



Stanley N. Werbow

Professor emeritus

Ph.D., Germanic Linguistics,
Johns Hopkins University

Vita academica

(written by Stanley Werbow near the end of 1997)

My career as a language teacher was set in high school, actually in junior high school when I started studying Latin in the seventh grade in Richmond, Virginia and then took the first year again in the eighth grade in Washington, DC. adding German at Roosevelt High School, but my Latin teacher there, Mabel Murray, was an inspiring teacher and a strong influence on my choice of Latin as my major at George Washington University, where Edward H. Sehr, a great scholar of Old High German and Old Saxon -- and incidentally a student of Sievers at Leipzig -- attracted me further into the study of German and Neogrammarian historical linguistics.

After a two-and-a-half year hiatus for WW II in Italy, I returned to G.W. in Fall, 1945 to find that my Latin teacher -- the only teacher of Latin and Greek -- had not returned from active duty in the Navy so that I had to go to Catholic University in order to fulfill my double major in Classics and German for graduation in June, 1946. I was accepted to graduate school at Illinois and UCLA, but my Dad had a heart attack and I decided to stay in DC and got a job teaching four classes of German and one of English at Eastern High School under the close tutelage of Emily M. White, director of foreign languages in the D.C. public schools. After that year I went to Middlebury College German Summer School at Bristol, Vermont where I came under the spell of Arno Schirokauer (a student of Carl von Kraus) and Ernst Feise (a student of Sievers), who invited me to come to Johns Hopkins, where they constituted the graduate faculty in German.

My arrival there along with John Cary doubled the size of the graduate student body in German, but fortunately there was no minimum class size at Hopkins, and *tres collegium faciunt* was the still respected medieval rule. Schirokauer was an exciting teacher and taught us Old and Middle High German language and literature, while Ernst Feise gave us charming and insightful instruction in the rest of German literature. I also

studied with Stefan Einarsson (Icelandic) and Leo Spitzer (Romance Philology), and Charles Singleton (Dante).

I should also mention another spellbinder at Middlebury, my wife Naomi, whom I met there in 1946 and married in 1952.

I returned to Middlebury in the summer of 1947, and in the summer of 1948 I attended the Linguistic Society Institute at Ann Arbor and studied with Bernard Bloch, J. R. Firth, and Edgar H. Sturtevant and was attracted into the field of Bloomfieldian descriptive linguistics. In 1950, I had a Fulbright to Holland and studied in Groningen with G. A. van Es (Dutch syntax), T. A. Rompelman (German philology) and Th. C. van Stockum (Tristan) and J. Brouwer (Gothic). When I returned in 1951, I taught for the summer at Ohio State University, where I enjoyed taking a conference course on Wolfram's Willehalm with Professor Hans Sperber.

With that background I returned to Hopkins and started to write my dissertation on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century German stylistic-syntax. Then I married, and for a year I worked at the Defense Department by day and wrote my dissertation by night. Happily for me, Professor Robert T. Clark had visited Hopkins, heard me give a seminar report and arranged to get me an offer to come to Texas with my new degree in Fall 1953 to take over the teaching of Middle High German from Lee Hollander, who was then 73. That was however not to be, at least not right away. Dr. Hollander had been teaching MHG one year and Old Norse the next for some time and was satisfied with that arrangement feeling that there was no demand for more than that amount of instruction in Middle High German. Luckily, Professor Hollander got a Fulbright to Norway during a year when MHG was scheduled, and I got to teach the course. When he returned, I suggested that we teach the introduction to MHG in alternate years, while I spent the rest of my teaching time on Phonetics and Phonemics and Morphology and Syntax along with German conversation and grammar including German 406 which we taught by the "mim-mem" method requiring the teacher to sound out the text for the class to repeat. It was teaching three sections of this course in a large classroom that contributed to the weakening of my voice. I also taught the graduate course in German translation using C. V. Pollard's Key to the Rapid Translation of German, which by the way was then also used in the Scientific German second year courses.

Meanwhile we added a second year of Middle High German, the graduate Survey of Medieval German literature, and I also taught the undergraduate survey Ger 361K as well as Old High German, Methods in German Literature and Philology and added seminars on Wolfram von Eschenbach, Gottfried's Tristan, MHG Lyrics, Medieval German Religious Literature, and Introduction to Early New High German, where a number of theses and dissertations originated.

During this time also I was active as Graduate Adviser and then Chairman of the Department before being appointed Dean of the new College of Humanities when the College of Liberal Arts was divided and served from 1971 to 1978 when the new College of Liberal Arts (without Natural Sciences) was established. I returned to teaching after a year off and then was asked by President Flawn to assume the Acting Deanship of the College of Fine Arts. That was the year when the new Fine Arts buildings were inaugurated and it was a thrill to sign the voucher for over a million dollars for the new tracker organ in Bates Recital Hall as well as those for dozens of new Steinway, Baldwin and other pianos.

Since then, it has become increasingly difficult to get to teach graduate courses in our Department, but I have enjoyed having the survey of German literature from the

Beginnings to Humanism, where I confess my predilection for the "classical" period from 1150 to 1250 made this the centerpiece of the course. From this and my conference courses in German and Dutch mysticism have come dissertation topics directed by others, one of which I have "inherited" after the untimely death of Professor Lefevere.

In 1986, I received a tenured half-time appointment and took advantage of the newly passed legislation permitting one to teach full-time in one semester as the equivalent of half-time for the year. This made it possible for us make trips to Germany and to Italy. Since then I have taught three courses in the Spring semester because I was not earning any of the required nine teaching points by supervising dissertations.

I taught three summers at the University of New Mexico German Summer School, most recently in 1989 when I introduced instruction in Yiddish to the School, which got its start with the impetus of Professor Leslie Willson while I was Dean of Humanities.

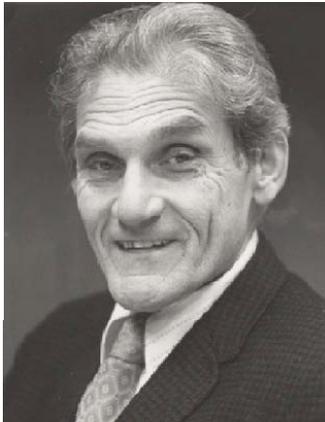
Now, after fifty years of teaching, 44 of them here at UT Austin with time away for a Guggenheim/Fulbright and then a visiting professorship at Marburg, I am retiring after this academic year (1996-1997). Among the things I am proud of are the Tutorial Study Hall, the *Stammtisch* which I started in 1954 -- but which would not have survived but for the dedication of Wolfgang and Marian Michael --, the establishment of the program in Yiddish in our Department, and the institution of the contract B.A. Degree in Humanities along, of course, with the accomplishments of my students undergraduate and graduate.

Note from the Chair

Stanley Werbow was chosen to receive the 1997 *Pro Bene Meritis Award* given by the College of Liberal Arts and the Liberal Arts Foundation Advisory Council. The award, which was established in 1984, honors individuals committed to the liberal arts who have made outstanding contributions in professional or philanthropic pursuits or who have participated in service related to the College of Liberal Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. He will join a small, select list of people previously honored.

This complements his *Bundesverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse*, awarded by FRG President Walter Scheel on 20 April 1979.

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Stanley Newman Werbow

Born in Philadelphia, PA,
on Apr. 19, 1922
Departed on Oct. 9, 2005,
and resided in Austin, TX.

Stanley Newman Werbow Stanley Newman Werbow, born April 19, 1922, in Philadelphia, Pa., passed away at North Austin Medical Center on October 9, 2005, with his family at his side. With the love and devotion of his wife, Naomi, they managed the delicate balance of Stanley's health for many years and still managed to live a very full and rich life. He is profoundly loved and will be missed by Naomi, his wife of 53 years and his three daughters and their husbands, Susan and Mike McClure, Emily Werbow and John Stefanowicz, Carol Werbow-Schier and Gerd Schier, and his grandchildren, Jefferson McClure, Michael McClure and Noah Schier.

One of the "Greatest Generation," Stanley served as a cryptanalyst technician in the US Army 849th Signal Intelligence Service during WWII, attaining the rank of Staff Sergeant. Stationed in Italy, his unit was instrumental in the allied effort to defeat the enemy at the Battle of Monte Cassino. He and the other members of his unit were awarded the Bronze Star. After his discharge from the army, he returned to his scholastic endeavors, earning his Bachelor's Degree from George Washington University and his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins. An invitation to teach at The University of Texas at Austin brought Stanley and Naomi to Austin in 1953.

Stanley N. Werbow is a recognized scholar of medieval German literature and historical linguistics, having contributed to leading journals in the United States and Germany. He was a Guggenheim Fellow and spent time as a Fulbright scholar in research on medieval syntax and as a guest professor at the University of Marburg Germany. In his 44 years at The University of Texas at Austin, Stanley taught German language and Medieval Culture to thousands of students, served as Chairman of the German Department, Dean of the College of Humanities, and Acting Dean of the College of Fine Arts. Among his greatest accomplishments, Stanley counts the establishment of the program in Yiddish in the German Department, and the institution of the contract BA Degree in Humanities along, of course, with the accomplishments of his students undergraduate and graduate. The College of Liberal Arts at UT awarded Stanley Werbow the Pro Bene Meritis Award in 1997. A large portion of Stanley's extensive and impressive library resides as a collection at the Bridwell Library of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

Stanley had a great love and appreciation for his university community and colleagues. Many know him for his keen and dry sense of humor, love of sailing on Lake Travis, European travels and appreciation of music, art and culture, and for his unconditional love, and support for his family. We thank all of Stanley's caregivers for their attention and support during his long illness. There will be a private burial. A memorial celebration of Stanley's life will be held at Weed- Corley Fish Funeral Home at a time and date still to be determined.

In lieu of flowers, those who wish may make memorial contributions to:

Parkinson's Disease Foundation
1359 Broadway, Suite 1509
New York, NY 10018
(800) 457-6676 (212) 923-4700

Or

Diabetes Research Institute Foundation, National Office
3440 Hollywood Blvd., Ste. 100
Hollywood, FL 33021
(954) 964-4040, (800) 321-3437.
