

Robert Blankenship

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(updated Summer 2022)

Education

Ph.D. in German, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2011

M.A. in German, Bowling Green State University, 2005

B.A. in Foreign Languages and International Studies, University of Southern Mississippi, 2003

Professional Appointments

Associate Professor of German, California State University, Long Beach, 2020-

Assistant Professor of German, California State University, Long Beach, 2016-2020

Bingham Scholar in German (rank of Assistant Professor, non-tenure track), Transylvania University, 2015-2016

Visiting Assistant Professor of German, University of Central Arkansas, 2013-2015

Term Assistant Professor of German, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 2012-2013

Visiting Assistant Professor of German, Middle Tennessee State University, 2011-2012

Book

Suicide in East German Literature: Fiction, Rhetoric, and the Self-Destruction of Literary Heritage, Camden House, 2017.

Articles and book chapters

"Subjective Authenticity as Realism: Christa Wolf and Georg Lukács." *What Remains: Responses to the Legacy of Christa Wolf*. Patricia Herminhouse and Gerald Fetz (Eds.). Oxford; New York: Berghahn, 2022.

"Christa Wolf's Richard Neutra: Architecture, Psychoanalysis, and Southern California in *Stadt der Engel oder The Overcoat of Dr. Freud*." *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory*, vol. 95, no. 1, January 2020, pp. 55-64.

(with Jill Twark) "Berliner Sonderschule: History, Space, and Humour in Jan Ole Gerster's *Oh Boy (A Coffee in Berlin)*." *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*. 53.4 (November 2017): 362-381.

“Erzählt ist erzählt’: The Ethics of Narration in Christa Wolf’s *Stadt der Engel oder the Overcoat of Dr. Freud*.” *Envisioning Social Justice in Contemporary German Culture*. Jill Twark and Axel Hildebrandt (Eds.). Rochester: Camden House, 2015. 165-185.

“The Imperative to Remember: *Hamlet* as Unmarked Intertext in Christoph Hein’s *Horn’s End*.” *The Hamlet Zone: Reworking Hamlet in European Cultures*. Ruth J. Owen (Ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012. 189-196.

“The One-Armed Carpenter: Forced Migration, Labor, and Humor in Christoph Hein’s *Landnahme*.” *Strategies of Humor in Post-Unification German Literature, Film, and Other Media*. Jill Twark (Ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011. 122-142.

Encyclopedia Entries

“Der geteilte Himmel.” *Directory of World Cinema: Germany*. Vol. 2. Michelle Langford (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2013.

“Lotte in Weimar.” *Directory of World Cinema: Germany*. Vol. 2. Michelle Langford (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2013.

“Hälfte des Lebens.” *Directory of World Cinema: Germany*. Vol. 2. Michelle Langford (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2013.

“Die Unberührbare.” *Directory of World Cinema: Germany*. Vol. 1. Michelle Langford (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2011.

“Karbid und Sauerampfer.” *Directory of World Cinema: Germany*. Vol. 1. Michelle Langford (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2011.

“Die Architekten.” *Directory of World Cinema: Germany*. Vol. 1. Michelle Langford (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2011.

Book and Film Reviews

Review of: Gerrit-Jan Berendse. *Echoes of Surrealism: Challenging Socialist Realism in East German Literature, 1945-1990*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2021. In: *The German Quarterly*. 95.2 (Spring 2022): 222-224.

Review of: Curtis Swope. *Building Socialism: Architecture and Urbanism in East German Literature, 1955-1973*, Bloomsbury, 2017. In: *German Studies Review*. 42.1 (February 2019): 187-188.

“Picking at a Scabbed Wound.” Review of: *Jadup and Boel* (dir. Rainer Simon). DEFA Film Library, 2008. *Edge: A Graduate Journal for Germanic and Scandinavian Studies*. 1.1 (2010). <http://scholarworks.umass.edu/edge/vol1/iss1/6>

Review of: Kristin Schulz. *Attentate auf die Geometrie: Heiner Müllers Schriften der Ausschweifung und Disziplinierung*. Berlin: Alexander, 2009. *theaterforschung.de*, 2009. <http://www.theaterforschung.de/rezension.php4?ID=816>

“Lyricizing Transitions: Poetry and Political Caesurae.” Review Essay of: Anthony Bushell. *Poetry in a Provisional State: The Austrian Lyric 1945-1955*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007. and Karen Leeder (Ed.). *Schaltstelle: Neue deutsche Lyrik im Dialog*. Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2007. *H-German*. July 2008. <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=14781>

Blog Entries and Interviews

“Imagining East Germany.” *Research @ The Beach*. November 23, 2020: <https://www.csulb.edu/office-of-research-and-sponsored-programs/research-the-beach>

“Mourning, Melancholia, and the Coronavirus: Teaching Freud During the Shutdown.” *Coronavirus Stories Archive*, WAC Clearinghouse, July 1, 2020. <https://wac.colostate.edu/resources/coronastories/view/?storyid=1109>

“An Interview with Robert Blankenship on *Suicide in East German Literature*.” *Camden House Rundschau*, January 2018. <https://boydellandbrewer.com/ch-rundschau-suicide-in-east-german-literature>

“Preventing Apathy.” *Teaching Matters @ UCA*. November 18, 2014. <http://teachingmattersatuca.wordpress.com/2014/11/18/preventing-apaty/>

Invited Talks

“Global Christa Wolf, or How Polylocal Responses Can Reinvigorate Scholarly Interest.” RGRLL Research Showcase. Long Beach, CA. October 2021.

“‘Facts lined up one after the other don’t give you reality, you know’: Reading Christa Wolf in the Age of ‘Fake News,’ ‘Alternative Facts,’ and ‘Post-Truth.’” Truman State University, Kirksville, MO. April 2020. (invitation extended and accepted; event canceled due to COVID-19)

“Christa Wolf: A Primer for Readers of Elena Ferrante.” Global Ferrante, California State University, Long Beach, October 2019.

“‘Die Wlassowas aller Länder’: Brechts *Die Mutter* und die Solidarität.” Deutsche Sommerschule am Pazifik, Portland, OR. July 2019.

“Der blinde Fleck: Christa Wolf’s Ocular Theory of Knowledge.” University of California, Davis. November 2018.

“Liebe in Bertolt Brechts *Geschichten vom Herrn Keuner*.” Deutsche Sommerschule am Pazifik, Portland, OR. July 2018.

“The Other East: Eastern Germans, Migrants from the Middle East and Asia, and Contemporary German Cinema.” University of Mississippi (Oxford, MS). October 2017.

“Selbstmord in der DDR-Literatur: Ein Buchgespräch.” Deutsche Sommerschule am Pazifik, Portland, OR. July 2017.

“Penthesilea’s Dagger: Christa Wolf, Kleist, and the Stabbing of Literary Heritage.” Drive-By Theatre Double Feature: Brecht+60/Kleist+205, Long Beach, CA. September 2016.

“Wie die Osis westlich wurden: Junge Ostdeutsche, die Flüchtlingskrise und der Kurzfilm *Charda*.” German Summer School of New Mexico, Taos, NM. July 2016.

“The Blind Spot: Christa Wolf’s Theory of Knowledge and Narration.” World Languages Faculty Symposium, Conway, AR. November 2014.

"Literatur im kommunikativen Deutschunterricht: wie, wann, welche und warum?" Alaskans For Language Acquisition, Fairbanks, AK. September 2012.

“Christa Wolf: wie und warum liest man ihre Prosa?” Sommer in Sewanee, Sewanee, TN. July 2012.

“Warum hat Schultze den Blues?” Sommer in Sewanee, Sewanee, TN. July 2012.

Conference Presentations

“Mapping Memories: Christa Wolf Revisits Moscow, Berlin, Gorzów, Los Angeles.” Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA) Conference. Los Angeles, CA. November 2022. (abstract accepted)

“Hotel Mirage: Christa Wolf’s Las Vegas.” Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA) Conference. Las Vegas, NV. November 2021.

“Christa Wolf and Friedrich Nietzsche: Prolegomena to an Odd Couple.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Zoom. April 2021.

“Christa Wolf and Friedrich Nietzsche: Prolegomena to an Odd Couple.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2020. (abstract accepted; event canceled due to COVID-19)

“Christa Wolf’s Russian Revolution: Epistemological Turning Points.” Writing Revolution. Long Beach, CA. November 2019. 55-64.

“The Singing Cure: Poetry, Song, and Psychoanalysis in the Prose of Christa Wolf.” German Studies Association, Portland, OR. October 2019.

“The Creative Afterlife of Brecht’s Poem ‘Praise of Communism’.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2019.

“Christa Wolf’s Richard Neutra: Architecture and Psychoanalysis in *Stadt der Engel*.” German Art in SoCal—SoCal in German Art. Long Beach, CA. November 2018.

“The Battle of Hermann Braun: Kleist, Fassbinder, and the Intertextuality of Occupation.” German Studies Association, Pittsburgh, PA. September 2018.

“The Blind Spot: Borders of Vision, Narrative, and Knowledge in the Works of Christa Wolf.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2018.

“The Blind Spot: Knowledge, Narrative, and Ocular Metaphors in the Works of Christa Wolf.” International Conference on Narrative. Montreal, Canada. April 2018.

“Hello Again, Lenin: Nietzsche’s Eternal Recurrence in Wolfgang Becker’s Film *Goodbye, Lenin!*” Marx—Nietzsche—Freud, And? Long Beach, CA. November 2017.

“Christa Wolf’s Russian Revolution.” German Studies Association, Atlanta, GA. October 2017.

“Shifting Identities of East and West: Unification Films, the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and the Short Film *Charda*.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2017.

“Rethinking East and West: Young East Germans, the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and the Short Film *Charda*.” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Lexington, KY. April 2017.

“Berlin Cinema Against the Berlin School: Depictions of Berlin in *Oh Boy* and *Victoria*.” Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association, Pasadena, CA. November 2016.

“Jonathan Franzen’s East Germany: An Ecology of Secrets.” German Studies Association, San Diego, CA. October 2016.

“‘Berliner Sonderschule’: Jan Ole Gerster’s Critical Relationship to Berlin School Cinema.” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Lexington, KY. April 2016.

“The Blind Spot: Christa Wolf’s Subversive Epistemology.” German Studies Association, Washington, DC. October 2015.

“Christa Wolf’s Ethics of Seeing.” Northeastern Modern Language Association, Toronto, Canada. May 2015.

“Looking Back: Christa Wolf, the Stasi, and Focalization.” German Studies Association, Kansas City, MO. September 2014.

“‘Erzählt ist erzählt’: The Ethics of Narrative in Christa Wolf’s *Stadt der Engel oder the Overcoat of Dr. Freud*.” German Studies Association, Denver, CO. October 2013.

“Subjective Authenticity as (Anti)Realism: Christa Wolf and Georg Lukács.” German Studies Association, Milwaukee, WI. October 2012.

“Exile and Intertextuality in Christa Wolf’s *Stadt der Engel oder The Overcoat of Dr. Freud*.” Northeast Modern Language Association, Rochester, NY. March 2012.

“Death, Immortality, and Intertextuality in Johannes R. Becher’s Exile Sonnets.” South Atlantic Modern Language Association, Atlanta, GA. November 2011.

“The Overcoat of Wolf Biermann: Space, Intertextuality, and the Biermann Affair in Christa Wolf’s *Kein Ort. Nirgends* and *Stadt der Engel oder The Overcoat of Dr. Freud*.” German Studies Association, Louisville, KY. September 2011.

“When the Dead Tell Stories: Haunting and Epistolarity in Ulrich Plenzdorf’s *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.*” International Conference on Narrative. St. Louis, MO. April 2011.

“Haunting Borders: Space and Spectrality in Christoph Hein’s *Horns Ende*.” German Studies Association conference, Washington, DC. October 2009.

“Detecting East German History: Reading Werner Heiduczek’s *Tod am Meer* as Detective Fiction.” Con(tra)vention: Crime and the Boundaries of Genre. Corke, Ireland. June 2009.

“‘Erinnere dich’: *Hamlet* as Intertext in Christoph Hein’s *Horns Ende*.” *Hamlet: Reception in European Cultures*. Cardiff, Wales. May 2009.

“Bad Guldenberg: Christoph Hein’s Fictional Provincial Town.” *Beyond Berlin: Local Cultures in Divided Germany, 1945–1989*. Austin, TX. March 2008.

“Memorialization and *linke Melancholie*: An Examination of Stefan Heym’s *Pargfrider* and Günter Grass’s *Unkenrufe*.” Focus on German Studies Graduate Student Conference. Cincinnati, OH. October 2004.

Other Conference Activity

Organizer: “Affective Outcasts: Christa Wolf and Friedrich Nietzsche.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Zoom. April 2020.

Co-organizer (with Kevin Eubanks): Three-Panel Series, “Theory Critical, or Marx, Nietzsche, Freud NOW.” German Studies Association, Zoom. October 2020.

Commentator: “Marx, Nietzsche, Freud III: Applications.” German Studies Association, Zoom. October 2020.

Moderator: “Marx, Nietzsche, Freud I: Conflicts.” German Studies Association, Zoom. October 2020.

Organizer: “Affective Outcasts: Christa Wolf and Friedrich Nietzsche.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2020. (panel accepted; event canceled due to COVID-19)

Organizer: “‘Dicht machen’: Poetry, Song, and Linguistic Play in the Works of Christa Wolf.” German Studies Association, Portland, OR. October 2019.

Moderator: “Theory Critical; or Time, Life, and the Use-Value of Marx in the 21st Century.” German Studies Association, Portland, OR. October 2019.

Organizer: “Bertolt Brecht and the Scars of Modernity.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2019.

Commentator: "19th and 20th-Century Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Politics." German Studies Association, Pittsburgh, PA. September 2018.

Organizer: “Christa Wolf’s Borders: Geography, Genre, Fiction, Knowledge.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2018.

Organizer: “Shifting Identities in Contemporary German Cinema.” CSULB Comparative Literature Conference, Long Beach, CA. April 2017.

Moderator: “Ecologies of Socialism III: Unruly Nature.” German Studies Association, San Diego, CA. October 2016.

Commentator: “Voicing Social Injustice as Exclusion in Twenty-First-Century German Novels by Women Writers.” German Studies Association, Washington, DC. October 2015.

Moderator: “Bilder, Machwerke, Nachlässe: Barbara Honigmann, Volker Braun, and Christoph Hein on East(ern) Germany’s Past and Present.” German Studies Association. Milwaukee, WI, October 2012.

Courses Taught (more detailed information about courses available upon request)

Theoretical Approaches to Christa Wolf’s *Der geteilte Himmel* (graduate course, in preparation for Fall 2022)

Two Perspectives: Christa Wolf and Heinrich Böll (graduate course)

Bertolt Brecht (graduate course)

Contemporary Germany: Society and Culture

Research Methods and Critical Theory (graduate course)

The Faces of United Germany (combined grad/undergrad)

Christa Wolf’s *Stadt der Engel* (combined grad/undergrad)

Contemporary German Cinema

Marx, Nietzsche, Freud (Writing Intensive)

Two Perspectives: 1945-1990 (combined grad/undergrad)

German Cinema

Fiction and Fact: Short Texts

The Road to Modernity: Marx, Nietzsche, Freud (combined grad/undergrad)

Contemporary Germany

Berlin, Weimar: Birth and Rebirth of a Nation, 1871-1933

Survival: Representations of Violence, Oppression, and Hope in Central Europe (writing-intensive first-year seminar)
Rebuilding from the Screen Up: Postwar German Cinema
Introduction to German Literature
The German Novella
East Germany: Oppression, Protest, and Every Day Life
Advanced Conversation and Comprehension 1
Advanced Conversation and Comprehension 2
Beginning German 1
Beginning German 2
Intermediate German 1
Intermediate German 2
German for Reading Knowledge (graduate course)
Introduction to Twentieth-Century German Philosophy (recitation sections)
Austrian Culture (tutorial section)
Politics of the German-speaking world (tutorial section)

Grants, Fellowships, Learning Communities, and Honors

RSCA, Fall 2022
Participated in CLA Learning Community on Ungrading, Fall 2021
RSCA, Fall 2021
RSCA, Spring 2020
RSCA, Spring 2019
(with Jeffrey L. High, Natalie Martz, Christian Lopez, and Xochitl San Vicente) German Embassy “Building Tomorrow” Campus Weeks Grant, Fall 2020
(with Jeffrey L. High, Teresa Wright, and Max Rosenkrantz) Scholarly Intersections Grant, “Revolutionary Philosophy/Philosophical Revolutions,” Fall 2019
Writing Across the Curriculum Fellow, 2019-2020
Project HOGAR Summer Faculty Grant, Summer 2019
(with Jeffrey L. High, Jeffrey Blutinger, Jerry Mosher, and Naya Lekht) Scholarly Intersections Grant, “Jewish-German Art in Southern California,” Fall 2018
(with Elaine Chen, Jeffrey L. High, and Natalie Martz) German Academic Exchange Service—DAAD, Conference Grant, Fall 2018
(with Jeffrey L. High and Natalie Martz) German Embassy “Shaping Germany” Campus Weeks Grant, Fall 2018
Most Inspirational Professor Award, CSULB Alumni Association, Fall 2017
(with Jeffrey L. High) German Academic Exchange Service—DAAD, Conference Grant, Fall 2017
CLA College Travel Award, 2016-2017, 2017-2018
Bingham Startup Grant, 2015
German Academic Exchange Service—DAAD Summer Grant, 2011
Future Faculty Fellowship, UNC, August 12-18, 2009
Kent James Brown Fellowship, UNC, 2005-2008, 2009-2011
Baden-Württemberg Exchange, 2008-2009
Bowling Green On-Campus Assistantship, 2004-2005
AYA Salzburg Assistantship, 2003-2004

Service to the Profession

Peer Reviewed book manuscript for Peter Lang, Fall 2021
Vice President, Southern California Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German, Fall 2021-
Speaker at Long Beach City College Foreign Film Festival, Screening of *Tschick*. May 2018.
Speaker at panel discussion on *Proud to Present*, California Repertory Company. March 2018
Testing Chair, Southern California Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German, Fall 2017-Spring 2021
Served as interpreter for filmmaker Annekatrin Hendel, Santa Monica, December 2016
Reader for *Directory of World Cinema: Germany* (4 mss.)
Reader for the journal *The Kennesaw Tower* (18 mss.)
Reader for the journal *Edge: A Graduate Journal for German and Scandinavian Studies* (2 mss.)
Reader for the journal *Intersections: Women's and Gender Studies in Review across Disciplines* (1 ms.)
Reader for *Kenya at Fifty: Milestones, Challenges, and Prospects*. Eds. Michael Kithinji (1 ms.)

Service to the University

GenExcel Faculty Mentor (for first-generation college students), Fall 2022-Spring 2023
Juror for Student Research Competition (Humanities and Letters Division), Spring 2021
University Resources Council, Fall 2018-Spring 2021
(Secretary of the University Resources Council, Spring 2019-Spring 2020)

Service to the College

Faculty Council, CLA, Spring Semester 2017

Service to the Department

Undergraduate Advisor for French, German, and Spanish, Fall 2021
Undergraduate Advisor for French, German, and Spanish, Fall 2020
RGRL Summer Advising, Summer 2021
RGRL Summer Advising, Summer 2020
RGRL Summer Advising, Summer 2019
Co-organizer of Poetry Without Borders, Spring 2018 and Spring 2019
RGRL Curriculum Committee, Cal State Long Beach, Fall 2016-
(Chair of RGRL Curriculum Committee, Fall 2018-Fall 2021)
RGRL Summer Advising, Summer 2018
RGRL Summer Advising, Summer 2017
Composed a Standard Course Outline for German 397: Marx, Nietzsche, Freud (Writing Intensive GE), Fall 2016
Conducted 3 LOTE interviews, November 2016
Conducted 1 LOTE interview, March 2017
Conducted 3 LOTE interviews, October 2017
Conducted 1 LOTE interview, March 2018
Conducted 3 LOTE interviews, October 2018
Conducted 1 LOTE interview, March 2019
Conducted 4 LOTE Interviews via Zoom, March 2020

Conducted 2 LOTE interviews via Zoom, October 2020
Conducted 3 LOTE interviews via Zoom, March 2021
Conducted 1 LOTE interview via Zoom, October 2021

Service to the Program

Examiner for Taylor Espinoza's MA exam on Karl Marx, Fall 2021
Co-Examiner for Josephine Claus's MA exam on Bertolt Brecht, Spring 2021
Examiner for Luke Beller's MA exam on Friedrich Nietzsche, Spring 2020
Co-Examiner for Luke Beller's MA exam on Bertolt Brecht, Spring 2020
Co-Examiner for Dionne Agawu's MA exam on Bertolt Brecht, Spring 2020
Examiner for Kenneth Ensslin's MA exam "A Ruthless Critique of Society: History, Morality, and Technology, 1843-2019," Fall 2019
Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program Faculty Sponsor for Kenny Martinez-Nolasco, Fall 2019-Spring 2021
I/ST Undergraduate Thesis Advisor for Hailey Fulcomer, Spring 2021
McNair Scholars Program Faculty Mentor for Hailey Fulcomer, Summer 2019
Examiner for Liane Sponberg's MA exam on Narratology, Spring 2019
Co-Examiner for Liane Sponberg's MA exam on Bertolt Brecht, Spring 2019
Co-Examiner for Maxwell Stout's MA exam on Bertolt Brecht, Spring 2019
Examiner for Kyle Bauer's MA exam on Women in German Cinema, Spring 2018
Examiner for Tegan White-Nesbitt's MA exam on the Berlin School, Spring 2018
Helped organize the conference Marx, Nietzsche, Freud—And?, November 2017
Examiner for Josh Todarello's MA exam on the Gruppe 47, Spring 2017
Examiner for Jeff Jarzomb's MA exam on Marx, Engels, and Luxemburg, Spring 2017
Examiner for Asher Stolte's MA exam on Nazi Propaganda Films, Spring 2017
Co-Examiner (with Jeff High) for Asher Stolte's MA exam on Freudian Approaches to Kleist's "Der Findling," Spring 2017
Examiner for Madeline Foss's MA exam on German Expressionist Cinema, Spring 2017
Examiner for Madeline Foss's MA exam on Bertolt Brecht and the Verfremdungseffekt, Spring 2017
Helped organize Documentary Double Feature with Director Annkatrin Hendel, and gave a lecture introducing Hendel and her work, November 2016
Helped organize the conference Drive-By Theatre Double Feature: Brecht+60/Kleist+205, October 2016
Examiner for Brenda Lamboy's MA exam on East German Cinema, Fall 2016
Weekly attendance at the German Club's Stammtisch (business meeting)
Regular attendance at the German Club's Sprechstunde (conversation hour)

Professional Associations

Christa Wolf Gesellschaft
American Association of Teachers of German
German Studies Association
Modern Language Association
Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association
International Brecht Society
International Society for the Study of Narrative

Languages

English – native

German – near-native

French – reading knowledge, basic conversation skills

References available upon request