

smarts

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SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARTS

Living History:

German Studies Professor Takes Students on a Journey into Terezin's Dark Past



Dr. Margarethe Heukaeufer, Modern Languages & Classics, (centre), with students Christina Martin, 4th year BA, Hon Psychology, Certificate in German, (left); Amanda Dillman, BA Honours May '05, major German/History (right back); Amy Bollivar, 5th year BA Hon Linguistics (right front).

Imagine the feeling of waking up in a place that had once been a Jewish Ghetto in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia. That is what eighteen Saint Mary's students experienced earlier this year when they visited the town of Terezin in Northern Bohemia in the Czech Republic. The Terezin visit was part of a ten-day field school planned by Dr. Margarethe Heukaeufer of the Department of Modern Languages and Classics in collaboration with Dr. Fred Young, a retired professor from the Department of History.

Dr. Heukaeufer's research interest in Terezin or, as the Nazis called it, Theresienstadt, began in Halifax in 1999. She attended a week-long series of events and exhibitions called the 'Terezin Studio Project', which profiled the role of the Theresienstadt ghetto in Hitler's 'Final Solution'. As a professor of German language and literature, she became particularly intrigued by an opera, which featured a libretto composed by Peter Kien, a German-speaking Czech Jew who lived for three years at Theresienstadt and later died in Auschwitz, at the age of twenty-five. She found Kien's poetry quite beautiful, and puzzled how such lyrical beauty could have been inspired within the wretched circumstances of the ghetto.

Intrigued by this puzzle, Dr. Heukaeufer began to study Kien's poetry with the hope of reanimating his silenced voice. Her first task was to transcribe the poems, which had been written originally in Sütterlin, an obsolete style of German handwriting taught in German schools from 1915 to 1941. This script is largely unknown today, and so anything written in that style is incomprehensible to most Germans born after the Second World War. Dr. Heukaeufer's transcriptions and her commitment to

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Christina Martin (front), Amanda Dillman (back left), Amy Bollivour (back right).

Photo: Kelly Clark

bringing Kien's work out of obscurity will make his poetry accessible to a contemporary German speaking audience.

When Dr. Heukaeufer began her research on Peter Kien's poetry, she knew very little about Theresienstadt – only that it was built in the late 18th century as a military garrison at the confluence of the rivers Labe (Elbe) and Ohre (Eger). The fortifications consist of two fortresses - the Main and the Small fortress - with the town contained within the walls of the Main Fortress. Although modern for its period, Terezin gradually lost its military importance. But it proved quite suitable to the Nazis as a ghetto and concentration camp. Political prisoners, mostly Czech, were jailed in the Small Fortress; Jews from across Europe were kept in the Main Fortress.

Recognizing the importance of understanding Kien's world more completely, Dr. Heukaeufer travelled to Terezin for field research. She says her first experience caught her quite off guard. "I left the bus at the little market square of Terezin, stood there with my luggage and wondered about the whereabouts of the Ghetto. I soon found out that the whole little town was, in fact, the Ghetto."

In doing her research, Dr. Heukaeufer made a surprising finding – the ghetto was largely populated by a highly literate and artistic community. Dr. Heukaeufer says: "Compared with other ghettos, for instance Warsaw, a very high percentage of the prisoners in Theresienstadt were well educated. They had university degrees; they were artists, musicians, conductors; they were painters, and writers, poets

and famous actors. Jewish prisoners at Theresienstadt were allowed to pursue their interests in art, music, theatre and in lectures of all kinds." One account of life in this ghetto documents that 2,430 lectures were given by 520 lecturers. And for three years this both tragic and heroic place was the world of Peter Kien.

Over the next couple of years, a compelling picture of Theresienstadt came into focus for Dr. Heukaeufer, one she wanted to share with her students. She felt strongly that there would be great educational value in introducing her students to Terezin's grimly fascinating history. In 2005 Dr. Heukaeufer offered the first Saint Mary's Field School in Terezin as part of a new interdisciplinary course about the Holocaust. She believed that a course built around a trip to Terezin would be of interest to students of German, History, Politics, Sociology and Religious Studies, and she thought it would give students an unforgettable and transformative experience. She was right.

Eighteen students participated in the 2005 field school, three of whom have shared their reflections on the experience: Jennifer Warford, an Honours English student with a Major in History, who also worked as a student assistant on Dr. Heukaeufer's Terezin projects; Christina Martin, an Honours Psychology student doing also a Minor in Business and a Certificate in German Language and Culture; and Amanda Dillman, an Honours History student with a Major in German. The three agreed that the field school in Terezin was a deeply personal and important experience. "A lot of us knew historically, through books, what Terezin was, but after being there, it took on a whole new light."

See Living History continued on back panel



The Saint Mary's group explores Terezin with a local guide.



Photo: Sophia Deak

One of Life's Not So Little Mysteries

Anthropology major and author Nicole Lundrigan likely never met a mystery that didn't intrigue her or a

challenge that hadn't compelled her to action. In fact, her passion for a mystery is reminiscent of that delightful Sherlock Holmes exhortation: "Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot." And so it is with Nicole. Whether it's reconstructing the identity of skeletal remains, exploring the secrets of other cultures or fashioning the lives of her literary characters, Nicole delights in a good mystery.

Nicole's professional and personal enthusiasm for mysteries grew out of a combination of native curiosity, extreme focus and keen interest in physical and cultural anthropology. A biology graduate, Nicole came to Saint Mary's in 1994 to study physical anthropology, drawn by the University's excellent reputation in this area.

When she arrived Nicole found that study at Saint Mary's was much more than an Arts program. She found Saint Mary's was a place where she could explore her professional and personal potential. My Saint Mary's professors, she says, nurtured my creativity and encouraged me to explore my interests while always expecting a high degree of academic rigor. Nicole says, "Saint Mary's definitely had high academic standards, but also, there was an undeniable camaraderie between students and professors. Whether it's a group of students sharing a drink with Dr. Davis, or chatting with Dr. Erickson after a lecture, there was always an exchange of stories and ideas. I felt these were a group of individuals who not only imparted wisdom, but were interested in learning as well." Saint Mary's, she says, gave her the confidence to try new things.

Nicole graduated from Saint Mary's in 1996 with an Honours BA in Anthropology and went

on to the University of Toronto to do a Master's in Anthropology. She says, "I attended three universities, and while all had positive attributes, Saint Mary's was by far my favourite experience... I have the sense that if I ever visited Saint Mary's, I could walk down that hallway, be invited in, and welcomed back... There was very much a 'doors open' attitude there."

Nicole believes that her Saint Mary's Anthropology degree has been instrumental in her life. "In my mind, what the Anthropology Department really teaches is respect, appreciation, and tolerance for the tremendous diversity that exists in the world. In a way, I even viewed myself differently, much more aware of the value of my own Newfoundland culture. My experiences there shaped my world-view, and in many ways, influenced the way I parent, the way I work."

Drawing on her training in physical and cultural anthropology, Nicole now uses her formidable powers of observation and synthesis to inform her writing. "One of the main things I took away from university other than the knowledge was an ability to do research; so someone could throw any subject at me, and using the internet, using the library systems, I was able to go through and gather information... and ultimately write a good research paper. This skill was especially evident when I began writing articles, especially where a lot of research is required."

Like Sir Arthur's master sleuth, Nicole is first and foremost a trained observer. Today this trained observer and student of life has two novels and several magazine articles to her credit. Writing full-time, she says, lets her pursue her interest in peoples and cultures while giving her more time to spend with her young daughters. In fact, she says her studies in Anthropology directly inform how she raises her children; lucky kids.

Nicole Lundrigan's current books, *Unraveling Arva* and *Thaw*, are published by Jespersion, St. John's, NL. **S**

diverse



Some People Talk about Changing the World - Max Haiven May Do It

Those who think that youthful idealism ended with the '60s haven't met Max Haiven.

Those who are comfortably ensconced in their first-world orthodoxies may not want to meet him. Meeting Max means meeting a part of yourself with which you may not be well acquainted. A conversation with Max might challenge your most fundamental assumptions about our society, about the influence of power and how it is exercised through popular culture and maybe even about how the 'rhetoric of terrorism' is used to oppress dissent.

The 2004 Saint Mary's Honours Sociology graduate and Valedictorian was not always the quite so focused, quite so determined, quite so committed a scholar and social activist. Even though he was busy exploring his varied interests during high school, including being part of a political street theatre group and organizing a young musician's cooperative, he lacked a driving passion. So when he came to Saint Mary's, Max was on a journey of self-discovery, looking for that something that would join his varied interests into a coherent and purposeful life's goal.

Max didn't immediately choose a major. Instead he sampled courses from English, Sociology and Religious Studies, earning, he says, "average marks". Then, in the spring of 2001, everything changed. Max attended the demonstration at Quebec City opposing the 'Free Trade of the Americas' conference. The unifying passion that would guide his future studies grew out of his Quebec City experience. He says, "This really galvanized my interest in wanting to do something about politics, about global politics especially; and because I had this background in culture and being a cultural worker and being a cultural organizer, I wanted to tie the two together." That summer Max took two courses at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in cultural studies, an "eye opener", he remembers, that gave him further focus for his Saint Mary's studies.

In the fall of 2001, Max returned to Saint Mary's University and put English and Sociology

at the top of his personal research agenda. He enrolled in courses in cultural studies with Dr. Goran Stanivukovic; gender and media with Dr. Michele Byers; globalization with Dr. Linda Christiansen-Ruffinan, and sociological theory with Dr. Audrey MacNevin. Then came '9/11'. In response, he helped form the Saint Mary's University Activists' Coalition which, he says, "was another 'space' where I was able to practice and extend my political and cultural understanding..." The organization also helped him further formulate his thoughts, feelings and interests around culture, politics and power with other likeminded Saint Mary's students.

Max says that Saint Mary's played an important role in his success. "All of my professors were extremely supportive of my extra-curricular activities: the political and cultural work that I had been doing. They saw it as an important part of a comprehensive liberal-arts education." "Saint Mary's was a wonderful place to explore my personal research and political callings."

Max thinks that the smaller size of Saint Mary's offered him many advantages. He says it gave his university experience a level of intimacy that made it easier for him to find others who shared his commitments, especially across disciplines, although he wishes more students would become involved in political issues. Max says the overall quality of his experience shows the true value of the emphasis many at Saint Mary's put on teaching. Saint Mary's, he says, is rare in that it works hard at making the undergraduate experience a good one.

In retrospect, Max found Saint Mary's to be a very interesting place in ways he didn't fully realize until he left. Saint Mary's University, he says, has a reputation for having many strong student communities. "There were a lot of students who were interested in trying to make a difference, especially coming out of the International Development Studies program, but also coming out of English, Sociology and Political Science... the school is filled with people who, somehow, in their own various ways, want to make the world a bit of a better place... Many of the people that I met, whether they were from rural Nova Scotia or from the Caribbean or from China... wanted to be a benefit to

HISTORY DAN CONLIN



Dan Conlin Sees History In The Balance

The Maritime Museum of the Atlantic may undergo a significant expansion as part of a proposed two-hundred million

dollar Halifax harbour-front re-development. Helping guide the expansion is Museum curator and Saint Mary's alumnus, Dan Conlin. A broadcaster turned public historian, Dan has been researching Maritime history and creating exhibits at the Museum since receiving his Master's of History degree in 1996. Now he will be using his skills and training in communication and his love and knowledge of seafaring to help inform the design and purpose of what will become Canada's premier maritime museum.

This Berwick, Nova Scotia native has always had a love affair with the sea. "My first love is the wooden sailing ships that we built in our region for several centuries and what these ships did. And because our ships travelled all over the world, and in many ways still do, seafaring in Nova Scotia is, almost from its beginning, an international endeavour. I find that really interesting about seafaring." Dan says Nova Scotia's role in the merchant marine is significant. "Between 1840 and 1880 Nova Scotia built hundreds of ships each year. Communities such as Yarmouth, Windsor and New Glasgow financed and built their own ships, which they owned, operated and crewed; ships that carried the world's cargo". "The big shipyards have been replaced by smaller boatyards but the international tradition continues, he says. A shipyard in Meteghan, Nova Scotia, in a distant corner of the province, is making boats for England and France and specialized patrol boats for the US military."

Dan graduated from journalism school in 1986 and worked seven years for CBC Radio in Ottawa before homesickness and a yearning to break free of the confines of daily news deadlines drew him back to Nova Scotia. "I was interested in exploring ideas and stories and history in a lot more detail than I could as a journalist, where the story wasn't finished yet and you didn't have

access to all the information. History seemed to have all of these interesting secrets and mysteries that I could explore in a more colourful and interesting way. I can get files from the archives and see what they thought was going to happen, what actually happened and how everything ended up. I find that really absorbing."

In 1994 Dan decided to do an MA in History and chose Saint Mary's for a number of reasons. He says the History Department's small size was an advantage. "I got to know the other graduate students very well and that made for interesting seminar discussions." Dan especially liked Saint Mary's focus on Atlantic Canada and the History Department's strong working relationship with Saint Mary's Atlantic Canada Studies program. "It seemed to be a quite fertile relationship between a rather small history department and a multi-disciplinary program, and that was really quite attractive to me."

Dan's thesis was on Nova Scotia Privateers, an area which has a wealth of data but little published research. At Saint Mary's, he says, he found a community of people who could help him make sense out of the volumes of information he had discovered. "Saint Mary's has people who really know the colonial environment, like John Reid, from whom I got all sorts of good advice about the cultural and economic currents that could produce something like privateering. And people like Colin Howell and Dick Twomey, whose knowledge of the interesting social currents of the time helped me understand who these people were, where they came from and why they went to sea."

During his final year at Saint Mary's, Dan helped organize an Atlantic Canada Studies conference that involved collaborating with the Museum to create a very successful exhibit about women at sea. Since then, Dan says, interest in this topic has grown significantly. "In the last five years, three to four books have been published regionally about women at sea." It was while he was working on the women at sea exhibit that Dan completed his MA and went to work for the Museum.

Dan says that The Museum and Saint Mary's have a very good relationship. "Everyone at the Museum knew the Saint Mary's professors and



A Citizen of the World

What do NAFTA, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the G7-G8 Summits, and international non-proliferation agreements have in common? These diverse and interesting activities are all part of the résumé of Saint Mary's Arts graduate and Canadian Ambassador to Cambodia, Donica Pottie.

Her role as Canada's Head of Mission in Phnom Penh is the third foreign posting for Donica -and her most senior; her first was in China, her second in Jordan. As ambassador, she represents the Government of Canada, providing consular services to visiting Canadian citizens, and trade assistance to Canadian companies. "It's been fun" she says, and sometimes very challenging. You just don't know what you're going to come into in the morning and find waiting on the email, or what telephone call you're going to get with a question or an issue."

Donica's extraordinary professional journey began in 1984 when she was awarded a Saint Mary's Exchange Program Scholarship to study in China's Shandong Province. Part of her course of study in China included Introduction to English Literature taught by Dr. Ken Snyder, an English professor from Saint Mary's who was in China as a Visiting Scholar at the time. Reflecting on that experience, Donica comments, "Dr. Snyder provoked me to think in new ways." Speaking more generally about the Saint Mary's Exchange Program, Donica says that it was a transformative life experience for her: "My knowledge of China's language and culture became a focal point in my life. Going to China was one of those decisions that has ripple effects 22 years later. Certainly it was my ability to speak Chinese and understand China's culture that helped me get into the Foreign Service." Her exchange experience, she says, made her a much more interesting candidate, and led directly to her first overseas assignment in Beijing. It also

meant that she was well prepared to have a successful posting.

Donica says that an Arts degree is a good degree because it lets you keep your options open. While she admires people who can decide when they're very young what they wish to do with their lives, she thinks that for someone who is less sure about their future or simply wants to respond to professional opportunities as they present themselves, an Arts degree may be a better choice. What's more, she says, "You can use an Arts degree to get a specialized degree later if that's what you decide to do." In Donica's case, after graduation she worked for five years in Toronto and Winnipeg on a diverse range of international projects. In 1991 she took the Canadian Foreign Service Exams because, as she says, "I had a long-standing interest in foreign policy and diplomacy in the context of foreign affairs, and I wanted to see if I could do that as a career." This year Donica Pottie celebrates fourteen years in Canadian Foreign Service.

Looking beyond her personal experience, Donica says there is empirical evidence that employers are beginning to appreciate an Arts degree more than they once did. "I think there has been a recognition that the ability to think logically, to analyse and to write in recognizable English and to be a rounded person makes for a more flexible and agile employee." Certainly, she says, the Canadian Foreign Service looks for these qualities in its recruits. In my line of work, effective written communication, the ability to report accurately, the ability to analyse what you've been told, to 'unpack' and put ideas into a format understood in Ottawa, the ability to persuade people about your point of view and do it against the backdrop of many other competing priorities is something that an Arts degree prepares you for better, I think, than most other forms of university education." S

accessible

Living History continued from inside

to Terezin was their first realization that all this actually happened. It's not simply something we read about - it actually happened." Jennifer added that visiting Terezin put human faces on the statistics and the stories about the Holocaust. After hearing a story from a survivor of Auschwitz who had lost her friends and family, the students said they realized it is important to keep personal interests and ambitions in perspective, and ensure "that they stay connected to others on a human level."

Dr. Heukaeufer says that a field school such as the one to Terezin should not only help students to better understand the past, it should also inform their understanding of the present, and give them insight into how they can shape the future. Her students would agree.

Looking at the world today Amanda says: "Unfortunately, not too much has changed... When people say, 'let's hope it never happens again', I feel like saying, 'have you read a newspaper, do you watch CNN? It is happening. It's different; it may not be on the same scale.'" Jennifer shares this perspective: "There is still extreme racism all over the world, and I just don't see, with everything we've learned, especially from what happened during World War II, how this can still be going on." Christina added: "I believe what happened in Germany in the 1930s and '40s is a symbol of how easy it is for society to slip." Amanda aptly summed up the legacy of the

Terezin field school experience by saying: "Going to Terezin put my life into perspective: I can better see who I am in relation to the rest of the world. I would like to believe that in the future, the experience of Terezin will give me the strength to stand up against these kinds of massive injustices."

Now retired, Dr. Heukaeufer continues her research on the poems of Peter Kien, hoping to have them published as a small testament to the indomitable human spirit that characterized intellectual and artistic life at Theresienstadt. And as a personal legacy to Saint Mary's, Dr. Heukaeufer's field study course on Terezin will continue, giving future Saint Mary's students the experience of living history. **S**

smarts facts

- Students gain international and cross-cultural experiences.
- The average introductory Arts class size is 55. Upper level courses have an average class size of 30.
- At Saint Mary's you can take an Arts degree while minoring in Business or the Sciences.
- The 20-credit program provides added program diversity.
- Metro inter-university programs allow you to draw on the best resources local universities have to offer. Programs are available in Film Studies, Linguistics and Women's Studies.
- Saint Mary's is the only University in Canada where you can complete an undergraduate degree in Irish Studies.
- Saint Mary's has the only stand-alone Criminology program in Atlantic Canada, which includes the Bachelor, Honours, Graduate Diploma and Master's.
- The Creative Writing program enables students to have their work published in a University publication.
- Cultural life on campus includes an Art Gallery, a performing arts series, the Saint Mary's Drama Society, a Writer-in-Residence reading, and a Public Philosophy Lecture Series.
- Saint Mary's has the only Asian Studies program in Atlantic Canada.
- Saint Mary's is the first Canadian university to offer a Shakespeare course at Stratford-upon-Avon, England as part of its English program.

ARTS PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)	French
Bachelor of Arts (Major)	Geography
Bachelor of Arts (General)	German
Master of Arts – Atlantic	Hispanic Studies
Canada Studies,	History
Criminology, History,	International
International Development	Development Studies
Studies, Philosophy and	Irish Studies
Women's Studies	Linguistics
Majors	Mathematics
Anthropology	Philosophy
Asian Studies	Political Science
Atlantic Canada Studies	Psychology
Classics	Religious Studies
Criminology	Sociology
Economics	Women's Studies
English	

Conlin continued from inside

thought very highly of them.” He says that while the Museum did not have a formal arrangement with Saint Mary’s History Department, it maintained “a nice positive and professional one”. Now, as curator, Dan says he tries to nurture this relationship, assisting Saint Mary’s students who visit the Museum and even teaching a few courses at his Alma Mater.”

Dan’s talents in broadcasting and history may be an ideal combination to help inform the Museum’s future. With sixty percent of its revenues coming from its visitors, Dan recognizes the Museum must remain interesting and relevant to a broad audience. “As a public historian, as opposed to an academic historian, I’m always trying to harness the huge power of storytelling. I find when you’re talking to a popular audience, they really like stories. They like characters. They like beginning, middle and end narratives”.

He says that Samuel Cunard, for example, had an interesting life. “You can tell the whole story about the decline of sail, the arrival of steam, the embracing of this new world and then its failed promise, all through this one man.” Or, Dan says, the relationship between African Nova Scotians and the British Empire could be illustrated through the life of William Hall, a Royal Navy sailor and the first Black recipient of the Victoria Cross.

Dan believes this trend toward storytelling has made marine history more interesting, though he realizes ‘narrative’ is not a positive word for many academic historians. “The idea of stories taking over and simplifying very complicated patterns of history is a great concern to academic historians”, who would like the emphasis placed on examining ideas and complex social and economic relationships. Dan sees the benefit of both approaches. “To me, it’s all about balancing ideas and stories.” **S**

Haiven continued from inside

their community wherever they worked; there was a very strong sense of that. I think it is that perspective that is a real treasure. I think that’s the real difference that makes Saint Mary’s University special.” Nevertheless, he believes that, because it is a microcosm of society, Saint Mary’s is not without its challenges which include issues around diversity, the often troubling presence of the for-profit private sector in public education, and the ongoing work of training socially active and responsible citizens - issues he worked on during his time at Saint Mary’s.

Max is quite modest about his own abilities and his achievements at Saint Mary’s. “I really feel that

we never really accomplish anything on our own... any success that I had, had a lot to do with other people and being able to work in all groups like the Activists’ Coalition and with other people who were interested in the same topics...”.

Today Max is a PhD student in English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University where last year he completed his interdisciplinary Master’s degree in Globalization Studies. He says he hopes to teach at a university and continue his work with different social movements to raise awareness about global and local issues, and, in so doing, maybe help change the world, just a little bit. **S**

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