
> Abstracts

Black Voices Matter: Multi-Modal Approaches to Teaching Black Lives and Black Trauma by Julia Nitz

This workshop explores different forms of life-writing by Southern Blacks residing in the USA in historical perspective. It broaches the issue of self-representation and introduces a range of case studies from nineteenth-century autobiographical texts (slave narratives, diaries, autobiographies and photographs) to modern day blogs and Instagram posts by Black Southern women entrepreneurs. The aim of this session is twofold. On the one hand, it is geared at examining different modes of self-representation (written, oral, visual, audio-visual) and how to have students interact and understand such multi-media modes of representation. On the other hand, we will explore how such expressions of self may encourage students to produce creative forms of life-writing themselves in blogs, Instagram stories, podcast, or still photography. A core objective of this workshop is to move away from representing Black Americans as passive victims and instead to focus on their agency in presenting themselves boldly as part of the American societal fabric, especially so in times of crisis. As historical points in time, we will focus on the antebellum and postbellum period as well as the 21st century South and put special focus on traumatic “moments” (enslavement, postwar white terror, pandemic and police violence) that tend to trigger narratives of self as ways of coping with political, societal, and cultural turmoil.

The Teachers’ Room

It is 1963, one of the most turbulent years in American history. The escalating tensions and conflicts in society at large are playing out in classrooms across the country, along with the first stirrings of social transformation, though the past still holds its suffocating grip. And behind the closed door of the teachers’ room in one small Midwest town, two grade school teachers set eyes on each other and find it hard to look away ...

Karen Murphy, fresh from college, has taken on her first teaching job. Despite her best efforts, she can’t seem to stick to the subjects in her fifth-grade school books, helped along by the antics of a girl who upends all her lesson plans. She has a lot to learn, and her women colleagues are there to offer their advice, especially the enigmatic fourth-grade teacher, Esther Jonas. As Karen quickly discovers, the devoted spinster teacher with no life beyond the classroom is a myth—the school is teeming with passion and secrets, her own perilous desire for Esther Jonas included.

The Teachers’ Room offers both a panoramic view of a changing America and an intimate portrait of the hidden lives of teachers.

Program

Dr. Martina Kohl, Berlin

To register, please contact:

Nadja Borowski (ehem. Wieland)

Beraterin im Unterstützungssystem
des IQMV, SSA Rostock

Schwerpunkt Englisch Sek. 1

Telefon: 038231/77 85 57 **Mobil:** 0152/28754058

E-Mail: n.wieland@iq.bm.mv-regierung.de

or

Astrid Eisenhardt

Englisch, Fachleiterin Englisch
in der Lehrerbildung, Ministerium
für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur,
Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung (IQ M-V)

Telefon: 0385/58 81 78 31

E-Mail: a.eisenhardt@iq.bm.mv-regierung.de

Organizers

Nadja Borowski

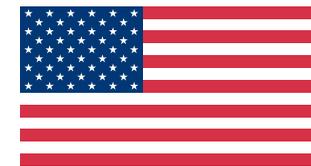
Astrid Eisenhardt

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Linke (emerit.)

Dr. Katja Schmidt



U.S. Consulate General
Hamburg



Embassy of the United States of America

**Mecklenburg
Vorpommern** 

MV tut gut.

Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern **IQMV**

ZLB Landesweites Zentrum für Lehrerbildung und Bildungsforschung

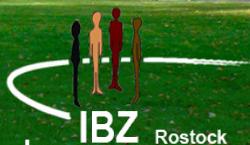
Teach About the USA

Annual Rostock Teacher
Seminar 2023

Friday, 14 April 2023
9:00 – 15:30



Place: Internationales
Begegnungszentrum
Rostock e.V.
Bergstr. 7a, 18057 Rostock



Program

9:00: Welcome and Introductions

Jason Chue,
U.S. Consul General, and
Steven Montero,
Information Specialist, U.S. Consulate General Hamburg

The Organizational Team in Rostock:

Nadja Borowski, Astrid Eisenhardt,
Prof. Dr. Gabriele Linke (emerit.), Dr. Katja Schmidt

LECTURE

9:15 -10:45

Teaching U.S. Immigration
through Stories of Meaning:
The Shanghai Refugee Experience as a Case Study

Kevin Ostoyich
Valparaiso University

Coffee Break

WORKSHOP

11:15 - 12:45

Black Voices Matter:
Multi-Modal Approaches to
Teaching Black Lives and Black Trauma

Julia Nitz
Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

Lunch

READING & DISCUSSION

13:45 -15:15

Lydia Stryk will read from her novel
The Teachers' Room

15:15 Concluding Discussion and Farewell

15:30 End of Seminar

Faculty



Lydia Stryk

Award-winning playwright Lydia Stryk was born and raised in DeKalb, Illinois, birthplace of barbed wire and flying ears of corn. After training as an actress, she went back to school to study History and Education and spent several years as a substitute teacher in NYC schools, observing the children and the educational system with fascination. Her plays have been produced across the United States and also in Germany. *The Teachers' Room* is her first novel, a process she describes in her essay, "A Playwright Crosses the Border Into Fiction". The Teachers' Room is available to order from local bookstores and online shops in Germany. You can learn more about her and her work at www.lydiastryk.com.



Julia Nitz

is associate professor of Anglo-American Cultural Studies at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. She has served as Executive Director at the Center for American Studies and is co-founder of the Intercontinental Crosscurrents Network for the study of transatlantic women's networks in the long nineteenth century (crosscurrents.uni-halle.de). Her research focuses on the American Civil War, women's life writing, intertextual cultural studies, historiographic and museum narratology as well as Anglophone (Caribbean) film and adaptation studies. Her publications include *Towards a Historiographic Narratology* (2011), *Intercontinental Crosscurrents: Women's Networks across Europe and the Americas* (2016) and *Women and US Politics* (2020). Her most recent monograph *Belles and Poets: Intertextuality in the Civil War Diaries of White Southern Women* (LSUP, 2020) establishes the extent to which literature offered a means of exploring ideas and convictions about class, gender, and racial hierarchies in the Civil War-era South.



Kevin Ostoyich

is professor of history and former chair of the Department of History (2015 to 2019) at Valparaiso University, Indiana. He is currently a fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg (global dis:connect) at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München. Dr. Ostoyich has directed Valparaiso University's Study Abroad Center in Hangzhou, China and its Study Abroad Center in Reutlingen, Germany. He holds his B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and his A.M. and Ph.D. from Harvard University. He has served as a research associate at the Harvard Business School and an Erasmus Institute fellow at the University of Notre Dame. He is currently a board member of CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center, a board member of the Sino-Judaic Institute, an advisory board member of the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, a non-resident fellow of the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies of The Johns Hopkins University (AICGS), and an associate of the Center for East Asian Studies of the University of Chicago. He has served as a visiting professor for Shanghai University. He is recipient of the Valparaiso University Excellence in Teaching Award for 2017-2018. Ostoyich is the co-editor of *The History of the Shanghai Jews: New Pathways of Research* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022) and author of *The German Society of Pennsylvania: A Guide to Its Book and Manuscript Collections* (German Historical Institute, 2006). He has created three historical theater plays about Shanghai Jewish refugees with students.

Abstracts

Teaching U.S. Immigration through Stories of Meaning: The Shanghai Refugee Experience as a Case Study by Kevin Ostoyich

The United States is often described as a country of immigrants. Nevertheless, it has not always been easy for certain immigrants and refugees to enter its borders. The history of the Shanghai refugees during the Second World War, for example, consists of people who sought refuge in the United States but had to find it elsewhere due to restrictive U.S. immigration policy and bureaucratic antisemitism. As such, the history of the Shanghai refugees pertains as much to the history of U.S. Immigration as it does to the Holocaust. Moreover, after the Second World War, the United States became the preferred destination of most of the refugees. Not all were permitted entry to the United States, and those who were often had to wait years in Shanghai for their visas. For many years, Prof. Ostoyich has been interviewing former Shanghai refugees not only about their time in Shanghai but about their experiences in the United States. In the interviews, the former refugees convey not only the narrative details of their immigrant experiences, but also what they believe it means to be an American. They often also discuss the parallels they see between their individual experiences and current issues pertaining to immigrants and refugees in the United States. Student engagement with the stories of Shanghai refugees not only provides historical knowledge but also adds perspective on present issues of U.S. immigration. In his presentation, Prof. Ostoyich will provide examples of how he uses primary documents and oral testimonies to promote "learning by doing" in the expanded classroom (e.g., the creation of physical exhibits, online exhibits, and theatrical plays). For an example of his use of theater with students, see

[The Singer of Shanghai: Historical Theatre, Shanghai Jewish Refugees: The Singer of Shanghai - YouTube.](#)

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