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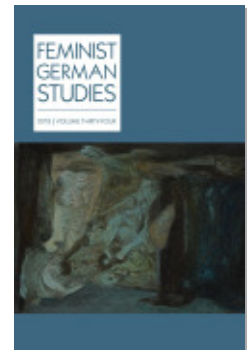
Editors' Introduction

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Editors' Introduction

As we write this introduction in the fall of 2018, we reflect on the troubled and troubling political climate in the United States, German-speaking countries, and across the globe.¹ Numerous issues trouble those of us reading the news with an eye to social justice: reproductive rights and immigration top the list (more below), joined with the rise of right-wing populist parties that embrace intolerance and self-interest. Yet the Coalition of Women in German was founded on principles of solidarity and mutual support, and it is precisely this lack of empathy that is anathema to us. Even in the direst of situations, there is, to borrow the term from Rebecca Solnit, “hope in the dark”;² people are coming together and fighting for each other, fighting for justice.

The issue of reproductive rights is exemplary of this fight. In the United States, legislation in individual states has led to the rolling back of women's reproductive rights, a trend that is expected to continue now that President Trump's nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh, has been sworn in as a replacement for Justice Anthony Kennedy.³ In Germany, OB/GYN Dr. Kristina Hänel faced a fine for including information on her website about abortions, violating paragraph 219a StGB (implemented in the Nazi era) that prohibits doctors from advertising that they perform abortions. In October her appeal was dismissed. Women in Poland gathered together in March to protest a proposed law that would further restrict access to abortion, and activists are currently seeking support from European institutions to put pressure on the Polish government in response to this law (Embling). In South Korea the Constitutional Court will review the ban on abortion, thanks to the hundreds of thousands of South Koreans who signed online petitions and participated in protests. And in Ireland in May, the legalization of abortion up to twelve weeks was approved by 66.4 percent of voters.

Migration is one of the most urgently debated issues worldwide in

2018, the urgency coming from the desperate need of those trying to enter the United States across the Mexican border or into the European Union across the Mediterranean. Due to overwhelming popular and political pressure, President Trump has suspended the practice of separating children from their parents when they cross the US-Mexico border illegally, and his administration has begun reuniting these children with their parents, although this process is far from complete. While this may address the heinous cruelty to these children, this step in no way addresses the larger issues of why so many attempt to enter the United States (e.g., fleeing economic hardship or violence) and how this country is morally obligated to help those in need. At the same time, twenty-seven EU leaders met in Brussels in June for a summit on migration policy, reaching the agreement that refugees to Europe first would be received in “control centers” where their migration status would be determined (e.g., economic migrant vs. refugee status), and then those seeking asylum would be distributed among EU member states willing to take them in. Built into the agreement is the intention to tighten the external EU border—an approach that speaks to the populist, nationalist backlash in Europe and elsewhere. The fear of the permeability of perceived borders (between nations, between religions, between cultures, between self and Other, between opportunity and lack) has given rise to the Trump presidency, the Alternative für Deutschland party, and the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs. These tensions mount as war and violence, radical financial inequality, and climate change increase the number of migrant people (and species) across the globe.

“We—all of us on Terra—live in disturbing times, mixed-up times, troubling and turbid times,” writes Donna Haraway in *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. While it can be overwhelming to identify and perceive the extent of the problems facing both the human and non-human on our planet, we must not look away. Nor may we delude ourselves by painting an overly optimistic vision of the future. Instead, “[o]ur task is to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle troubled waters and rebuild quiet places” (1). We can see examples of this on a large scale: the Black Lives Matter movement; the worldwide Women’s Marches in 2017 and 2018; commitment to the Paris Agreement on a nationwide, statewide, citywide, or individual level; protests for reproductive rights in the United States, Ireland, and Poland. In the past two years, one in five Americans marched, rallied, or protested issues from minimum wage to health care to gun

control to the environment to reproductive rights (“How We’re Doing” 7). In other words, people—all around the world—are standing up for what they believe in. On a smaller scale, we see this enacted at our universities and colleges, where students and faculty protest the mishandling of Title IX cases or evidence of racism on campuses. In our local communities we see neighbors gathering to protest unchecked environmental destruction and its harmful effects on the microclimate. And we see this effort to stay with the trouble within feminist, queer, ecocritical, and anti-racist scholarship. This journal is proud to publish the work of scholars who choose to stay with trouble of all kinds, past or present: trouble with the environment, with race, with gender roles, with nations, with genocide, with neoliberalism, with memory, with the roles of writers, artists, and intellectuals.

The volume opens with Deborah Janson’s “The Path Not (Yet) Taken: Bettina von Arnim’s Ecological Vision in her Romantic Fairy Tale ‘The Queen’s Son,’” which contributes to the exploration of the relevance of romanticism for twenty-first-century ecocriticism. Her analysis of the fairy tale “Der Königsohn” (written in 1808; “The Queen’s Son,” 1990) reveals two main elements that are important in current ecocritical theories: a rejection of the nature-culture dualism and an awareness of the interdependency of life. Janson also shows how these and similar ideas consistently were expressed in von Arnim’s later publications. “The Queen’s Son” can thus be understood as an exemplary parable that critiques Western civilization’s hierarchical separation from and silencing of nature and provides twenty-first-century ecocritics with literary inspiration for the complex tasks facing us today.

The quest to conquer nature along with other countries and populations formed the foundation for nineteenth-century colonialism and imperialism. In the second piece in the volume, Judith E. Martin investigates the novel *Die Auswanderer* (1852; *The Exiles*, 1853), a novel of German immigration to the United States, by the philologist and novelist Therese Robinson, who published under the pseudonym Talvj and was herself an immigrant. Martin’s study, “Colonial Counternarratives in Therese Robinson’s *Die Auswanderer*,” argues that the novel counters and challenges narratives that are based on masculine colonial fantasies of love with a native woman and the contemporary myth of Germans as model colonizers. Through a plot that combines colonial family history and (somewhat tragic) family romance, the German-American author Robinson addresses Germans’ complicity in imperialist domination

while also revising the genre of the *Amerikaroman*, which becomes a complex historical space filled with colonial conflicts and ethnic tensions. A troubled German national identity also sheds new light on questions of gender.

Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach was the foremost woman writer of the German realist period and is—along with Arnim—one of few pre-twentieth-century German-language women writers who fairly early were accepted into the canon of German literature. Acknowledgment by feminist scholars has increased in recent decades, and Petra Watzke's study of her two stories *Lotti, die Uhrmacherin* (1880; *Lotti, the watchmaker*) and "Ein Original" (1898; "One of a Kind," 2001) continues this line of feminist analysis, taking its approach from object-oriented feminism and focusing on the female protagonists, who as watchmaker and home trainee of electrical engineering, respectively, both act in nearly exclusively male domains. Watzke argues that the women's relationship to their objects of choice and to technology overall reflects a late-nineteenth-century negotiation of ownership and control that extended to women and perpetuated social injustice based on gender.

The fourth article contributes to visual studies and examines the neglected surrealist artist Ellida Schargo von Alten (1911–96) and her partnership with painter Richard Oelze. Eleanor Moseman's thesis is that the assumption of Oelze's influence on his longtime female partner, caregiver, and manager has to be reevaluated; examining von Alten's methods (mostly pastel) and abstract motifs in representative works in addition to her accomplishments as fashion designer and entrepreneur, Moseman describes their creative relationship in terms of cross-fertilization and cross-pollination. She begins to claim a place for von Alten in art history, a pilot study of a larger work.

The visual is also important in the next article, "Spiraling toward Happiness: City and the Self in Christa Wolf's 'Unter den Linden,'" in which Thyra E. Knapp examines how the prominent GDR author has her unnamed female protagonist and narrator experience the public cityscape of East Berlin's avenue Unter den Linden in the early 1970s. In surrendering to the ambivalences of the space, in allowing dream, memories, and imagination inspired by the sites to mix, the woman goes back and forth between the personal and the communal, the emotional and the cognitive, the past and the present, spiraling in a process of discovery and exploration that ultimately leads her to herself, now free from past emotional entanglements and a lover unable to move forward.

In the GDR of the 1970s such a retreat to female subjectivity was highly political. Deviating from the socialist realist policy to write about women in the workforce (thereby promoting a form of women's emancipation), the protagonist's search for herself expresses a strong female subjectivity that is as feminist as the calls of second-wave feminism for women's solidarity and a critique of patriarchal structures.

In the final article in this volume, patriarchy still looms in recent memory writings by Anne Weber and Esther Kinsky. Here, Helga Druxes explores transgenerational Holocaust memory in Kinsky's autobiographical novel *Am Fluß* (2015; *River*, 2017) and Weber's family memoir *Ahnen: Ein Zeitreise tagebuch* (2014; *Ancestors: Diary of a journey through time*). Both authors also produce translations, and Druxes posits that both works with their innovative structures form a kind of translation of the past into the present. Druxes shows how Weber writes herself into her father's lineage and challenges the family's hagiography as belonging to an educated elite that was not bound to the general norms. Kinsky focuses on displaced persons from the Bosnian War of the 1990s on the periphery of London for whom the Holocaust resonates with more recent genocides. It is noteworthy that Kinsky won the Leipzig Book Fair Prize in 2018 for her new novel *Hain* (Grove).

Spanning works from more than two hundred years, these six articles show the broad spectrum of feminist research in German studies that continues to transform our individual and collective engagement with feminism and helps us shape its future. As editors of this volume of *Women in German's* yearly publication, we are honored to have been chosen as venue for exciting ongoing research that aptly appears under the new title *Feminist German Studies*. At least two of the articles included here were previously presented and discussed at WiG-sponsored conference panels or the annual conference of WiG, which continues to be an invaluable platform for research, teaching, and networking.

Haraway argues against determining kin along biological lines. Instead, she encourages us to develop a human and non-human family that extends beyond biological relations. "Staying with the trouble requires making oddkin; that is, we require each other in unexpected collaborations and combinations, in hot compost piles" (Haraway 4). We, the editors, would like to acknowledge the network of kin that made it possible for the ideas in this issue to ferment and bubble with life. We extend our thanks to the scholars published here and the authors and artists whose works they discuss, all of whom trouble(d) systems of

oppression. We also heartily thank the members of the editorial board—including our new members Kyle Frackman, Sonja Klocke, and Michelle James—and the anonymous reviewers for their expertise, time, and generous support of their fellow scholars. This is Waltraud's final issue as coeditor, and on behalf of Women in German, Allie expresses her gratitude for Waltraud's mentoring, editing, and collaboration. Both editors continue to feel lucky for the excellent working relationship the Coalition of Women in German has enjoyed with University of Nebraska Press since 1991. The press staff's advice in all aspects of production is invaluable to the successful completion of volumes such as this. Thanks to an increase in page number we can now include the reviews of books published by WiG members in the print journal. Our thanks therefore also to Nicole Grewling, book review editor.

You hold in your hands volume 34, the first issue of *Feminist German Studies*, formerly known as the *Women in German Yearbook*. We wish you happy reading, with your human or non-human kin!

—Alexandra M. Hill and Waltraud Maierhofer, July 2018

ALEXANDRA M. HILL is associate professor of German at the University of Portland in Oregon, where she directs the German program and co-directs the gender and women's studies minor. She received her MA and PhD in German at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she made her first connection with the Coalition of Women in German. Hill's publications on contemporary German-language literature by women have appeared in *The German Quarterly*, *Studies in Twentieth- and Twenty-First Century Literature*, and *Women in German Yearbook*. She is the author of *Playing House: Motherhood, Intimacy, and Domestic Spaces in Julia Franck's Fiction* (2012), coeditor with Florence Feiereisen of *Germany in the Loud Twentieth Century: An Introduction* (2012), and coeditor with Hester Baer of *German Women's Writing in the Twenty-First Century* (2015).

WALTRAUD MAIERHOFER is professor of German, affiliated faculty member of international programs, and interim director of the global health studies program at the University of Iowa. She received her MA and PhD degrees in German and in philosophy from the University of Regensburg, Germany. She has published widely on German literature and culture since the eighteenth century, with a major focus on narrative prose. Her research on the representation of historical women and femininity in historical narratives about the Thirty Years' War (*Hexen—Huren—Heldenweiber*,

2005) as well as several project since have been supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Together with Beth W. Capo she has edited the collection *Reproductive Rights Issues in Popular Media: International Perspectives* (2017).

Notes

1. We should include a mention of the troubled and troubling climate, as well. The trend of hotter-than-average summers continues across the United States, Europe, and Asia, with droughts, extreme storms, and floods; as we know, women are disproportionately affected by climate change. See, for example, Klein.

2. This is the title of journalist and philosopher Rebecca Solnit's collection of essays, *Hope in the Dark*, which tells stories of collective protest effecting change in unexpected ways.

3. At the time of writing, various news sources (*Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Huffington Post*, *Slate*, *Rolling Stone*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Boston Globe*, etc.) are reading Kavanaugh's past speeches and rulings and finding evidence of the likelihood that he will undermine *Roe v. Wade*.

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