scholars throughout the region. This funding will support much-needed survey work among the artists and folk arts partners that Anna Rue, Marcus Cederström, Nate Gibson, Tom DuBois, and the rest of the team have worked with since the project began in 2017. In addition, SSFAUM will be engaging with the robust network of folklorists and culture workers dedicated to folklife and education through the creation of a Community of Practice dedicated to supporting DEI work in the classroom. For the SSFAUM team, this will include examining the intersections of immigration and indigeneity in a Nordic and Nordic American context. Look for more resources, exhibitions, events, and future collaborations between UW-Madison and artists and folklorists in the coming months at folklife.wisc.edu.



National Danish Book Club & Literary Event Series

National Danish Book Club & Literary Event Series

In the spring of 2021, I was contacted by Mary DeLorme, the Director of Grants and Partnerships for Scan Design Foundation, based in Seattle, WA. I met Mary many years ago when I was the Activities Coordinator for Scan Design while its program was still under the auspices of the Scandinavian Department. She was looking for ideas to encourage, stimulate, and further increase the growing interest in Danish literature that has developed in later years. An example of this is the success of Tove Ditlevsen's trilogy in translation and the literary events sponsored by the American Scandinavian Foundation and others.

My immediate response was that we should create a book club for anybody interested in reading and discussing Danish literature in translation. After several meetings, the idea was turned into a viable program, and as a valuable addition, Desiree Ohrbeck, former Danish Lecturer at the University of Washington in Seattle, was appointed to conduct interviews with either the authors or various experts. Our circle of partners was expanded through Mary's expertise, and it now comprises Scan Design Foundation, Museum of Danish America, Northwest Danish Association, National Foundation for Danish America, National Nordic Museum, American-Scandinavian Foundation, University of Wisconsin–Madison (through me as a representative), and University of Washington Scandinavian Studies Department (through Desiree Ohrbeck as a representative).

The next difficult task was choosing books that would be characteristic of Danish literature in its many facets: old, new, traditional, alternative—and covering various genres. Furthermore, the books should appeal to a wide and varied audience, be fairly easy—and inexpensive—to obtain, and able to generate lively, open discussion for readers of all levels and interests. As I perceived the book club as a “club” where people joined as members (whether it was for merely one or several meetings), I wanted to ensure that the chosen books would stimulate thoughts and opinions for sharing. As always, one obstacle is the accessibility of the books in English, so it took a lot of speculation and brainstorming to come up with the first list of nine books for the academic year of 2021–2022. The chosen ones are:

Helle Helle, *This Should be Written in the Present Tense*; Olga Ravn, *The Employees*; Jussi Adler-Olsen, *Victim 2117*; Isak Dinesen, *Babette's Feast*; Carsten Jensen, *We the Drowned*; Martin A. Hansen, *The Liar*, Dorthe Nors, *Mirror Shoulder Signal*; Erik Valeur, *The Man in the Lighthouse*; and Jonas Eika, *After the Sun*.

And then we began. It was with much trepidation that I signed on to the first Zoom meeting in September, but 12 people showed up, and we had a great, lively discussion. Desiree interviewed our local expert on Helle Helle, Claus Elholm Andersen, and the interview was watched by a large number of people. It seemed like we were on track towards success!

As I had hoped, the news about the book club spread through various media as well as word of mouth, and at our latest meeting, on Jan 18, the number was 53. The discussion of the 688-page long book was—as on previous occasions—lively, wide-ranging, profound, funny, and always interesting.

Participation is not a requirement, but, naturally, I truly enjoy the open-minded sharing of analyses, observations, opinions, and ideas. However, it is perfectly fine to sit back and enjoy the discussion from an observer's point of view, maybe thinking about views to share in the next book club event!

Both the book club and the interviews are being recorded, so they are available to everyone interested after the fact. In the spring of 2022, we are broadcasting the interviews before the book club discussions to give the participants a chance to immerse themselves even more deeply in the author's universe before or while reading the book.

It gives me great pleasure to be a part of this adventure, and I want to extend my warmest invitation to anyone who wants to join us for one or more book club evenings.

The book club takes place via Zoom at 7:00 pm Central time, once a month, and I am including the website with further details: <https://northwestdanish.org/nationalbookclub/>.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you would like more information. I hope to see you next time.

Nete Schmidt
Emerita
aschmidt2@wisc.edu

Nordic Filmmakers: A New Course Offered by Liina-Ly Roos

Liina-Ly is excited about a new course that she has proposed and plans to teach in Spring 2023. It is titled “Nordic Filmmakers,” and it is the first of the new courses about Nordic cinema that she and Benjamin Mier-Cruz have created. There are so many well-known and fascinating filmmakers from the Nordic region. Through unique styles and approaches to filmmaking, these filmmakers depict and explore universal topics, such as love, intimacy, guilt, happiness or melancholy. In this course, a variety of films by directors like Gabriela Pichler, Aki Kaurismäki, Anja Breien, Ingmar Bergman, Lars von Trier, Liselotte Wajstedt, Ahang



Above: Dana (Yara Aliadotter) and Aida (Zahraa Aldoujaili) in the film *Amatörer* by Gabriela Pichler, to be shown in the upcoming course.

Bashi, and Signe Baumann will be watched and discussed. Students will learn about the changing meaning of and different approaches to film authorship and filmmaking in Nordic cinema, problematize the dominance of white male directors as auteurs, discuss the increasing archive of films made by people of color, women, LGBTQ+, and Indigenous filmmakers in the Nordic region, and practice basic film analysis skills. The material of this course is largely inspired by a special topics class taught by Liina-Ly in 2020, which was well-received by both undergraduate and graduate students. One of her favorite assignments to grade was a recording where students were expected to introduce a Nordic film of their choice at a mock film festival in Madison. All of them brought out interesting and thought-provoking aspects about the films, and demonstrated both strong analytical skills as well as an ability to present their thoughts in an engaging and accessible manner.

Swede Home Chicago: Lost Sounds Recovered

A century ago America's major record companies, chiefly Columbia and Victor, sought "foreign born" audiences by bringing musicians of diverse ethnicities—including Danes, Finns, Icelanders, Norwegians, and Swedes—to studios in the New York City area. Their success issuing over 1000 Swedish double-sided discs, coupled with expanded access to recording technologies, inspired the first label launched by a Nordic American immigrant.

Throughout the Roaring Twenties, Gustav Wallin—a Chicago music store proprietor of humble Bohuslän origin who had been a piano factory pieceworker—captured the dynamic ferment of his generation's shifting Swedish American sounds on 56 remarkable tracks.

Scattered, scarce, almost lost, they are gathered, restored, and reissued as a new double-CD set including a 76-page illustrated booklet, *Swede Home Chicago: Wallin's Svenska Records, 1923-1927*.

Made by local and touring performers in Chicago studios, the tracks feature raucous vaudevillians, operatic tenors, accordion bands, classical duos, warbling thespians, vocal quartets, and bell-ringers offering earthy comic ditties, patriotic anthems, pious hymns, dance tunes, and sentimental homeland songs drawn variously from Swedish, pan-Scandinavian, continental European, and American sources. From 2019–2021, our department's Jim Leary (emeritus) and Marcus Cederström, closely collaborating with Richard Martin of Grammy-winning Archeophone Records, tracked down every extant disc, acquired scores of vivid images, unearthed biographical information for Wallin and all performers, and repeatedly listened to Martin's meticulous sonic restorations to decipher, transcribe, translate, and annotate lyrics.

As Leary and Cederström reveal in a series of blogs, persistent sleuthing and scavenging yielded rewarding connections with discographers, record collectors and, especially, institutional allies. Our colleague Nate Gibson and staff at UW–Madison's Mills Music Library provided and digitally transferred a baker's dozen Wallin's discs from their 78-RPM Recordings Collection. Archivists at Chicago's Swedish American Museum, the Gustavus Adolphus collection of Scandinavian-American Recordings, Bishop Hill's Vasa Archives, the National Library of Sweden's Svensk Mediedatabas, and Stockholm's Svenskt Visarchiv each provided essential otherwise elusive fragments.

The biggest puzzle-solving pieces, however, came from UW Scandinavian Studies alumna Carol Dixon, formerly Carol Anderson, who not only fondly remembers Kim Nilsson's Scandinavian linguistics courses but is also Gustav Wallin's granddaughter. Dixon generously provided access to family photographs, scrapbooks, and reminiscences, both immeasurably enriching the project and confirming that, despite many challenges, it was meant to be.



Top Left: Gustaf and Anna Wallin at the counter of Wallin's Music Shop on 3247 N. Clark Street in Chicago sometime in the mid-1920s.

Bottom Left: Gustaf Waldemar Wallin pictured here around the age of 18.

Scandinavian Studies Graduates and Award Winners

Graduate Students

- *Ailie Westbrook* (Scandinavian Studies, MA) 12/20/20
- *Bridgette Stoeckel* (Scandinavian Studies, MA) 5/9/21
- *Tristan Mueller-Vollmer* (Scandinavian Studies, Ph.D.) 8/22/21
- *Colin Connors* (Scandinavian Studies, Ph.D.) 12/26/21

Undergraduate Students

Majors

Kendall Leigh Allen
McKenna Mulvey
Linus Weissbach

Certificates:

Ellen Robison
Brianna Forsman
Sophie Beckfield
Connor Jones

Awards

Rachel Bott

Vera Cronor Travel Grant

Elliott Brandsma

Dr. Herbert E. Harper, Jr. Scholarship (San Antonio Area Foundation)
Wisconsin Idea Award

Mirva Johnson

Summer Graduate School Fellowship
Vera Cronor Travel Grant
Wisconsin Idea Award

Svea Larson

American Scandinavian Foundation Research Fellowship
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship
Swedish Emigrant Institute 2022 Research Fellowship
Vera Cronor Travel Grant

Holly McArthur

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship
Vera Cronor Travel Grant
Wisconsin Idea Award

John Prusynski

Vera Cronor Travel Grant

David Smith

Vera Cronor Travel Grant

Ailie Westbrook

Aurora Borealis Prize

Alumni Updates

Vendula Jaster

My name is Vendula, I live in Germany, but I was born and raised in the Czech Republic. I came to the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2001, after I received my BA degree in Norwegian from Charles University in Prague. I came to the United States to pursue my MA degree, but in the course of my studies I made the decision to continue with my PhD in Norwegian literature. What the years in Madison were like for me is hard to describe with just one simple word. They were intense, enriching, challenging, joyful, and gave me a lot of food for thought. The courses I took were exciting, well prepared and very comprehensive. I enjoyed every one of them, although the assignments often made me stay up late or skip a party that I so wanted to go to. I felt I grew a bit with every credit earned, and it felt like I was where I wanted to be.

In 2004, after I took my preliminary exams, I decided to bid the United States good-bye and return to the Old Continent. I married my German fiancé, started working on my German language more intensely than I used to, and also became mom of my son Valentin. Working on my dissertation from afar was hard and I am forever grateful to my dissertation adviser, Tanya Thresher, for all the help and patience I received from her in those years.

Living in Germany, being a mom, and constantly moving from place to place for my husband's job was not easy at first. Nevertheless, in 2007 I completed my dissertation and received my Ph.D. in Scandinavian Studies. In 2008, my daughter Rebecca was born. She was named after Rebekka West in *Rosmersholm*, a play that I used in my dissertation research.

As a family of four, we decided to welcome in more adventures and return to the United States. Living in the U.S. with children was a whole new experience for me. My graduate student perspective changed completely, as I shifted my focus to a place to live, safety, education, and traveling. I raised my children tri-lingually (English, German, and Czech), which despite some initial struggles brought enormous advantages not only to them, but also to my future career as a language teacher. My son was fluent in German and Czech and learned English as a foreign language at the age of 5. My daughter (2 years old back then) learned all three languages simultaneously. It was a wonderful time of inner growth, new friendships, first school- and preschool days, traveling, library afternoons, American traditions, music and fun. I am forever grateful for those three years we spent in Cincinnati. My children (16 and 13 today) still profit from that time, as it has broadened their horizons and taught them to respect what's different.

Upon our return to Germany in 2013, I started working as a tutor of English at a Nuremberg language school. Later, I exchanged this job for a position of a pre-school English teacher at a school that focused on bilingual education. Being away from all things Scandinavian for so long took away the confidence from me to pursue a career in Norwegian. I missed reading and speaking Norwegian, yet I couldn't imagine I could possibly find the opportunity to ever actively use it again. It turned out I was wrong! I found an on-line school of Scandinavian languages that sought Norwegian teachers. I applied for the job and started teaching Norwegian! As a non-native speaker of German it took me a while to feel confident explaining to my German and Swiss students Norwegian grammar in a language that was theirs, but not my own. In Madison I was trained to



master the transitions between English and Norwegian quite well. These languages, although both foreign to me, were different enough to avoid confusion. Now, I had to train myself to shift smoothly from German to Norwegian and back again, which was a challenge and a task that took a while to complete. Today, I can confidently say I am an established teacher of the Norwegian language, I have some amazing students who live in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Norway..... and our learning groups keep growing! The Scandinavian languages enjoy great popularity in the German speaking countries and all over Europe, and our courses allow the students to have a better insight into the Scandinavian mindset, whatever motivations they may have to study it. It took me years to return to my beloved field of study, and it has been a long way. Yet I don't regret the process. Each step of the way, no matter how far from my field it might have been, has contributed to what I am privileged to do now. And perhaps I wouldn't have become that without all the detours. I love my job, and I wish all Scandinavian Studies students a ton of optimism, determination and the best of luck.

Brad Holtmann

In retirement, I look back on my graduate experience at UW in the 1980s with great fondness. I was a Germanic Philology major with a minor in Scandinavian Studies. I'd studied a fair amount of Danish on my own but had never heard or spoken it much, so what did I do? Two amazing semesters of Danish Lit with Kirsten Wolf! Talk about trial by fire. But it was so stimulating. I also had two semesters of Old Norse with marvelous Dick Ringler. Too bad he didn't teach Old English when I took it. Kirsten also offered Modern Icelandic, and I jumped at the chance. Aside from those two stellar professors, I loved Scandinavian Linguistics with Kim Nilsson—taught partly in Swedish. The three years in grad school made up a memorable and wonderful time in my life. I got to study German lit and criticism, various historical phases and dialects of German and Middle Dutch, Gothic, and modern Dutch language and literature—with a year's Fulbright in the Netherlands afterward.

This far-ranging course work allowed me to survive 27 years at Mansfield University, a small state school in north-central Pennsylvania. I taught German and French, with some fine majors in a full-fledged German program, and founded an exchange with the University of Jena. There were even several native speakers of German, and my broad preparation in the German Department made it possible to challenge them even in literature courses. Alas, with budget and program cuts, my duties shifted to German culture courses in English, linguistics-oriented English courses—and eventually three years of intro Italian. I didn't mind professional development trips for that! But Germanic philology was definitely used in, for instance, History of the English Language.

Retirement has offered the precious resource of time. Lately, a review of UW Yiddish has kept me entertained. Although Swedish and Danish are mostly mutually comprehensible, I recently decided to learn Swedish properly, using the Babbel app. I loved learning Swedish tones and comparing/contrasting with Danish. My poor brain confused them until it realized that this new intruder was here to stay. Now I keep them apart pretty well. I've also reviewed Danish with apps and reading. It has all been a lovely reminder of a very special period of my life, for which I am most grateful. The icing on the cake was my fantastic experience in Scandinavian Studies. Mange tak for det!



Paul Natiw

“Write a little piece about what you’ve been up to” –Now, do I give the Miss America pageant response that’s nice and light, pleasant, a little sugary and expected, yet also forgettable and trite at the same time?....

Or do I say what I’ve really been up to and embarrass myself and the department in the eyes of the imaginary Judge Judy we all have in our heads? “Hi, since graduating, I’ve been in a never-ending, early-onset midlife crisis exacerbated by a presidency that was a complete disgrace to any modern ‘democracy’ followed then by the Tonya Harding of respiratory infections. Since Ms. Rona Covidchkova has been obsessed with competing to become the new flu, I’ve been hiding in my boyfriend’s house living off the money I made at a company more unstable than myself and pretending that the

next Jackpot winning lottery numbers will appear before me in a dream to absolve me of my debt and need to ‘find a job,’ i.e., convince employers that working for their company is exactly why I convert oxygen to carbon dioxide everyday—eyeroll—” Am I bitter? Aw, but on a lighter note, I can’t believe it’s already been seven years since I left Madison. Though I was not a fan of the winter, I really do miss the summers and falls up there, and getting to bike around everywhere. I really wish more cities were as bike friendly as Madison! I currently live in a monster truck-friendly town; yay Florida, home of all kinds of things. Mmm, yes.



What haven’t I been up to since I left the Arctic tundra, I mean, Wisconsin? I’ve been trying out all the professions, or so it might seem on my résumé. I babysat, I mean, taught middle school and high school for a year, quit; then worked for an artist friend of mine to set up her business and first gallery exhibition. After that finished, I moved to Orlando and started working remotely as a freelance translator, the isolation of which pushed me to find work in 3D reality with physical people, which led me to a job using my language knowledge in a chatbot company where I got to work in person for a whole three months before, guess who, COVID swooped in and said nope, back to the 2D world. So then, I did what I’m super good at and quit, which brings us to the present. I’ll be 40 in two years and I still don’t know what I want to be when I grow up. Adulthood isn’t just hard, it can be kinda boring. You mean I can’t keep changing my job as much as I changed my major? I have to feign mental stability to be employable? Where’s the job where I get paid to learn all day without signing a contract with the devil, I mean, the financial aid office? I’m not young and cute anymore, so a sugar daddy’s out of the question, and I come from poor folk, so an accidental poisoning of a rich relative is not even a viable option... My only next bet is actually winning the lottery or e-mailing Oprah for pity money—her pocket change is more than most people will see in a lifetime, maybe I’ll catch her personal assistant’s personal assistant on a good day—Yet still, I’m sure the odds are better that I’ll be abducted by whatever alien species the James Webb Space Telescope discovers is on its way to Earth later this year when it peers into deep space and sees that there’s actually something there, unlike my bank account. Maybe they’re coming from a civilization where they pay you to learn all day and just be a big, organic brain. And where the hell is Universal income already? Maybe Uncle Sam can print more of that monopoly money and be all of our sugar daddies.

“And you get a sugar daddy, and you get a sugar daddy, and you get a sugar dadddddy!!”

David Natvig

I graduated in May 2018 with a Ph.D. in Scandinavian Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. After teaching Norwegian, linguistics, and Nordic culture courses at St. Olaf College for one year, I worked as a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Oslo's Center for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan (MultiLing) from 2019–2021. There I ran a research project on variation and change in American Norwegian sound patterns, particularly in the American Upper Midwest, called American Norwegian Sound Systems and Language Contact, led the organization of the International Conference on Nordic and General Linguistics in Oslo (June 2021), and co-edited a thematic issue on heritage languages and bilingualism for *The Nordic Journal of Linguistics* (Cambridge University Press).



Following my fellowship at the University of Oslo, I started as an Associate Professor (førsteamanuensis) of Nordic Linguistics at the University of Stavanger this year, in September 2021. Here, I continue to focus on integrating multilingualism and sociolinguistic variation with formal approaches to phonology and morphology, with an eye to Norwegian and Nordic languages. I am also teaching introductory courses in linguistics and sociolinguistics, as well as Master's courses in multilingualism, Norwegian as a Second Language, and language variation and change. In addition, I am advising a number of Master's students. Of course, I am also excited about new opportunities to collaborate with faculty and students, and looking forward to establishing new research projects on language and community in Stavanger and western Norway.

During my time at the University of Wisconsin, I developed teaching and research skills, in particular community-oriented fieldwork and collaboration with students and faculty, that has been invaluable for my stay in Norway, both in Oslo and now in Stavanger. Working with Nordic and GNS+ scholars with a wide range of perspectives—linguists, folklorists, and literature scholars—allowed me to transition as a colleague in the Department of Cultures and Languages, the university's interdisciplinary humanities department. Furthermore, the language abilities and cultural knowledge I learned through my studies has provided a strong foundation for me to be an active member of the intellectual community at the University of Stavanger, and among Norwegian linguists more broadly. I'm looking forward to coming back to Madison to visit and hoping to build and maintain strong ties and collaboration between Wisconsin and Stavanger.

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 Kyle Swenson at kdsenson@wisc.edu. All donations go to the NGSA and support graduate students in their research, teaching, and professional development.



Song Recommendations

As we head into the summer months, faculty, staff, and students offer up a few Scandinavian song (and album) recommendations for your playlist. You can find recordings of these songs in a playlist on our German, Nordic, and Slavic+ YouTube channel!

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGy1MJ-Ncs2OkgU697NdLPg/videos>

Monicas vals

Artist: Monica Zetterlund

Recommended by Richelle Wilson

I'd like to recommend "Monicas vals" performed by Swedish singer Monica Zetterlund with Bill Evans on the album *Waltz for Debby* (1964). I've always been a fan of vocal and piano jazz, so it was a treat for me to discover this after I started studying Swedish. It's a very cozy and atmospheric song, and I can't listen to it without thinking of the charming video of Monica and Bill performing together in 1966.

Kom ti biyn and Pa to ta na kako?

Artist: KAJpop

Recommended by Scott Mellor

My recommendation is two songs by the group Kajpop from Österbotten, Finland: "Kom ti biyn" and "Pa to ta na kako?," both can be found on YouTube. The singers sing in a variety of musical styles, in the first case Kpop from Korea and in the other rap, but it is all tongue in cheek. They sing in dialect, which is a reminder of the diversity of varieties of Swedish spoken around the world.

Kuukene

Artist: Trad.Attack!

Recommended by Liina-Ly Roos

One of my favorite songs by Estonian folk-rock band Trad.Attack! is titled "Kuukene" / "Moon" (2015). Similar to many of their other songs, it combines traditional Estonian folk songs and instruments, samples from archival recordings, and contemporary rock/pop/electronic music. The lyrics, based on an archival recording of Emilie Kõiv (whose voice we hear at the end of the song) basically asks the moon to make one stronger. The Russian band Oligarkh's remix of "Kuukene" (2020) is also an amazing musical experience that adds to the above-mentioned elements Oligarkh's fusion of Orthodox hymns, electronic, and Russian folk music.

Bachelorette

Artist: Björk

Recommended by Dean Krouk

From the album *Homogenic*, 1997, with lyrics by the Icelandic novelist Sjón ("I'm a fountain of blood in the shape of a girl") and an excellent music video directed by Michel Gondry, this song is one of many examples of the inimitable genius of 1990s Björk.

Beyond the Great Vast Forest

Artist: Emperor

Recommended by Kyle Swenson

Emperor is an iconic Norwegian black metal band and the band's debut studio album, *In the Nightside Eclipse*, is highly regarded. I chose this song because it is the closest I could get to a somewhat palatable song from an important band, and important album, in what is otherwise a disconcerting genre. That said, it will still probably sound like a bunch of racket!

Stålslått (Album)

Artist: Thov G. Wetterhus

Recommended by David Smith

Last summer in Norway I had the good fortune of picking up the album *Stålslått* by Thov G. Wetterhus on vinyl. Wetterhus is a Norwegian virtuoso of the jaw harp, a vibrating instrument inserted directly into the mouth, where the oral cavity itself is used to modulate resonance and pitch. *Stålslått* is quite possibly the weirdest but most fun record in my collection. The jaw harp's buzzy drone, accompanied only by Wetterhus's stamping foot, helps facilitate deep concentration during a long night of study.

Stålslått is part of the "Perspektiv på norsk folkemusikk" series from the Norwegian indie label Motvind Records, whose music can be purchased and downloaded at bandcamp.com.

Sliteneliten (Album)

Artist: Sliteneliten

Recommended by Ida Moen Johnson

I recommend Sliteneliten's self-titled 2021 album. The band consists of six Norwegian women in their twenties. Their sound is boisterous and upbeat, with instruments ranging from guitar and drums to flute and fiddle. Their lyrics are political, with a playful edge. Chorus refrains include, "Sjå opp, sjå opp! Me ska knusa kapitalen" (Watch out, watch out! We'll crush capitalism) and the line, "Dansa, till the world ends, Nei, eg vil berre drikka øl" (Dance till the world ends, no, I just want to drink beer). When sung in tandem, we hear the lines in the variety of dialects spoken by the band's members, who hail from both city and countryside. The anti-capitalist album feels timely at a moment when the socialist party in Norway (Rødt) has doubled its representation in parliament, aided largely by votes from young people. I discovered Sliteneliten on Deichman's "Ferske spor" playlist on Spotify, which I also recommend.

I Just Cleaned the Floor

Artist: Turn off Your Television

Recommended by Thor Rothering

After trudging through the seemingly endless mire of COVID for the past two years I've found it increasingly important to set aside small moments of mental respite each day. Like a calm weekend morning the melody of "I Just Cleaned the Floor" by Turn off Your Television wanders aimlessly into your ears, waking up a sense of appreciation for the world around you. Lyrically it delivers a similarly grateful message, finding joy in the small things life offers, even ones as trivial as a clean floor.

Harpans Kraft

Artist: Kalabra

Recommended by Rachel Bott

Kalabra describes themselves as "a type of musical wok of Nordic folk music dressed as pop music, peppered with funk, rock, and jazz." "Harpans Kraft" features the clarity and power of Ulrika Bodén's vocals, accompanied with folk-jazz style instrumentals, creating an exciting, updated version to a medieval classic.

Tròdlabùndin

Artist: Eivør

Recommended by Emily Beyer

One of my favorite Scandinavian virtuosas is Faroese folk singer Eivør. In her song "Tròdlabùndin," (Trøllabundin, 2005) she blends aspects of Indigenous music traditions from around the Arctic to create a haunting song. This song describes how just one look at a Scandinavian shaman, or Galdramaður, can enchant an onlooker. Notice the ingressive singing, or singing on in-breaths, and imitative huffs and puffs of a reindeer, and other details that connect her song to a pan-Arctic tradition.

Faculty and Staff Updates

Claus Elholm Andersen

Claus Elholm Andersen is finishing his book manuscript on autofiction and the Norwegian author Karl Ove Knausgård and has begun his next project, which examines how Hans Christian Andersen, through the formalistic features of his fairytales, offers an early criticism of capitalism and suggests that capitalism in 19th-century Denmark, in addition to commodifying human existence, puts limits on what he means to be human. In the fall of 2021, he was a fellow at the Institute for the Research in the Humanities. He continues to give numerous talks around Wisconsin on hygge and happiness through the Badger Talks Program.



Susan Brantly

During 2021, Susan Brantly has engaged in a number of outreach activities. Brantly prepared a lecture about our first Scandinavian professor at the UW titled: "Rasmus B. Anderson: The Hub of Norwegian-American Life." This talk was delivered in person to Tre Lag Stevne at their gathering in Madison, and in October, it was performed via Zoom thanks to Livsreise in Stoughton. Brantly was also invited to be interviewed for a documentary on the Swedish Academy and the sex scandal that rocked it in 2018, titled "The Prize of Silence." Her part was to inform an American audience about the Swedish Academy in general and the literary Nobel Prize in particular. A quick trip to LA and chauffeured limousines had her feeling like a movie star!

Marcus Cederström

Marcus Cederström continues his work with the Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest project. The project team co-authored and was awarded an additional \$350,000 grant to build on the work and create a regional Community of Practice focused on folklore and education in the Upper Midwest. In addition, Marcus taught a couple of versions of FOLK 100: Introduction to Folklore with nearly 200 students in each class and co-authored the liner notes for *Swede Home Chicago: The Wallin's Svenska Records Story, 1923-1927*, for which he also transcribed and translated the song lyrics.



Tom DuBois

Tom DuBois is finishing his work as chair of GNS+ in the spring of 2022. While continuing to work diligently on ongoing research projects, he also responded to a nationwide call for Zoom programming by signing on for numerous online presentations at various universities and organizations. He talked about some of his recent books and translations in Seattle, Detroit, and Minneapolis. He talked about the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* on the BBC and in Alberta. He talked about Sámi culture in Virginia, Wisconsin, and California. Yet he never left Madison for any of these!

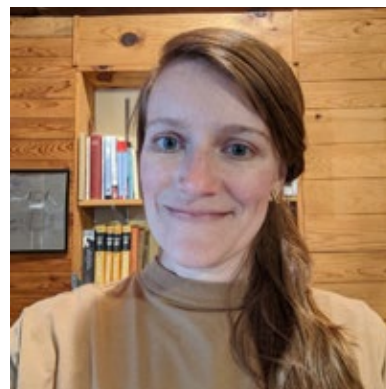


Rebecca Forbes Wank

Rebecca Forbes Wank is the financial specialist in the department. She has been busy lately with travel arrangements for guest speakers, which is a good sign that the pandemic is winding down! She also handles reimbursements and grants for the department and the funds at the Foundation. Outside of work, she and her husband are bird paparazzi (his words), and she plays the mandolin (and sometimes fiddle) in a contra dance band. She is noticing an upturn in gigs, which is another positive sign the pandemic is on the decline.

Ida Moen Johnson

Ida Moen Johnson joined the department in August of 2022 as the new Permanent Lecturer in Norwegian. In this role, she teaches first- and second-year Norwegian language courses, as well as courses on Nordic literature and culture. Prior to joining the department at UW Madison, she graduated with a PhD from the Department of Scandinavian at UC Berkeley in spring of 2020 followed by one year as a Visiting Assistant Professor at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN. Her research focuses on children, animals, and ecology in Nordic literature and culture. In 2021, her article “*Bjørn and Børn: Queer Interspecies Kinship in Norway’s First Text for Children*” was published in the journal *Scandinavian Studies*.



Dean Krouk

In the spring of 2021, Dean Krouk taught a new topics course on nynorsk literature with a group of eager participants. Fall semester brought his first-ever sabbatical, when he translated the nonfiction book *Fars krig* (My Father’s War) by Bjørn Westlie and put the final touches on his book about Nordahl Grieg (see separate article). His chapter contributions to *Ibsen in Context* and *Nordic War Stories* were both published. Dean is currently serving as the Director of Graduate Studies for Nordic and the book review editor for the journal *Scandinavian Studies*. In October, Dean got married to his partner, Nick, in a small outdoor wedding.

Mark Mears

Mark Mears is the Graduate Coordinator for German, Nordic, and Slavic+ since it formed in 2016. Prior to that he was the Graduate Coordinator for the German Department and has worked at UW–Madison for over 30 years. He is the first contact for all graduate student admissions and he assists current graduate students with navigating both Department and Graduate School policies and procedures from their initial recruitment to their final graduation. He is also the Curricular Representative for GNS+ and responsible for posting course offerings to the University’s Catalog of Courses each term and for classroom scheduling. In his leisure time Mark has been an avid softball and volleyball player and also enjoys camping with family and friends.





Scott Mellor

Scott Mellor continues his work with the International Learning Community as the faculty director of the Norden Language floor and the Bradley Learning Community for first-year students. Scott was elected the vice-president of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study and is co-editor of a volume on Finland-Swedish culture, for which he is writing an article on the Åland Islands. Scott teaches a First-year Interest Group on the medieval Sagas for which he was written up in *Inside UW* for his innovative use of games and gaming to explore images of the medieval Nordic countries in pop culture.

Todd Michelson-Ambelang

Todd Michelson-Ambelang is currently working on a number of research projects and articles in philology and libraries. He is especially interested in taking part in a research study of the research habits and needs of faculty and teaching staff at UW–Madison this semester. He continues to teach library courses for Scandinavian and South Asian Studies, order items for the two areas, and work on making libraries more accessible, especially for users with disabilities and impairments. He is now starting his second year on the HEAL project and looks forward to seeing the project grow and ignite other communities to study antiracism.



Benjamin Mier-Cruz

Benjamin Mier-Cruz is Assistant Professor of Scandinavian Studies and Gender and Women's Studies. Their research interests are modern Nordic literature and film with a focus on writers and filmmakers of color and intersectional representations of gender, sexuality, and race. Benjamin's current book project explores contemporary representations of non-whiteness in Swedish visual culture. They have recently written "Edith Södergran's Genderqueer Modernism," "Swedish Racial Innocence on Film: To be Young, Queer and Black in Swedish Documentary Filmmaking," and the co-authored "Dracula or Draculitz? Translational Forgery and Bram Stoker's 'Lost Version' of *Dracula*."

Liina-Ly Roos

Liina-Ly Roos has enjoyed getting to know many of the wonderful colleagues and students at UW–Madison in 2021. Starting a job as assistant professor during COVID was challenging but teaching both online and in-person has provided many rewarding moments in her courses such as Contemporary Nordic Television or Sexual Politics in Scandinavia. Last year was also a productive research year: Liina-Ly's articles "Mediating a Pluralised 'We': Amateur First-Person Filmmaking in Gabriela Pichler's *Amatörer*" and "It Is So Bad To Be Estonian: Parody Music Videos and Remediated Sites of National Cultural Memory on Estonian Public Broadcasting" are forthcoming in 2022.



Thor Rothering

Thor Rothering is in his third year of working as the Communications Specialist for GNS+. Throughout the pandemic Thor worked on several projects including multiple poster series for department courses, a folk artist exhibit for The Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, and improving accessibility on the GNS+ website (a project that is still ongoing). In his free time Thor has enjoyed spending time with his family, biking, and taking classes through the UW including a runology course with the department.



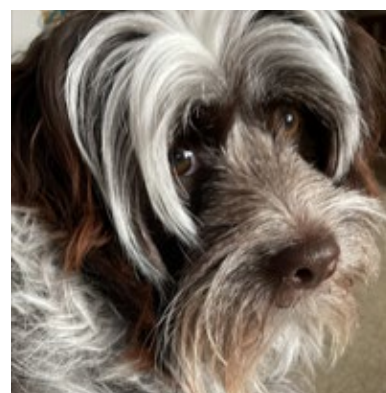
Joanna Schuth

Joanna Schuth is the undergraduate advisor for the Scandinavian Studies major and certificate. She has been with GNS+ since 2019 and is the point of contact for all students in the department's twelve undergrad majors and certificates. When not at work she lives with her husband, daughter, and two cats on the east side of Madison, where she foists classical music on her kid, dreams of summer, and invariably overplants her garden.



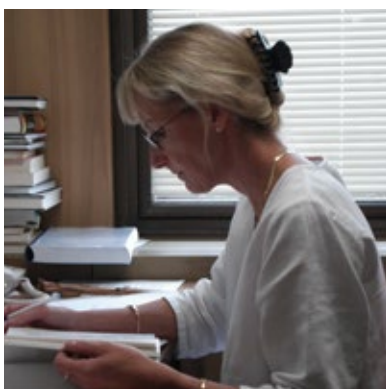
Nicole Senter

Nicole Senter has been the Department Administrator since the merger in 2016, and only speaks the languages of Human Resources, Budgeting, and Policy and Procedure. In addition to her role, she also serves as co-Chair for the Academic Staff Personal and Policies Committee. When not at work, she is finishing her Master's in Project Management, has learned to not kill her indoor and outdoor succulents, goes to craft breweries with her husband, and tries to not annoy her adult children with too many phone calls about their replacement, her pup Harper.



Kirsten Wolf

Kirsten Wolf took advantage of the partial lockdown to focus on her research. Travel and field work abroad seemed impossible, so while holed up in Madison, she finished a book, *Pious Fictions and Pseudo-Saints in the Late Middle Ages*, in collaboration with Marianne Kalinke. The book is now under review at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto. A few other research projects were brought to completion, such as *Vikings: An Encyclopedia of Conflict, Invasions, and Raids*, in collaboration with Tristan Mueller-Vollmer. Gardening, a favorite hobby, was fun and productive, and she had a wonderful crop of tomatoes, basil, and other produce. Teaching online was a bit of a challenge technologically and otherwise, so Kirsten was happy to return to in-person teaching in the fall and to once again being around students and colleagues.



Graduate Student Updates



Emily Beyer

Emily is a graduate student in Scandinavian Studies. She holds an MFA in Poetry from the University of Iowa and an MA in Medieval Icelandic Studies from the University of Iceland. She was lucky to be a Norwegian FLAS Fellow for the duration of the 2021–2022 academic year.



Rachel Bott

Rachel is a first-year Scandinavian Studies PhD student. She received an MA in Early Modern History from Uppsala University and wrote her thesis on gender and hybridity in the Swedish Medieval Ballads. She looks forward to continuing her work at the department, branching further into Scandinavian music, history, and folklore.



Elliott Brandsma

Elliott is a third-year PhD Student on the Literature track, minoring in Global Studies and Political Science. He teaches first-year Swedish for the Nordic Unit and works part time for Project DATA, a political communication research team at UW–Madison. His scholarly interests include 20th century Swedish and Icelandic literature, and he enjoys translating short stories and poems by various Nordic authors in his free time.



Mirva Johnson

Mirva Johnson is a PhD Candidate conducting linguistic and folkloristic research on Finnish Americans in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. She has spent this academic year visiting the Department of Finnish and Finno-Ugric Languages at the University of Turku through the generous support of Fulbright-EDUFI and American Scandinavian Foundation fellowships.



Svea Larson

Svea is a PhD student researching the material culture of Swedish-American Migration and homemaking in the early twentieth century. In addition to TAing for FOLK 100, Svea has been working on projects on material culture in partnership with Folklore Village, the CDMC, and CSUMC.



Holly McArthur

Holly is a third-year PhD student on the Philology Track. She has spent the past year preparing for her prelims, studying *Flóvents saga* to prepare for her dissertation, and working part-time as an acquisitions assistant for the University of Wisconsin Press.



Laura Moquin

Laura is a Ph.D. student building a sociolinguistic dissertation project that examines Norwegian features present in a variety of regional English, and the relationship of those features to notions of regional and heritage identity. She also works as Editorial Assistant for *Papers of the Algonquian Conference and Current Issues in Linguistic Theory*.



Lauren Poyer

Lauren is a PhD Candidate here at UW–Madison and an Assistant Teaching Professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington–Seattle, where she teaches the majority of the medieval Scandinavian curriculum. Her dissertation project examines nautical supernatural encounters in the Sagas of Icelanders.



John Prusynski

John is a PhD candidate working on a dissertation on Sámi literature. He is currently writing about contemporary Sámi authors such as Inger-Mari Aikio and Niillas Holmberg whose works feature international travel as well as the longer history of Sámi writing on travel and migration.



David M. Smith

David is a second-year PhD student specializing in Norwegian literature. He works in the department as a Norwegian language TA, and his translation projects include works by Dag Solstad, Tarjei Vesaas, Johan Harstad, and Leif Høghaug.



Kyle Swenson

Kyle continued work on his dissertation, served as the primary representative of the NGSa, helped teach Hans Christian Andersen, did some copyediting, and helped coach 5th grade football. Kyle's research has focused on early Ibsen; two notable books are *The Young Henrik Ibsen* by Gudleiv Bø and *The Drama of History* by Kristin Gjesdal.



Caitlin Vitale-Sullivan

Cait is exploring farmer perspectives of sound surrounding the landscapes they work in and their perception of multispecies connections in those spaces. She is looking to Swedish and Norwegian agricultural systems, and the herding music used in those landscapes, to examine how music plays a role in the development of multispecies relationships.



Ailie Westbrook

Ailie is a PhD student in the Folklore track. She is currently a TA for Folklore 100 and has previously taught Danish. She is currently researching women's health in medieval Denmark and Sweden. Other research interests include medieval Danish church art, folk healing, and magic.



Richelle Wilson

Richelle is a PhD candidate writing a dissertation about IKEA in literature and culture. She currently works part-time as a radio producer and serves as the managing editor of *Edge Effects*, a digital magazine and podcast produced by graduate students in the Center for Culture, History, and Environment.

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