

FRANK

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. Newsletter



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Letter from the Editor



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 19th edition of the *FRANKly*!

Soon after I started with the first preparatory works as editor, it occurred to me that this year's theme has to be "US Elections". Not because the U.S. president holds the most powerful office on earth or because

our association has obvious special ties to the U.S. No, this year's elections are (and when you read these lines written on August 3, 2008: were) very special in many other respects: Never before for more than 50 years, U.S. citizens were denied the option to reelect a sitting president or deprive the sitting vice president of this "vice". Never before, a black candidate has run on top of a ticket of the two major parties (and when the theme was conceived, it looked more likely that a woman would claim this honor). At the same time and unfortunately, never before since WW II, an incumbent U.S. administration has received that low approval ratings overseas, and in particular here in Germany.

As every year, this edition also contains brief introductions of our board members, descriptions of national and international events, and reports from the regional chapters. I frankly hope that these reports will be less Munich-centric next year. Not only from this year's Winter Ball but also from many years as member of the Berlin chapter I know that our association well exceeds the *Weißwurstäquator*!

Finally, and unusually, there is an interesting article on analyzing proteins. I do appreciate it as scientific counter-balance to this humanities heavy edition!

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the *FRANKly*!

Yours,

Martin Söhngen, Editor *FRANKly*
Munich, August 2008

Impressum

FRANKly No. 19
ISSN 1865-5645
September 2008
Copyright by
Fulbright Alumni e.V.
Postfach 10 08 65
60008 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

Editor
Martin Söhngen
Munich, Germany

Photos by
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Photos in Introduction
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Proofreading by the board
of the Fulbright Alumni e.V.

Printing and Lettershop by
Liebeskind Druck, Apolda

Greetings from the President

Dear Members and Friends of the German Fulbright Alumni e.V.,

I am very pleased to introduce to you this 19th edition of our association's annual journal, the *FRANKly*. For the third time this issue is dedicated to a special theme. Due to the fact that the people of the United States are facing an extraordinary presidential election in many respects – among others having for the first time the chance to elect an African-American for President – various articles introduce and comment on the history and current issues of elections in the United States. At the time you hold this issue in your hands the campaigns are nearly over and you might find interesting parallels in the articles.

Another part of this issue is – as usual – dedicated to the activities of our regional chapters and the national events. All

regional chapters are happy to welcome members from other chapters to their activities. So look in the “Calendar” section of our website at www.fulbright-alumni.de if you are travelling in Germany.

To all contributors to this issue: On behalf of the whole board I thank you very much for your effort. This journal would not have been possible without you. For motivating and finding authors special thanks go to this year's editor Martin Söhngen. We rarely had an edition with articles with in-depth analysis like this one.

Enjoy reading this issue – I look forward to seeing you at the association's upcoming events.

Yours,
Uwe Koch, Nuremberg, June 2008

Introduction

Uwe Koch – President

Born and grown up in Reutlingen I went as a first step to study Physics in the neighboring town of Tübingen before taking the larger step to Corvallis, Oregon. The year at the Physics Department of Oregon State University is unforgettable: Hard work and trips to the remarkable Pacific Coast, lifelong international friendships and the loneliness of the desert.

After completing my PhD in 1997 I left Tübingen for a job at Deutsche Bank in Eschborn. The Frankfurt Chapter helped a lot to feel “home” in Frankfurt and I soon became its treasurer. In 2001 I went to Nuremberg to work for an internet broker. After helping to organize the Winterball 2002 in Bamberg I was elected to the board for the first time. After five years as treasurer I was elected president last year.

Like last year, the 2008 elections at the general assembly resulted in changes of three offices of the board. Thank you Carina, Désirée and Florian for your dedication and passion for our cause last year.

A warm welcome to Cem, Claudia, Claus and Martin as new members of the (extended) board. It's a special pleasure for



me to have Cem – a former “Fulbright Enterprise Scholar” supported by the Fulbright Alumni e.V. – on the board. This shows that our continuing support of the Association of Friends

and Donors is worth the effort. Hopefully the first alumni of the Diversity Initiative will apply for a Fulbright Grant soon.

As you might have noticed, this year is more a year of consolidation and reconsidering than a year of projects. It took much more effort than anticipated to relaunch our website. Special thanks to Steffen Schmuck-Soldan for his continuing work and dedication as webmaster and to Barbara for coordinating the authors. The first step is now done – I hope you enjoy our new website with its new possibilities. I know it's still work in progress – but websites will always be.

Comments and suggestions are welcome, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Yours,
Uwe Koch, President

Barbara Weiten – Vice President Communications

Born in Saarbrücken, I grew up and went to school in Homburg Saar. I got to know the United States first hand in 1996/97 when I spent a year as a high-school exchange student in Muskogee, Oklahoma. After finishing school, I moved to Passau to study International Business and Cultural Studies. In the course of my studies, I went to Malaga (Spain) for a semester as an Erasmus student and subsequently spent my Fulbright year at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. At Brown, I completed a Master's degree in American Civilization and greatly enjoyed life in the U.S. as a grad student, both academically and personally. At the end of the academic year, I worked as an intern for the UN Development Program in New York City for two months, fell in love with the city and spent my free time tirelessly exploring its many different parts. Since 2006, I have been living in Munich and working towards my Ph.D. in Political Science/American Studies.

Participating in the many varied activities of the Fulbright regional chapter in Munich and getting to know quite a few Fulbrighters in my new home city encouraged me to become



Introduction

more active in the association, and since 2007 I have been serving on the national board. As Vice President for Communications, I coordinate the Fulbright Alumni e.V. "media portfolio" *FAIN*, *FRANKly*, our website and our e-mail newsletters – fortunately, not by myself: I am lucky to work with Martin (*FRANKly* editor), Adrian (*FAIN* editor), Holger (e-mail newsletters) and Steffen (webmaster); I'd like to say a big thank you to all of them for their commitment and their hard work for the Fulbright alumni community.

As many of you probably know, the relaunch of the Fulbright Alumni website – including a new technology (a content management system), a new design, a new structure and many new and updated content elements – has been a major effort in the last two years; a special thanks goes to Steffen who has been leading this process from the very beginning at the strategy meeting in 2006. Of course all of you are invited to let us know your feedback on the new site. In addition, you are also always welcome to contribute articles for our publications *FAIN* or *FRANKly* or directly for the website in order to share your experiences or expertise with the Fulbright community.

Yours,
Barbara Weiten, Vice President Communications

Introduction

Claus Vollrath-Rödiger – Treasurer

I was born in Hanau, Hesse. I spent my high school years in various cities throughout Germany and Switzerland. From Berlin, where I studied sociology, I went to Michigan for two years. After completing my M.A., I finished my Dipl.-Soz. and Dipl.-Kfm.

Being a member of Fulbright Alumni e.V. for twenty years, I took part in the organization of a number of national events (Conference *Ökologie und Strukturwandel* 1993, Welcome Meeting 1996, Winter Ball Aachen 1997). The last bigger event to organize with our Regional Chapter was the Winterball 2008 in Münster. For one year, I was elected member of the extended



board for fundraising. This year I support the Fulbright Alumni e.V. as treasurer.

As treasurer I have to care for all financial matters of the association: payments, management of cash and fund reserves, accounting, annual financial reporting, tax declaration. I could only begin to tackle these tasks with the help of the former officeholders. As holds true for all the board members, organization is a big part of my work.

Yours,
Claus Vollrath-Rödiger, Treasurer



Introduction

Cem Yüçetas – Vice President Members

I was born and grew up in Stuttgart as a son of a Turkish immigrant family. From 1998 on, I studied Visual Communications at

the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach/M, continued through-out 2002 in Vienna. In 2003/2004, a Fulbright scholarship brought me to San Francisco where I specialized in Photography at the Academy of Art University. I graduated in 2005 in Offenbach/M.

After studying in Offenbach and Vienna, San Francisco changed me and my work a lot. The academic culture and artistic approaches were so different that it opened my eyes in my field of studies.

Since 2005 I am working as a photographer for magazines, advertising, museums, and I am a lecturer at the Academy of Communication and Design in Frankfurt/M.

As Vice President for Members my goals are to evaluate our current strengths and identify upcoming challenges. Which subjects are in need of more attention to make the association grow? I am currently working on inquiries for the regional chapters and the returnees.

How can we make sure that the regional chapters stay active? How to convince returnees of the possibilities awaiting them? A lot of returnees think that after they have returned the best is over. It is upon us to show that with joining the Fulbright Alumni Association a new chapter is opened.

Yours,
Cem Yüçetas, Vice President Members

Introduction

Claudia Detje – Vice President Events

I was born and raised in Frankfurt/Main. After completing high school I started to study chemistry at the Technical University Darmstadt before I switched to the biochemistry program at Goethe University Frankfurt. During my studies, I felt the need to expand my horizon and found myself as Fulbright grantee at the University of Kansas. After a tremendous year in the ostensible *middle of nowhere*, I returned to Frankfurt. The regional chapter Frankfurt gave me a warm welcome and two years later I became “head” of the chapter. As part of the Frankfurt chapter I was involved in the organization of the Winter Ball in Würzburg and the celebration of the 100th anniversary of J.W. Fulbright.

At the last general assembly, I was elected Vice President for Events. This gives me the opportunity to work together with



in the organization of the past and upcoming events.

‘Besides’ my activities for the Fulbright alumni I am a post-doctoral fellow at the newly established Twincore Institute in Hanover doing research on viral infections of the central nervous system.

So see you at our next event!

Yours,
Claudia Detje, Vice President Events

Mario Reichel (Welcome Meeting), Joe Kristensen (Strategy Meeting) and Dagmar Schreiber (Sailing Trip 2009) and of course all the people who are involved

The Whole World is Watching the Coming American Elections

Dr. T. Michael Maher, Fulbright Professor,
University of Regensburg,
Professor and Head, Department of Communication,
University of Louisiana

★ The coming November 4 American presidential election has generated worldwide interest, as there is the potential for real change in a country where change seems very much desired.

In a late June 2008 Pew Research Center survey, 76 percent of Americans expressed dissatisfaction with the way things are going in their country.

The whole world seems to be watching and anticipating changes, as well. A separate Pew Global Attitudes survey found that America's global image improved for the first time this decade. According to the Pew Global Attitudes Project Web site, "favorable ratings have increased modestly since 2007 in 10 of 21 countries where comparative data are available, and many people around the world are paying close attention to the U.S. presidential election." This improving climate of world opinion about America is likely linked to the possibility of significant change in American policy as the result of the election.

The study noted that 56 percent of Germans told surveyors they were somewhat interested or very interested in the coming U.S. elections. The Pew summary added, "in nearly every country surveyed, greater numbers express confidence in presidential candidate Barack Obama than in John McCain." (<http://pewglobal.org/>)

Obama's popularity in Europe was also confirmed in a June 3, 2008, survey done by the British newspaper *The Telegraph*. This survey asked voters in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia their preference for U.S. president. Obama had 52 percent of the "vote," while McCain received only 15 percent.

Obviously a high percentage of those surveyed were undecided! As everyone knows, the coming election is full of "firsts" and superlatives. Barack Obama has already made history by becoming America's first black presidential candidate. In the various state caucuses and primaries, he has defeated Sen. Hillary Clinton, who was the first serious woman candidate for president. He will face Sen. John McCain, who would be the oldest president in American history to first assume office, if he is elected.

The coming election will be the first time since 1928 in which no executive branch incumbent was running for president. Rather, Americans will choose between two senators for the first time in history.

Yet another first in this year's elections has been the growing power of the Internet to connect the candidates to the voters, both for visibility and for fund raising.

In the 2004 Democratic primaries, Howard Dean, the former Vermont governor, made history by raising \$25 million over the Internet during his campaign, which ultimately did not win. In the current campaign, however, Barack Obama has taken Internet fund raising to a completely new level. A June 2008 report indicated Obama had raised \$265 million, most of it in small contributions from the Internet. "What's intriguing to Democrats and worrisome to Republicans is how someone lacking these deep connections to traditional sources of wealth could raise so much money so quickly," noted Joshua Green in his article titled "The Amazing Money

Machine" in the June 2008 *Atlantic Monthly*. Indeed, Internet fund raising seems to promise a broad democratization of the election process during the 2008 election.

But in addition to using the Web for fund raising, the Obama campaign has used social networking sites like Facebook to spread the candidate's messages. Indeed, a July 7 *New York Times* story features Chris Hughes, a 24-year old who is one of the four founders of Facebook and who is now an Obama campaign staffer, working to unite volunteers and contributors via *My.BarackObama.com*. This included using the Obama email list to inspire 4,000 grassroots house parties across America with the theme "Unite for Change" for an Obama presidency. One recent article in *The Guardian* indicated that Obama had accumulated 1 million Facebook friends, versus 150,000 for McCain.

Obama staffers are also using the Web to fight smear campaigns, which can be spread via the Internet. A persistent smear spread via email holds that Obama is a Muslim who harbors anti-American views. Another smear holds that Obama's wife Michelle has used the racial slur "whitey" in a Chicago sermon four years ago.



The Obama website dispels this on the website <http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/fighththesmearshome/>

Yet another new use of the Internet comes from YouTube, where Obama promotional videos like one by will.i.am of the *Black Eyed Peas* have been viewed online 18 million times.

From this you might think that Obama is miles ahead of McCain in the presidential race. He isn't. European popularity polls, Facebook friends and YouTube viewings don't elect American presidents. The latest Gallup survey from July 11-13 shows Obama with a 46-43 percent lead over McCain, in a sample having an error margin of 2 percentage points.

This is a thin lead, considering all the good press Obama has received about his innovative campaign, his historic status as the first black candidate, and his well-established personal and rhetorical magnetism. Obama's lead seems even slimmer when we consider that some 23 percent of the voters are still considered undecided, as of mid-July.

Of course, the popular vote is an important indicator, but like Facebook friends, the popular vote doesn't elect American presidents: The Electoral College does. The Electoral College is a hard-to-kill relic of the 18th century, created at a time when communication from northern to southern states might take weeks. It is the constitutionally mandated body that elects presidents. Each state has a number of electors based on population, and the candidate with the most votes in

each state wins 100 percent of the state's electoral votes in a "winner take all" system (with two exceptions, Maine and Nebraska).

George W. Bush lost the 2000 popular vote to Al Gore, but won the electoral vote by virtue of taking all of Florida's electors in a very narrow and controversial popular-vote victory in that state. In mid-July CNN.com was predicting 231 electoral votes for Obama and 194 for McCain, with 270 electoral votes needed to win, and 113 electoral votes in "tossup" states that are too closely contested to predict. CNN considered Florida, Michigan, Ohio and Virginia as key "tossup" states (<http://edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/06/10/electoral.map/index.html>). Of these states, a different Web site, *Electoral-vote.com*, shows Michigan as "weak Democrat", Florida as "weak Republican", and Ohio and Virginia as "barely Democrat". Yet another July electoral map by MSNBC shows Obama with a 210-189 lead over McCain (<http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2008/07/09/1188557.aspx>).

Truth be told, it's far too early to project a winner in most states. Neither candidate has named a vice presidential running mate as of this writing (July 15). Nor have there been any McCain-Obama debates. Another sobering fact for Obama fans to consider is that a July 7 Gallup website article has noted that in six of the most recent nine closely contested elections, the July leader

(in 2008, Obama), lost the general election (see <http://www.gallup.com/poll/108676/July-Leader-Lost-Last-Competitive-US-Elections.aspx>).

So anything can happen between now and the election. A *Time* magazine poll conducted in June 2008 showed that Obama leads McCain on a lot of personal qualities such as "likeability" (58-23 percent), and "best understands the needs of people like myself" (47-36). However, McCain, a Vietnam War hero, holds a commanding lead on the personal quality of "would best protect the U.S. against terrorism" (McCain leads 53-33). A major terrorism attack on American soil could move a lot of voters to favor McCain. On the other hand, McCain is heavily identified with supporting continued American armed forces in Iraq, a tremendously unpopular war, while Obama favors beginning an immediate withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. So if the Iraq situation seems to be deteriorating between now and the election, this could move voters toward Obama.

Yet another key aspect of the election is the vote for Congress. Almost all projections indicate that the Democrats will increase their narrow lead in the House and Senate. If Obama does win the presidency, and if the Democrats do increase their lead in Congress, the Obama administration would have the opportunity to make substantial changes in American policy. The world will continue watching this contest with considerable interest to see just how things will play out. ★

American Fulbrighters in an Election Year

by Gil Carbajal

Part I

How American Fulbrighters in Germany Dealt with the Primary Elections

Two major networks in my life are the Fulbright community and Democrats Abroad (DA), the official branch of the Democratic Party for American expatriates. And this year, as the stars would have it, the Berlin Seminar opened on April 6, five days before the Democrats Abroad Global Convention opened in Vancouver. Fortunately, I had a day between the end of the one and beginning of the other. Thanks to Lufthansa I was able to dance at the closing party of the Seminar and fly the next day to Vancouver where I was hoping to be elected a member of the DA delegation to the Democratic Convention.

In Berlin I was fascinated by what Fulbrighters had to say about their experiences explaining the American primary process because, as an active member of DA I myself was participating in that very process. In a regional meeting of DA in Brussels in March I came very close to be elected a delegate for Hillary Clinton. In Vancouver I would have another opportunity.

As citizen ambassadors of American ideals and culture, American Fulbrighters this year found that the primary process in the U.S. had an important impact on their experiences. English teachers were expected to be experts on the often arcane details of the American electoral process while researchers had a ready-made icebreaking topic of conversation at encounters with friends and colleagues. Many Fulbrighters were struck by the contrast between Germans and Americans when it comes to talking politics.

The first Fulbrighter I interviewed was Sam Cox from Cocomo, Indiana. He said he learned a lot about the primary process in order to answer his students' questions. He voted for Obama in the Democrats Abroad primary election held in Berlin on Super Tuesday (Feb. 5). Of all the Fulbrighters I interviewed only one admitted to being prepared to vote for John McCain, although reluctantly. Meghan Grizzle, from the

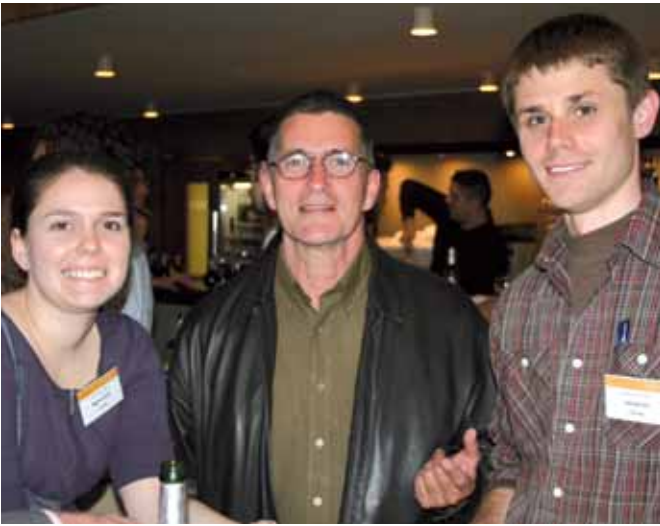
Republican redoubt of Orange County in the mainly Democratic state of California, was an English teaching assistant in Berlin. Most of her colleagues supported either Clinton or Obama. Meghan is used to being the only Conservative in a crowd since she is a graduate of Harvard University. As most of her students were Turkish, the Iraq War was a frequent topic of discussion. "They believe the war is somehow against Islam. So if I say I'm supporting a candidate who is favor of the war, then they think I am inherently against Islam as well. It's a touchy subject."

When German friends asked Conrad Lee from Woodward, Iowa, about the American electoral process, they got a professional opinion. A graduate student in Political Science, he was researching Political Socialization in Bielefeld. And so he was able to explain how the system works from the local precinct level up through the national level. A staunch supporter of Barack Obama, Conrad nonetheless could point out that there were few policy differences between the black Senator and Hillary Clinton. He thought she was a good candidate but believed that Obama was outstanding because of his character and vision for America.

Another political science student, Courtney Obrien of Minneapolis studying in Frankfurt found a lot of Germans really interested and informed about the American elections. The majority of people she talked to supported Obama. They were really excited to hear that she did so as well. She did know a woman very involved in the SPD who favored Hillary Clinton and thought it might have something to do with her feminist point of view developed in women's movements in the sixties.

"Rent-an-American" was biologist Jeffrey Tiegler's extra-curricular project in Tübingen. It afforded him opportunities to talk American politics with Germans. Under the sponsorship of the Deutsch-Amerikanisches-Institut, Jeffrey was "loaned out" to English classes at different gymnasia. "They ask you questions. Some of them want a presentation on presidential politics, economy or other aspects of American life," he explained. And of course he was asked a lot about the American electoral system which his German students found very confusing.

Bryant Kirkland's extra curricular activity while studying Greek and Roman poetry at the University of Trier was to sing in the Cathedral choir. He went to his



American Fulbrighters Meghan Grizzle and Samuel Cox share their opinions on the candidates with author Gil Carbajal.

first rehearsal on the day of the first set of primaries in early January. As he walked into the room, the Choir Director who had been talking to a group of basses, turned to him and asked excitedly, “Obama or Clinton?” Bryant responded, “The last time I checked it was Obama.” The choir director slapped his hands together, made a jubilant sound and then returned to talking to the basses. The elections also came up during his oral exams on Hellenistic literature at the end of the semester. The line of questioning turned to political content in poetry under the Ptolomies; and then the professor asked abruptly, “Who will be the next president of the United States?”

In American social circles it is considered almost as impolite to talk about politics as it is to talk about religion. In Germany many Fulbrighters found that not to be a problem. Bryant found himself talking much more about religions and politics than he ever did in the U.S. “Living in Germany”, he said, “gives an American somewhat of an idea of how a more secular version of our society could look like. I’ve been pleased to talk about two of my favorite subjects with tremendous freedom.”

Lieutenant John Amnah, a graduate of the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, spent the academic year studying economics at Potsdam University. “When people find out I’m in the military” he said, “they’re really interested to know what I feel about the upcoming elections. A lot of people ask whether I will vote for Obama or Clinton, and

I think that is an interesting question because we also have another party. I try to remain pretty neutral because I’m in the military and I tell them that I think the three remaining candidates have a lot of skills and bring a lot to the table.”

He also noticed how freely Germans talk politics. “The German people are very, very political,” he said. “And they’re very interested in what’s going on not just in America and Germany but around the world. I’ve learned a lot. They’re very critical but I think that’s great.”

Drew Lafiandre has broken a family tradition not to talk politics. Although he liked both Democratic candidates, he thought Obama had a better chance of beating Mc Cain than Hillary Clinton. Among his students in Nuremburg, he found support for the candidates was more or less split by the sexes, girls were for Clinton while the boys were for Obama. “I hear it all the time, he said, ‘I like Barack because he’s so cool!’

When Drew would explain the American electoral system his students reacted saying it was stupid and didn’t make sense. “They ask me” he said, “why you have to be registered to vote and why the voting process is so complicated because in the caucus system you go to a specific location on a given day, wait in line, and sometimes waiting in line wouldn’t even allow you to participate. They didn’t understand the caucus system and thought of it like more of the way you’d elect a prom queen rather than the leader of the modern world. They grilled me pretty hard and questioned the system as flawed.”

Part II

How the Primary Elections Dealt with an American Fulbright Alumnus

It is no wonder German adolescents think the process for selecting presidential candidates strange, even American adults have difficulty understanding it. I myself finally began to get it because of my participation in Democrats Abroad, whose system reflects the general pattern followed by Democratic state organizations throughout the U.S. The Republican Party has a simpler system than the Democrats because in each state the winner

American Fulbrighters in an Election Year

takes all, whereas the Democrats apportion the delegates for each candidate according to percentages.

Democrats Abroad is an official branch of the American Democratic Party with committees in more than 35 countries throughout the world. There are an estimated 4 to 6 million U.S. citizens living abroad and DA affords them the possibility of taking part in the governance of the Democratic Party at a grass roots level. DA is treated as a state party; it has representatives in the Democratic National Committee and sends a delegation to the national convention where the candidates for president and vice president are elected. Accordingly, DA held a world-wide primary, from February 5th to the 12th, in which Americans all over the world were able to vote for their preferred candidates. They could cast their ballots in person, by mail, by fax, and, for the first time in history, on the Internet. The results gave Obama around 70% of the vote and 10 of the 14 directly elected members of the DA Delegation. (Super Delegates have been elected as well but not through the primary process.)

DA sends a contingent of 22 Delegates (including 8 Super Delegates), plus two Alternate Delegates, to the Convention with a 1/2 vote each. Democrats Abroad is divided into three regions: Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, and Europe, Africa and the Middle East. This latter is the largest region, and after the primary elections, representatives from the various national committees in the region met in Brussels on the weekend of March 14th to elect delegates. Of the more than 300 DA members who assembled there that weekend, nearly a third of us hoped to be elected to one of the six delegation slots up for election. We divided into two caucuses one for Clinton (about 60 people) and a much larger one for Obama.

There is a gender parity rule in the Democratic Party. In the Obama caucuses there were many more males, something like two thirds while in the Clinton Caucus we men were a third of the candidates. That of course gave women a better chance in the Obama group and men a better chance among the Clinton supporters.

The procedure for elections basically consisted in candidates giving three-minute speeches and then being voted on by the representatives of the

various national committees. Each national committee had its vote weighted according to the percentages of its voters in the world wide primary. In Europe the countries with the most votes cast in the primaries were Britain, German, France and Italy. Spain was in the middle between these and smaller countries like Holland and Austria. After every vote, the candidates with less than 15% of the vote were eliminated, until a candidate emerged with more than 50% of the vote.

Curiously enough, the Clinton Caucus had a large proportion of DA leadership reflecting a phenomenon observable throughout the Democratic Party. It was my first experience ever with a Caucus. I gave my speech emphasizing my Hispanic heritage and pointing out that a major pillar of support for Clinton came from the Hispanic communities. Some 25 of us candidates gave speeches. The female delegate was elected first. It was rather an easy decision since she was the head of the Clinton campaign in Europe.

There was also a lot of maneuvering behind the scenes to which I, as a novice, was oblivious. It was important to have been active in a given national committee, and the veteran leaders had an advantage because they were well known. I have been active in DA for barely three years.

To my amazement, I had the largest number of votes in the first round of votes. I lost that advantage in the second round; and I was eliminated in the final round, losing to a veteran DA member from France credited with having consolidated that country's very important DA committee. But I was pleased just to realize that I was a competitive candidate. That led me to try again right after the Berlin Seminar at the DA Global Convention in Vancouver.

There, representatives from the other two DA regions, the Americas and Asia and the Pacific, met on Friday and selected one Clinton and two Obama delegates. The final group of delegates was elected at a plenary meeting of DA representatives from around the world over the weekend. To make a long story short, I was voted in as an Alternate Delegate. And what does that mean? It means I am part of the DA Delegation to the Denver Convention but cannot cast a 1/2 vote unless a Clinton delegate gets ill. But what really matters is that I will be an eye-witness to the election of the first black Democratic presidential candidate in history; and, most important of all, I will be invited to all the parties! ★

P.S. Gil wrote us in early August that he had been promoted delegate. Congratulations!

Bloomington – a Small Liberal Island in the Middle of the Midwest!

by Annika Pampel

★ This year's presidential elections are a very interesting and exciting time to be a guest and student in the United States. This article is a subjective account of the year I spent in Bloomington Indiana, a small but very liberal and lovable town in the Midwest of the United States.

Before I start going further into detail about politics, I would like to briefly introduce Bloomington. Generally the Midwest is a very conservative area that mainly votes republican. On the election map right now the blue (Democratic) part covers California, Oregon and Washington, New England and some parts of the East Coast. The big part in the middle is nearly purely covered in red (Republican). At least that is what the election maps show. Bloomington certainly doesn't fit into that picture. 40 thousand locals share their city with 40 thousand college kids and about 4 thousand academics and artists. Indiana University is home to the number three school of business, the number one ranked school in music, and many more really highly ranked programs. Sports are cherished as well as arts and science, and hospitality is not only a nice word; it's lived and shown.

So it doesn't really surprise that Bloomington is considered liberal. As a film student I had the chance to work for WFIU/WTIU – the local affiliate TV-station – as a photographer and camera-girl. This is why I had the unusual chance as a foreigner to be tightly involved in the political coverage locally and nationally. In the fall, Bloomington elected a new mayor. Interviewing both candidates, I was truly amazed how liberal both of their programs were. Very openly they talked about the most important issues here such as: health care, social security, taxes and the war in Iraq.

In the fall, the assassinations in Pakistan became a very sad and important part of the general discussions here. Especially students talked about the global hot spots and how a new president might want or should relate to them. Another discussed theme is Burma and the possibilities for refugees to get education. But the most famous and most heated discussion is related to Tibet. The Dalai Lama visits Bloomington at least once a year to see his brother and family, who own two restaurants here. This spring, Bloomington hosted many discussions and meetings to talk about the current events related to the Olympic Games in China and the way the world reacts. Just recently, a movie has caused another important issue. Micheal Moore's film *Sicko* had a promotion bus visit Bloomington. The film is a very sarcastic and critical non-fiction work on the American health care system and its flaws. The marketing group sent participants from the movie to campus and had them talk about their experience. The effects were

noticeable in every political discussion afterwards. Whether it was a speech or a discussion group, there was always someone who asked about social security and a necessary change in the health care system.

Both Democratic presidential candidates visited Bloomington various times during the primary elections, gave speeches and answered questions very willingly and openly. To me, the most interesting talk has been given by Chelsea Clinton, Hillary Clinton's daughter. She visited Bloomington's campus and gave a very clever and entertaining speech about what can be changed and how. She knew a lot about global politics and was no stranger to the problems minorities have locally. Even faced with her father's very embarrassing affair in the past, she reacted professional and calm.

Barack Obama visited the "little 500", the most important sport-event of the year in Bloomington, a bike race. He shook many hands before the women's race began and later went into a local restaurant and joined students drinking a beer and eating pizza. After this very clever political move he gave an interesting speech a few weeks later before Indiana voted in the primaries. Many people complained about the fact that the Indiana primaries were scheduled so late and thought Indiana's voice might not have much weight anymore. But the closer the state primary came, the more important the state of Indiana became and people were proud that their voice meant something. Hillary won Indiana but ran out of money soon after. Barack Obama won the primary elections and faces now the big challenge against John McCain, a very well known and experienced politician with a history as "war hero". Mr Obama focuses now on foreign politics because it is one of his weaknesses to be less experienced than Mr McCain. But that didn't show in the speeches the young candidate gave in Indiana University's assembly hall. With a lot of humor and the ability to make people listen and to give them hope for change, Mr Obama spoke very openly about everything he was asked. His opponent visited Indiana as well, but he didn't give speeches in the biggest college there. But Mr McCain has the support of the governor of Indiana.

Unexpectedly, almost everyone here is willing and interested to talk about politics. Bloomington is definitely not only a great place to study, but also a very nice place to rethink some clichés about American politics. ★



A Vote for Barhard Oschröder

Stephen J. Rice

★ Who might an American conservative vote for in the upcoming November election? Let me answer that question with reference to who an American conservative might have voted for in the 1998 German election.¹

I lived in Bonn in 1998, which was a time when that city was still possessed of politics. That year was a particularly political year because of Germany's federal election and the fact that the CDU and Helmut Kohl – Bundeskanzler since 1982 and only a narrow victor in 1994, when I lived in Freiburg – were ripe for defeat.

In 1998, Germany was in an economic morass. Unemployment had risen to over 4 million people. As people in the field of marketing can tell you, a price of \$4.00 is psychologically much higher than a price of \$3.99. In politics, the leading “4” was definitely poison for the incumbent and fuel for the challenger.

That challenger, Gerhard Schröder, called Kohl the “unemployment chancellor,” and he boldly proclaimed that if he were elected, the populace could measure him on his goal of significantly reducing unemployment, adding “if we don’t achieve that goal, then we will not have earned the right to be reelected.” (Four years later, Schröder should well have proclaimed, “Well, never mind!” By 2005, his last year in office, unemployment had almost risen to 5 million).

Added to the unemployment – but integrally part of it – were the unmet (and unmeetable) expectations created by German reunification. Helmut Kohl surged greatly in popularity as a result of reunification, and his popularity sank concomitantly as the reality of the process usurped its promise. (See also: Bush, Iraq War, 2003–2008.)

Kohl faced a socio-economic and political landscape in 1998 that greatly favored his challenger, whoever that challenger might have been. In Gerhard Schröder, however, Kohl faced not just an average, uninspiring candidate, but rather a particularly gifted politician – a future *Medienkanzler* – who was well poised to take power.

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Viewing German politics from an American perspective requires quite a bit of translating. By that, I don’t mean translating in just a linguistic sense, but rather in a conceptual one.

It’s no easy translation: not only are our electoral systems structurally very different, but also the parties that operate in

them do not align with each other in any direct fashion. For example, you cannot simply equate Germany’s SPD with our Democratic party, or Germany’s sister CDU/CSU parties with our Republican party. Of course, even writing of Germany as if its political parties *might* align exhibits a fundamental misconception of that country’s parliamentary system: in Germany, six or more parties serve the same constituency that two parties serve in America.

Even the terminology is confusing. American liberals are not German *Liberal*: Germans use the word *Liberal* in its classical economic sense, denoting free markets, while Americans use it to describe a leftist political leaning (i.e. *Links*). On the other hand, while the word “conservative” describes the parties to the right of the left in both countries, the American conservative platform would not fit comfortably within the conservative platform of Germany’s conservative parties. (I am, of course, speaking in broadly general terms, since party platforms are neither static nor capable of precise arithmetic description. Suffice it to say that in most countries and certainly in Germany, a typical American Republican candidate would find a very small constituency if he or she were able to run for office.)

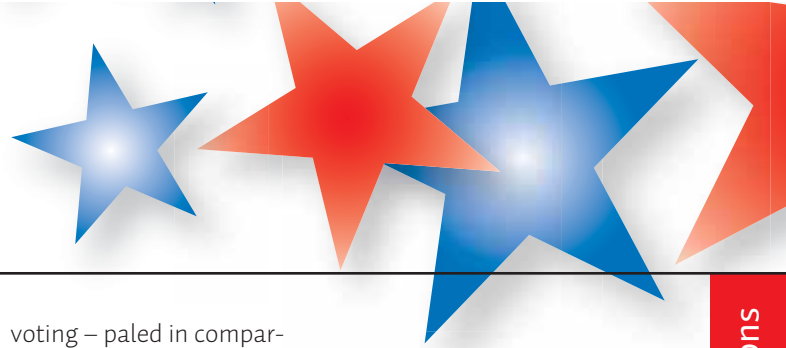
Perhaps one way of comparing German and American politics is to postulate what would happen if a hypothetical average voter voted in either country. I think that if you took a group of liberal Americans (i.e. Democratic voters) and allowed them to vote in a German election, a significant number of them would find their political and social philosophies reflected in conservative German politics and would vote CDU/CSU. By the same token, if you took a group of conservative German voters and allowed them to vote in a U.S. election, a substantial number would vote for Democratic candidates. This conjecture is nothing remarkable; rather, it simply identifies the center of German politics as being to the left of the center of American politics – a statement that is unquestionably true.

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I am an American voter who considers American Democratic candidates to be rarely worth serious consideration. While I appreciate some tenets of the typical Democratic platform – e.g., I feel that universal health care should be implemented in the U.S., and that it will arrive in America within my lifetime, but probably only under a Democratic administration – I generally view the Republican platform as either better overall or, at the very least, the lesser of two evils.

For me, therefore, a vote for the German SPD and its candidates, who would typically fall squarely into the liberal wing of our

¹ “American conservative” is not a narrow term, and this essay, of necessity, speaks from a very general perspective. Of the two most common categories of conservative, social and fiscal, the author falls most comfortably in the fiscal category.



liberal party, would normally be out of the question. Nevertheless, if I could have voted in the 1998 German election, I would have voted for the SPD and Gerhard Schröder. On the night of Schröder's victory, I remember riding the S-Bahn from Bad Godesberg, where I worked as the Fulbright Commission's editor of *The Funnel*, to downtown Bonn, and passing the SPD building in the Bundesviertel. The plaza in front of the building contained a full crowd and well-lit stage, all of which clearly conveyed the excitement of Schröder's victory. I remember thinking at the time: "This is a good thing for Germany."

Although I followed German politics at the time, I must admit that my vote for the SPD/Schröder would have been more *reflexive* than *cerebral*. That is: I would have been reacting to what I perceived Germany needed at the time – that being a shot in the arm or kick in the butt – more than I would have been analyzing the choice in a calculated or rational manner. What would I have been reacting to?

In politics, change-for-change's-sake occasionally becomes a voting rationale that supersedes the politics and policies of those for whom one votes. SPD policies aside, Germany desperately needed a change from Helmut Kohl in 1998. Germans, who in the best of times will rarely win the prize for "Most Optimistic People," seemed to me to be particularly uninspired in 1998. Reunification was a drag. Unemployment was a drag. Helmut Kohl was a drag. Even soccer was a drag! A continuation of the Helmut Kohl-led government would have been tiresome and uninspiring. It would have signaled resignation to a status quo that so many were complaining about, and an attitude such as: "well, we've got all these problems and generally feel down-in-the-dumps, but hey, he's Kohl and we know him and anyways, why risk it." The Kohl campaign used as one slogan "Safety, not Risks." Bad slogan!

Of course, most Germans voted for the SPD/Schröder not just "for change's sake." Many certainly voted for the SPD because they believed that Schröder and his party would indeed bring about constructive change in the form of better social and economic policies.

I would not have been one of those voters. In fact, I viewed SPD policies as a necessary evil (that's just a saying – I don't really think that most SPD policies are truly evil!), and believed that four years of those policies might be enough to convince the German electorate that it was time for a more conservative government. (This shows you how much I knew/know about any of this!). The policy reasons for voting for the SPD and Schröder or the CDU and Kohl – i.e. the cerebral reasons for

voting – paled in comparison to the reflexive reason to vote for Schröder: change, plain and simple! Thus, the answer to the question "to Kohl or not to Kohl" was, for me, clear. *Basta*, as the future Bundeskanzler might have declared.



Ten years later in America – eight years after George Bush was first elected – we in America face a political landscape requiring change-for-change's sake. Not coincidentally, the buzzword used by *all* of the candidates so far has been: change! The candidates are mirroring what they see in the public: broad dissatisfaction about what has occurred in the last eight years under Bush.

I share this dissatisfaction. Therefore, my voting booth calculus isn't going to be "I'm going to vote for Candidate A because of Issues X, Z and Z," but rather "I'm voting for Candidate A (Democrat) because he's not Candidate B (Republican)." I will be *thinking* less than I will be *reacting*. What exactly will I be reacting to?

The prime cause of my reflex will be George Bush, although the Republican party as a whole has done itself no favors in the previous eight years. The self-professed 'party of limited government' has not governed in a way that vindicates that core ideal. And, of course, the party whose candidate in 2000 suggested that the military's role should be war-fighting and not nation-building then embarked on a war that was guaranteed to embroil the U.S. in nation-building for – as is now clear and should have been clear from day one of the war – a potentially limitless duration. Bush, therefore, is a good, worthy focal point of Republican frustration.

Bush has demoralized conservatives to a truly remarkable degree. Just a few years ago, I had several friends and colleagues who I would have very confidently predicted would *never* vote for a Democrat in their lifetimes. I have been astonished by how not one, but several of these people have told me that they may or will vote for Obama. I still have many conservative acquaintances who will not vote for Obama. But when elections are decided by single-digit percentage margins, you don't need everyone from the other side to shift an election's results.

The Iraq war is an issue that is diminishing in importance, but I believe for conservatives it remains the most compelling reason to turn from the Republican candidate this November.

Especially *the* Republican candidate, John McCain, who, if not outright declaring that he will steadfastly stay the course in Iraq, certainly gives that impression.

Reasonable people will disagree as to whether staying the course in Iraq is a good policy, especially after the past year's undeniable success in that country as measured by the reduced bloodshed.

We arguably have no real choice but to continue shepherding the process of stabilizing Iraq from a moral and ethical standpoint. Although the comparison is somewhat crass, I think our involvement in Iraq is similar to that of a 16-year-old boy who gets his girlfriend pregnant. Both the war and the pregnancy are mistakes; neither situation can simply be ignored or abandoned after the fact; both carry consequences from which responsibilities flow. Society does not look favorably on boys (or men) who abandon their children. Should Americans or the international community look favorably on an America that might abandon the Iraqis? Americans feel frustrated at being involved in Iraq, and the international community undoubtedly feels a certain amount of *schadenfreude* at our struggles there. Despite our frustration, advocating departure from Iraq appears to me to be a rather naïve and irresponsible reaction to a mistake.

And "mistake" is clearly the correct word: as the war has dragged on, it has become increasingly difficult to find reasonable people – Republican, Democrat, or independent – who believe that the war in Iraq was a good decision.

Nevertheless, returning to my *thinking-versus-reacting* voting impetus, my reaction to the war in Iraq is that we need a non-Republican in office. (Perhaps if I thought Obama would simply up-and-withdraw our troops from Iraq shortly after being elected would I choose McCain, but that is ...*thinking*. Ultimately, I do not think that Obama, when sitting with military advisors and carefully pondering options, as no political candidate has the resources to do, will simply withdraw from Iraq).

My reflexive vote on the war issue suggests my likely vote for Obama.

The issue currently superseding the war in most American's minds is the economy, which is the traditional bellwether of politics. Short term, there is not much a president can do to affect the economy one way or the other (other than cheerlead). Long term, a Republican is better than a Democrat: Democrats can be counted on to increase the regulatory breadth of government – its power and influence – and mostly with negative rather than positive consequences. Their efforts will

be compounded by the fact that they will likely control not only the presidency if Obama is elected, but also Congress as well. I do not wish to see government grow still greater in power and importance, but I unfortunately cannot say that under Bush, that has *not* been the case.

Regarding increases in governmental power, Republicans have lately also tended to increase governmental power instead of containing it. This is mostly due to the current administration's conduct of the war: regarding the power of the executive branch, conservative columnist George Will recently wrote that conservatives, "disoriented by their reverence for Reagan and sedated by Republican victories in seven of the past 10 presidential elections, ... have not just become comfortable with the idea of a strong president, they have embraced the theory of the 'unitary executive.'" A unitary executive acts as Bush has acted, which is under the theory that because he is leading the nation in a war effort, laws and other checks on his powers do not apply. The Supreme Court has recently brushed back this theory, but the Court is an institution that acts in a narrow and incremental fashion. Voters, as an institution, can act with more dramatic authority.

Although the power of the president is a rather academic issue that does not greatly concern many Americans – unlike the economy – for a conservative voter who is concerned with government arrogating power to itself, the tradeoff between ceding power to the Democrats, who will increase government's reach, and the Republicans, who have recently done little to stem government's influence, is smaller than it has been in the past.

On matters of economics, I'm tempted to vote for McCain, but as I thought when Schröder was first elected, I am hopeful that four years of liberal (Democratic) rule will simply provide a springboard for more reliable conservative politics in the near future. (I will regret this particular vote for at least four years!)

A third issue – one that weighs much more heavily in the mind of someone who has lived abroad and was a Fulbrighter than for a typical American – is America's international reputation. Friends of mine asked me years ago – after Bush's election but before the Iraq war – what it would take to rehabilitate America's image in European eyes. My response was simple: elect a Democrat. Any Democrat.

Europeans, similar to Americans (...and Chinese, Brazilians, Indians, Japanese, Canadians... and the rest of the world's human population), like best those things that they can easily identify and understand. It is not

easy for the rest of the world to understand American conservatism and the policies conservative American politicians champion.

Like snuggling up to a camp fire on a hot summer day, when Americans elect a Republican, we commit an act that appears wholly irrational to most of the world. Several hot-button issues taint the reputation of the party as a whole: Republicans are pro-gun, pro-death penalty, and house within their party a faction, social conservatives, that espouses social policies rejected by the vast majority of Western Europeans (and also by a significant number of Americans). The rehabilitation of our reputation in the world will be complete only when we commit an overtly rational act that is an equal and opposite reaction to our irrational act of electing Bush. That act will be Obama's election.

Political cartoonist Tom Toles well illustrated this issue recently. During Bush's June trip to Europe, Toles drew the president stepping off his plane before a "Welcome to Europe" sign. Turning to an aide standing next to him, Bush asks, "Do they still hate us," and the aide responds "tell them you come from a country that may elect Obama." Toles always includes a humorous commentary in smaller print below his illustrations. In this particular cartoon, he shows Bush responding to the aide: "And I can take credit for that!" (You can view the cartoon from June 11, 2008, at www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/opinions/cartoonsandvideos/toles_archive.html).

Is my view that electing a Democrat will rehabilitate America's reputation overly simplistic? Of course it is. Europeans and others will still have plenty of reasons to belly-ache about the U.S. But, in speaking generally (...a theme of this essay), my view is simplistic, but accurate.

I could continue writing about numerous other issues important to me, and other disaffected conservatives would have their own particular lists. Let me conclude with two reasons I will likely vote for Obama – not simply "the Democratic candidate", but rather Obama the individual – in November. The first is trivial; the second is not.

The trivial reason to vote for Obama is that after eight years of watching Bush press conferences and witnessing his prolific ability to mangle words and phrases and appear clueless when not reading a carefully crafted speech,

I long for a president – the occupant of not just the White House but also its bully pulpit – who is at least *minimally* articulate. McCain is minimally articulate, but Obama, because he's such a good orator, makes McCain look like Bush all over again.

The nontrivial reason to vote for Obama has been best articulated by conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer (but also expressed by others). Krauthammer has written, "Like many Americans, I long to see an African American ascend to the presidency. It would be an event of profound significance, a great milestone in the unfolding story of African Americans achieving their rightful, long-delayed place in American life."

I would love to see a *conservative* black politician ascend to the presidency. However, the pool of truly viable presidential candidates is small when it includes candidates of all races; the pool of viable black presidential candidates is a small fraction of that small overall pool. It is difficult for me to imagine another black candidate in my lifetime being as close to achieving the presidency as Obama is now, both because of the last eight Bush years, which have been dissatisfactory to both Democrats and Republicans, and because of Obama's unique gifts, including his intelligence and his charisma. I wish Obama were a conservative African American politician instead of a liberal one, but Obama is good enough at this point in time to likely win my vote.



When I go to vote this November, I will not be voting primarily for an individual or for a party, but rather my vote will be *against* a party that has disappointed me for the past eight years. I know I am not alone in this regard.

Similar to Germany in 1998, I feel the U.S. in 2008 needs a fresh face heading into the next four years. Like Schröder was for the SPD, Obama is a highly charismatic and articulate candidate. Although John McCain is not an incumbent like Helmut Kohl was in 1998, McCain is a much older man and a long-time politician, like Kohl was. He is also a venerable politician, as was Kohl, but I think age and experience ("safety, not risks") are characteristics too mundane to counter inspiring opponents. They were in Germany in 1998. I think they will be in the U.S. in 2008.

My vote in November will likely be for a fictional candidate-of-change, who I'll call "Barhard Oschröder." While I may be the lone American voter thinking of the 1998 German election when voting this fall, I nevertheless believe that many conservative American voters will share my sentiments when heading to the voting booth. ★

The Elections and Me – Encounters as a Fulbrighter over 20 Years

by Dagmar Hovestädt

★ The idea of „Six Degrees of Separation“ is something most of the Fulbrighter might have encountered in their time in the U.S. Every person on the planet is just six steps away from everybody else, because you know someone who knows someone who knows someone that was for example working at Senator Fulbright’s office. The whole of humanity is connected. Funnily enough I found out this principle also works for my connection to the U.S. elections, in terms of places I’ve been and people I’ve met. Who would have thought? And by looking closely at my crossroads with the elections I found out that they are a drama that keeps repeating the same motives and stories in only varying historic circumstance with different people. Nothing that hasn’t been there before – and even I have already experienced that in just 20 years.

In 1984, freshly graduated from high school, I came to the U.S. for the first time and landed in Colorado and Nebraska. It was summer, it was my first time in the USA, the president’s name was Ronald Reagan. But that wasn’t as impressive to me as this hot new thing called MTV and the waterbed gurgling under me my first night in

America. I remember that the nation was thinking about a woman in the White House for the first time, because the Democratic contender Walter Mondale decided to make Geraldine Ferraro his running mate. I watched them both on TV, criss-crossing the country, shaking hands and cuddling babies, they even stopped by a county fair close to my host families. There was a fair amount of mockery as far as I remember about women in politics and a man who couldn’t find anyone else but a woman to be vice president. Maybe it was because of the more conservative farmers I was staying with, maybe it was because of the generally Reagan-happy atmosphere in the U.S. – Mondale wasn’t seen as having a real shot at the White House and so ultimately a woman “on the ticket” didn’t matter much either. That summer I also watched for the first time the made-for-TV orchestration of the nomination of the candidates during the Conventions. To me it looked like a rock concert when on the last day the candidate was officially declared and the crowd was enamored, waving flags in a rain of confetti. A strange mix of priorities, I thought, waving those signs and stars and stripes and adoring a politician. I was fascinated and intrigued. Two years later I returned as a Fulbright scholar to the University of Colorado in Boulder.

I realized in my Fulbright year
that the elections for
better or worse
are a

perennial spectacle. Since parties in the U.S. don’t determine their candidates through members-only internal votes and back-room discussions, but through an essentially public process between the party and their voters – the primary system – there is a need for ambitious politicians to work at any given time on their reputation and popularity. Only those who are on the “radar” of the nation can hope to rally enough support and thus money to sustain a nomination run. But there is a thin line between popularity and notoriety, and we know where that leads to. The Democratic Senator Gary Hart from my new home state Colorado had tried in 1984 to win the nomination. Even though he was fairly unknown and had limited resources he actually put Mondale’s campaign under a lot of pressure through intense and early campaigning in the first primary states New Hampshire and Iowa (and, just like in 2008, forced a decision about the candidate to last nearly until the convention). Encouraged by his success he was dead-set to conquer the nomination for 1988. But the summer of 1987 not only brought the days of live hearings with Oliver North on the Iran-Contra-Affair to national TV but earlier also the Gary Hart scandal. In April he had just declared his official intention to run, in May that run was over, because the press had caught him with another woman, an extramarital affair. That seemed beside the point to me, infidelity is not what you wish for, but it didn’t seem to correlate with his political qualifications. Nonetheless, the photo of the senator with a young blonde woman on his lap on a yacht in

Florida is eternally burned in my memory – as a symbol for the hunt for personal information that can cost a politician his or her career.

The Bush-Dukakis race became a distant spectacle again from my new home Berlin, nonetheless in a curious way I felt quite close to it. U.S. elections are as personal an issue to me as the ones in which I can vote. I noticed that in other alumni as well: The U.S. are the other home-country, the in-law nation, and hence its elections become just as personal. In the summer of 1989 I finally encountered a former candidate in real life. George McGovern, the Democratic candidate who in 1972 set out to beat incumbent Richard Nixon, taught a lecture at the JFK-Institute in Berlin offering fascinating insights from his active days. The World War II veteran was an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War, especially angered about the fabricated Gulf of Tonkin incident that paved the way for the war. His deep-seated anger about this manipulation is still present in my mind – and was ringing heavily in my ears when the evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq evaporated, after yet another war had been started on shaky grounds. Did I, by the way, mention that McGovern's campaign manager was ... Gary Hart.

For election night 1992 I was assigned to cover the party at Berlin's Amerika-haus for the local news-show *Berliner Abendschau*. The candidate from the South who knew how to play the saxophone had actually done it, a new generation moved into the White House. Two years later I actually stood in a room with President Bill Clinton and his wife, again as a reporter, during his historic visit to Berlin in 1994. The city seemed exhilarated; it felt like how it must have been when John F. Kennedy was here. It was the first time in my life that I experienced the visit of a U.S. president as a joyful event. The year of his re-election I finally made it to Washington, D.C., as an intern with a local TV station. Another summer filled with conventions, cheering people, candidates shaking hands, giving speeches, squeezing babies. The incumbent had just turned 50, his opponent was 20 years older, seemed frail, more so than the independent outsider Ross Perot, a Texan self-made millionaire who for the second time became an unusual third force in the race. The campaign itself was pretty uneventful; Clinton's re-election as safe as Reagan's twelve years earlier. Every day, on my way to the station, I passed a life-size paper-doll of Bill Clinton with a

saxophone in his hand, for sale at the campaign office. The president as pop figure, there he was again.

When I moved to California at the end of 1999 Clinton was in his last year, a "lame duck" president, who wanted his vice president to become the number one. I watched the events in Florida in November of 2000 as a guest-citizen in the U.S. and I couldn't quite believe that it was so easy to kidnap the elections. Seven years under President George W. Bush brought an emotional distance to the business of candidates. The summer of 2004 introduced another low point in finding personal information to harm a candidate. John Kerry's Vietnam War service was attacked with dubious testimonies. This attack received its place in the campaign-vocabulary: "Swift-Boating" is what you now call the blowing up of a personal episode of a candidate's life that can cost you the race.

But now we are again starting an election summer. This year I already reported from the Democratic Caucus in Nevada and saw Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton speak at several events – and I felt reminded of that brief encounter 14 years ago when I saw her in the Charlottenburg Castle and asked her about Berlin. It didn't work out for her, but I will make it to the Conventions for the first time this year, as a producer for a German news network. I am excited, something is in the air again. ★

Welcome Meeting 2007 in Frankfurt:

50 Years of Europe – Outside and Inside Perspectives by Maren Peters

Most of us who have been abroad for an extended period have experienced this feeling: returning to our home country and perceiving it from a different perspective. Maybe less like home, maybe more. The way of life of “your” people might suddenly appear peculiar to you or strike you to be as familiar to you as never before. You might like “home” more or less than before, but in any case your way to see it will have changed in some way.

To live and share these various experiences of being a “returnee”, the Fulbright alumni Welcome Meeting is a wonderful opportunity. At the same time, it can be the catalyst of a “Fulbright identity”; to become more involved in that worldwide community.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome that laid the foundation of the European Union, the theme for the 2007 Welcome Meeting, organized by Mario Reichel and Désirée Doyle, was “50 Jahre Europa – innere und äußere Ansichten” (“50 Years of Europe – Outside and Inside Perspectives”).

The key note speech by Heiko Engelkes, former Paris correspondent for the ARD, reflected not only on national and inter-



Heiko Engelkes delivered the key note speech.

national identities along the lines of the history of European integration. He also focused on the changing relations of the core members of the EU, France and Germany, and the role of the United States in the interaction with these two strong and sometimes unruly players.

For the afternoon, the participants could choose one of four workshops:

- “How to become a management consultant”, moderated by Gunar Hering and Juliane Kronen, both

Fulbright alumni from The Boston Consulting Group, was a lively and informative discussion of different questions related to the work of a management consultancy: How do interdisciplinary teams cooperate? Is the job really that tough? What qualification and skills does a consultant need?

- Markus Lorenz, also a Fulbright alumnus from the Boston Consulting Group, was responsible for the group “The new global challengers: Globale Wettbewerbsvorteile realisieren”. He discussed globalized market structures with the participants and analyzed the effect they have on the strategic options of companies. Together, the group developed a corporate strategy for the entrance into emerging markets.

- “How to survive Germany” – this question was directed by Fulbright alumna Kathleen Engart to a group of Americans and one German. They came up with the nice picture of the Germans as a coconut – hard on the outside but, once you get through, mellow inside – and the Americans as peaches – with a sweet surface, but a hard core.



Heiko Engelkes with European Fulbrighters.

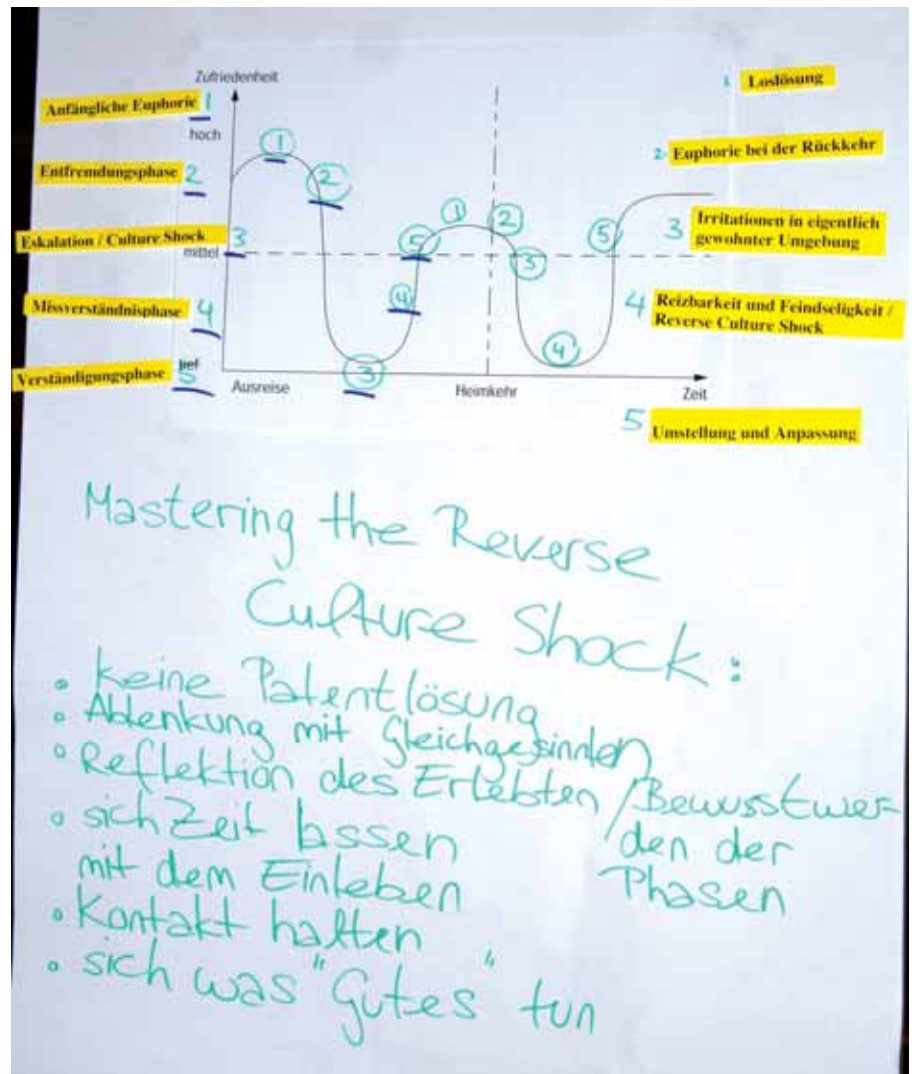


Party time – excellent!

- The group “Mastering your reverse culture shock”, led by Nikol Rummel und Claus Binder, also Fulbright alumni, talked about how to cope with the return to the home country. Their description of the “emotional impact” is a W-shaped curve of euphoria, followed by the actual culture shock which gives why to a continuing acculturation and ends in a stable state of acceptance of the host culture.

The hard and productive work in the groups was rewarded by a dinner and party in the evening: getting together with good food and drinks, exchanging experiences in the States or in Germany, talking about personal plans for the future or developing new projects for the Fulbright community. The American Fulbrighters were the first ones to warm up the dance floor, but after some time, the Germans joined in.

The brunch the next morning revealed some quite tired and hangoverish, but largely very satisfied faces – promising to stay in touch and meet again at future Fulbright events.



Results of the workshop “Reverse culture shock”.



Workshop “How to become a management consultant”.

Get Involved – PowWow 2007 in Bonn

“Right Livelihood Award / Sustainable Development”

by Ulrich Schlecht,
Manfred Gillner, Inga Sellien



Do Fulbrighters live according to the spirit of Senator Fulbright's mission? Although we can't answer this question, we would like to provide some ideas to encourage all alumni to establish new ideas and initiate activities which respect human rights, different ways of living, and cultural diversity.

Since the industrial revolution, the world has been changing at an increasing speed. Not all technical improvements, however, create a better world for mankind. Shouldn't the goal of mankind be a livable world for everybody, addressing environmental issues, preventing poverty and creating equal laws? These are only a few issues that are considered under the term of *Sustainable Development*. The way to achieve this goal, however, is not clear and – in some cases – generates fear for our future, as these problems seem to be overwhelming.

All attempts to define the exact meaning of the phrase *Sustainable Development* did not feel complete. Further discussions revealed the complexity of this global issue quickly asking ourselves: “Is sustainable development a global issue which can be addressed only with a global approach? Can a single person contribute to a more sustainable future even if only in his neighborhood?” We concluded that while there are issues that are beyond an individual's scope, many people work on local solutions to any kind of problem in order to try to improve the world a little bit.

We all have great opportunities to act locally for global improvement. Therefore ideas and possible solutions on local projects should be the focus of the PowWow 2007. Extraordinary examples concerned with sustainable development have been honored by the *Alternative Nobel Prize*, officially known as *Right Livelihood Award* (www.rightlivelihood.org). Based on these

ideas the PowWow 2007 was called “Right Livelihood Award/ Sustainable Development” and took place from September 14 to 16, 2007 in Bonn.

We felt honored when Ole von Uexküll, Executive Director of the Right Livelihood Award and nephew of the founder Jakob von Uexküll, introduced the prize as “the modern interpretation of Alfred Nobel. It stands for poverty reduction, human rights and ecology.”

Established in 1980 it has so far honored 128 Laureates from 56 countries. Unlike the Nobel Prizes, the Right Livelihood Award has no categories, as “it recognizes that, in striving to meet the human challenges of today's world, the most inspiring and remarkable work often defies any standard classification.”

The decision not to classify the “heroes” of the Right Livelihood Award is reflected in the term of ‘sustainable development’. An introduction to this concept was given by Dr. Geseko von Lüpke, journalist and author of the books “Die Alternative” and “Projekte der Hoffnung”. The term ‘sustainable development’ refers to a continuous development which is not based on exploitation or suppression, but aims to create a world livable for future generations.

Today's world is different: The third world lives in a vicious circle of exploitation, poverty, ecologic destruction, and insufficient education. The industrial countries face problems of sinking social standards, expensive health care, and an increasing inequality of rich and poor, young and old. Global markets try to unify the world, while local markets, social structures, and biological diversity are being destroyed.

Balancing between global and local issues is not an easy task. Prof. Dr. Janos Bogardi, director of the Institute for Environment and Human Security of United Nations (UNU-EHS), presented the United Nations as a global institution. In the last twenty years the UN had to learn that today's difficulties cannot solely be solved on a global basis, but local solutions are required as well. Therefore the millennium campaign (www.endpoverty2015.org) addresses the following issues on a local basis: ending hunger, universal education, gender, equality, child health, maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability, and global partnership.

While today's problems might be obvious, their solutions are not. Stagnancy is not a solution, but inspiration required!



Foyer of the Caesar-Building: Katja Petereit and international students from developing countries (ARTS-program) discuss possibilities for their countries during a coffee-break. (Photo: Inga Sellien)

Nothing else but progress is the best motivation. Therefore three international winner of the Right Livelihood Award presented their projects to the audience.

Felicia Langer, Israeli lawyer, offered a rousing address on the Palestinian people being deprived of human rights. Obeying United Nations' resolutions is a must, she says. Mrs. Langer explained her decades' long engagement to protect Palestinian land owners at court – which has been without any great success. Although she emigrated to Germany, she is still committed to fair justice for the Palestinians. Numerous books (e.g. "Quo vadis Israel? Die neue Intifada der Palästinenser") are a result.

As president of the Environment Defense Foundation (FUNAM), Dr. Raúl Montenegro is active in Argentina. According to his explanation, using the rain forest as a nearly unlimited source for economic growth is a short-sighted perception. A pollution of the environment with toxic wastes is a consequence, which destroys the ground of remote tribes. Dr. Montenegro's initiative has resulted in the establishment of six nature reserves, protecting more than 500,000 hectares of forest.

Ledum Mitee from Nigeria presented nearly unbelievable facts on the "liberation" of the Ogoni people. Based on childhood memories of oil drilling, dynamite bangs, and destruction of his home and school, he protested against the invaders. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) was formed, which is currently headed by Ledum Mitee. There has not been any assistance from the Nigerian government as political leaders had prospered from oil. To the contrary, demonstrations ended in massacres. Thus several politicians had to leave government and based on international pressure the renowned oil company had to leave.

Three extraordinary examples showed the power of local projects to create a better world. However, they left out the question of how everybody can contribute to this vision. As a third level of the PowWow, four parallel-sessions were aimed at providing ideas to get everybody involved. Mae Chao from UN volunteers reflected on the topic of „Civic Engagement and the Millennium Development Goals“. Reverend Ulrich Kock-Blunk addressed the question of whether religion, spirituality, and theology might be a resource for an ecologically and ethically sustainable world. Irmgard Klamant presented her project of nursing homes for a worthy living which was funded by USable. The network-concept of Moderne Helden was presented by Steffen Gill and Judita Ruske. They believe that a motivated group is always more efficient than an individual.



Dr. Geseko von Lüpke meets Felicia Langer in the entrance hall. (Photo: Inga Sellien)



Award winners Ledum Mitee (left), Felicia Langer (center), and Dr. Raul Montenegro (second right) discuss a joint basis for their diverse projects with Fulbright alumni Thomas Dickmann and Katja Petereit. (Photo: Inga Sellien)



Prof. Bogardi and Ole von Üxkuell in a discussion after their talks.

In sum, three speeches on the topic of sustainable development and the Right Livelihood Award, three successful examples as presented by award winners and four ideas for specific projects are only a snapshot of how everybody can create a better world. Reaching this truly noble goal might be a never ending story; however, it cannot be achieved without your participation. Get involved!

The PowWow was organized by Katja Petereit, Inga Sellien, Thomas Dickmann, and Ulrich Schlecht.

Climate Today – Climate Tomorrow – Big Worries?

Focus Conference in Erlangen

by Andrew Johnson

Climate change is a topic that has been intensely discussed in the media over the past few years. Climate change is such an important topic that it has even won the attention of the Nobel Prize Commission. Al Gore and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN IPCC) were awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace this past year. But what exactly is climate change? Is it simply the melting of glaciers or it is something more? What is being done to stop or slow the changes in climate? The complexity and political nature of this topic has made it hard to separate fact from fiction. I hoped that the Conference “Climate Today – Climate Tomorrow – Big worries?” would provide me with the answers to my questions.

The keynote speech of Dr. Donald Shemanski, diplomatic attaché for global questions from the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, gave a broad overview of the energy efficiency and renewable energy programs sponsored by the U.S. government. This was a good attempt to show that the Bush administration does take the topic of climate change seriously, but I was disturbed by one point in the presentation. The U.S. government discussed the amount CO₂ emissions only in CO₂(g)/GDP rather CO₂(g)/person. Why did the Bush administration specifically choose this way to express CO₂ emissions? My question was answered in the next presentation.

Prof. Dr. Annette Menzel from the TU-München, who contributed to the IPCC reports, gave all the hard facts on climate change. She presented the data used to measure climate change over the past 100 years. Clearly there has been a measurable increase in the average earth temperature over the past 100 years. All theoretical models predict a further increase in temperature over the next 20 years. The level of accuracy of the

models may be open to discussion, but the general trend is clear: future increases in CO₂ emissions will lead to an increase in temperature. Prof. Menzel ended her presentation with a slide comparing the CO₂ emissions between each country in both CO₂(g)/GDP and CO₂(g)/person. Of course the USA was not the leader in CO₂ emissions in the CO₂ (g)/GDP comparison.

The afternoon session was split into three different forums. I chose the technical forum, which explained the technical aspects of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. The first talk “Concept of an Environmentally Friendly and Secure Energy Source for Germany” was by Prof. Hundhausen of the Friedrich-Alexander University (FAU) Erlangen-Nürnberg. The talk showed how at the local level citizens can push for renewable energy and energy efficiency in their own cities, as in the case of Erlangen. You could really sense his pride in his work. He was really proud that solar cells had been placed at schools in the Erlangen area.

The next talk “Solar Power Plants” by Manfred Bächler of Phoenix Solar AG showed me the maturity of the solar energy industry. His presentation was not an ideological presentation, but concentrated on the business model necessary to build large solar energy complexes. He only discussed innovations if these innovations could bring his costs down. The presentation on wind energy “Wind Energy: An overview” from Martin Schaller of Enercon went along the same lines. He was really passionate about the potential of wind energy to cover large parts of the world right now and not just in 10 to 20 years. Solar and wind energy are now mature industries that can help meet part of our energy needs

The presentation by Prof. Jäger of the FAU “Energy Transformation from the Viewpoint of Electrical Engineering” provided a welcome contrast to the other presentations. It was the only presentation which pointed out the present deficits of renewable energy. First he gave a very informative overview of the different types of energy sources available. Renewable energies cannot yet produce a constant amount of electricity. The electricity networks require a constant flow of electricity. Dips or spikes in the electricity supply can lead to massive problems. Additionally, the excess energy from wind or solar energy can not yet be effectively saved. Fuel cell or battery technology is not yet advanced enough to store large amounts of electricity. Fossil fuels and nuclear power can produce electricity on demand. For these reasons, Prof. Jäger predicted a future energy mix still heavily dependent on fossil fuels and more dependent on nuclear power. These viewpoints lead to a heated discussion between Prof. Jäger and the audience.

After a long, but very interesting day, another successful Fulbright conference, organized by Désirée Doyle and Uwe Koch, came to an end. I was very impressed with the quality of presentations and speakers at the conference. I am now more optimistic that renewable energy can help us cover the energy needs of the world in the future. Mankind has made incredible strides in the development of wind and solar energy. It is clear, however, that there is still much to do. Continued effort from individual citizens, NGOs and governments of the world are necessary in reducing the effect of climate change on the world and further developing renewable energy sources. This conference made one important fact clear to me: Germany is at the forefront of the climate protection/renewable energy movement.



FULBRIGHT ALUMNI E.V.

History and Purpose

The German Fulbright Alumni e.V. was founded in Frankfurt in 1986 by former Fulbrighters. By 2008, our membership has increased to over 1200. The association brings together internationally-oriented students, scholars, and practitioners from a wide range of academic fields and areas of professional expertise. Most of our members have spent a Fulbright year in the United States. Fulbright Alumni e.V. is the platform for former grantees with a special affiliation to the U.S., who want to promote global understanding. As we are committed to tolerance and true internationality, we are striving to learn more about other peoples' customs, surroundings and histories.

Based on the personal and educational experience and insights gained as participants in an international exchange program, it is the overriding mission of German Fulbright Alumni e.V. members to

- strengthen and support cross-cultural contacts and exchange between Fulbrighters from all around the world;
- encourage dialogue and interaction between international scholars, experts, and activists on topics important to the political, social, and cultural life of nations.

The German Fulbright Alumni e.V. is guided by the idea of the program's founder, Senator J. William Fulbright, to bring together people of different nations and contribute to world peace through better international understanding.

In promoting its political support for the Fulbright program, our association stays in close but independent contact with the Fulbright Commission in Berlin.

Fulbright Alumni e.V. is supported by its members only. Grants and contributions from foundations, corporations and individuals are welcome.

Activities

Based on a young, lively and broad-based membership, our association organizes a diverse range of regional and nationwide events.

General Assembly & Winter Ball

Once each year all members are invited to our General Assembly. At the Assembly, each board member reports on his or her activities during the year, followed by the election of a new board. The Assembly is also the forum for members to make movements for decisions by the attendees, which are then binding for the association.

After the General Assembly, the annual Winter Ball is celebrated.

Welcome Meetings

Each fall our Welcome Meeting offers the opportunity for contacts and networking between former and new German returnees as well as American Fulbrighters currently in Germany. The meetings also serve as forums for the discussion of any issues relevant to people after a year abroad.

Arranged by the regional groups the Welcome Meeting has taken place each year since 1986 in many different cities in Germany.

Strategy Meeting

At the Strategy Meeting, the most devoted core of the members come together to discuss the present and future of the association we all hold so dear. Strategy Meetings have so far been held in 1997, 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006.

Regional Chapter Activities

Regional chapters organize more informal cultural and social events on a monthly basis, including lectures, discussions, and "Stammtische". To find out about the next "Stammtisch" in your area, contact the regional coordinator listed on the overleaf.

Powwows/ Focus Conferences

Different regional chapters of our association regularly organize national conferences and seminars, usually covering a specific topic.

1988	Minorities, Conservatism and Design, Frankfurt
1988	The United States and Germany Corporate Cultures in Comparison, Mannheim
1989	Playground Future, Stuttgart
1989	The French Revolution in American and German Perspectives, Regensburg
1990	The Future of the Information Society – Personal Communication in a Crisis? Hamburg
1990	Signs for Tomorrow's Architecture, Landscape and Urban Development, Darmstadt
1991	Traffic Concepts for the Future – How Mobile will our Society be in the Year 2000? München
1991	German Reunification and the Future of German-American Relations, Berlin
1991	Living and Working in Changing Structures, Todtmoos
1992	Health, Köln
1993	Market Leadership and Brand Names, Böblingen
1993	Ecology and Structural Change, Essen
1994	Where is our New Frontier? Stuttgart
1994	Organizational Development and International Competitiveness, Frankfurt
1995	First Fulbright Fun & Future Camp, Lenggries
1995	Environmental Strategy, Heidenheim
1996	A Chance for Global Understanding, Berlin
1996	Multimedia, Stuttgart
1997	Managing Public Organizations, Frankfurt
1998	Intercultural Communications, Frankfurt
1999	Biotechnology, Frauenchiemsee
1999	Educational Systems, Frankfurt
2001	Nutrition, Calw
2002	Quo Vadis USA?, Berlin
2004	EU Enlargement, Berlin
2005	J. William Fulbright Centennial, Frankfurt am Main
2007	Sustainability/ Right Livelihood Award, Bonn
2007	Climate Change, Erlangen

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International Activities

Our association has put an emphasis on strengthening personal contacts among Fulbright alumni all around the world. Some core activities have been:

- 1993 European Fulbright Alumni Convention, Brussels
- 1996 World Fulbright Alumni Conference, The Spirit of Global Understanding, Budapest
- 1998 European Fulbright Alumni Workshop, Strasbourg
- 2000 3rd European Fulbright Alumni Workshop, Toledo
- 2004 The International Interdisciplinary Fulbright Conference, Olympism and the Fulbright Spirit: Humanism in Action, Athens
- 2006 2nd International Fulbright Alumni Conference, Morocco

Other Activities

“Bright People under Full Sail”. International sailing trips on the Baltic Sea, every two years since 1991.

Family Weekend, yearly event for singles, couples and families, since 2000.

Our Services

The association publishes a national journal *FRANKly*, an internal newsletter *FAIN*, and an alumni membership directory.

Each regional chapter contacts and assists American Fulbright visiting scholars in its local area. A host program for American Fulbrighters in Germany was successfully established in 1993.

For further information, please contact our national office in Frankfurt or one of our officers listed on the right.

To find out more about the Fulbright Alumni e.V., please visit our website at www.fulbright-alumni.de.

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contact(at)fulbright-alumni.de
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Fulbright Alumni e.V.

Membership Application

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Die Angabe der Zusatzdaten (mit*) ist freiwillig. Über die Aufnahme entscheidet der Vorstand.

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Geburtsdatum:

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Straße/Postfach:

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☐ Ja ☐ Nein

In den USA war ich als:

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US-Studienabschluss:

US-Studienfach:

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Fulbright Alumni e.V.

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E-Mail Adresse: _____

An den
Fulbright Alumni e.V.
Postfach 100 865
60008 Frankfurt

The U.S. Fulbright Association's 30th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. – People & the Planet –

by Carina Simmchen

The 30th Annual U.S. Fulbright Association Conference took place in Washington, D.C., from November 1 to 4, 2007, just a week before our association's Welcome Meeting. The conference started at the marvelous residence of the ambassador to Colombia with an opening reception and an intriguing modern dance performance organized by the American Fulbright association. Among the mass of participants it wasn't easy to meet the other Germans, Wiltrud Hammelstein and Oliver and Petra Steinmetz, who each made dynamic contributions to the conference.

In fact, the conference sold out with about 400 Fulbright scholars and alumni from 23 countries such as Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, El Salvador, Brazil, Yemen, Ukraine, Morocco, Croatia, Belgium, Spain, Serbia, and the UK.

The topic – *People and the Planet* – focused on climate change, a topic that has received major international attention since the increased number of natural disasters. In a survey sent to Fulbright alumni around the world, the environment, climate change, and our role in the calamity was chosen as an overwhelmingly important issue.

The first panel gave alarming examples that climate change is happening all over the world. The panelists described, for instance, impacts of climate change in Lima (Peru), the vulnerability of the glacial lakes that could cause floods and ice mourning in Nepal, and weather trends in the problematic region of Sahel. The following discussion questioned indivi-

dual responsibility and sought methods for how the solution to climate change could be turned into business opportunities.

At the annual banquet, Miranda Schreurs (Director of the Policy and Research Centre and Professor of Comparative Politics, Free University of Berlin) – gave an impressive keynote speech on local initiatives for global environmental protection. In chronological order, she pointed out the steps to environmental protection: protection of the air and rivers, the construction of a network of proactive, cooperative environmental agencies and the recognition among the world's population that pollution can and does cross borders. We see now that international agreements for protection do not sufficiently achieve the necessary goals and that the degradation of the environment continues. Therefore, she mentioned that people have started to act on a local level, which is not the beginning of this grass roots movement to save the environment. The new trend is networking at all levels, including from within local governments to build international networks. Mirander Schreurs compared the cooperative grass-roots effort to that of the global Fulbright alumni.

The next day, the conference offered a wide range of panel discussions. Topics varied from writers and the environment, international conflicts caused by climate change such as mass migration, to successful adaptations to environmental changes. In the afternoon, roundtable discussions with groups of up to 10 participants were organized on a plethora of topics ranging from "Human migrations – from the glacial



Miranda Schreurs and Fulbright Association President Marilyn Berg Callender at the annual banquet.



Fulbrighters from all over the world discussing the challenges the world faces today. (Photo: Carina Simmchen)

The U.S. Fulbright Association's 30th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.



Dancing painter Nyonman Gunnasa gives an introduction into his art.

age to the XXI century” or “Food and water security” to “Fostering volunteerism: A people’s role in improving their society and environment”.

Thanks to the Fulbright program, many nationalities came together and shared their regional and national perspectives and ideas concerning the looming environmental situation and especially that of climate change and its unwanted effects.



German Fulbright participants with Jane Anderson, the Executive Director of the Fulbright Association (at right).

In addition to the main topic, international representatives were invited to participate in the chapter leadership seminar of the 51 chapters throughout the U.S. The presentations and talks focused on developing comprehensive and engaging programs for visiting Fulbrighters and seeking grant funding. For me as Vice President Members of our association, it was a great opportunity to meet and talk to American chapter leaders and catch some new ideas for our German chapters.

One of the highlights of each Fulbright Association conference is the *Selma Jean Cohen Fund Lecture on Dance*. This year’s recipient, Ron Jenkins, Professor of Theatre at Wesleyan College, focused his speech titled “Sacred dance & secular law in Bali” on how the dancing painter, Nyonman Gunnasa, argued in a landmark case in intellectual property rights and why a fragment of sacred choreography was his most persuasive evidence. Mr. Gunnasa himself was present and gave us some very vivid examples of his art. If you would like to read the full speech or see more details on other parts of the conference, check it out under www.fulbright.org/conference/2007/program.

The conference closed on Sunday with a poster session, in which 25 participants were able to present their projects and discuss them with participants.

The conference schedule was packed, but there was still time left to meet old friends and get to know many new people during coffee and dinner breaks that were followed by walks through downtown Washington, D.C.

Thanks to the dedication of Jane L. Anderson and the organizing team, the conference was a great success.



At Sunday morning's poster session.

Winter Ball 2008 in Münster – Westphalian Peace

by Martin Söhngen

Having seen, and being familiar with, quite a number of places both in Germany and outside, I had never been to Münster and the surrounding area until this February. I count out deliberately a five day seminar my previous employer sent me to two years ago somewhere in the middle of nowhere (allegedly in the Münster vicinity but the constant heavy rain made it impossible to verify). Münster was also, until the Winter Ball, the only of the traditional German university cities that I had not seen yet.

Arriving with an early bird flight from the busy Munich airport on Saturday, February 9, 2008, I was surprised to see that my plane was actually “the” plane at the *Flughafen Münster Osnabrück*. Otherwise, no plane to be seen at the medium sized airport terminal. That reminded me of remote airports in Peru and the Argentine Andes where you know that if “today’s plane” from Lima (or Buenos Aires) does not arrive, you have no means of transport to get out. (Here, it turned out that the next plane, incidentally from Munich, too, should arrive within half an hour.) I then took the bus to downtown Münster crossing the *Mittellandkanal*. The entirely flat land I was riding through sparsely populated with wide open skies, remind-

ed me of Midwest plains in the United States.

Arriving at the central station, I headed towards the *Mitgliederversammlung*. I walked through an architecturally nice university city center, giving me the impression of a vibrant place just about to recover from Friday night’s hangover. The *Mitgliederversammlung* took place in a modern university building and was, well, exactly like a *Mitgliederversammlung* is supposed to be (save for that I walked out being the editor of the *FRANKly* you are about to hold in your hands).

The afternoon was – like the entire weekend – sunny and unusually warm. The outside tables of the many cafes and restaurants were filled with students and an urban crowd. It made me completely forget about the Andes or the Midwest. I was in a nice traditional European city center with tiny streets and alleyways and a distinctly northern character, displayed by the brick-lined walls of the buildings.

From the *Stadthotel*, we walked in a large crowd to the *Zwei Löwen Club*, the venue of the Winter Ball. The mansion and what I could infer from the interior of the location about the club itself



Münster city hall.

rather made me think of the famous London clubs (though I must admit to know only one from the inside), not of the Midwest. Sipping champagne and orange juice in the ground floor reception area, 130 odd Fulbrighters and friends were chatting cheerfully. Around an hour later, we were permitted to go upstairs to the ballroom. The name sake two lions watched over us while we chose our places – fortunately they were safely attached to the wall and carved out of wood.



The org team of the weekend.



At the Winterball.

Winter Ball 2008 in Münster – Westphalian Peace

The several courses of the – remarkably good – dinner were pleasantly interrupted by addresses by United States Consul General Matthew G. Boyse, Dr. Rolf Hoffmann, Executive Director of the German-American Fulbright Commission, as well as the newly elected board of our association. And right then, the *Men in Black* (why did they omit their female lead singer in their name?) from the nearby Netherlands started to play the first waltz. Later on and during the entire night until very late they picked the right songs and managed to find the dancing audience's taste – remarkably well, again. Quickly, the dinner tables had to yield way to the growing dance floor. I can not recall a Winter Ball where location, music, and food all fitted that perfectly. (Having

co-organized a Winter Ball myself, I take the freedom to say so.)

Unfortunately, after at least three encores, the *Men in Black* had to end the Winter Ball at the *Zwei Löwen Club*. Truly committed dancers headed on to the – it was animals' night – *Elefantenbar* to extend the night at a party in a location that both will not be commented on here.

The next morning brunch right at the central *Domplatz* once again underlined the apparently high standards of cuisine in Münster. Afterwards, we split into three guided city tours. Mine was supposed to be in English. Due to the complete absence of native English speakers, the wise decision was made to let the (German) guide speak German to the (German) audience. We walked through the city center, this time consuming food for thought – getting insights on the Westphalian Peace concluded in 1648, which shaped the next centuries of European history. Who of our readers knew that the Netherlands (including the *Men in Black*, and, I am afraid, their soccer team) owe their existence as an independent state to some backdoor negotiations in a nice medieval house that now duly hosts the center for Dutch studies of Münster university? Worth remembering was also that the



Strictly Ballroom. (Photo: Ulrich Paar)

city center was heavily bombed in WW II. Münster's administration decided not to rebuild in a "quick and dirty" way – but had the patience, and took its time, to carefully reconstruct the old houses and streets, which is demonstrated best at the *Prinzipalmarkt*.

The afternoon, a large Fulbright crowd enjoyed delicious ice cream in an open air café (yes, this being February in Northern Germany) and walked a last time around the city center. Flying back with two fellow Fulbrighters from Munich, I took home two conclusions: First, Münster is an excellent place to spend a Westphalianly peaceful weekend. And last but certainly not least: Thanks a lot to the core team of Ulrich Paar and Claus Vollrath-Rödiger who were supported by Helge Bohlmann, Karin Bohlmann, Rainer Martin, Sigrid Martin, Kirsten Teubel, and Doris Wehlau. You did your job not just remarkably but amazingly well!



Fulbrighters enjoy an outside ice cream on a sunny winter day.



Fulbright generations meet at the Friday evening get-together.



The new board started working the morning after the Winter Ball! From left to right Barbara Weiten, Claus Vollrath-Rödiger, Uwe Koch, Claudia Detje, Cem Yücesat. (Photo: Ulrich Paar)

2009

Winterball

Berlin, 30. Januar - 1. Februar

Wir laden herzlich zur Mitgliederversammlung
und zum Winterball 2009 in Berlin ein.

Unverbindliche Voranmeldung unter: rc.berlin@fulbright-alumni.de

VORLÄUFIGES PROGRAMM:

30/01/2009 ab 19:00 Get-together

31/01/2009 ab 09:30 Mitgliederversammlung

31/01/2009 ab 19:00 Winterball

01/02/2009 ab 09:00 Frühstück mit anschließender Schnitzeljagd

DETAILLIERTE INFORMATIONEN UNTER
www.fulbright-alumni.de/regional-chapters/berlin.html



Strategy Meeting 2008

Maschen/Hamburg

by Anne Schmidt

It pretty much doesn't matter when you left from where you came from, you arrive at Hamburg/Harburg train station and meet fellow Fulbrighters to catch the hourly train to Maschen. You have never heard of Maschen before? It's where 'the Wild Wild West starts right after Hamburg, in a studio in Maschen right behind the Autobahn' as an old German Trucker song goes. Arriving somewhat after normal dinner hour at our hostel 'Friends of Nature' we are still being served some fresh meatballs. Our hosts are truly concerned for any late arrival.

The plopping sounds of opened bottles synchronize with Uwe's list of activities planned for the next days. We are eager to get started and so we indulge in some first brilliant ideas. But we are soon disarmed by a wise person whispering 'Don't shoot your powder all at once, leave some for tomorrow'. So off we troll to our bunk beds, not knowing what dreadful mosquito fights are awaiting some of us for the night.

Saturday morning starts with some nice breakfast, the buffet table offers something for everybody. Braced for the day we then gather for the meeting. We proudly wear our Danish name tags and begin to organize in small groups for the first workshop session. The sun is killing us with kindness and we are all engaged in heated discussions under brightly colored umbrellas. An odor of insect spray notably encases one of our members. Pages of brainstorming are filled up quickly. Hats off for each of the workshops' leaders for keeping an eye on the time and covering the topic's goal, approach, time plan, and need of resources in order to subsequently present all of it to the other strategists. Over a delicious lunch we get to reflect on our morning's achievements. We



21 Fulbright strategists at the end of a pleasant and productive weekend. (Photo: Joe Kristensen)

share our thoughts on topics such as where and how to organize the next years' Welcome Meetings, what are traditional and new goals of our alumni association, and how to handle the member database in this growing age of 'onelinesation'. Realizing how time has just flown by, we are left with only a ten minute walk (or two five-minute table tennis matches) and a reviving cup of coffee before the next session is about to start.

Cem, our Vice President for Members, has organized the afternoon workshop on Fulbright alumni regional groups. First of all, brickbat for those regional coordinators who didn't turn in their questionnaire in time – tststs! Before we begin to brain storm on how to reanimate silent regional groups, Cem urges us to free ourselves from thinking in the box. But how to loosen up? So here we are, twenty bright minded fellows wobbling arms and legs wildly,

and believe me, we would have danced on top of the tables if we had been told to do so. Then we fall into silence and eagerly scribble down a couple of notes. Some of the most favoured pieces of advice that we collect are to increase personalized contact to reach out to new or inactive members, or to include regional information in a start-up package for new Fulbright returnees. It might also be worth rethinking the term 'Stammtisch', and to organize some trademark T-shirt or logo button for each regional group. As we fill pages and pages on the front note board with our ideas, some lovely barbecue smell reaches in through the opened windows. Joe, who had organised all logistical matters for the strategy meeting, immediately volunteers for "self barbecue" and so we slowly wind down the workshop for the sake of a good steak. The brave ones continue into the night with another workshop: Steffen introduces us to the website content



Fulbrighters doing a relaxation exercise before the workshop on Saturday afternoon .

management system 'typo3' that is easy and fun to use so anyone can contribute to our recently re-launched Alumni website (www.fulbright-alumni.de). The executive board members even last till way after midnight wrapping up their meeting, while one of us is already being tormented by mosquitos again.

Sunday morning. With great empathy we follow the latest report of nocturnal insect hunting; the dark circles are obvious around Joachim's eyes. Once again we organize ourselves into small groups for the next workshop session. This time we chew on topics like how to communicate goals and achievements

through different media, others brainstorm on new event concepts, or continue planning the new Alumni website. We also work on a questionnaire to pass out to prospective new members to capture their range of interest. Pensive for good ideas we gaze out into the beautiful nature surrounding us, and someone murmurs 'the sun in those trees, that looks just like America'. We gather inside for a last round of feedback and after lunch we drive back to the Maschen train station. We even find enough time for a brief ticket machine tutorial. At our stop over in Hamburg/ Harburg we finally have to part, heading home into all our Fulbright regional groups awaiting our stories at the next *Stammtisch*.



Workshop participants brainstorming while enjoying the fresh air.

Yummy or Yucky: Proteins and Jellycake – a Healthy Combination?

by Robert Ventzki

Even the less scientifically inclined among you have surely heard of proteins. Not only are these a major part of our daily diet, but also they constitute the smallest functional units within the cells of any organism. Their name derives from Proteus, the ancient god in Greek mythology, who was known to appear in ever varying disguise. That is also true for the tiny biological molecules bearing his name. It is estimated that 50,000 or so different proteins are present in any cell of the human body, carrying out all the functions in the cell, and thus of the body. Malfunctioning of the proteins results in plagues such as Alzheimer's disease, asthma, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), Creutzfeld-Jakob and some other nasty diseases with even nastier names, which I don't even know how to spell correctly.

The kind of proteins present in a cell depends on the organism itself, on the cell type (be it a nerve, muscle, or liver cell) and on the current state of the cell (whether it is healthy, sick, hungry, in process of division...). Moreover, by producing specific proteins "on cue", the cell can adapt to external challenges such as bacteria, alcohol, or drugs.

Altogether, the so-called proteome, that is the relative occurrence of all proteins of a given cell in a given state, is influenced by a host of factors. Hence, from this proteome, scientists can draw a wealth of information. However, to analyze this vast complexity still represents a daunting challenge even for today's advanced research technologies. So, how do we go about it?

The first step of such an investigation is to establish a reference, that is the average protein collection of an average cell. Other protein samples, obtained from cells under whatever influence, are compared to this Joe Average proteome by a so-called differential or comparative protein expression study. This is done by a method called 2-dimensional electrophoresis (2-DE, in short), which has been known for 30 odd years now. For 2-DE, the proteins are first spread out along one axis – the first dimension – according to their specific pH-value by a technique known as isoelectric focusing (IEF): The sample series are applied to thin gel strips 11 cm long, 3 mm wide, one sample per strip (Fig. 1A). Under the influence of an electric field, the more acidic proteins group towards one end

of the strip, their more alkaline counterparts drift to the opposite end with the neutral pH ones staying in the middle. As a result, the proteins form a row of puddles along the strip, each puddle containing all those of the same pH-value.

For the second analysis step, each IEF strip is placed on the edge of a thin gel slab the size of a postcard. Again drawn by an electric field, the proteins that gathered according to their pH-value migrate through the gel slab, this time perpendicular to their first path. As small proteins make their way through the jello faster than larger ones, they separate according to their size. As soon as the first, smallest protein reaches the opposite side of the jelly, the process is stopped, and all the gel slabs are scanned as a series of 2D images. For this, proteins are color stained to make them visible in the otherwise transparent gel. The result is a series of scans, one per sample, with proteins scattered all over the image, each puddle containing only those of same size and pH-value (Fig. 1C).

As for each sample a new gel slab is needed, which then has to be stained and scanned individually, the whole analysis is a very laborious and time-consuming procedure. Hence, it takes weeks of tedious work to determine the presence and abundance of the proteins in only a single cell type! Moreover, the variations in experimental conditions from gel to gel occurring in such a large series make it difficult to tell whether the appearance of a certain protein on a gel scan is significant, or just an artifact. For these reasons, this conventional 2-DE analysis has always presented a major bottleneck and was never really considered suitable for large-scale protein studies involving hundreds of samples.

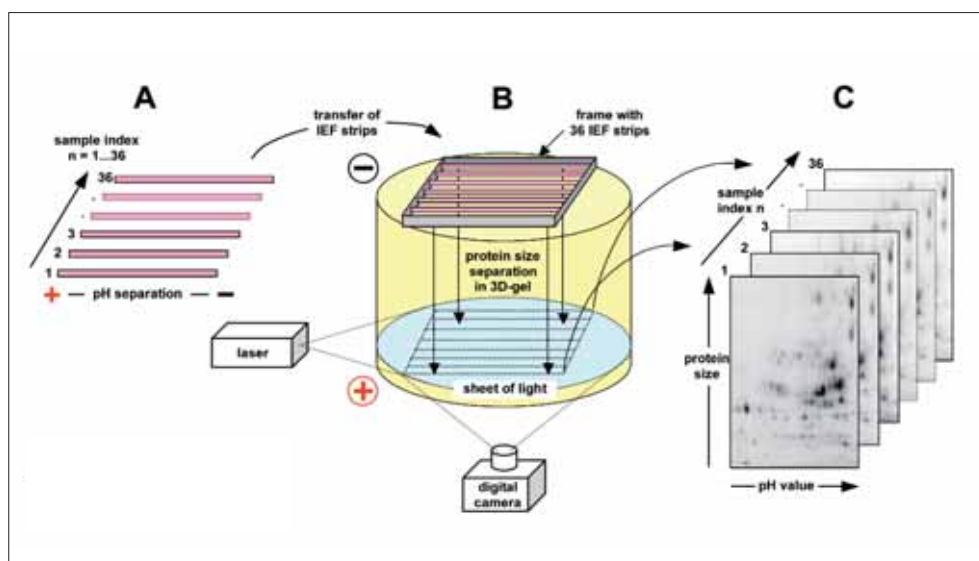


Figure 1: Protein analysis in a 3D-gel.

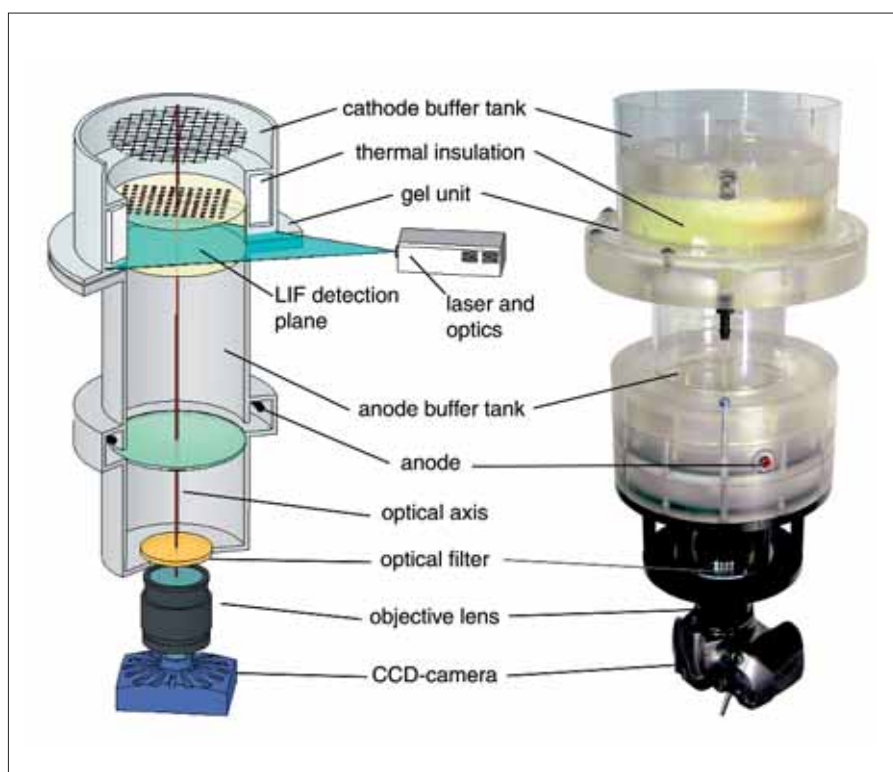


Figure 2: Cutaway view of the 3D-gel setup (left), and the instrument prototype (right).

So, it was about time to boldly go up to the third dimension and to replace the old-fashioned gel slabs used for 2-DE by a really *yummy* 3D-jellycake! As you know, jellycakes come in various flavors: Ours is a tasty transparent 3D-gel block, 15 cm in diameter, 8 cm high, of a quite wobbly, jell-o-like consistence. Preparing such a 3D-gel is much like making a jellycake: You mix the ingredients (10% acrylic plastic, 90% water, add some “spices”), pour the stuff in a bowl, and let it set for an hour or so. Once the jello has solidified, it is placed in a specific 3D-gel apparatus that provides the electric field needed to separate the proteins. So far, we have built one prototype of this instrument, mainly made of perspex tubes (Fig. 2).

Now, instead of using one gel slab per protein sample, our 3D-jellycake takes up 36 IEF strips at one time! They are fitted neatly like the strings of a harp in a postcard-sized frame that we place on top of the 3D-gel (Fig. 1B). Drawn by the electric field, the tiny proteins crawl out of the strips and all the way down in the

jellycake in 36 parallel layers. On their way through the jello the proteins separate according to their size, as I have explained before. Finally, they reach a laser beam that illuminates a thin sheet of light just 5 mm above jello’s bottom. The proteins are marked with a fluorescent dye, so they shine up brightly, much like a highlighter pen in sunlight. Underneath the jellycake, a digital camera takes a picture every 10 seconds of what is going on in the laser-illuminated plane above. These images are recorded on the fly by a computer, as the proteins pass the laser beam.

About 6 hours later, when the last and heaviest protein has made it all the way through the jello, the process is stopped and the stack of about 2,000 images is ready for further analysis: The computer draws vertical sections out of the 3D image stack, each of the 36 sections representing a conventional slab gel scan (Fig. 1C). Another computer operation subtracts the reference proteome image, thus pinpointing those proteins in which the samples differ from the

average. As all 36 samples of a series go in the same 3D-jellycake, the pitfalls caused by the gel-to-gel variations that I mentioned are avoided. Beautiful, we’re all done! No more staining of the proteins and scanning of images, nor the messy cleanup job of 36 gel slabs...

So, what is it good for? One application is to investigate the effects of a drug depending on its dose. For this dose-response assessment, a series of 36 samples are taken, each with a tiny increase of the drug’s concentration, and analysed in the 3D-jellycake. One gets the changes in protein occurrence as a function of the dose. This way, the unwanted side effects of a medication can also be shown as changes in a cell’s proteome. Likewise, potentially hazardous chemicals can be applied to cells in an experiment to see which effect they have, if any. This is important for their classification as harmless or toxic and issuing precautionary statements accordingly, or identifying the yucky ones and banning them from the market altogether.

Another application is to monitor the changes in the proteome over the course of a disease to find out how it affects the cell. For this, the samples are taken at 36 successive points of time, displaying the protein occurrence as a function of time. In a second step, a medication can be applied to the cells, to see how it counteracts the effects of the illness. This will allow scientists, hopefully, to find a cure soon for many nasty diseases with those hard-to-spell names.

So, to answer the title’s question: Yummy, I think proteins and jellycake are a truly healthy combination! For more information, please visit www.3D-gel.com.

My Incredible Sailing Weekend with Borat and All the Others

by Doris Ammon

Imagine a long sailing weekend on Lake Constance with three sailing boats and 19 Fulbrighters – perfect conditions for loads of fun. Instead, Friday starts like this: *‘Saturday, mostly cloudy with heavy rainfalls. Sunday continuous rain, chance of precipitation 89 per cent, temperatures 6 to 13 centigrade. Lake Constance area particularly unpleasant.’* I turn off the weather forecast. In fact, it is already raining and the Autobahn is soaking wet. Sounds like it’s going to be loads of fun!

I imagined the upcoming weekend with me lolling picturesquely on the boat in my bikini, enjoying the sun and being only occasionally interrupted by some leisurely sailing manoeuvres, maybe the lashing of a few ropes at most. I have packed three bikinis. Rain, continuous rain in particular, was not part of the bargain. Furthermore, I am not one of those sailing nuts that feels compelled to sail the waves no matter how much wind and rain there make life miserable.

After all, I have not even reached the lowliest level on the open-ended sail pro scale. I am not even a ‘fair weather sailor’. I have no idea how to sail at all. I just like being on the water and enjoying the balmy breeze and the open skies, and, as should be obvious by now, the sun. So much for that! Instead I will be cramped onto a five-meter (16 foot) boat for two cold and rainy days with a bunch of people, half of whom I do not know and the other half I know by name only. I have also heard rumors that boat crews have murdered each other on sailing trips, especially during continuous rain!

Two hours later, as I arrive at the marina in Kressbronn, my fellow sailors are already digging into their dinner. My skipper’s name is Dirk. Him at least I do know. Miraculously, the rain had stopped shortly before I left the autobahn at Lake Constance, and only a few minutes later I am sitting on the deck with the others, sipping red wine and eating

spaghetti, while chatting with skipper Robert from one of the other boats who, for some reason, seems intent on explaining to me at length the seven levels of mutiny, levels that escalate from minor teasing to outright rebellion.

But mutiny is not on the agenda, at least not tonight. Tonight is just loud and fun and we all get along perfectly. ‘We’ are 19 Fulbright alumni housed on three adjacently moored boats in the picturesque marina of Kressbronn. Everybody is sitting on deck with a plate and a drink and exuberantly exchanging news and stories. “DJ” Catherine has put on some cool lounge music, my bunk mate, Caroline, has brought some Spanish red wine from her brother’s winery and whoever has prepared the dinner, thank you, it tastes delicious!

At any rate, we are having much more of a party here than the sad rain-ruined event that I dreaded and even the temperature is still quite mild. Remember that funny game: ‘How many people can you fit into a Volkswagen Beetle?’ It also exists for sailors. At least 15 Fulbrighters squeeze around a tiny table on two plastic benches, some sitting on the backrests and some on the rail. It is fairly loud, the mood is great and we have the idyllic marina practically all to ourselves since the fairweather sailing season is just about to begin. By the end of the night, I have made acquaintance with at least ten other Fulbrighters whose names I will, of course, have forgotten by the next morning. But who cares – everyone is awfully nice!

Already, the largest and most spacious boat, occupied by the youngest crew, has been dubbed the ‘Party Boat’. The crew specialize in cocktails and are offering everything from Batida de Coco to Creme de Menthe. It is truly amazing



Some breeze at the end of the second day! (Photo: Martin Söhngen)



Other than the author, they unfortunately forgot their bikinis back home! (Photo: Martin Söhnngen)

how much stuff fits into a small boat! Everywhere, there is some hidden storage room, either in the numerous small cabinets and shelves, below the seats, in the map table or in the armrest – there are bottles in every nook and cranny. Or potato chips. And even a kettle. Basically, there is plenty of everything for tomorrow's party. On the Party Boat's deck, there is a conspicuously placed pineapple on boastful display and they have even remembered to bring party lights. Incredible! But still, it is going to be very hard to top this first evening.

There are six on our boat, four guys and two girls. Caroline and I share the bunk in the bow of the boat, which is narrow but cosy. We finally fall asleep around 2 a.m. and I am already afraid of a rude awakening, as I have been told that real sailors are early birds and have a weakness for having breakfast at sunrise on the middle of Lake Constance. This means... getting up at six! Skipper Matthias Stecher from the third boat (and the organizer of the whole weekend!) has already convinced his crew of the joys of sunrise breakfasting by way of efficient (and incessant) pep talks.

They happily join in. Hmmm, I am sure it is very beautiful, if only you are sufficiently awake to enjoy the moment.

As I am considering the specter of getting up so unspeakably early, Dirk mentions that 'realistically, it's going to be around 9 a.m.' I recalculate: if he wants

to be on the lake by nine, maybe we will only have to get up at seven or so to get the boat ready? At that instant, I hear him say: '...but it could well be ten until I am awake'. Caroline and I look at each other with barely concealed elation. Is there anything better than a sailing trip with non-sailors and a skipper who, like me, is allergic to mornings? Plus, I know for a fact that we have some good coffee on board. By then I am convinced the weekend will be just great, no matter how cold it will be!

As we crawl out of the bunk the next morning – and it really is almost nine! – we discover that the guys have already brewed coffee. We even get served boiled eggs for breakfast. Perfect. The morning is quiet and peaceful as we sit out on the deck munching on croissants and danishes as ducks and coots float by the hull looking for crumbs. Absolutely idyllic. Our mood is not even diminished by the leaden sky and the increasingly fresh temperature. Matthias and his



The sun was NOT shining continuously. (Photo: Martin Söhnngen)

My Incredible Sailing Weekend with Borat and All the Others

boat are, of course, long gone. The Party Boat, shepherded by skipper Robert, is, not surprisingly, also still having breakfast. And the best news? It is NOT raining!

Now Dirk is getting serious. Our boss for the weekend briefs us about the boat and appropriate behavior on board. No shoes with black soles, which leave ugly black marks on deck (the penalty for that is being keelhauled) and do not fall overboard! And if someone does anyway, we now know how to lift the unfortunate soul back on to the boat, and yes, it actually works, at least in theory. After Dirk's lengthy instructions we could probably haul a small-sized whale back on board if need be. There must be 1001 ways to recover a body, all developed by ingenious yachtsmen before us. Apparently, this is a standard procedure, or rather, a standard problem! Later on the lake we are supposed to learn how to tie various nautical knots. But for now we're off ... finally!

The next few hours we criss-cross Lake Constance. On the horizon we can see

the snowy mountaintops of Austria. Switzerland is directly across from us on the other side of the lake, with the rolling Bavarian meadows and onion-shaped church domes in the background. The view is absolutely stunning! No vista from any point on the shore can possibly match this. Plus, the gentle breeze is just strong enough to propel us along all day (well, nearly), but mild enough to embolden even me to take over the steering wheel and shout commands to the others, under Dirk's friendly and competent guidance, of course. And it actually works! The only thing we have to pass up on today is fender riding. Fender riding means straddling the inflated balloons, whose primary purpose is to protect the boat's hull against scratches in the marina, but they double perfectly as ersatz water skis when tied to the boat – the faster and the bigger, the more fun. Last year it was swelteringly hot and therefore fender riding was very popular, but this year it is too cold. Nevertheless, the afternoon flies by, accompanied by delicious snacks prepared by self-proclaimed chef Ulrich.

At about five p.m., we enter the port of Arbon, our Swiss refuge for the night. Half an hour later, it starts raining, but the sharing of chores on deck is perfect. While Dirk checks us in with the harbour master, Florian and Roger cook the meat on a wet barbecue grill, and Caroline and I prepare the salad. Ulrich meanwhile shows off a new talent – Origami! So we end up dining in style using beautiful and meticulously folded flower-shaped paper napkins before we head off to the Party Boat, armed with Dirk's yummy chocolate-orange cream. The pineapple has already had its day but there are mouth-watering cocktails, various deserts, great music and so many nice people that you cannot possibly talk to all of them in just one night. It is getting loud and late again.

At one point I hear 'Borat', but the most sexist of all Kazakhstan TV reporters has stayed at home, of course, and I am just being aurally challenged, and after all the cocktails, maybe mentally challenged, too. But really it is all Matthias' fault! He is standing next to me in a blazing red, super sized, waterproof work overall with a huge front pocket opening at his belly. He is looking like a giant kangaroo, painted red with an empty pouch, and, as his crew discreetly points out, the empty space is big enough to accommodate all the diapers he needs after wetting himself when they perform nautical manoeuvres. Anyhow, his outfit reminds me of Borat's legendary swimsuit. And, come to think of it, Matthias himself reminds me of Borat, with his impertinent, feisty grin being highly contagious. Only the bridal kidnapping a la Borat has to be cancelled. Thinking back, though, the women we witnessed at a Swiss wedding earlier in the evening were all dressed in black, although the groom was not all that ugly, or maybe it was because of that.



Just for fun – lying in the Arbon marina before the party starts. (Photo: Caroline Hoffmann)



Sail the waves! (Photo: Caroline Hoffmann)



The partyboat on the day afterwards. (Photo: Martin Söhngen)



Are we in Borat country after all? Finally, around 3 a.m., the last party animals quit the deck. It is still raining cats and dogs but that cannot ruin our party mood in the least.

The entire night we hear the rain pouring down onto the boat. But surprise – the sun is peeking from the sky the next morning. The forecasted rainy weather must have crossed the area completely during the night and pushed off elsewhere. Of course, Matthias and his crew have already been gone for hours. The rest of us enjoy another leisurely breakfast in Arbon and after that float around on the gentle waves of Lake Constance for a few more hours. And yes! We did do some knots and manoeuvres, too. Late in the afternoon, we return to Kressbronn from where we set out to conquer the lake and finish off the wonderful weekend with one for the road in a café overlooking the harbor.

So, in short, not one drop of the waters of Lake Constance has moistened any of my three bikinis, and, despite the rain, there was no mutiny, not even on level One. Instead, all of us had loads of fun, and next year I am definitely in, no matter how bad the weather forecast might be!

Still smiling though the sailing trip has already ended. (Photo: Martin Söhngen)

Regional Chapter

München / Südbayern

by Astrid Fontius, Sabine Pallas, Florian Kühnel, Andreas Schoberth

Guided “Cultour(e)” to Neuschwanstein Castle

Visiting the Dream King’s (Ludwig II) castle is a must for every American, not to mention all the Japanese tourists flocking there everyday. Compared to them of course I live “close by”, in Munich. Yet I had not been to visit the legendary castle for 20 years. This is why I jumped at the idea of taking part in a tour, led by Fulbrighter Astrid Fontius.

We started on Sunday morning. It was an unusually bright mid-November day, which might have added to our good spirits on the train to Füssen, as we merrily discussed and took apart the theories about the king’s sudden, mysterious death. After a short bus-ride from Füssen station we arrived at the foot of the hill around two o’clock and decided to sit down for a Bavarian lunch first, before we would brave the steep trail up to the castle.

Through the gatehouse we entered the court-yard. This was the starting point for our tour of the interiors of the castle – in English of course. The coronation hall was astounding. So were the singer hall and the king’s study and sleeping room.

After the castle tour we made our way down, adventurous as we were, following the closed path towards Pöllat Gorge passing Marien Bridge. Weathering snow and ice we finally arrived at the bridge and were rewarded with another breathtaking view of the castle in the snow. Graced with the beautiful view

of the castle from here, we were not surprised when being told that Ludwig himself, in his lifetime, would stand on this bridge looking across at the castle with candles lit up in every window

By now – sadly – it was time to head home, safe and sound, after a fantastic wintry trip in mid-November.

Fulbright Alumni Winter Magic & Snow Pleasure Sleigh Riding – well, almost.

*“Just hear those sleigh bells jingle-ing
Ring ting tingle-ing, too
Come on, it’s lovely weather
For a sleigh ride together with you”*

In January the outdoorsy Fulbrighters went for a sleigh ride – or at least something similar. On a beautiful winter morning we met in Munich and drove down to Oberaudorf in the Bavarian Alps, where there is a 3km long toboggan run. There is even an uphill ski lift that the luges could use, too. This was tremendously comfortable, and consequently we could get the adrenalin rush as often as desired. Everyone had his personal perfectly groomed sled, borrowed from a local business, and so we all became careening downhill Fulbrighters – on purpose or not. Some curves were really tight and hard to take, so some of us got closer to the snow than planned.



Unbelievable but true: Walt Disney was neither involved in the construction of the castle nor in the taking of the picture. (Photo: Florian Kühnel)



Fulbrighters heading to Neuschwanstein. (Photo: RG München)



July 4 BBQ. (Photo: Andreas Schoberth)

Of course, we didn't miss the opportunity for really good Bavarian food in a traditional atmosphere – grouchy host included. We got back tired and maybe with some bruises, but it was a wonderful day!

Wild Water Rafting on the Ötztaler Ache

Believe it or not – German summers are hot! So it's understandable to look for any chance to cool down. For a group of Munich's Fulbright alumni a rafting trip on the Ötztaler Ache in Austria was this chance to get soaked and therefore bear July's hot temperatures.

After we arrived at the impressive Inn valley, everybody got a wetsuit, life jacket and helmet and soon we were shuttled to the river. Yeah!

Immediately after the start, we were in the first rapid. It took us by surprise and everybody got soaked and thrown around, but we learned soon (with the help of our raft guide) to maneuver the boat better. We had a lot of fun shooting over waves, crashing through huge holes and cutting in and out of eddies. Rafting the Ötztaler Ache is like a roller coaster ride. Of course, you get soaked, but it's perfect for a summer day.

The Ötztaler Ache flows into the Inn River, which is calmer and wider, but still has some pretty wild rapids. But it was calm enough that we jumped overboard. No problem with wetsuit and life jacket. Getting back in the boat is the real problem!

This was the second rafting trip organized by the Munich Fulbright Alumni. I am sure there are many more to come!

The Things we Did Last Summer – Fulbright Fun With a Nostalgic Touch

If you want to know what lies at the core of one of the more prolific regional chapters, just join our monthly *Stammtisch*. On the last Tuesday of every month, about 15 to 20 Fulbrighters meet and eat at varying locations in downtown Munich, welcoming returnees as well as current U.S. grantees. This number doubles once a year for the annual Thanksgiving Dinner traditionally hosted at the restaurant *Wassermann*, where we enjoy the "Kill the Turkey" show as much as the U.S.-style menu accompanied by it.

Another tradition of our regional chapter follows suit – around mid December we gather for the Christmas-*Stammtisch* for a game known as *Wichteln* or *Juleklap*. The fun is not so much the small gift you finally take home, but the way you get it. Who would have known how greedy these oh-so-civilized and intellectual Fulbrighters can get when they are amongst themselves. A fair game of poker is nothing against it.

Last but not least, we wouldn't leave out the American national holiday, the July 4 BBQ potluck. The party usually takes place at the premises of one of our association member's home, be it an ample garden or a roof-top terrace. Among the many talents of Fulbrighters, cooking seems to be prominent, given the considerable variety of the dishes lined up.



Smiling after the rafting is the harder part! (Photo: Florian Kühnel)

Regional Chapter Franken

by Esther Meyer

This year's highlight in the regional chapter was a symposium on climate protection and renewable energies (*Fachtagung Klimaschutz und erneuerbare Energien*). As you find a whole article about this event in this issue of the *FRANKLY*, it should only be noted here that it was a weekend worth the time invested – there were some interesting discussions, and different opinions were articulated in Erlangen.

Our last get-together was on a rainy Sunday at the end of July, just a little late for a July 4 party. In contrast to the Thanksgiving dinner, no US party equipment like the obligatory star-spangled banner was available, so our group members proved their ability to improvise by making a flag from the table napkins – as you can see in the picture.



July 4 Party in Fanconia. (Photo: Esther Meyer)

Well yes, it has only four stars on it ... so you know what to bring along the next time!

Regional Chapter Frankfurt am Main

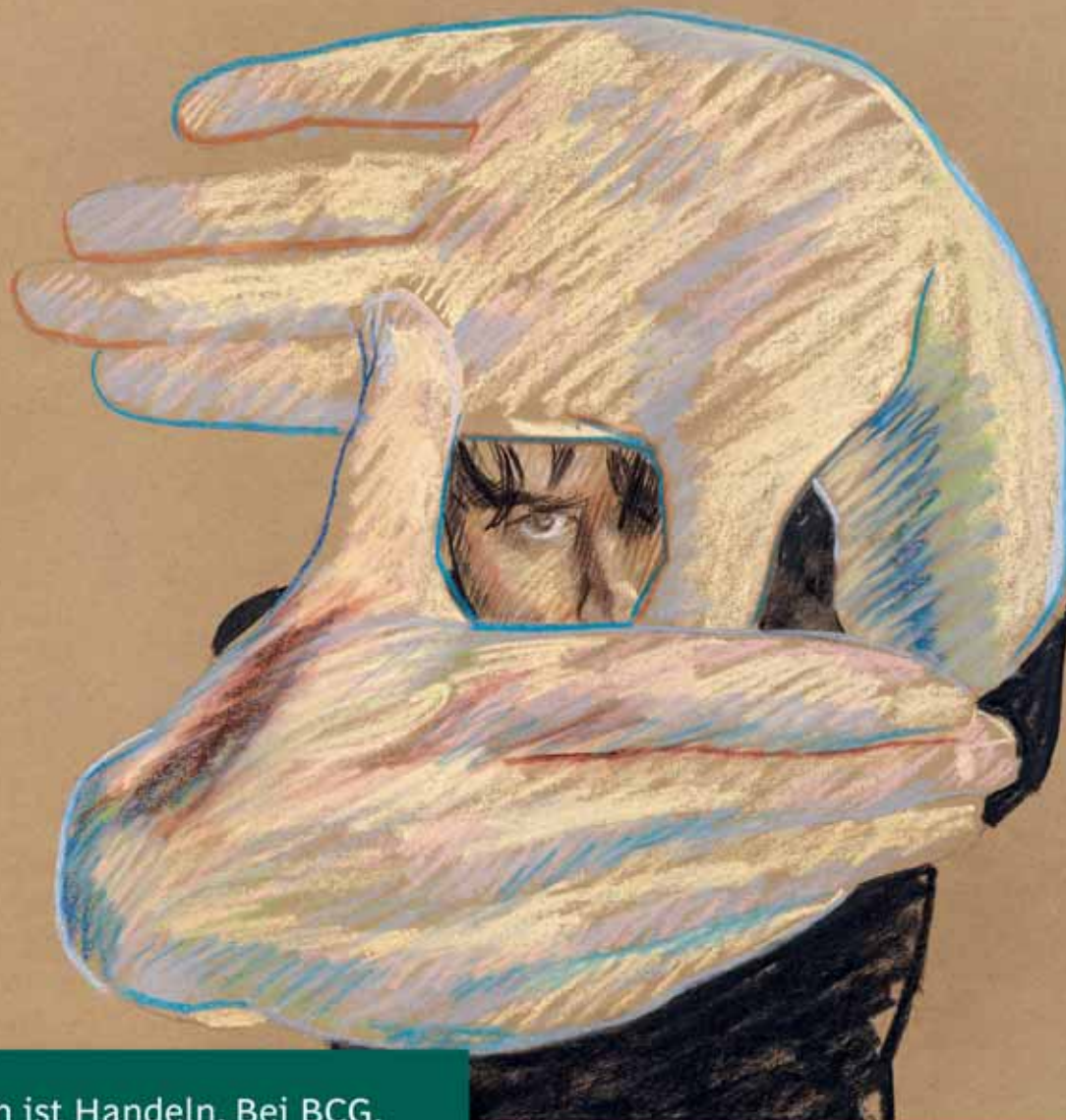
by Mario Reichel

Frankfurt is also called Mainhattan or Banktown because of the many banks here and especially those bank towers that are becoming more and more numerous, even in times of credit crunch and liquidity problems banks are facing right now. Our regional chapter here in Frankfurt has some other problems, not comparable with those of banks. The Fulbright alumni association was founded in Frankfurt some 20 years ago. Until last year we met in the restaurant *Künstlerkeller* every first Thursday in every month. Then that restaurant went bankrupt – a notion that derives from the Italian *banka rotta* for banks. Thus we chose to monthly change the location of our *Stammtisch* by way of “restaurant hopping”. Of course, we tried those traditionally Hessian *Ebbelwoi*, we also tried American burger restaurants and many international cuisines.

At our monthly *Stammtisch* we do not only eat and drink but also discuss and chat, and plan other activities: cinema, theater, musical, museums and much more. So if it happens that you be in Frankfurt any first Thursday in any month, check out our association's website calendar, where you will find the next location of our meeting. 15 to 20 people meet, some hard core kernel and some new, some older, some German, some American, and sometimes some international Fulbright family members. And even potential new grantees get in contact for some last hints for the interview. Different ages and backgrounds – not only bankers or economists. This year Michael Daub and myself were chosen to head the regional chapter, again as information expert Bernhard Koch, and as the new member on the team, we welcome Aline Klingberg as treasurer.

Our December *Stammtisch* traditionally starts with a short visit to the famous Christmas Market at the Frankfurt *Römer*. In January, we organized an intense ballroom dancing lesson to prepare for our association's national Winter Ball. Reinhard Koch will organize a weekend tour to the neighboring state of Thuringia. In early September, we will head to the cities of Mühlhausen and Langensalza for a culture weekend. At the moment we are preparing for this year's national welcome meeting in November – which will, once again, take place in Frankfurt. We are hard at work to make it memorable.

We are always happy to see new and old faces, and are definitely open to new ideas. So please show up and speak up! We'd love to hear from you!



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