



Germanic Studies

Fall 2022

Alumni Newsletter

Letter from the Chair

Change is a two-way street, and among its busy comings and goings, it has its sorrows as well as its rewards. This year we lost two beloved members of our department to cancer. **Kari Gade** passed away this past March, with her sister Anne Lill Gade and cousin Lisa Gade Asquini by her side. **Esther Ham** passed away at the end of September, with her husband Peter Hofker by her side.

Kari was the anchor of our philology program, an internationally recognized scholar, who was a founding editor of the Skaldic Project, celebrated by dons of the middle-ages around the world. She was a legendary mentor, and a force of good sense and irreverent humor in the Germanic Studies Department, which she twice chaired and for which she served as director of graduate studies for sixteen years, and to whose devices—elevators, printers, paper shredders—she attached many a fond, totemic name. For me as chair, she was an indispensable source of advice, reminding me to recognize some effort I'd overlooked, to push harder on a constituency's behalf, or to ignore a silly rule. To the end, she'd send me emails concerned to ensure the department took all its members into consideration. She could puncture your pretensions, but she would stand up for you when it mattered.

The deepest lesson I learned as chair from her: pronouncements from this or that office are less important than doing right by your colleagues and students; you never need permission to be fair.

Esther, who was promoted to full teaching professor last year in the first cohort of that rank, won the admiration of her students, colleagues, and friends for her quiet charisma, her dedication, her joy in teaching, and her utter lack of pedantry and pretension. To recall Esther's gentleness, captures something of her manner, but only if one appreciates it together with the unaffected joy she felt in teaching Dutch language and culture. Valuing what was important in life, her humor could wryly mock the fuss and bustle of academic ritual. Esther was so calm that it was easy to overlook just how energetically she was always teaching courses (the dean's office would routinely inquire into the prodigious number of Dutch courses we were mysteriously able to put on our schedule), always advising students and colleagues, always conversing and hosting, whether the Dutch consul or a first-year student at *Koffietijd*. Her humor and reassurance, the buzz of her activity, her attentiveness to matters great and small, and her gracious humility—we will miss Esther greatly.

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Germanic Studies

This newsletter is published by the Department of Germanic Studies, with support from the College of Arts and Sciences, to encourage alumni interest in and support for Indiana University.

For activities and membership information, call 800-824-3044 or visit alumni.iu.edu

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Grüße aus Bloomington!

The end of the year is upon us again, and this one has been a challenging one for reasons you will read about in these pages. But as with any challenging time, this one also brought rewards and riches, if not of the literal kind, then certainly in deep and lastingly heartfelt ways. We suffered some bitter losses, celebrated some significant milestones, and pondered the utter contentment of a cat in the sunshine, while all along exploring and developing academic and professional pathways. We'll let the contributors to this year's newsletter tell you more themselves.

We can, however, take this opportunity to congratulate emeritus professor of Dutch -- and former newsletter editor-- **William Shetter** on reaching his 95th birthday this year. (He said it was all right to tell you.) Happy birthday, Bill!

We were also delighted by the visit this fall of alumna **Eva Maria Janke**, MA '82, and her husband Jörg Nagler, friends from long ago. Their very fond memories of Bloomington and Indiana University brought them back for a lovely, long October weekend. Jörg studied history at IU and has been professor of north American history at the University of Jena since 1998. They send greetings to all who might remember them.

And after more years than I care to count, I finally taught my last class this spring. But jumped at the chance to serve once again as German diction coach for the Jacobs School of Music Opera Theatre, this time for their wonderful production of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. That stack of books I've been meaning to read in my spare time will have to wait a bit longer.

If you are among this year's newsletter contributors, thank you for writing. If you have not sent in an item, please consider doing so next year. Let me encourage you to write whenever you have something to share. We especially want to hear from more alums. See my contact information below. Everyone can also check in with us any time via the Department of Germanic Studies website *Department of Germanic Studies: Indiana University Bloomington* (especially under News and Events) and on the Facebook page IU Bloomington Germanic Studies Department. Read on everyone and keep us in your thoughts.

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Letter from the Chair, (cont.)

Cherishing the memories of those who've shared so much spirit and care to build our programs and communities, we continue to make Germanic Studies a vital part of the humanities at IU Bloomington and, through our research and students, also in the wider world. This past year was characterized by an incredible, historic effort on the part of Bloomington graduate instructors to organize to improve their stipends and working conditions through unionization. Faculty overwhelmingly supported the leadership and initiative of those who teach many of our language courses; assist us in our lectures; organize colloquia; and adopt, adapt, and challenge our research to ensure our scholarship remains part of living tradition. Although the Indiana Graduate Workers Union (IGWC-UE) is still seeking recognition from the trustees, the victories they have won in long overdue raises and improved conditions demonstrate that they are already an acknowledged presence to be reckoned with at the highest level of the institution.

As important as bread and butter are, the union struggle is not just about the shop floor (or classroom whiteboard). A university such as ours is a complex institution, one with a gamut of contending aims and a general scholarly mission composed of welter of different departments, constituencies, and callings. In the liberal chaos of ideas and creativity, research and learning, teaching and retaining, it is sometimes easy to lose sight of the humane values that keep us going—whether we're representing an art or a science. Under the pressure of processes and metrics, we tend to fall prey to the idea that what matters is revenue receipts, or the state, or some established set of interests and powers. Our graduate workers remind us of the importance of values, and the conversations and initiatives—the collective activities—that

truly foster them.

As the feedback process initiated by the new IU leadership directs our eyes to the campus strategic vision, it is urgent that we, friends of Germanic Studies and the humanities, recall and express what makes our scholarly and pedagogic vocation distinct. In the face of the pressure universities are bearing to find ever new sources of revenue, I want to highlight what I see as the humanities' distinct mission to express and interpret the human experience. Or, in an era that some call post-humanist, to reflect on how we humans are entangled with ecologies and collectivities, with the things we've made and contexts that have made us into something other than what we'd been. Since long before Aristotle, we've tussled over what the "essence" of the human is and some—and these are perhaps our inspiration today—have held that our essence is just to be without an essence, but on the way always to becoming who we are. Some have decried this diagnosis of our inessential character as leaving us unmoored, others have exploited it to inveigle us to pseudo-grandeur. But I want to suggest that under today's posthuman conditions, it's more important than ever to become aware of who we aren't ever quite. To find a way to grasp and reflect on experiences of sociability and individuality, history and anticipation, care and neglect, failure and satisfaction, anger and joy—to name just a few things metrics and revenues fail to capture. To be sure, metrics and revenues are pretty post-humanist, too. But they are metonyms for an impoverished posthumanism that puts our shared experiences and ecological understandings in jeopardy. What I see at the center of our mission here in Bloomington is to express and interpret our experiences in tragedy and humor, sarcasm and elegy, proposition and paradox. Do those

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Letter from the Chair, (cont.)

expressions and interpretations align our activity with revenue growth or the state? Do they rather clarify how and why we are never going to be so aligned? Of course, it may be that you or I or our fellow Hoosiers occasionally express our passions blissfully free of the humanities and its concerns—giving reign to impulses of avarice and vainglory as well as pride, jealousy, or love. But then isn't it still up to us in the humanities—and otherwise, who else?—to lift a mirror, to shape and understand such impulses in forms better suited to flourishing than are Instagram flame wars and Twitter memes? Doesn't it do something indispensable even just to draw out the sadness of a situation, to lend our predicaments a trace of dignity?

While I may be saddened and confused the revenue chasing and indifference to public investment that I hear reverberating in the official feedback machine, I'm more than restored by the energy and creativity of our faculty and students! First, a shout out to our new students this year, **Henrique Carvalho Pereira, Claire Richters, and Cynthia Vaona**, whom we've drawn from across continents and disciplines. It is exciting for all of us to be working with them. **Uwe Wirth** (Liebig-Universität Giessen), our Distinguished Max Kade Visiting Professor for the first-8 weeks of the fall semester, was a warm, generous, and truly generative thinker and teacher. His course, "Hybridity as a Concept of Composition and Translation," made a real impact on the thinking of our department, as did his Kade Lecture, "After Hybridity: Grafting as a Model for Cultural Translation." Phillip Weber (Ruhr Universität Bochum), Feodor Lynen Fellow with **Prof. Fritz Breithaupt's** Experimental Humanities Lab, gave our Peter Boerner Memorial Lecture on "The Devil's Contradiction: On the Vox Diaboli in Goethe's Faust" to a large and appreciative audience.

Burkhard Wolf (Universität Wien) shared a thought-provoking analysis of the representation of people seeking refuge across the Mediterranean in his lecture, "When Seascapes Collide: Maritime Film and Fiction After the Age of Adventure." We had stimulating summer research fellowship presentations from our graduate students **Cynthia Shin** ("Depiction of the Foreign in German Cinema: A Comparative Study of Doris Dörrie and Werner Herzog") and **Elijah Peters** ("Semantics, Grammaticalization, and Suffixes in Old High German"). **Profs. Chris Sapp and Rex Sprouse's** project of building a parsed corpus of historical German is moving ahead quickly with the help of **Elliot Evens, Elaine Dalida, Mary Gilbert, and Tyler Kniess**. Upcoming soon, **Prof. Teresa Kovacs** has organized a spectacular conference, *Diffractive World-Making: Theatre & Science Beyond the Capitalocene*, with a roster of intellectual and creative firepower that promises to inspire well beyond departmental and disciplinary boundaries: Karen Barad, Kevin Rittberger, McKenzie Wark, Rebecca Schneider, Tavia Nyong'o, Karin Harrasser, Ulf Otto, Bini Adamczak, Alison Calhoun, Penda Diouf, Luiza Prado, and Tzveta Kassabova. Upcoming this winter, **Prof. Irit Dekel** has co-organized a likewise spectacular and urgent conference, *When Justice Migrates: How Mobility across Borders Reconfigures Rights, Equity, and Belonging*. The following week, the pandemic-delayed Patten lectures and weeklong visit of the celebrated moral philosopher, Susan Neiman, director of the Einstein Forum in Potsdam, will finally take place.

There is much more going on, but for that you will have to read the rest of the newsletter or visit our website to find out the latest.

Ben Robinson, Chair



Faculty + Emeriti News

We begin this year's visit with the faculty Professor **Irit Dekel**:



"2021-22 was an interesting and fruitful year: I taught two new classes in Germanic Studies which I was glad to develop: GER 334 "Intro to German Social Thought: the freedom to think otherwise" to a group of enthusiastic students in the Fall, and GER 627 "Holocaust Memory: Sites and Debates" to a group of excellent graduate students from across the College and the Jacobs School of Music in the Spring. Over the academic year, I participated in the Institute for Advanced Study Bloomington Symposia Working Group on the topic of Migration, which opened up meaningful conversations on the concept of postmigration that I work on in my book in progress.

In March 2022 I co-led a virtual workshop with Professor Alice Bloch of Manchester University, featuring students and faculty from IU and from Manchester on the topic *Body Art and Modification: Memory and Identity*, generously funded by Manchester University Humanities Strategic Investment Fund for Internationalization, which also enabled Alice Bloch and me to meet in Berlin in the summer of 2022 for pilot fieldwork on the topic of *Jewish Embodiment through Body Art*. The summer continued with an engaging invited lecture I delivered in the Martin Buber Institute at Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, on Philosemitism in Contemporary German Media.

I co-organized with colleagues from Cambridge, London and Berlin the Cambridge

University held workshop *Entangled Otherings*, which was funded by the DAAD and the British Academy in June 2022, where I presented work in progress on explaining the fight against Antisemitism in Germany in three cultural shifts.

My article "Philosemitism in Contemporary German Media" was published in May 2022 in *Media, Culture & Society* vol. 44.

Finally, this Fall I focus on research and writing, while meeting with advisees and directing the Olamot Center for scholarly and cultural exchange with Israel."

Next up, **Susanne Even** shares her thoughts:

"I don't know how many of you are aware of Kari's old house having changed colors. Dramatically so. It is now striped cream and crimson (horizontally) and looks absolutely hideous. Still, whenever I drive past it I enjoy imagining what Kari would say if she saw it. Her well-known phrase "It looks like shit!" would be one of the tamer ones.

The deaths of our two beloved colleagues Kari and Esther have brought home to me again the importance of being able to live in the moment. Not always easy when faced with a huge workload, deadlines, exams, research projects, etc., as many of us are, and anxiety about the future, as most of us experience at some stage, particularly at job application times. It is easy to lose sight of what really matters; it can be hard to determine what really matters in the first place, and our answers might be ephemeral in nature. Still, it is valuable to ask this question of ourselves from time to time.

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A few things that mattered to me this past year are (neither in particular order nor an exhaustive list) [1] spending time talking with and listening to friends, brothers and sisters, colleagues, strangers, over a shared meal or a glass of wine, while walking, cooking, on the phone, in the rain; [2] teaching and

learning in equal measure – trying to communicate the joy of discovering something, and learning to set up favorable conditions in the classroom for the students to find similar joy; [3] playing – cards, scrabble or pool, throwing balls for Oliver, inventing stories; being involved in something not *nützlich*, just for the sake of doing it: *homo ludens*; [4] writing – an article, a book chapter, liver rhymes, or a quasi-philosophical contribution to the departmental newsletter.”



Although **Bieneke Haitjema** retired in 2018 from teaching Dutch in our department, she asked us to include the following tribute: “I met **Esther Ham** in 2001 after she and Peter had just moved to Bloomington. As soon as Esther started her work as a lecturer of Dutch Language and Culture at the Germanic Studies department, it became clear that she was a gifted lecturer, and her language courses grew steadily in number and popularity. Recognizing the importance of language and culture relationship, Esther very early on built novel cultural activities in her classroom, increasing engagement in language learning and strengthening communication skills of her students.

She also exposed her students to other native speakers of Dutch by involving members of the Dutch community in Bloomington in some of her extracurricular activities such as Dutch coffee hour, Dutch movie nights, and of course, the very popular, annual Sinterklaas



Dutch Coffee Hour Christmas



celebration (see picture where Esther is on the right). Esther pioneered in the development of online language courses and became one of the first directors of Online Education at Indiana University. I had the pleasure of teaching with Esther in the Dutch Program between 2010-2018, teaching first and second year Dutch, as well as culture courses.

In 2015 we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our program, which was founded by Professor **Bill Shetter** in the 1960s. Esther and Professor Shetter had collaborated on a textbook titled *Dutch: An Essential Grammar*. She had also already co-authored a book on Dutch for speakers of other languages, called *Help!*

Esther’s courage, love of teaching, and wit, have touched all of us who surrounded her.”



Nikole Langjahr sends news from her end of the corridor: “2022 stood under the sign of things getting slowly back to normal. We have worked hard to make sure that all of our overseas programs will finally run again in the spring/summer/fall of 2024 - the first time since 2019. More students than in recent years have declared or are planning to declare their majors, minors, and certificates in our department. The German Club, under new leadership, is extremely active. They will

collaborate with me to host a Weihnachtsfeier, again, an event that could not take place in the last three years due to the pandemic. Speaking of the pandemic, one of Covid’s victims was Bear’s Place, our Stammtisch venue for over ten years. Luckily, thanks to graduate student Rebecca Haley, who connected me with the owner of the Runcible Spoon, we were able to resume in-person Stammtisch in the restaurant’s basement. Most Tuesdays, a boisterous and enthusiastic group of German speakers convenes there, happy that the days of forced Zoomtisch are over.”

Emeritus Professor **Breon Mitchell** is very busy in retirement: “I’ve spent the past year trying to finish up a Covid-delayed project I’m working on called “Beckett in Other Voices: A Bibliography of Translations of his Works , 1938-1969,” with 26 languages represented, including, among others, Icelandic and Marathi. The German section has approximately 80 entries. Anyone who would like to proofread the Bengali entry let me know. I’m also still updating my bibliography of bilingual and multilingual dictionaries of the languages of the world—arranged alphabetically by language and chronologically within the language. The dates range from 1460 to the present. So far it includes over 2300 languages and is available on line if you’re interested!

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Chris Sapp is a master collaborator: “Last year felt like my first ‘real’ year on the faculty in Germanic Studies. It was very rewarding to teach Middle High German and Old High German - both firsts for me! I also took over as

Director of Graduate Studies, a role for which I leaned heavily on **Kari Gade**’s institutional knowledge. This role gave me the opportunity to get to know every grad student in the department, even those who are no longer in Bloomington.

On the research side, I finally published my book *Dating the Old Norse Poetic Edda: A multifactorial analysis of linguistic features* (a catchy title for real page-turner, to be sure - get it wherever fine books are sold!) Joking aside, this was a truly bittersweet accomplishment, because Kari was one of the founding mothers of the modern attempts to use metrical criteria to figure out how old Old Norse poems are, and I had to edit the acknowledgments page of the book just before publication to recognize her passing.

My next project is a multi-year endeavor with **Rex Sprouse** to create the *Indiana Parsed Corpus of Historical High German*, a collection of syntactically parsed sentences from about 175 German texts from the years 1100-1920.

Rex and I have received a small grant from IU Research to fund the



Tyler Kniess, Mary Gilbert, Chris Sapp

pilot project, and based on our success so far we will soon apply for a grant from the National Science Foundation to complete the project. Thanks to former and current grad students **David Bolter, Elliott Evans, Mary Gilbert,** and **Tyler Kniess** for their assistance annotating sentences so far! Check out our webpage at ipchg.iu.edu”

And here’s a short but sweet addition from one of Chris’ collaborators, **Rex Sprouse**, who lets us know that he is currently “now serving as an Associate Editor of the (very prestigious) journal *Language Acquisition*; my focus is submissions on nonnative language acquisition.”

Rex is also Professor of Second Language Acquisition and Adjunct Professor of Linguistics and Germanic Studies, as well as Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Second Language Studies.

With a little help from a friend, **Lane Sorensen** brings us a sunny update: “Like a fine wine (or not - I’m not going to pretend I know anything about wine), some dissertations take their sweet time. Well, we finally uncorked



mine and enjoyed it with Late Middle Low German *liver-rhymes*, a.k.a. ‘livericks’. Other than that, we’ve been busy with work and teaching, but also enjoying our front porch with Pasha (a.k.a. Pooshk a.k.a. Pooh-Bear) as well as with human friends.”

Last but not least, a word from **Johannes Türk**: “This past academic year, I co-convoked a seminar at the German Studies Association on literature as medium of positive emotions with Eva Eßlinger (LMU München) and **Fritz Breithaupt**.



For the first part of the year, the Institute of German Studies continued its lecture series online and I hosted Frank Biess, Jan Süselbeck, and Anna Parkinson for



a conversation on the role affects play in postwar Germany. And in the spring, we had our first in person lecture by Erica Weitzman from Northwestern University on the role of the obscene in German realism. I was invited to present a lecture on pain at the annual conference of the Ernst Jünger Society in April, and I decided to explore the role that anesthesia plays in his work, in particular in his writing on World War I. My project on affect is continuing to gain shape and I have also returned to teaching and researching topics related to epidemic and literature due to the pandemic emergency. At the same time, my oldest daughter is now in middle school, a reminder of the time that has passed since I arrived in Bloomington.”



Alumni News



We're happy to hear for the first time from current grad student **Jacob Hoffman** and to know that cultural immersion adventures still thrive:

"This past summer I went to Baden-Württemberg, to a small town called Scheer, where I worked on an organic farm for about three weeks as part of a program called WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms). I had already been in Germany for a month before this, and decided I wanted a break from jumping between cities to really immerse myself in local culture. The family who runs the farm housed and fed me in exchange for six hours of labor per day on the farm, and the experience was amazing! Good, honest work under the sun in a beautiful landscape, and always eating organic, wholesome meals. During the day I pulled weeds, fed the cows, helped fix machinery, and cleaned out grain silos. Also, I learned a bit of the Schwäbisch dialect during my stay there, and they named a newborn calf after me! Along with walking the "barna ösvény" in Budapest (a gorgeous tourist trail from the St. Matthias Church all the way to the Oktogon in city center), this was one of the absolute highlights of my trip!

Former IU graduate student **Juliane Wuensch** (Ph.D., 2020) is super happy in her position at Skidmore College (Saratoga Springs, NY). After two years as Visiting Assistant Professor, she was promoted to a tenure-track-line as Assistant Professor and is now the German Program Coordinator. She loves to plan fun events and new courses for her students, while continuing her research in language pedagogy and on notions of egalitarianism among female writers. Her new project focuses on German women who (re)wrote fairy tales for emancipatory and egalitarian purposes. Juliane, her husband Jan (who still works for IU in the registrar's office), and their dog Buttercup also just bought their dream house and are happy to settle down in Upstate New York.



If you are among this year's newsletter contributors, thank you for writing. If you did not send in an item, please consider doing so next year. You don't have to wait until asked (but rest assured, I will ask!). Let me encourage you to write whenever you have something to share.

See my contact information on page 2.

Stay in touch with us any time via the [Department of Germanic Studies website](#) and on the Facebook pages of [IU Bloomington Germanic Studies](#) and [German House Indiana University](#).

There's always something going on - even this year.



Jill Giffin and Nikole Langjahr at the walk for NAMI Indiana (National Alliance on Mental Illness) in October



German Club game night.



Remembrances

Kari Ellen Gade, 68, died peacefully on Saturday evening, March 5, at her home in Bloomington, Indiana, with her sister Anne Lill Gade from Norway and cousin Lisa Gade Asquini from Waterford, Michigan, by her side.

Kari was born in Sandefjord in Vestfold, Norway, about 60 miles southwest of Oslo. She attended the University of Oslo, majoring in German linguistics and minoring in sports and English. She earned her doctorate in Germanic philology and Old Norse philology at the University of Minnesota and joined the faculty of Indiana University in 1986, though for the first two years in that position she was a Mellon Fellow at Stanford University. She remained loyal to IU Bloomington throughout her career, during which she earned recognition as Provost Professor in the Department of Germanic Studies. Although she taught nearly all the earliest Germanic languages, including Gothic, Old High German, and Old Saxon, her passion was Old Norse philology, on which she was the acknowledged authority. Perhaps her greatest scholarly achievement was serving as one of the five founding editors, alongside dozens of contributing editors, of what is known familiarly worldwide among scholars of the Middle Ages as “The Skaldic Project,” the most tangible product of which is the series of massive volumes titled *Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages*. When the last of the nine volumes is completed within the next few years, this will be the standard, encyclopedic edition of skaldic verse, including introductions, skald biographies, editions, translations, critical apparatus, and commentaries on all surviving works of skalds, nearly 6,000 stanzas.

Kari was also the recipient of numerous teaching awards, including recognition as Outstanding Professor by the Indiana University Student Union and as a recipient of a Trustees’ Teaching Award, along with many other awards in the Department of Germanic Studies. She inspired intense devotion in her students and shepherded dozens of graduate students through to the doctorate, serving on dissertation committees in her home department as well as in English, History, Linguistics, and Comparative Literature. No doubt her students remember with particular fondness the many times she hosted the monthly meetings of the oldest Old Norse reading group outside of Europe, where she served her amazing Norwegian meatballs accompanied by plenty of good wine and good cheer.

- Excerpted from the H-T

We learned about the passing this year of **Esther Ham** from Chair Ben Robinson: “Our cherished colleague Esther passed away on September 24th in hospice under the loving care of her husband Peter. Many of you know that Esther had a struggle with breast cancer last year. She seemed to fight it off with surgery and chemotherapy, but it returned at the end of the summer.



Gade's office door.

Remembrances

Last year, Esther was promoted to the rank of Full Teaching Professor—it was the first year of the rank’s existence at IU and Esther was a true model of the instructional excellence the rank was created to recognize. She arrived in Bloomington in 2001, and—developing the groundwork laid by **Bill Shetter**—she built our Dutch program into one of the most prominent in the country. Since 2016, she led the American Association for Netherlandic Studies. Esther was such a modest person that it was often hard to see just how much she inspired her students and supported her field, but a glance at the letters from around the country on behalf of her promotion makes it clear that Esther was simply the face of Dutch language studies and *Neerlandistike* in the US. She was also an advocate for all less commonly taught languages, committed to developing the techniques and connections necessary to reach students interested not only in Dutch but Yoruba, Turkish and Korean.



Esther was a calm, generous and dedicated presence in our department, hosting students here, zooming with students there, conversing at Koffietijd, always busy with an initiative or workshop, but never too busy to share her wry understated humor. We will miss Esther greatly.”

Ben also notified us of the loss of a former student, **Tarlise Townsend**, and shares this: “One of our most remarkable and warmly remembered students in Germanic Studies, Tarlise (Tarlle) Townsend, passed away from cancer this May. She was 31 years old and had just received a faculty position at NYU, where she had finished a post doc at the Center for Opioid Epidemiology and Policy.

She began taking classes with us in 2008 as a senior at Edgewood High in Ellettsville. When she joined IU as a Wells Scholar the following year, she majored in Germanic Studies and Neuroscience, later spending a year abroad in Freiburg, and eventually writing an honors thesis in our department that examined the impact of German school tracking policies on equitable life chances. Her thesis won a Provost Undergraduate Research Award in 2012, the year she graduated summa cum laude from IU. After spending a year at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin on a DAAD fellowship, she switched venues—but maintained her focus on the topic of decision-making under conditions of uncertainty—to Vietnam, where she spent another year, on a Luce Fellowship, navigating between ministerial bureaucracies in Hanoi and rice paddies in the Mekong Delta, seeking to gauge the effect of climate communication on the environmental practices of rice farmers (and particularly women) threatened by sea level rise. In 2015 she began graduate studies at the University of Michigan, receiving her PhD in Health Services Organization and Policy and Sociology in 2020, with a focus on effectively responding to the opioid epidemic in the United States.

To recollect a bit more personally, I can say that whenever I mentioned Tarlie to anyone, if they knew her at all, they lit up with enthusiasm and admiration. Even a brief meeting with Tarlie over coffee filled me with a genuine sense of optimism. Her energy and generosity invariably opened up so many prospects and opportunities to engage with the world. Tarlie was not only an incredibly energetic achiever, she was a mensch in the truest sense of the Yiddish word. It was a real blessing that Tarlie found her way to our department so we could share in the joy and vitality she brought to the world.”

