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Editorial: Welcome to German Journal

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Pauline Broda is originally from Poland, but she studied German in Stuttgart and eventually received her Master's degree in Business Administration. She also worked as a Product Manager for a children and teenagers magazine for several years. Currently, she is, among other things, working as a German teacher at the DANK Haus in Chicago.

Dr. Carina Staudte received her doctorate degree in American literature dissecting some of Philip Roth's work. Since then she has been an independent researcher, exploring literature's various angles, be it YA lit, sports lit, or gender studies. She also currently works at the DANK Haus in Chicago.

Dear Reader,

We are so excited to publish our first edition! We are of course still in the beginning stage, but we are proud to publish two very interesting articles.

But why, you might ask, a "German Journal" in the first place? The simple answer: because there are so many fascinating areas when it comes to „German," and we want to offer a platform for all those who are exploring those topics. And especially because there are so many different subject matters, do we not want to pin this journal down into only one direction, but we want to look beyond the simple scope and bring together culture and language, or political issues and literature, or historical events and the learning of a language, or, or, or. We are thus looking for the big picture, where we can see the innate complexities of Germany which is fascinating and worthy of exploration. Since Germany is part of the modern global interconnectedness, however, and America plays a great role in the German world, we also want to connect the two and offer English-speaking researchers a platform to share their explorations and knowledge of "German." This way, we want to facilitate communication, as communication itself comprises a great part of

our lives. After all, because we can speak a language we can communicate, and especially German is spoken in many countries so that its knowledge offers advantages in the real world – whether it is in our daily lives, on vacation, in the sciences, or art.

Learning German thus can be very advantageous, but it also requires a lot of work and patience. Particularly complex, and especially so for English-speaking learners, is German grammar. Learning German as a second language is generally a very interesting topic for us, as we are working closely together with the German American Cultural Center (Deutsch Amerikanischer Nationalkongress, or DANK) and Dr. Nikolova is exploring this in her article in our “language” section. Her interest is in finding out how we can teach modal verbs better, since there usually is quite some confusion when students are asked to differentiate between the direct and the epistemic sense of, for example, “müssen.”

This ability to speak another language goes further than a simple academic interest in the subject, however. After all, besides recent political events, Germany and the US are still important trade partners, and Germany does offer employment in various industries (the auto- and the machine building industry spring to mind). Naturally, a candidate has to have some knowledge of German and this extra qualification is still sought after in the global industries. In fact, not only the knowledge of the language per se is sought, but knowledge of its cultural particularities. After all, despite being a part of the western world, and having a quite entangled past, the US and Germany still differ in many things. Yet our author Leo Roth worked on a cultural connection that both countries share: the tendency that the border between work and private life becomes more and more blurred. He is looking at what is called BYOD (bring your own device) and how more and more people are using their private devices to check work e-mails and are constantly available, which turns private life into work life. For those who do work in both the American and the English world this means that the electronic dictionary is always on – and always available on our smartphones, independent on whether we work, or we engage in a private activity.

And finally, while the worldwide highly valued “made in Germany” usually refers to actual goods, German researchers, artists, and thinkers still like to publish in German, despite an ever growing tendency toward using English. To bring these two sides together, we hope to publish many more articles in the future, be it in our language, literature, or culture section.

Enjoy reading our first edition!

Paulina Broda und Dr. Carina Staudte