

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

**Conference on the EU's
Constitutional Crisis a
success** 1-2

**Norwegian Studies on
the rise at Indiana** 1-2

**Germany's universities
experiencing great
change** 3

**WEST
Accomplishments** 3

**Alumni update: Ruth
Mitchell-Pitts** 4

**Focus on Europe Today:
The challenges of re-
gional identities in
Europe** 5-8

**WEST Events and
Activities** 8

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**Deborah Piston-
Hatlen,
Assistant Director**

**Linda Jean,
Administrative Services
Coordinator**

**Graduate Assistants
Bronson Long
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Conference on the EU's Constitutional Crisis a success

West European Studies and the EU Center of Excellence sponsored a Symposium entitled "Transnational Democracy at the Crossroads? The EU's Constitutional Crisis," held at Indiana University on December 2, 2006. Political Science professor William Scheuerman organized this symposium, which gathered five scholars from several different disciplines to address the theoretical implications of transnational democratization and the challenges that the French and Dutch rejections of the European Constitution in May 2005 pose to the future of the European Union. Alessandro Ferrara, Dario Castiglione, James Bohman, and Glyn Morgan all presented papers, and a roundtable discussion featuring commentary from Beate Sissenich, Nadia Urbinati, and Jeff Issac took place in the afternoon. Professor Scheuerman put together this international symposium in conjunction with his fall 2006 Political Science graduate seminar course "Globalization and the Fate of Democracy." The seminar asked how democracy should be reconfigured to best respond to the challenges of globalization. Seminar students attended the symposium and found it beneficial to their studies. "The panelists' genuine enthusiasm for their arguments emphasized the importance of the integration debate, not only for Europe, but also for how human affairs should be organized and governed generally," said Sam Brazys, a doctoral student in Political Science.

Andy Satchwell, a master's student in West European Studies concurred with Brazys' view and added that "I was surprised to find many convincing approaches to the same problems, particularly on solutions to such difficult questions as EU democracy." *(continued on page 2)*



Norwegian Studies on the rise at Indiana

While Indiana University can be proud of the large variety of foreign languages it offers, there is one area that has been continuously underrepresented in the past, namely Scandinavia. This, however, is about to change. The departments of West European Studies and Germanic Studies, with support from US Department of Education Title VI funds, recently collaborated to establish a Norwegian Language and Culture Program. The ambitions for the program are big: not only will it introduce the curious IU student population to Norway's language and culture, but it will also spearhead initiatives aimed at popularizing the whole Scandinavian region as an exciting area for scholarly research.

The Norwegian program has already had its first highly successful event. On the evening of November 16, an eager group of scholars and students gathered at IMU's Presidents' Room to commemorate the centennial of Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen's death. WEST director Fritz Breithaupt opened the event, which included a lecture by Professor Fredrik Engelstad from the Norwegian Institute for Social Research, who spoke about Ibsen's works as seen from a sociological *(continued on page 2)*



Fredrik Engelstad

Conference on the EU's Constitutional Crisis a success

(continued from page 1)

According to many students, the roundtable discussion that concluded the seminar led to some of the most inspiring moments. "Perhaps the best thing was that the presenters and discussants were well constituted and represented diverse disciplines and theoretical backgrounds. The discussions were very lively and truly fruitful," said Joohyung Kim, a doctoral student in Political Science.



"The panelists proposed alternatives or additions to the European project, some convincing and others not. They all built on ideas developed in our seminar." Andy Satchwell



While the presenters and panel discussants did not wholly agree on the process by which democracy could expand in the EU, they all did agree that the failed Constitution has not derailed the European project for good.

Professor Scheuerman confronts questions of democracy head-on in his research, publishing on modern political thought, German political thought, and normative international theory.

Norwegian Studies on the rise at Indiana

(continued from page 1)

perspective. In addition, a representative from the Royal Norwegian Consulate, Ms. Inger Brusell, addressed the audience and gave an overview of the current opportunities to study Norwegian in the United States. Two more events accompanied the evening. The Monroe County Public Library exhibited a set of posters titled *"To be a poet is to see - Ibsen in our time"* in its Art Gallery. In addition, the previous evening the Department of Theatre and Drama showed a Norwegian film called *An Enemy of the People*, a recent adaptation of the classic Ibsen play.

The Norwegian program is a long-term investment for West European Studies. IU Students will soon be able to graduate with a Norwegian minor choosing from core courses contributed by faculty members in six different departments. A Scandinavian lecture series will soon bring in two exciting speakers from other universities. Professor Tina Yarborough (Art History/Georgia College and State University) will visit in the Spring, and professor Christine Ingebritsen (Political Science/University of Washington) will come in the fall of 2007. There are many more good things to come from the Norwegian program. Stay tuned!

Contributed by Gergana May, Coordinator for Norwegian Language & Culture; Lecturer in German Studies & West European Studies

Germany's universities experiencing great change

Dear friends of WEST,

Europe is currently experiencing many interesting changes. I would like to report on one change which thus far has received relatively little attention, namely, the drastic overhaul that Germany's higher education system is undergoing.

The issue for Germany is not the Bologna Process that streamlines all EU countries' systems of course requirements and credits in order to allow students to transfer to schools in different countries. Instead, Germany has decided to end a century of equal distribution of funds to its public universities. In November 2006 the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG), which is mostly funded by the German government, announced the first winners of the so-called initiative for excellence that will distribute 1 billion Euros to select university programs. The three largest recipients of these funds to date are the Technical University in Karlsruhe, the University of Munich, and the Technical University of Munich. The idea is that universities with special programs should be able to build on their "excellence" to compete head-on with universities like MIT, Oxford, and Yale. This initiative is significant not simply as an attempt to jump-start the German university system.

What this change indicates is that German universities are adopting a market oriented system in which programs compete against each other for funding. In the past, all universities and programs received similar funding. One of the effects of the old system was that decisions about vacancies for professorships were made strictly by criteria within the discipline. Now these hiring priorities may change, so that the person who works on a 'hot' topic will be hired because he or she may bring in more grants.

In the United States, we have long been used to market-driven academia, and we appreciate the speed at which research agendas change. Nevertheless, one should not forget the advantages that Germany's idea of equal distribution and thus freedom of research entailed. There was also freedom from administration. Hence, some like me, who do appreciate the long-overdue change in Germany, still can feel nostalgic about a lost idea of the professorate. It will be interesting to see what the German universities do with their new powers.

Best wishes for 2007,
Fritz



WEST Accomplishments

Jack Bielasiak wrote a chapter entitled "Party System and EU Accession: Euroskepticism in East Europe" in the recently published book *Public Opinion, Party Competition, and the European Union in Post-Communist Europe*, **Robert Rohrschneider** and Stephen Whitefield, eds. (Palgrave, 2006). He also published an article called "Regime Diversity and Electoral Systems in Post-Communism" in the December edition of *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*.

Roy Gardner presented the paper "Enlargement Challenges of the EU: the role of corruption" at the national meetings of the Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies in November.

Lois R. Wise presented several papers this semester including "Prevailing and Promised Wages: What Visa Applications for Foreigners Can Tell Us about Wage Patterns in the Nonprofit Sector" with Mary Tschirhart at the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, "Adoption of H-1B Visas for Foreign Teachers among Texas Public School Districts: An Empirical Analysis of Organizational Innovation" with Sergio Fernandez at the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration annual meeting and "The Impact of Globalization on Civil Service Systems," which she also gave at the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration annual meeting. In addition, she received a grant from the Swedish Council for Working Life Research and Social Science to study integration policy in state government authorities in Sweden 2007-2010.

WEST Master's students participated in a brownbag series this semester meant to expose them to a wide range of topics and ideas in Western Europe. Weekly topics and presenters included Professor **Hannah Buxbaum** of the IU School of Law discussing transnational legal issues; Professor **Carl Ipsen** and his new book, *Italian Youth in the Age of Pinnocchio*; Professors **Gerhard Gloom** (Economics); **Abdulkader Sinno** (Political Science), and **Dan Knudsen** (Geography) presenting research projects funded by WEST grants; Master's student **Bob Larsen** leading a discussion of Europe's changing demographics; Professor and WEST Director **Fritz Breithaupt**'s engaging mirror neurons; and student-led panels on FLAS awards and the EU summer study trip. Many thanks to **Nicole LaLonde** and **Andy Satchwell** for organizing the fall 2006 brownbag meetings.

WEST Alumni Update: Ruth Mitchell-Pitts

For Ruth Mitchell-Pitts, her position as Associate Director for the Center of European Studies (CES) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is her dream job. Mitchell-Pitts completed her BS in French Education at Indiana University in 1978 before going on to finish her MA in West European Studies in 1981. As an undergraduate and graduate student in WEST, she studied Education, French, German, History, and Political Science and took courses with professors such as Jim Christoph, Bill Cohen and David Pace. She wrote her thesis on Welsh nationalism and the role of nonconformist churches under the direction of Norm Furniss.



Mitchell-Pitts and her husband found Bloomington in the late 1970s to be a very special place. She has many fond memories of her years at WEST. On a recent visit to Bloomington, she remarked that “My IU experience was fantastic—the fact that I’m re-living it more than 30 years later tells you something! The event that loomed largest when I was a student was the visit of former British prime minister Harold Wilson and the lunch we all attended with him.”

After completing her studies at WEST, Mitchell-Pitts went on to receive her Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1991. Her experiences at IU and WEST in particular have shaped her career since then and were even instrumental in her landing her current job. She recalled that “WEST was a Title VI center even back in the late 1970s. I caught the excitement about inter-disciplinarity and the integration of languages into other disciplines there. When I started my doctoral program at UNC there was no area studies program on Europe. I pressed continually for area-focused courses. After I graduated and went on to teach at East Carolina University, several new faculty at UNC developed a ‘Program in European Studies’ and asked me to work with them to write a Title VI proposal. I agreed IF, when successful, they hired me to run it! That was in 1994. We have had continuous NRC funding since then, and since 1997 we have also been funded as an EU Center.”

As Associate Director at the CES, Mitchell-Pitts has a lot of freedom to be creative, but many responsibilities as well. The CES has an undergraduate major, runs a Languages Across the Curriculum program and has outreach programs for K-12 education, business and legislation. As of last year, it assumed the roles of Network Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator for the Network of EU Centers of Excellence. The Center’s Transatlantic Masters (TAM) program, which offers an MA in collaboration with six European Universities, is the only such program of its kind in the United States. The Languages Across the Curriculum program is increasingly getting attention from doctoral institutions around the country as a model for building their own programs. Mitchell-Pitts’ background in Education and French studies have helped her develop teacher workshops and set up a database of EU lesson plans for K-12, as well as put together a wealth of web-based teaching resources for social sciences and language teachers.

Every day is different for Mitchell-Pitts. She and her staff of six have hands-on responsibilities for undergraduate programs, the TAM, web and distance learning, web-design, tech support, finances and outreach programs. She enjoys her job and says that “I’m most proud of my role in helping to develop collaboration across EU centers, and of building a few special programs in the Center here. Most days I can’t wait to get to work. Of course, other days I can’t wait to go home!”

Focus on Europe Today: The challenges of regional identities in Europe

Since the Second World War, European nations such as the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Spain, and Italy have experienced a rise in regional identities. Regions have demanded more autonomy and have sought to protect their cultures. Regionalism has become a threat to the purpose and authority of the nation-state, although European integration has had some success in reducing tensions between state governments and their regions. WEST recently spoke with faculty member **Josep Sobrer** and graduate student **John Lary** about the challenges of regionalism in Spain and Belgium.

Josep Sobrer



In Spain, regional identities were suppressed at the end of the Civil War. In Catalonia, many political and intellectual leaders were forced to go into exile when Franco first took power. It was forbidden to teach Catalan in schools or to have any publications and broadcasts in Catalan. Nevertheless, in the late 1940s the regime allowed intellectuals who had not been involved in violence during the Civil War to return. In addition, it permitted the publication of books in Catalan.

Catalonia saw a gradual recovery of its cultural identity after the Civil War, though this was checked by the influx of poorer migrants from the south of Spain who came to Catalonia to work. Catalonia has been the wealthiest and most industrialized region of Spain since the nineteenth century, and because of this had absorbed groups of mi-

grants before. In the 1950s and 1960s, however, the number of migrants coming

into Catalonia was so great that it changed the balance of the population. Unlike in the past, many migrants did not learn Catalan, and migrants came to live in a belt of towns surrounding Barcelona. This killed any prospects Catalonia had for full independence, and Catalans came to see migrants as a greater threat to their culture than Franco's repression.

Language is what is really essential to Catalan identity. Without its language, there is no Catalonia. Unlike the Basque language, Catalan is still very alive today, and about half of Barcelona speaks it. Catalans tend to sympathize with Basque concerns about preserving their culture, but Catalans have never used violence like the Basque separatist movement ETA has. In Catalonia, there is an institutional push to have all signs in Catalan. But those who only speak Spanish resist such moves, and the language question causes problems from time to time. Soccer is also important to



Catalonia's flag is a symbol of its separate identity from Spain.

Catalan identity.

Barcelona's team is closely associated with Catalonia and Catalan pride. Culturally, soccer is more popular than anything else in Catalonia, even its best art and literature. The day after the Barcelona team won the European Champion's League in May 2006 the whole city stopped to welcome the team back. People from all walks of life turned out to greet them and celebrate. Ironically, very few of the team's players are from Catalonia!

Politically speaking, the idea that Catalonia will become an independent nation is a bit utopian at this point, and the European Union has smoothed over some differences between the Catalan and Spanish governments. Also, Catalans view themselves as more cosmopolitan, entrepreneurial and economically and culturally more open to the rest of Europe than others in Spain. They thus tend to have a positive view of the European Union. The EU has nevertheless been a mixed blessing at times because of all of the *(continued on page 6)*



(continued from page 5)

complicated regulations that it places on farmers.

Catalonia had a referendum on granting it greater regional and local autonomy in June 2006. Although the referendum passed, it was a bit of a fiasco. In Catalonia the right supported it while the left opposed it. This was the exact opposite of the positions taken by Spain's political parties on the national level. Cultural issues remain important in Catalonia, but full independence from Spain is not practical. The impact of the referendum was more symbolic than substantive

John Lary

To most people, citizens and foreigners alike, Belgian identity is pretty hard to pin down. Symbols of national identity typically include the Trappist beers, comic books, the *frites* or fries, chocolate, and the monarchy. Most of these things have to do with eating, drinking, and enjoying life, which is probably not coincidental as Belgians do know how to enjoy life. When talking about their national identity, Belgians themselves often make jokes that invoke stereotypes about their neighbors and then say that their neighbors' values are in complete contradiction to those of Belgium. Saying that they are clearly not Dutch, French, or German is a key way of hinting at what they are. Even the Flemish who are very proud of their language do not see themselves as Dutch at all.



issues pertaining to Brussels which the Flemish and Walloons clash over passionately, especially issues relating to how the periphery and suburbs should be governed.

While Belgium is held together by a sense of being different from its neighbors as well as by Brussels and the European Union, regional tensions are very strong. Flanders and Wallonia have been drifting apart since the 1960s and 1970s, and Flanders, Wallonia, and the small German-speaking area of Belgium have all gained more



The EU helps reduce tensions between national governments and regions such as Catalonia and Flanders, but problems still remain.

Brussels may be where Belgian identity is the strongest. It is a multi-cultural city that contains Flemish, Wallons, immigrants from Africa and the Middle East, and people from all over Europe who are working for the European Union. The European Union brings in a massive amount of money to Brussels, though EU bureaucrats have now bought up much of the expensive housing in the expanding periphery. Brussels is paradoxical in that it on one hand it is what keeps Belgium together; neither the Flemish or the Walloons could conceive of losing Brussels. On the other hand, there are many delicate

(continued from page 6)

autonomy since then. It was during this period that the conflicting memories of the First and Second World Wars came to the fore and when Flemish nationalists starting gaining ground. Flemish nationalists believed that the Wallons saw them as inferior and alleged that they had discriminated against them in the past. Flemish awareness has grown across the political spectrum at the expense of Belgian identity. Since the 1970s daily life in Flanders and Wallonia has become increasingly separated. For example, today television channels in Flanders and Wallonia are not just in Flemish or French, but they rarely feature coverage outside their region. Whatever cross-regional coverage that exists tends to be stereotypical and decidedly not neutral.

Economics play an important role in the divisions between the Flemish and Wallons. Historically, Wallonia was the wealthy, industrial area of Belgium. But since the 1960s Wallonia has declined economically. Flanders on the other hand has done quite well, and the Flemish resent paying for things such as unemployment benefits for miners in Wallonia

The Flemish nationalist movement, the *Vlaams Belang* party, has grown in recent years. It is, however, more than a nationalist party that advocates the establishment of an independent Flanders. The *Vlaams Belang* is a far-right wing party that runs heavily on an anti-immigrant platform. Because of this, other parties have refused to work with it. Some think that it may have reached the crest of its popularity as it did not do as well as expected in the important city of Antwerp in recent local election. Next year's national elections will be crucial for it. Wallonia also has nationalists and anti-immigrant groups, but they are much smaller than the *Vlaams Belang*.

Increased regional identity has put much strain on the existence of Belgium as a nation-state. Some observers argue that Belgium is collapsing because it is an artificial entity without a real sense of identity. While it is widely recognized that Belgium is a fragile nation-state, others are more optimistic about its future. They see Belgium as an example of a post-national nation, one that holds together without a strong sense of national identity. Belgians are also fairly risk averse and are not at all interested in a revolution. Thus, the ability for Belgians to find compromise cannot be underestimated.

A recent broadcast on Wallonia's state television channel RTBF stated that Flanders had declared its independence and the king had fled to Kinshasa. The broadcast stated that it was fiction only after 30 minutes. This broadcast's impact was similar to that of the famous 1938 "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast, as it caused a brief panic in Belgium, especially among the Wallons. Many Wallons initially believed it was true and turned out to protest the breakup of Belgium. Most Flemish viewers did not initially see the program as the Flemish channel was showing a football game at the time. While the broadcast caused consternation among Wallons, many in Flanders have seen the whole incident as an example of how naïve Wallons are about Belgium. In many respects, the different reactions to this broadcast illustrate that both views of *(continued on page 8)*



Flemish identity has grown since the 1960s at the expense of Belgian identity

(continued from page 7)

Belgium's future have some merit. The fear that Belgium might fall apart is very real, but many Belgians are also strongly opposed to this.

Basically, the identity issues that Belgium is grappling with will become increasingly the norm for peoples in other nations who are also living lives which are more and more transnational. Yet at the same time, the desire for firmer sense of identity is growing as well, which often creates a backlash and fuels the problems we see today in Belgium.

Josep Sobrer is a Professor of Spanish and Catalan. His research interests include Catalan language, literature, and political affirmation. John Lary is a doctoral student in History. He is currently a Fulbright IIE recipient and visiting fellow at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. His dissertation is entitled "Shifting Ethnic boundaries in post-war Brussels."

*Flags and maps courtesy of FOTW Flags of the World website at <http://flagspot.net/flags>. Maps and boundary data are copyrighted by Flags of the World website and can be found at http://flagspot.net/flags/g_ix.html#list
Catalan flag from Jorge Candeias, Flemish flag from Mark Sensen.*

WEST outreach activities

Two WEST graduate assistants attended the Indianapolis International Festival at the state fairgrounds on November 3, 2006, to staff the IU International Programs booth. Schoolchildren from all over the state attended to learn about the diverse communities of the Indianapolis area. A naturalization ceremony was held in the afternoon in which nearly 180 people from around the world received American citizenship.

WEST also sent representatives to Ivy Tech Community College's culture connection on December 5, where they spoke to Ivy Tech students interested in transferring to Indiana University about minors in West European Studies and the European Union, European language studies, and study abroad opportunities.

On December 6, **Andy Satchwell** and **Nichole Tramel** visited Rogers-Binford Elementary School to teach about Christmas traditions in France and Germany. Twenty first-grade students constructed shoes for Saint Nikolaus and sang *O Tannenbaum*. They also learned about the *bûche de Noël* and *le réveillon*.

In December, **Diana Cervone**, a graduate student in French and Italian, and **Gergana May**, instructor and coordinator for Norwegian, visited an eighth-grade World Cultures class at Owen Valley Middle School in Spencer, IN. Diana spoke about youth culture, the educational system, and popular music in Italy, and Gergana about Norwegian culture and Christmas traditions. Also in December, WEST graduate student **Andy Satchwell**, Political Science graduate students **Nick Clark** and **Antje Schwennicke**, and **Jeff Pennington**, Assistant Director of the EU Center of Excellence, participated in a videoconference with a high school French class studying the EU. The video conference was part of a lesson developed by Jill Reid after her attendance at a spring 2006 workshop sponsored by the EU Center of Excellence, WEST, and the Russian and East European Institute.



WEST Contact Information

West European Studies
Ballantine Hall 542
1020 E. Kirkwood Avenue
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47405-7103

E-mail: west@indiana.edu
Phone: 812-855-3280
Fax: 812-855-7695

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m.-noon
1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Website:
<http://www.indiana.edu/~west>

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