

Helga's English Articles

Attempts To Publish

by Helga von Schweinitz

Introduction

Helga already had several of her articles published in German magazines and newspaper, in German of course. Starting in 1974, Helga began seriously to try to publish her articles in English publications. Once her husband, Hans, retired and they continued to live in Austin Texas, Helga's articles were very often accepted by publications. Herein are a few of her attempts between 1974 and 1982 that did not make it publication.

Because they are mentioned in the submission, her interview in the Newspaper in 1973 and her election into Phi Beta Kappa in 1973 are included.

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Learn Me and Love Me

In 1974, Helga von Schweinitz wrote an article about her experiences in the school year when she taught at the New Heritage School in Montgomery Alabama. During that school year she taught three months of French, three months of German, and three months of Spanish.

The compendium contains all the letters back and forth has Helga submitted the article to various publications. There is no indication that the article ever did get published.

The reason that her records have her letters and the response letters, is because Helga often wrote out a draft of her letters. They were in her files.

At the end of the compendium are the photos and the article.

Process of submission

In January 1974 she submitted the article to “Die Unterrichtspraxis” at Stanford University. It was not until November 1974 that her article was rejected. But they did recommend that she submit the article to Reader’s Digest or another publication.

In 1975, she submitted to publication “Rundschau” and they rejected on 15 January 1975.

On 2 March 1975 she submitted the article to Reader’s Digest. Their rejection letter arrived on 15 March 1975.

Then in April 1975, she submitted the article to the University of Nevada for consideration in their publication “Accent on ACTFL” (ACTFL is American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages). On 29 April 1975, Mr Bob Gilman responded and request some photos to accompany her article. Helga sent five photos on 13 May 1975. There was no response for several months. So on 9 September 1975, Helga send another letter to Mr Bob Gilman requesting a status. On 16 September 1975, Mr Bob Gilman responded, stating that the “Accent” could not publish the article, but that he was sending the article on to Mr Warren Born who is the editor of another publication in the ACTFL

On 8 July 1976, Mr Warren Born writes to Helga. Instead of publishing her submitted article, he would like for Helga to submit “prose passages” for the

photos she has submitted so that might be published under “Using non-Text Materials in Foreign Language Classes.” On 6 August 1976, Helga sent him ‘prose passages’ for each photo for his review. Helga gets no response, and almost a year later on 30 July 1977 she writes a letter to Mr Warren Born asking for status. Again, no response. On 11 December 1978, Helga receives a letter from Ms Cathy Linder, acting editor, basically rejecting the article and the ‘prose passages’ and returns the photos and article.

There is no more correspondence after 11 December 1978 in Helga’s file, so all indications are that the article did not get published, and neither did the photos with their “prose passages”.

Correspondence

1974 Jan 13

Helga von Schweinitz
223 Murfee Drive
Prattville, Ala, 36067
3 January, 1974

UP Editorial Office
Department of German Studies
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Sir.

During the 1973/1974 school year I am teaching three months of French, three months of German and three months of Spanish to grades 1 through 9 in the New Heritage School in Montgomery, Alabama. Foreign Language is a mandatory subject, and all students, from the handicapped to the very gifted, participate.

I am gaining a great experience and I am sure that somebody can profit from knowing about it. Do you think you might find space in one of the future editions of the *Unterrichts-Praxis* for an article in which I evaluate my experiences?

At the moment I am in the middle of the German program, which everybody enjoys most because I am a native German and very much at ease with the language and the culture. I would evaluate the German program in particular in the planned article.

We are not using any books; I am modelling the lessons to the needs of the students. I am preparing my own material every day.

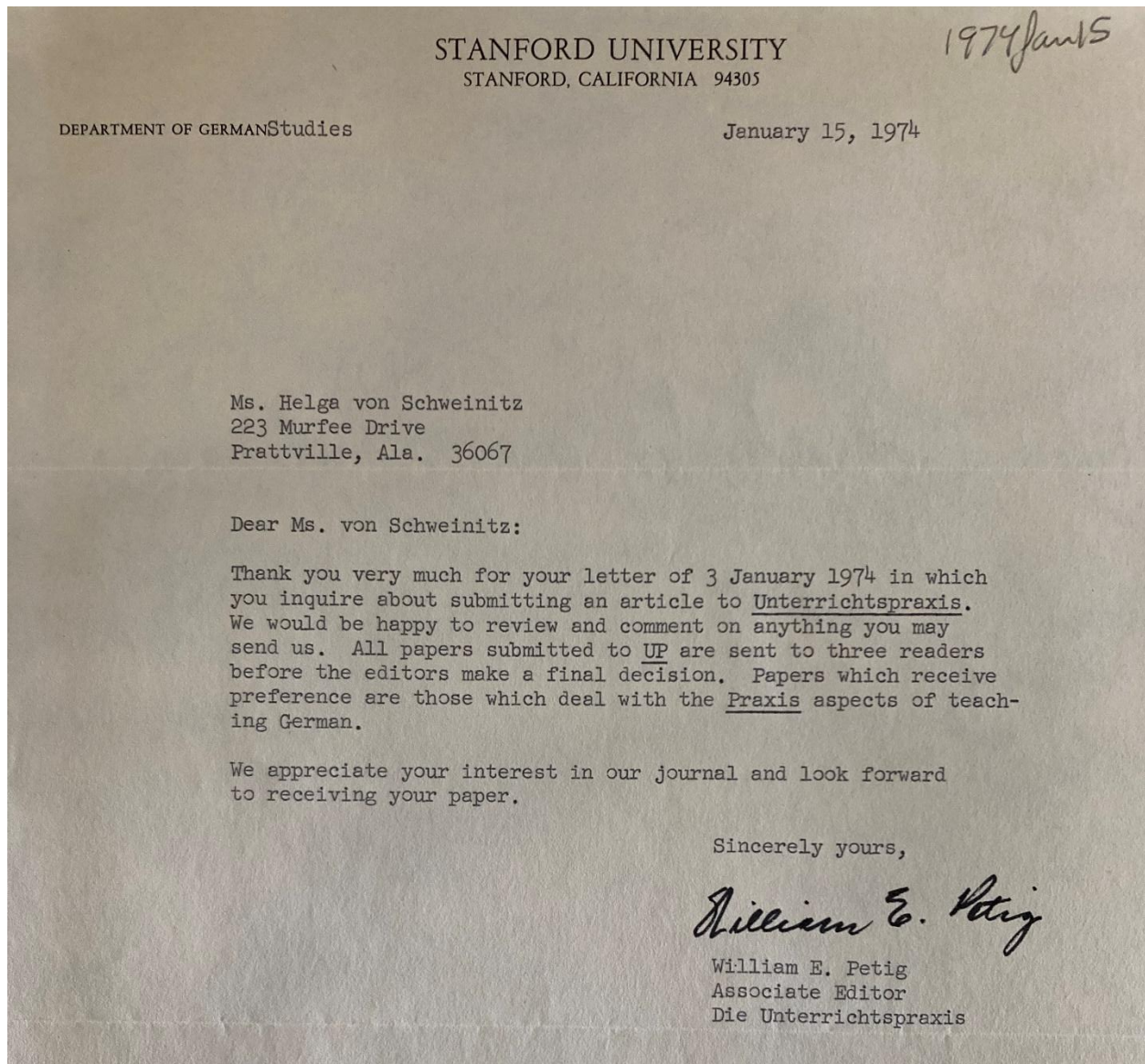
I am certified to teach German and French in highschools, I have a B.A. from the University of South Carolina, I am a member of Delta Phi Alpha and Phi Beta Kappa and I have won the West German Federal Republic Award in 1972 at the University of South Carolina.

The new Heritage School is a small private school. It was founded last year. I think their foreign language program is remarkable and even more so if you consider that Montgomery is the capital of Alabama.

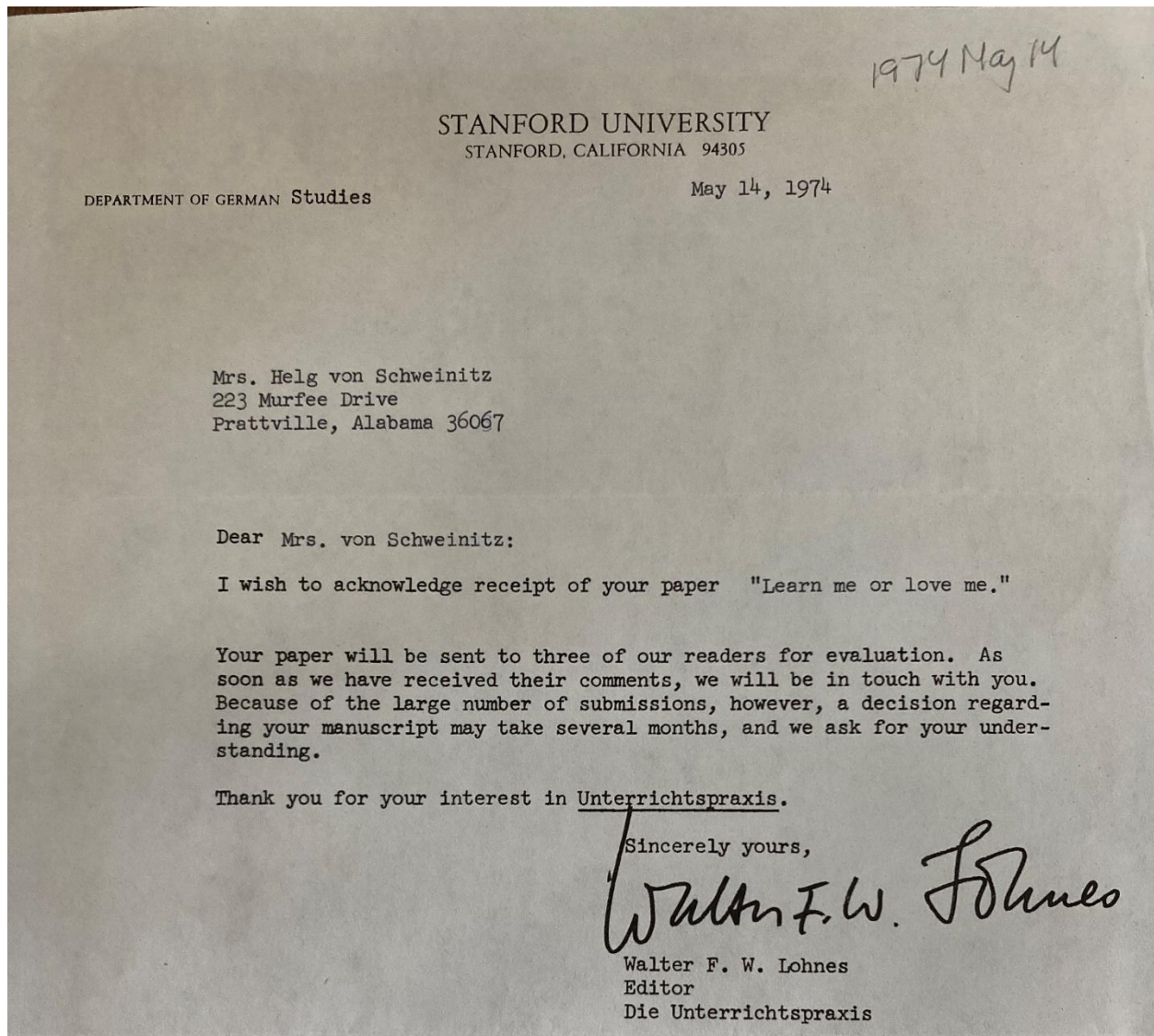
Sincerely,

3 Jan 1974 to Stanford University for *Unterrichtspraxis* publication

Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts



15 Jan 1974 Initial Response by Stanford University for Unterrichtspraxis publication



14 May 1974 Status letter from Stanford University for Unterrichtspraxis publication

Helga

Walter F. W. Lohnes
Editor, Die Unterrichtspraxis
Stanford University

Dear Mr. Lohnes,

On May 14, 1974, you acknowledged the receipt of my manuscript "Learn me and love me," in which I wrote about my experiences with FLES. I have not heard from you since.

I would appreciate if you could let me know whether you are still considering it for possible publication or not. I had ~~been~~ been asked by an editor of another professional publication ^{on foreign language teaching} to submit ~~to submit~~ ~~also~~ submit the manuscript for examination if you are not interested.

Please, understand my anxiousness.

Sincerely yours,

24 Sept. 74

Draft version of Helga's letter to Stanford University for Unterrichtspraxis publication, requestion status

Walter F. W. Lohnes
Editor, Die Unterrichtspraxis
Stanford University

Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts

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Please, understand my anxiousness.

Sincerely yours,

24 Sept 74

Department of German
SAINT OLAF COLLEGE • NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA 55057 • (507)645-9311



1974 NOV 16

November 16, 1974

Mrs. Helga von Schweinitz
223 Murfee Drive
Prattville, Ala. 36067

Dear Mrs. von Schweinitz:

Unfortunately, it will not be possible to publish your paper
"Learn me and love me" in Unterrichtspraxis.

Our readers suggest that you submit it to the NEA Journal, PTA Magazine, or preferably to the Rundschau (Mrs. Susan Parker, Editor, 339 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19106).

We appreciate your interest in our journal and wish to apologize for the delay in reaching a decision regarding your manuscript. Please feel free to send us other papers you have written.

Sincerely yours,

William E. Petig
Associate Editor
Die Unterrichtspraxis

Enclosure
WP/vj

16 November 1974, response from Die Unterrichtspraxis publication, now William E Petig, associate editor.

1974 Nov 16

DIE UNTERRICHTSPRAXIS
Report Form

Author: Helga von Schweinitz

Title of Paper: "Learn Me and Love Me"

Note: Please compose your comments in such a fashion that they may be transmitted to the author. Be as specific as possible in your criticism.

Classification of Paper:

<input type="checkbox"/> outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> acceptable	<input type="checkbox"/> better published elsewhere
<input type="checkbox"/> not acceptable for reasons given below	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> conditionally recommended as explained below	

• Reader's Comments: (Use back of this sheet if necessary)

(x) Retype and submit clean copy for printer!

This is a most unusual article, one that with a bit of polish might be sent to Reader's Digest for consideration (or at least to the NEA Journal or the PTA Magazine). Though not essentially an article that can be considered "unterrichtspraxis," I have found much truth in the article, much that will ring true and pleasurable for FIES and other teachers. As it stands it is a somewhat simple but pleasant mixture of pedagogical insights, inventions, and experiences, but more significantly it echoes that eternally returning cry of a teacher isolated and struggling somewhere out there in a forgotten classroom.

Die Unterrichtspraxis associate Editor's suggestions on 16 November 1974.

1975 Jan 1

Rundschau
N. v. S.

after x-mas

Mrs. Susan Parker, Editor,
339 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19106

Dear Mrs. Parker,

Enclosed is my paper "Learn Me and Love Me". It has reaped great praise from the editors of Unterrichtspraxis, but unfortunately they considered it not suitable for their type of publication. Mr. W. E. Petig suggested that I send it to you or to the Reader's Digest for consideration. I am giving you first choice. I hope you find ^{some room space in Rundschau for} the article this "eternally returning cry of a teacher isolated and struggling somewhere out there in a forgotten classroom" (quoted from editor ^{comment} the remarks made by an editor of Unterrichtspraxis).

Please, if you are going to or going to return the manuscript - I am certified to teach German and French. I am a member of Delta Phi alpha and Phi Beta Kappa. My previous ^{past} publications were in German newspapers. I have previously published in German newspapers.

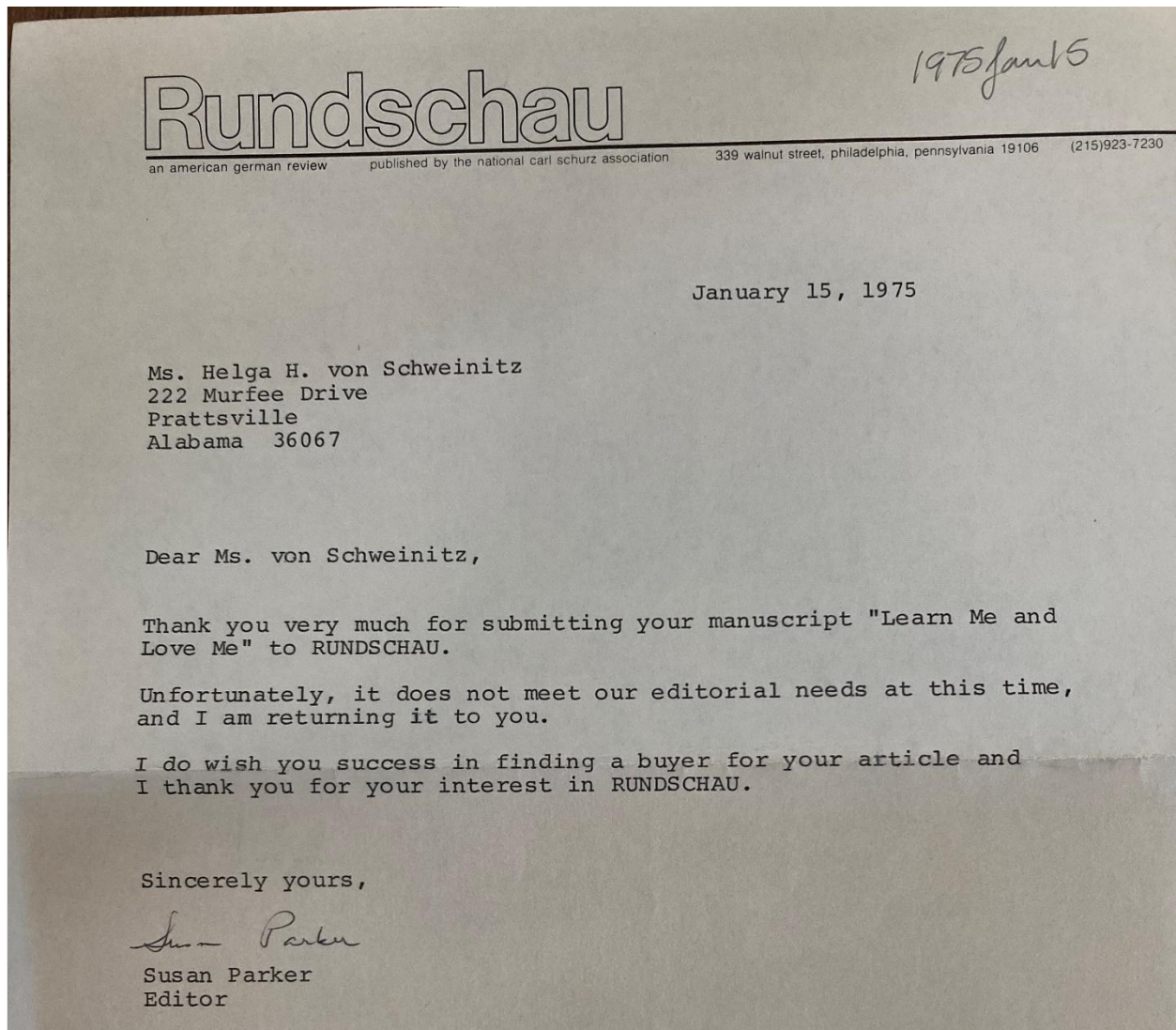
Draft of Helga's letter to the "Rundschau" publication, Probably written very early in January 1975.

Mrs Susan Parker, Editor
339 Walnut St
Philadelphia, PA 19106

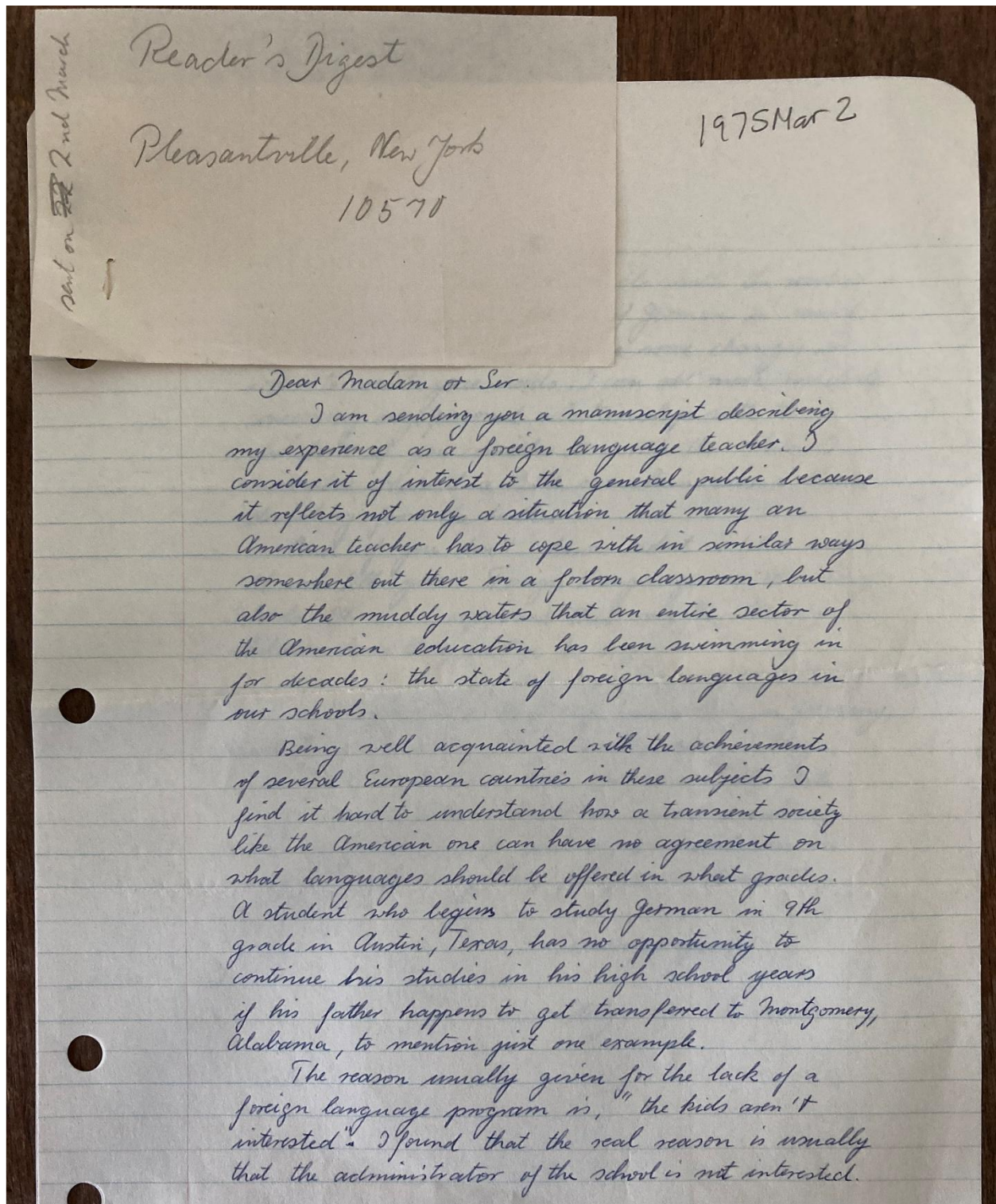
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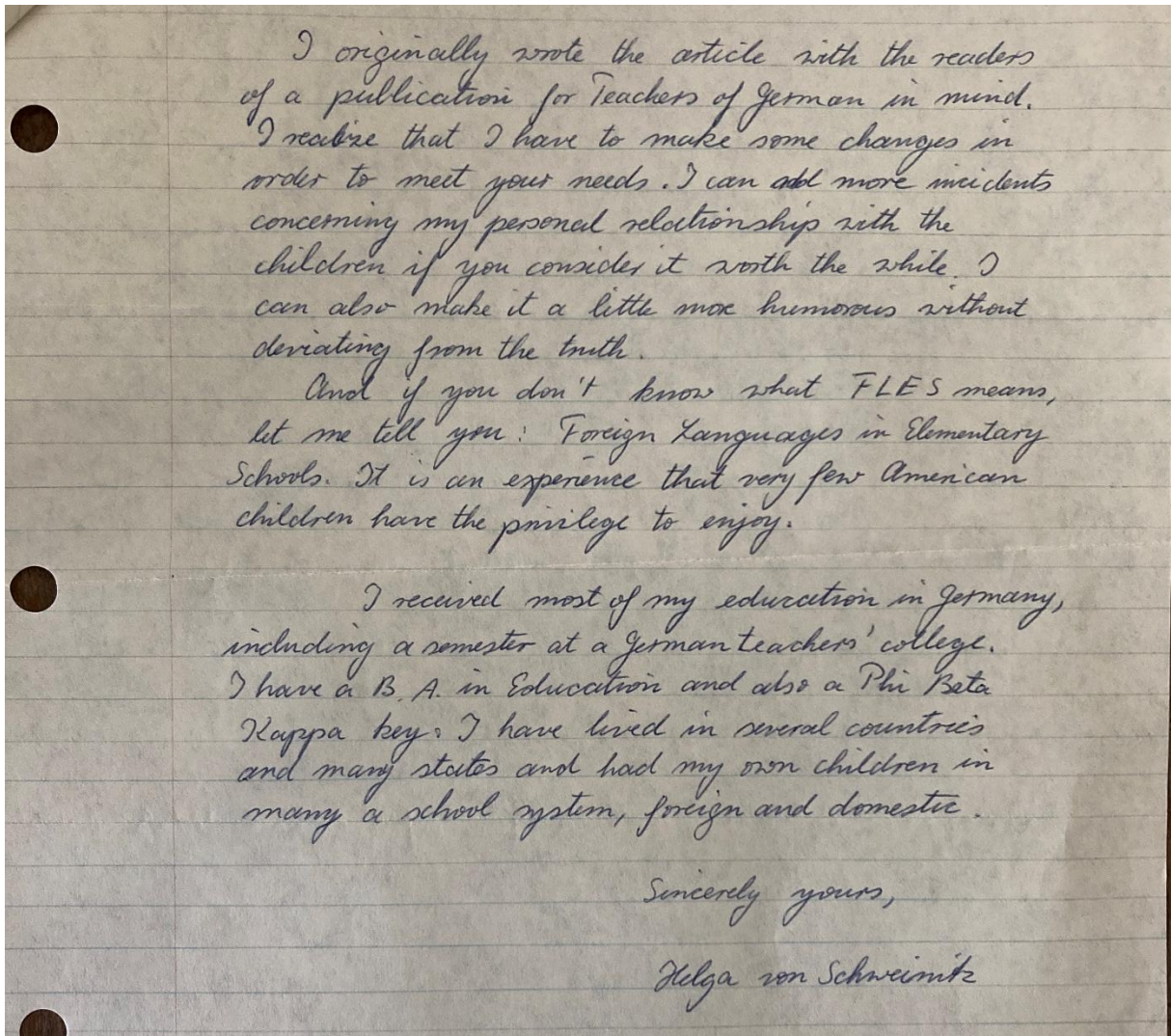
I am certified to teach German and French. I am a member of Delta Phi Alpha and Phi Beta Kappa. I have previously published in German newspapers.



15 January 1975, response letter from Rundschau.



2 March 1975, Page one of Helga's Letter with submission to Reader's Digest



I originally wrote the article with the readers of a publication for Teachers of German in mind. I realize that I have to make some changes in order to meet your needs. I can add more incidents concerning my personal relationships with the children if you consider it worth the while. I can also make it a little more humorous without deviating from the truth.

And if you don't know what FLES means, let me tell you: Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools. It is an experience that very few American children have the privilege to enjoy.

I received most of my education in Germany, including a semester at a German Teachers' college. I have a B. A. in Education and also a Phi Beta Kappa key. I have lived in several countries and many states and had my own children in many a school system, foreign and domestic.

Sincerely yours,
Helga von Schweinitz

2 March 1975, Page two of Helga's Letter with submission to Reader's Digest

Dear Madam or Sir,

I am sending you a manuscript describing my experience as a foreign language teacher. I consider it of interest to the general public because it reflects not only a situation that many an American teacher has to cope with in similar ways somewhere out there in a forlorn classroom, but also the muddy waters that an entire sector of the American education has been swimming in for decades: the state of foreign languages in our schools.

Being well acquainted with the achievements of several European countries in these subjects I find it hard to understand how a transient society like the American one can have no agreement on what languages should be offered in what grades. A student who begins to study German in 9th grade in Austin, Texas, has no

opportunity to continue his studies in his high school years if his father happens to get transferred to Montgomery, Alabama, to mention just one example.

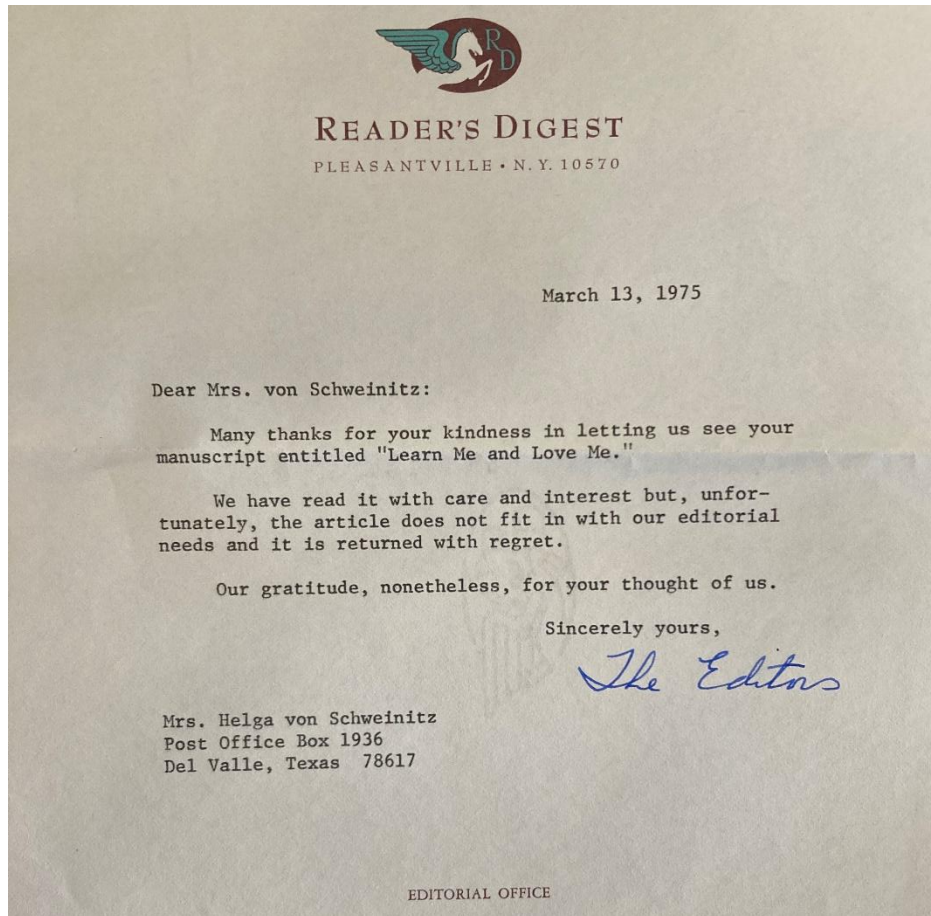
The reason usually given for the lack of a foreign language program is, “the kids aren’t interested.” I found that the real reason is usually that the administrator of the school is not interested.

I originally wrote the article with the readers of a publication for Teachers of German in mind. I realize that I have to make some changes in order to meet your needs. I can add more incidents concerning my personal relationship with the children if you consider it worth the while. I can also make it a little more humorous without deviating from the truth.

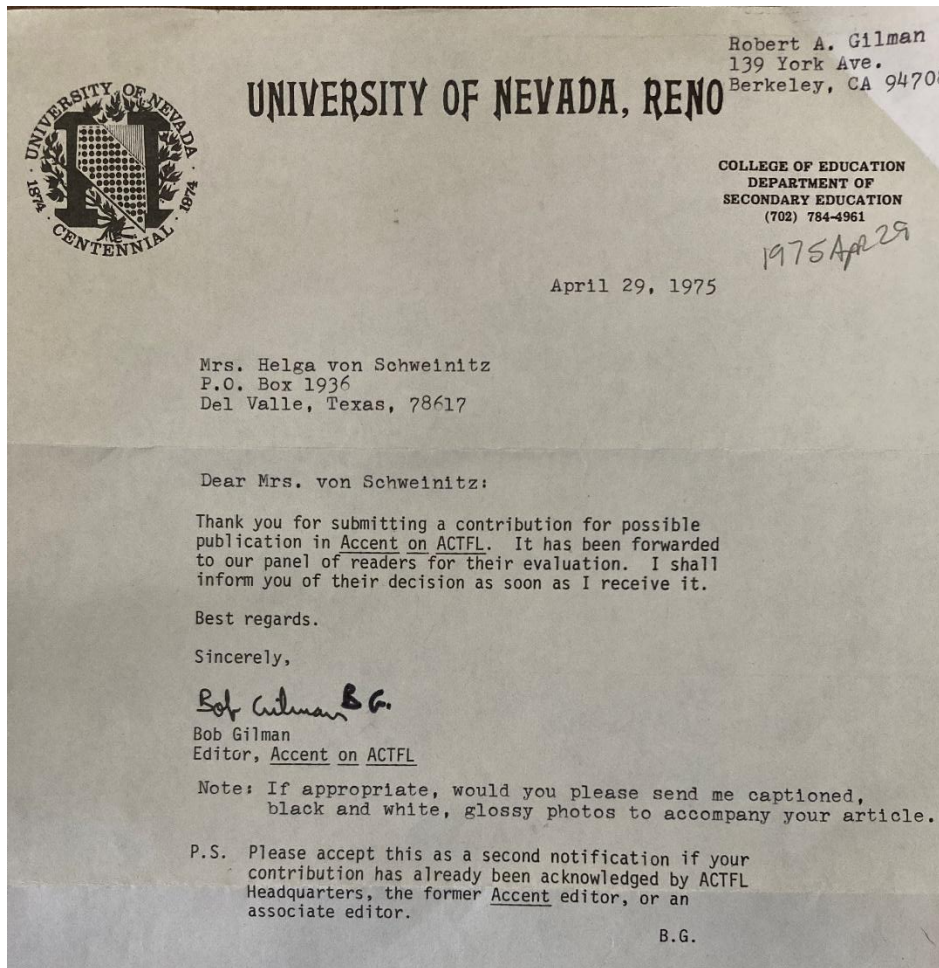
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Sincerely yours, Helga von Schweinitz



13 March 1975 response letter from Reader's Digest



29 April 1975, response letter from University of Nevada, Reno to Helga's submittal. Requesting photos to accompany article. The photos are included herein, after the article.

copy

ACTFL
Univ Nevada 1975 May 13

Helga von Schweinitz
2309 Village Circle
Austin, Tx, 78745
May 13, 1975

Dear Dr. Gilman.

In response to your letter of April 29, 1975, here are some pictures to go with my article "Learn me and love me" that you have forwarded to your panel of readers for evaluation.

Picture # 2 has been used once before by the Montgomery Advertiser in connection with a feature on my life and teaching. I have written to the paper for release of the rights if they have any.

I hope these pictures are appropriate for Accent on ACTFL.

Sincerely,

13 May 1975, Helga's response to University of Nevada letter, she is sending them the photos.

copy 1975

H. . .

9-9-75

Robert A. Gilman
139 York Ave
Berkeley, Ca 94708

Dear Mr. Gilman.

In April, 1975, I submitted an article titled "Learn me and Love me" for possible publication in Accent on ACTFL. You asked me in a letter dated April 29, 1975, to send you some captioned photos to accompany the article. I sent them on May 13, 1975, and haven't heard from you since.

Has the material been lost in, on, under or near the desk of one of the readers on the panel? I would like to keep track of it.

I am now teaching in a high school in ^{Anstien} Texas in Anderson High School, Anstien, Texas, where we have a great foreign language program. (Five class

Sincerely,

Draft of Helga's letter of 9 September 1975 to University of Nevada, asking for status.

9-9-75

Robert A. Gilman
139 York Ave
Berkeley CA 94708

Dear Mr. Gilman

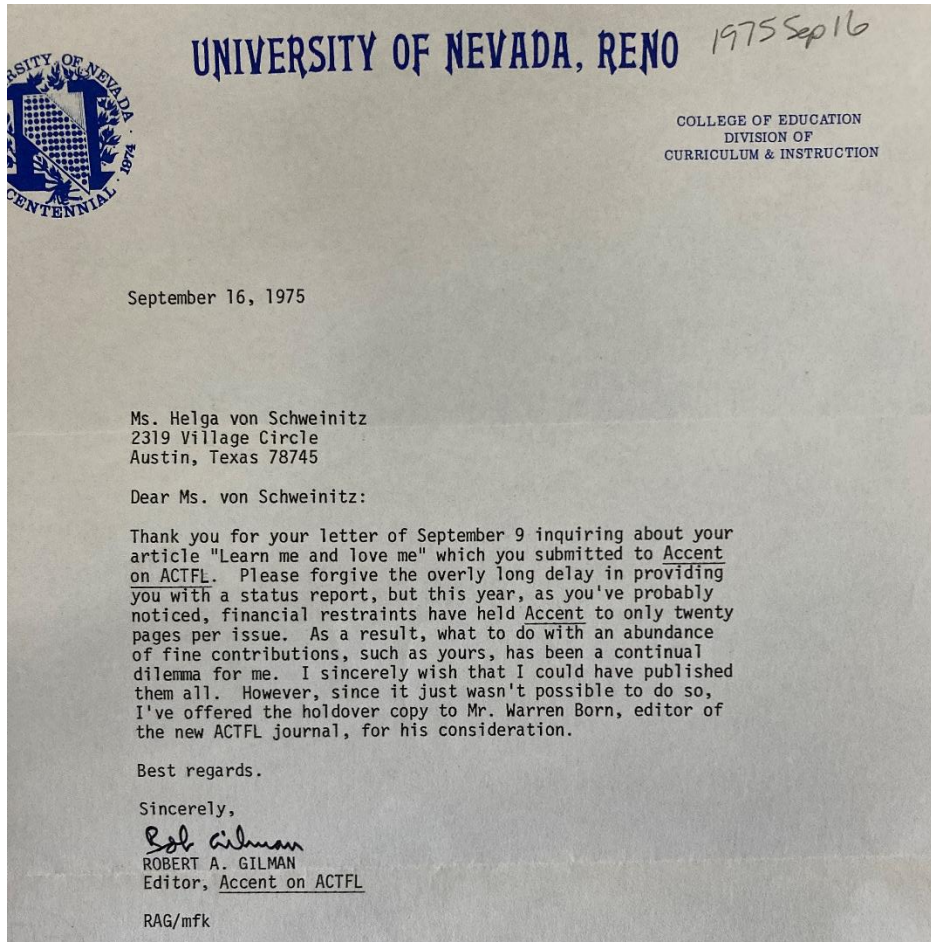
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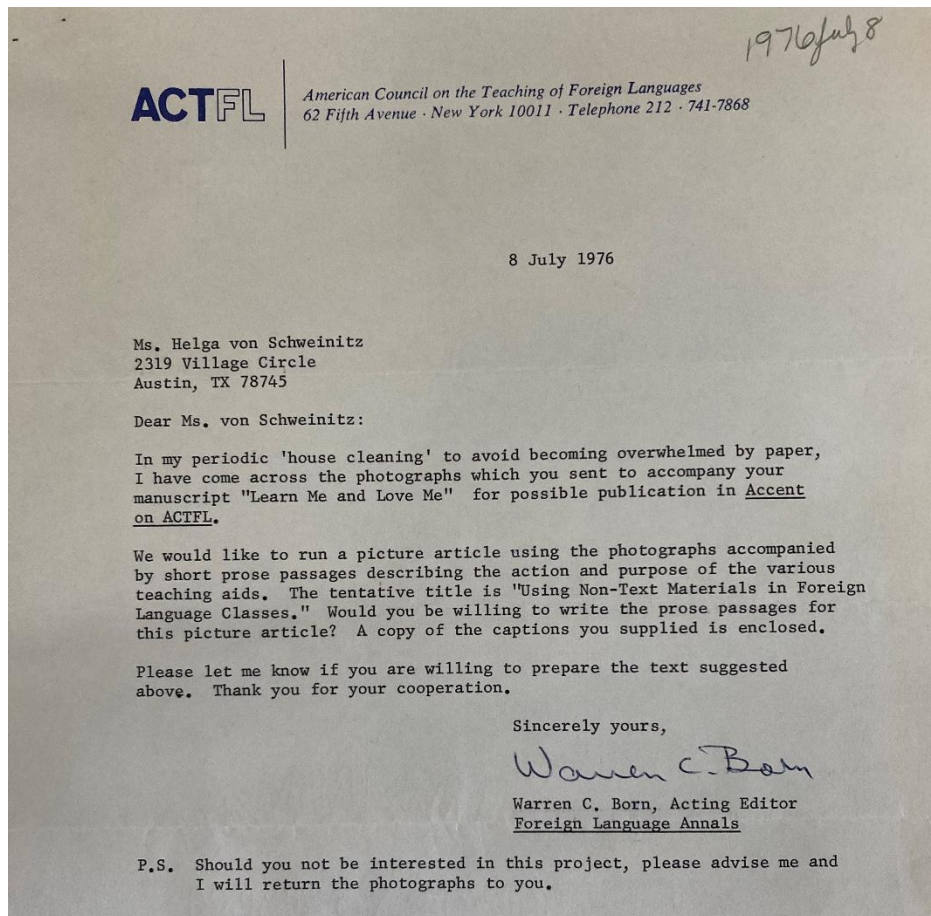
Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts

I am now teaching in Anderson High School, Austin, Texas, where we have a great foreign language program.

Sincerely,



16 September 1975, letter from University Nevada, Accent on ACTFL cannot publish the article, but Mr Gilman is sending manuscript on to Mr Born.



8 July 1975 Letter from Mr Born at ACTFL requesting "prose passages" for the photos.

Helga von Schweinitz
2319 Village Circle
Austin, Texas

Warren C. Born,
ACTFL
62 Fifth Avenue
New York 10011

6 August 1976

Dear Mr. Born:

Due to travels in Europe I have not been able to respond to your letter dated 8 July 1976 any earlier.

Yes, I would be willing to write the prose passages for the picture article with the tentative title "Using Non-Text Materials in Foreign Language Classes." I am looking forward to receiving more instructions from you.

If you have a need for more pictures with a specific contents I can easily make them as long as the subjects specified are not too unusual.

Sincerely yours,

Helga von Schweinitz

6 August 1975, letter from Helga to Mr Born at ACTFL with the "prose passages"

1976 Aug 6

Helga von Schweinitz
 2319 Village Circle
 Austin, Tx, 78745

CAPTIONS FOR PICTURES TO ILLUSTRATE "LEARN ME AND LOVE ME".
 (Pictures are numbered on the back)

- # 1. Pinocchio cried for help: "Hilfe! Hilfe!" A policeman inquired: " Was ist denn los?" And then followed the ever popular search for Pinocchio's bicycle and the thief. No English spoken, of course.

photo by Hans von Schweinitz

- # 2. "Hasta mañana, Pepito," said Karyn after each class. Most children found tremendous pleasure in being able to talk to puppets that "did not understand a word of English."

photo by Roger Wentowski

- # 3. While little hands were busy creating merchandise for playing restaurant I (the teacher) had an opportunity to give individual speaking practice to those who wanted it.

photo by Hans von Schweinitz

- # 4. The older children liked to visit with me during my (the teacher's) preparation period to have a peek at the German and French magazines that the parents had objected to.

photo by Hans von Schweinitz

- # 5. For the German christmas play the actors had to be chosen according to their size rather than their competence in German because they had to fit into the available costumes.

photo by Hans von Schweinitz

6 August 1975, the "Prose passage", which are also included under each photo herein, later.

copy 1977 Jul 30

H.

30 July, 1977

Mr. Warren Born ACTFL (American
Acting Editor 62 Fifth Avenue New York 10011
Foreign Language Annals F

Dear Mr. Born:

During your "periodic house cleaning" in the summer of '76 you ~~sent me some~~ ~~across~~ ~~sent me~~ came across my article "Learn Me and Love Me" and some photographs. You sent me a letter a copy of which I am enclosing.

I answered your request concerning the ~~capt~~ ~~writing of~~ ~~captions~~ ~~positively~~ ~~prose~~ ~~passages~~ ~~often~~ ~~positively~~. I haven't heard from you since, and I wonder what happened?

Sincerely yours,

Draft of Helga's letter, 30 July 1977, to Mr Born of ACTFL

30 July 1977

Mr Warren Born

ACTFL Acting Editor

62 Fifth Avenue, New York 10011

Foreign Language Annals

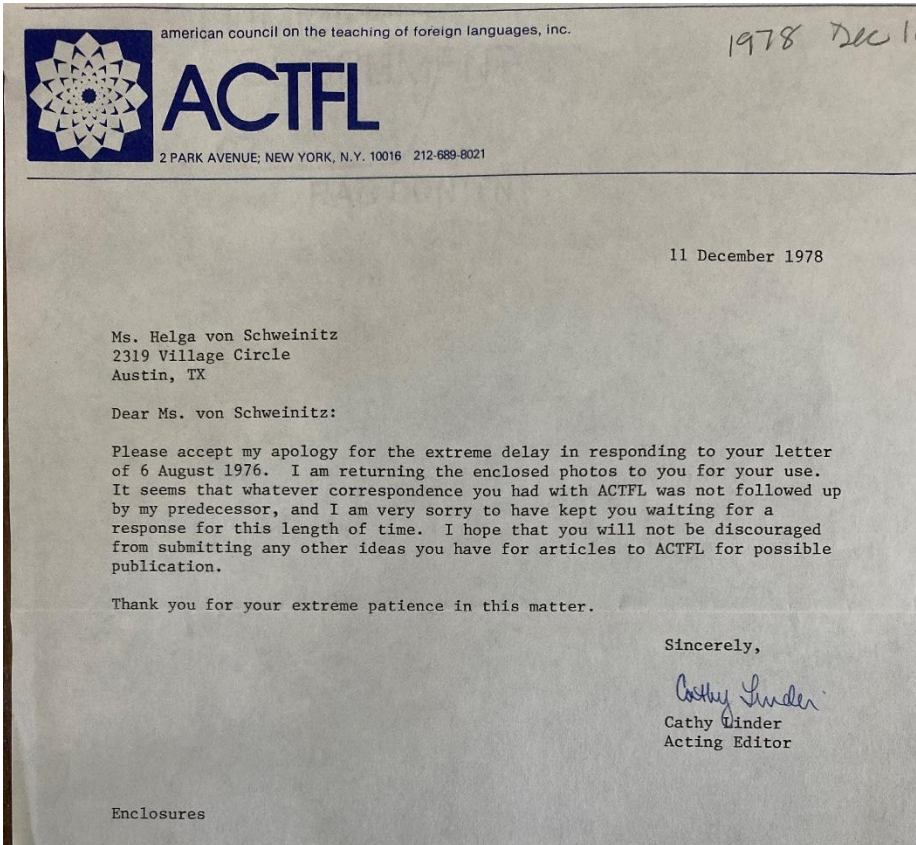
Dear Mr Born:

During your "periodic house cleaning" in the summer of '76 you came across my article "Learn Me and Love Me" and some photographs. You sent me a letter a copy of which I am enclosing.

I answered your request concerning the writing of prose passages positively I haven't heard from you since. What happened?

Sincerely yours,

Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts



11 December 1978, Letter for ACTFL acting Editor, Cathy Linder, returning the photos.

Photos with Prose Passages

Unless otherwise identified:

The boy in the cub-scout uniform and lederhosen is Helga's son.

The girl in the white shirt is Helga's daughter.

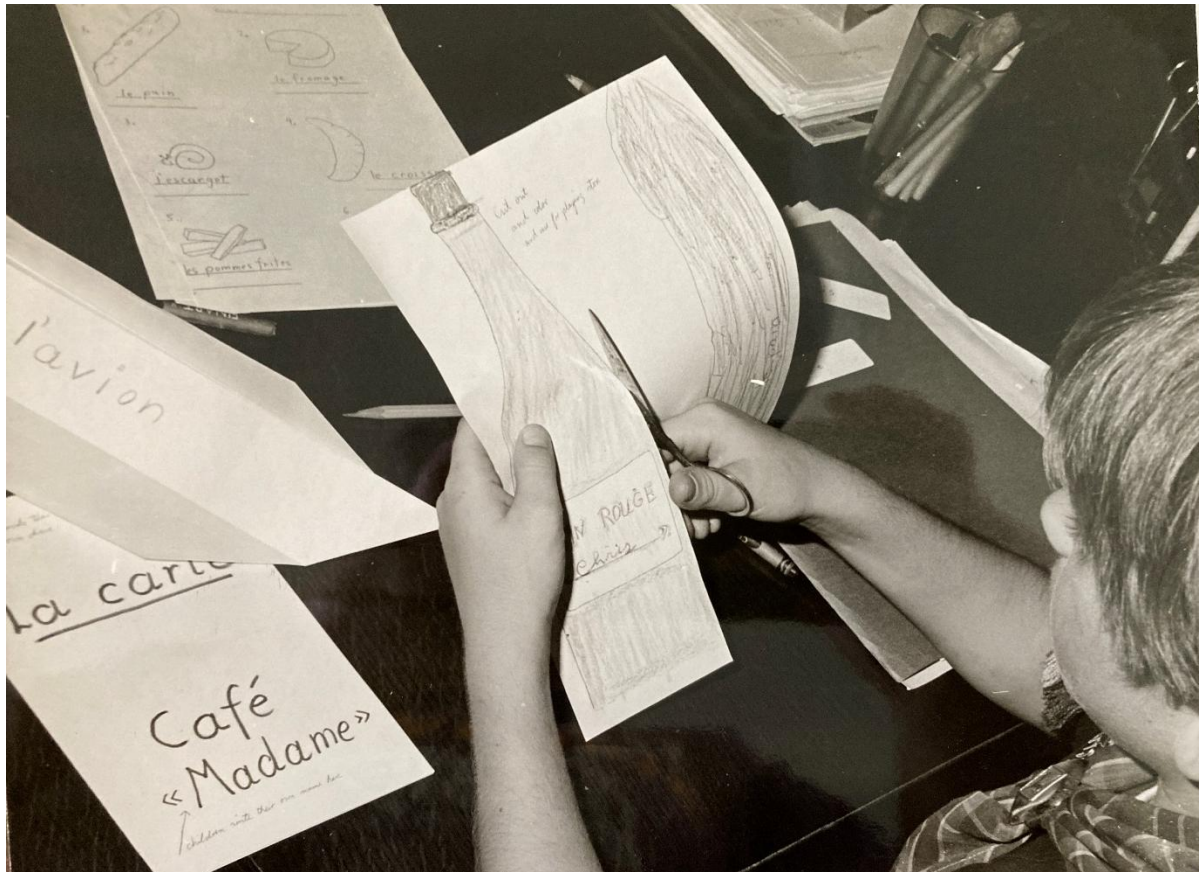
The photos were taken by Helga's husband, Hans von Schweinitz



#1 Pinocchio cried for help: “Hilfe! Hilfe!” A policeman inquired: “Was ist denn los?” And then followed the ever-popular search for Pinocchio’s bicycle and the thief. No English spoken, of course. Photo by Hans von Schweinitz



#2 “Hasta manana, Pepito,” said Karyn after each class. Most children found tremendous pleasure in being able to talk to puppets that “did not understand a word of English.” Photo by Roger Wentowski. Children are Billy Gowan and Karyne Berger.



#3 While little hands were busy creating merchandise for playing restaurant I (the teacher) had an opportunity to give individual speaking practice to those who wanted it. Photo by Hans von Schweinitz



#4 The older children liked to visit with me during my (the teacher's) preparation period to have a peek at the German and French magazines that the parents had object to. Photo by Hans von Schweinitz



#5 For the German Christmas play the actors had to be chosen according to their size rather than their competence in German, because they had to fit into the available costumes. Photo by Hans von Schweinitz.



This photo depicting the use of music to teach the language was not included with the article.



This photo was not included with the article. But the ‘older child’ must have found one of those pictures in the French magazine that would never be allowed in an American magazine.

Article from 1974 Example

This is the manuscript that Helga first submitted to Stanford University. They recommended retyping it before submitting to another publisher. Helga did.

1974 Version

Helga von Schweinitz
223 Murfee Drive
Prattville, Alabama 36067

"LEARN ME AND LOVE ME"

I was hired in late August to teach three months of French, three months of German and three months of Spanish to every child ^{name of school, (1-9)} in the school. It was a private school with grades one through nine. The daily foreign language lessons lasted for 30 minutes for the first four grades, ^{and} 45 minutes ^{five} for the upper grades. Most children had no experience with a second language.

And although this particular type of program may be of little interest to most schools, my experiences and my problems during the German period contain some points for discussion among people concerned with German in elementary schools.

Like most foreign language teachers I was trained to teach high school students. It took ^(me) several weeks to find ^{the} ~~the~~ level of academic development of the many different age groups, and it took me even longer to learn all the tricks and signals that each class seemed to be conditioned to obey. I noticed that each classroom teacher had her own way of controlling her children and ^{just} they ~~children~~ expected me to use the same methods. The stricter the teacher, the more important it was that I used her ^{patterns} ways if I wanted ^{pupils} them to pay attention to me. This factor was especially important for the younger children. What do you do with twenty six-year-olds, who storm your room after their P.E. period, pants unzipped, shoes on the wrong feet, with a burning need to go to the restroom, dropping crayons all over, some crying over lost earrings, ^{and} others because they don't know where mama is? ^{I was told by one little boy,} With this group, I had to

Learn Me and Love Me Article retyped

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We were fortunate enough to have a classroom exclusively for the foreign language classes; we could decorate it with pictures, posters, flags and signs and lease unfinished projects on the shelves. But we had no money for books. The only teaching aids available through the school were a spirit duplicator and a film

projector, both of them with a rather mean streak of unreliability. The lack of money is a common companion of foreign language programs these days, therefore I maintained a very friendly relationship with the father of one of the boys, because I knew he cherished his memories of many a winter night that he spent with one Frl. Ingeborg M. in Garmisch, and I hoped that he would donate some German books if I could find one that I could honestly recommend for use in our school.

I wrote to publishers and received only brochures, I tried to find other teachers of German in elementary schools through the AATG without result, I went for help to the office of the Foreign Language Consultant for the State of Alabama, but she was temporarily working in another department, and her library contained only those books that publishers had sent to her for possible acceptance into the Alabama textbook list. There was only one book suitable for children below the junior high age, and that one seemed to be written by a college professor for a pilot group of children selected for their accomplishments in other academic fields.

My children, however; were "just ordinary kids". Some were equipped with an intelligence obviously superior to that of their teacher, some were comfortably "average", but quite a few had any I.Q. below 80, there were those with speech defects and many with dyslexia, one boy had a hearing aid that he could turn on "off" and on "squeak", others had severe emotional and behavior problems, and many of the older boys had just entered our school after many years of "failure" in other schools, and most of them did not want to be caught showing an interest in anything but sex, cigarettes and motorbikes, at least not in front of their friends.

Since we had no material that the children could work their way through in their own speed I knew that the most difficult part for me would be to offer a challenge to the eager learners without frustrating the slower ones. It was a great experience for me to feel the enthusiasm with which almost all children started their foreign study language, because statistics show such a decline in interest. In my opinion one of the major motivational factors was my assurance that I would not count any spelling mistakes in their English as mistakes and that their problems as well as their achievements in other subjects did not impress me and were of little importance in the type of lesson I planned to give. Only few children were determined not to participate and agreed with little Leroy who said "I ain't goin' nowhere when I grow up and I ain't goin' to learn no crazy words." Most of them were naturally curious and seemed to feel like ten-year-old Anna who slipped a note into my purse "Learn me and love me." They wanted to learn -not study-and they wanted to find my approval. This note, and the many other notes and letters I received during the following months made it clear that the personal relationship

between the children and the teacher is more important than the teacher's fluency in the language, especially on the grade school level.

I asked the children what they wanted to learn. They had concrete suggestions: the numbers, colors, names, expressions for food and drinks; how to ask for directions and prices, phrases of common courtesy, some prayers (I had not expected that), animals, especially pets, words you need when you have an accident (and they thought up some horrifying situations), and a lot of other useful vocabulary. They also wanted to know a lot about the customs in other countries and almost all of them wanted to be able to read and write the language so they could "carry it around" with them and show it to their family and look things up when they needed something they had forgotten. Even first graders were anxious to read, but few of them liked to write more than three words at one time.

"Your job will be ever so easy," said one boy's grandmother to me before I accepted the job, "you tell them the words and you write them on the board and you make them repeat that stuff until they know it. They are all beginners and you can do the same thing with every class all day long." But I knew that the children would soon lose interest in that sort of a lesson and I also knew that six-year-olds illiterates needed a different instruction than fifteen-year-olds, illiterate or not. During the French period, which preceded the German; I became increasingly aware of the great variety of activity for each lesson that the short attention span of most of my students required. I knew what we wanted and did not have and could not find:

A teacher's guide with material to be introduced, with suggestions on how to introduce it to various age levels, space to mark how far each class has progressed, suggestions for extra assignments for eager students, suggestions for puppet shows and short plays, games that can be played in a crowded classroom.

A set of stencils that can be duplicated in required numbers, offering a wide variety of worksheets covering and deepening the material that the teacher has introduced orally according to the teacher's guide; each section of material should have work sheets in many degrees of difficulty, ranging from simple pictures to be colored to translations. With the teacher's guidance students should be allowed to choose the sheets they want to work on; so that they can work on their own level of development and possible achievement rather than on the assumed level of the grade they happen to be in.

Had I found this kind of teaching aid I would have pulled all available strings to get the money for it, but as it was I had to develop it myself on a day to day basis, which was a tremendous demand on my time and imagination. Although I enjoyed task in a way, since German is my native language, I wished I was a nun or a dedicated spinster. Like most teachers I have a family to live with and feel guilty toward my own children if I spend night after night preparing next day's lessons and tossing around in my bed wondering what I did with the sixth graders last Friday. My preparation period in school gave me just enough time to make up lesson plans that had to be turned in a week in advance, and to make some notes concerning grades and special achievements, and to have informal conversations with some children.

The following is an attempt to describe our German lessons; (they did not really turn out the way I would have liked them to, because I was never able to develop the material several days in advance due to lack of time,).

I could not individualize the instruction, but I tried to individualize the expectations I had for each student. If I brought a basket full of vegetable to school, it was vegetable for everybody, although little Nancy might illustrate the words "Bohnen und Spinat", John might create a menu for a vegetarians restaurant.

At first I had to assure them that German was not so hard as some people had told them. ("It's hard because my mom flunked it in college"). For the first day I made up a list of easily recognizable cognates like Arm, Finger, Hände, Telefon u.s.w..[usw is for und so weite, and so on]. I read them one by one, they repeated them and wrote down what they thought these words meant in English, first and second graders made little drawings. I promised those, who had more than 90 % right a bubble gum. The next day the entire student body went smack smack smack pop. Then I gave a little puppet show with an obvious action and again using cognates as the key words. They were delighted to find out that they could understand so much, especially since the favorite puppets "did not speak any English at all". From then on they always listened for cognates and known words and filled in the blanks with educated guesses. (Puppets were marvelous teaching aids, they fascinated all ages, especially the sex-cigarettes-and-motorbike set, shy children would talk easier to a puppet than to a person, but on the other hand, so to speak, all children wanted to get their hands on or into the puppets and fought constantly to have the next turn.)

Although I considered speaking the most important activity I started almost immediately with reading and writing, mainly because many children wanted

something physical to take home. In the lowest three grades we practiced reading and some writing only because the children insisted on it. I introduced reading in very small steps indeed. During the first session I said "Anna" and wrote it on the then "Papa" and when I wrote down "M_m_", they completed it correctly. Asked what they thought I was trying to teach them, they said that German people American letters for writing and that sometimes or always the a-sound is spelled a. I gave them a short list of names and words, using a as the only vowel; and right away we made up phrases: " Was hat Anna? Anna hat Salz. Hat Mama Salz? Ja. Was hat Papa? Schaps....." We could also sing the melodies of German songs: "La la la la, la la la la, la la la la la la la la la la."

The next day we added I: " Ist das Tina? Ja, das ist Tina. Was ist das? Glas. Was hat Linda? Linda hat Haar....." With a few more words I could tell them to make up as many sentences as they could think of, first orally, then in writing. while some of them filled two pages with combinations of the given words I had time to work individually with those children who could not work on written assignments. For the lower grades I made a drawing of a girl in a dirndl-dress with the words "das ist Tina,", and a drawing of a boy in a "Lederhose" with the words "das ist Hans" underneath. They colored the picture and we used them for dialogs. The next day all the older children stormed my desk and wanted those drawings to color, so I ran off some more copies.

After we had added the o-sound we were ready for some poetry:

Papa ist alt'
Mama ist kalt,
Hanna ist tot.
Wo ist das Bret?

One girl challenged the world of art: "Mona Lisa ist dof."

We dug our way in this manner through all the vowel, their mutations and combinations. The consonants were noticed and practiced as they occurred. The difference in achievements within each class were tremendous. While some children - some second graders among them - wrote oodles of phrases or made up dialogs and little sketches that they liked to present to their classmates, others could not work creatively, they would copy those sentences or words that I had written on the board, or they would fill in blanks on sheets that I had prepared, I always had to make sure that they were given a chance to excel in other activities.

The vocabulary I chose for the first few weeks consisted mainly of cognates and nouns in the neuter gender because they are the same as subject of the sentence as they are as direct object. (Das ist mein Auto. Hast du ein Auto?) I also suggested that they use adjectives only in connection with "ist" for the beginning in order to avoid those nasty endings.

Using this slow step by step method as the core of the lessons did not seem to be boring because I built a lot of activities around each new block of knowledge, which became easier as soon as we could switch from the sound oriented vocabulary to contents oriented words and phrases. Besides the ever popular pictures to color or complete or draw and the puppet shows I made crossword puzzles and other puzzles, we made menus, we played Bingo in various ways, we played "simple Simon" and store and family, we sang, cooked and made up a new song. We were very restricted with the types of games we could play because our room was small and filled with desks. The desks were also very noisy and unless everybody was sitting like a picture, which nobody ever was, we couldn't hear from all the noise. To transfer the play activities that I found suggested in some books for the lower grades to the outside proved impossible because the weatherman would not cooperate with my lesson plans. Many of the activities that were not based on using pencil and paper had distinct disadvantages: if they were very popular the children would argue and fight to have their turn, and if they were not so popular but nevertheless good practice, like substitution drills, only the "good" students would participate. I found that the only way to have a worthwhile conversation session was to keep part of the class busy with an interesting paper bound assignment and keep the group for the conversation small enough to give it a very personal touch. The little ones liked to whisper something into my ear or hug me after they felt they had said something very clever. Unfortunately I did not always have the proper material developed in time to work in this way, and the knowledge that the lesson was not the way it could be or should be bothered me a lot, yet I did not feel that, it was really my fault.

In order for the children to be able to go back to words or phrases that they had worked with days before it was necessary that they had a sturdy folder in which they could fasten their vocabulary list, worksheets, pictures, maps, newspaper clippings, song sheets and so on. This folder was a great problem for some, the source of increasing pleasure for most children, and the problem seemed in no way related to their intelligence. Many children - American children I must say because I have not noticed it in any other country - have the un-resistible urge to throw all written on pieces of paper in or near a wastepaper basket; even when they were genuinely proud of their work. An incomplete folder was, of course, a handicap

because they could not reinforce previously learned material systematically. Even though Nancy might have twelve different questions and answers on page 27 and Rosie only three short sentences that she copied from the hoard; both had the core of that lesson in their folder unless they had thrown it away. During our French period I had insisted on keeping all folders inside my classroom from one lesson to the next; during the German period I made the mistake of giving in to their begging: "I want to show it to my mom", or "Jim and I want to practice at home". Consequently many folders disappeared or were drenched in milk or had to serve as raw material for airplanes. Many parents, especially those with very young children, were very proud of their child's folder, prouder than they would have been about a printed workbook, because the folder contained so much of their own child's own creative work. Also those children with severe learning problems, who would never have volunteered to take a foreign language and would in most schools not even have been permitted to enroll could tell their friends about their German class and show proof without having to show a workbook full of mistakes.

According to most literature I read on FLES young children want to learn how to speak the language rather than read or write it. I found that true only for the outgoing and lively type who by their very nature would excel in it and dominate the scene. Considering the short attention span of the lower grades and of many students in the junior high school grades a purely audio-lingual sessions rarely fascinated the class for more than a few minutes, especially since the subject matter could usually not be too interesting with the limited vocabulary available. In fact, it happened to me several times that we had a lively conversation going and I felt that everybody was participating; that one serious little face asked "What are we going to do today?" Purely intellectual work was "doing nothing really." They needed a tool in their hands, a pencil, crayons, scissors, a puppet or whatever was suitable. One afternoon I had a piercing earache and could not concentrate on conducting a class. so I told the third graders to copy three pages worth of German words off the blackboard. The words meant nothing to them, it was a senseless exercise, but the children rejoiced, they worked like ants, humming a happy tune. They left the classroom filled with pride and satisfaction; today they had really done well in German, three whole pages. Yet, I realized that the only way they would learn to give an immediate German response to a German question was practice with repetition, repetition, repetition in one form or another.

Since our German instruction was limited to three months for this year with an uncertain future for the coming years I tried extra hard to make the lessons relevant and interesting and did not see the acquisition of the language skills the only purpose of the program. I tried to assure the children that their foreign language

class can be a highlight in their school day. Whenever possible I brought up matters that were of common interest that very any like the wedding of one of the teachers -Braut, Hochzeit, Pastor.... or Nikolaustag or a movie on TV. The Christmas season was a natural source of material.

In order to find material that might fascinate the sex-motors-bike-cigarette set I tugged a big box of German magazines to school that I had carefully collected over the previous months. I had found just what they wanted. They stuck their heads together and whispered and borrowed my dictionary and made notes, fantastic. I just knew found the answer to all my problems – until the next day when one of the fathers came to me and asked me to let him have a look at the pornographic literature that his son had told him about. I leafed through the pages again with the father looking over my shoulder. I had to agree that there was probably a connection between the boy's fascination with the magazines and all the nudes, the topless girls and the adds promising the ultimate in sexual pleasures. Although I had read the magazines I had not noticed anything so remarkable about the picture contents; it was the end of ordinary German family literature like "der Stern", "Quick", "Bunte Illustrierte" etc.in this Alabama private school.

Some children liked to read German comic books and actually tried to decipher the words, but most of them would look only at the pictures. The English language magazine "Scala" that I am receiving free of charge courtesy of the German Consulate proved to be most valuable. The pictures are eye-catching and the articles are usually short and concern a wide variety of subjects. The older students showed a keen interest in modern day Germany, much more than they showed in France or the Spanish speaking countries. They did not believe that the country and people they knew from "Combat" or "The Sound of Music" were real,

I had planned to show several films on Germany during the first weeks and I had sent my request to the consulate film lending service in early September and sent four reminders. Unfortunately we did not receive a film until the very last day of our German period, and that film was -of all things- a film on the training of the Bundeswehr, again reminding them of "Combat". The younger children had hardly clear conception of the world outside their immediate environment and words like Germany or France were abstract concepts, however, I had no trouble finding French and Spanish films and it was a great help to see real children speaking the language and to see that people who speak in such a funny way live in real houses.

Another problem arose two days after we had started with German. We were asked to put a German Christmas play on the stage for the school's Parent-day in two

weeks. I could not find a play anywhere than was easy enough for absolute beginners. I had to write one overnight and I had to choose the children for the roles according to their size rather than according to their ability to learn, because they, so had to fit into the costumes I had. The audience, who did not understand any German, was enthusiastic.

A great help would have been an opaque projector. It would have permitted me to use pictures out of books and out of those forbidden magazines – “decent” pictures I mean - for discussion on culture and current events. Almost every day I could have used it instead of passing things around in Class or showing it to row after row and nobody could see it well anyhow.

A great nuisance were the report cards. It was a pleasure to give the eager and fast learners their due praise, and they were always anxious to receive it, but grades based on achievements measured with respect to class or age average would have destroyed the confidence I had tried to build up in the shy and withdrawn student and in those with a low self image. I explained to them that language is an attempt to communicate and that usually a wrong response is better than no response, and that I would grade their effort and their participation in class more than little quizzes and tests we had once in a while. If they participated their own pride made them try to do things right.

I am sure that to most children foreign language lessons were a valuable experience, although many of them would never have volunteered to spend part of the day learning “crazy words”, they enjoyed it nevertheless after a while. In the beginning there was hardly anybody who had ever considered German as a possible course, but I know that quite a few can’t wait now to have an opportunity pursue their studies in depth. Traditionally Spanish is popular in Alabama and it is still the most popular language among my students, mainly because so many of their friends claim to speak Spanish; French appeals to the musically inclined and once they have developed a preference for one language over another they usually can't be converted.

I have tried all through the year to let the children feel that pure intellectual activities can be a lot of fun and very satisfying. Toward the end I gave them permission to answer me in any language they wanted to and I switched from Spanish to English to French to German and English and Spanish---it was a real “Kauderwelsch” [Gibberish] but everybody enjoyed it. It was obvious that they remembered the language the best that they liked most. The pronunciation was usually not perfect, but I consider it more important that people open their

mouth and try to get their point across rather than to recite some phrases with perfect diction and no relevance to the situation.

I am not sure that the three months of a language program is such a good idea except may be for sixth graders or for seniors in high school who just want to get an idea about what the different languages are all about and what they sound like. Many of the intelligent and eager learners would have preferred to study one of them in depth, whereas many of those who did not plan on becoming an expert right away appreciated the insight in several languages and the few phrases they could show off with. At the end of the year many children said they would have liked to have studied their favorite language all year round, but at the beginning of the year they had no idea of what their favorite was. I also had great doubts about the value of FLES in the three lowest grades, but the children's enthusiasm soon wiped all doubts away. But I do think that each a program should only be started with enough money to buy a usable set of materials, and I am not sure that the type I have in mind is on the market.

My problem with finding help for my job as a teacher of German is possibly due to my own ignorance, but rather seems to be a lack of channels for communication. Maybe the channels are there and there is simply not much information available or the available teaching material is not what it should be. I also wish that I had looked deeper into FLES while I was in college. I am sure my professors would have been happy to go into the subject had they seen an interest among their students. As it was I had the impression that the situation of finding no other job than as a teacher in elementary grades was a predicament only other people would find themselves in. It can be a very satisfying work and I hope more teachers find themselves in that situation.

Peter und der Nikolaus

While teaching at the New Heritage School in Montgomery Alabama in 1974, Helga had to quickly pen a Christmas play for a cast of all age groups. She mentions this play in her article "Learn Me and Love Me." Helga submitted the play to National Textbook Company but there is no record of their response, or if the play was ever published. Herein is her draft submission letter and her play. There is no date on the draft, so the submission date is unknown.

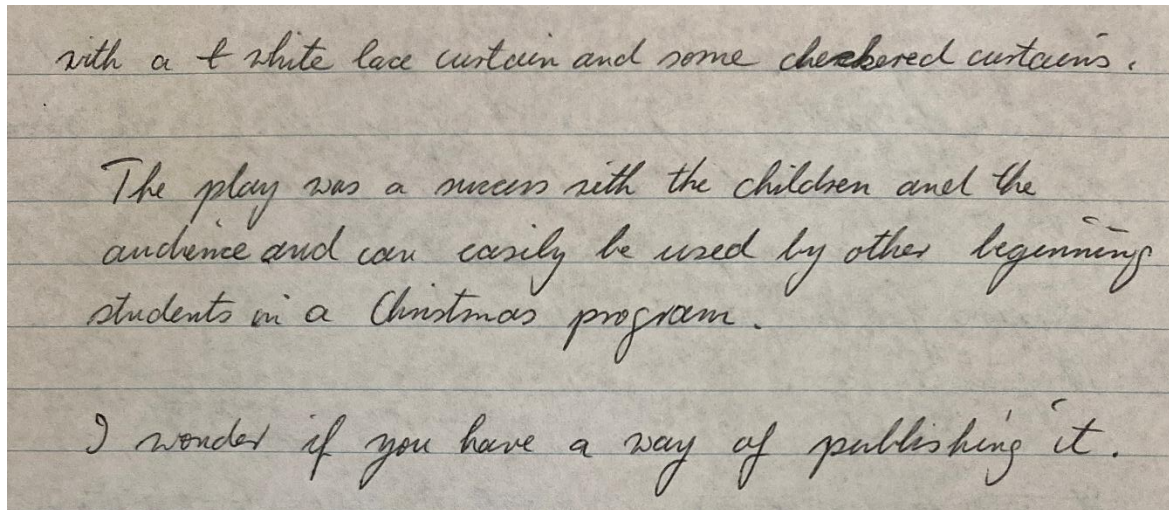
Submission Letter

To National Textbook Company

Shortly before Christmas I was suddenly confronted with the task of putting a German Christmas play on the school stage with students who had had only two weeks of German. It was supposed to fit into the school's Christmas program for the parents. The children ranged from 5 to 17 years in age.

I wrote the "Peter und der Nikolaus", ^{everybody wanted to be in} which took about ^{the play,} ~~It gave the children an opportunity to study old fashioned~~ German. I selected most actors by drawing names out of a box ^{and} grouping them only according to size. Many ^{not by their ability} During the practice sessions they other children helped to ^{necessary} organize the ~~actors~~ find the clothes and items to make the show "German." We studied a lot of cultural aspects in a hurry and everybody was very anxious to get the German pronunciation right.

Each ^{short, common} most players have only little phrases to learn and everybody four players have to write a ~~verse~~ prayer or poem. Of great importance is the acting. It can be over-acted, since it is not a serious play. This way even a not-German-speaking audience can understand the play, which was the case in our school. The play leaves a lot of room for ^{and other possibilities} changes and additions according to the needs of the performing group and gives the children a chance to use their own ~~own~~ imagination and initiative. For a ~~scene~~ to Our window, for example, was a projection screen decorated



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Shortly before Christmas I was suddenly confronted with the task of putting a German play on the stage with students who had had only two weeks of German. It was supposed to fit into the school's Christmas program for the parents. The children ranged from 5 to 17 years in age.

I wrote "Peter und der Nikolaus". Everybody wanted to be in the play. I selected most actors not by their linguistic ability but by drawing names out of a box and grouping them only according to size. Many other children helped to find the clothes and items necessary to make the show "German". We studied a lot of cultural aspects in a hurry and everybody was very anxious to get the German pronunciation right.

Most players had only short common phrases to learn and four players have to recite a prayer or poem. Of great importance is the acting. It can be over-acted, since it is not a serious play. This way even a not-German-speaking audience can understand the play, which was the case in our school. The play leaves a lot of room for changes and additions according to the needs and possibilities of the performing group and gives the children a chance to use their own imagination and initiative. Our window, for example, was a projection screen decorated with a white lace curtain and some checkered curtains.

The play was a success with the children and the audience and can easily be used by other beginning students in a Christmas program.

I wonder if you have a way of publishing it?

Peter und der Nikolaus the play

PERSONEN:

Mama (Frau Bayer)
Papa (Herr Bayer)
Maria Bayer
Hans Bayer Kinder
Heidi Bayer
Peter Bayer (the youngest child)
Nikolaus

Place?

The bayers' family room.

Time:

Late afternoon of the 6th of December.

Remarks:

If the necessary items are available, all persons should be dressed in traditional Bavarian or Austrian garments, in Lederhosen, Dirndl-dresses etc.

The family room should contain a table with six chairs. The chairs must be arranged so that all actors faces can be seen by the audience. The room should also contain a calendar with the date " 6 Dezember " clearly visible. There should be a window with a windowsill, and the children's house slippers and a pair of man-size boot should be somewhere on the stage before the play begins. An Advent-wreath would add a German pre-Christmas item.

Mama and Maria are laying the table. They put down 5 cups and saucers, spoons, a plate with cake, sugar, milk, a pot of coffee, a beer mug for Papa (with some cotton in the top to make it look like froth), a German newspaper or magazine next to Papa's plate, 6 plates.

Peter teases them and tries to make a nuisance of himself. When they are almost finished setting the table, Mama calls toward the door;

Mama: " Kommt zum Kaffee, Kinderh Kommt zum Kaffee!" `

Direction: Hans and Heidi enter. Hans turns back towards the door and shouts:

Hans: " Papa, komm zum Kaffee!"

Direction: Papa enters, smoking a pipe:

Papa: "Grüss Gott."

Direction: The rest of the family answers:

Alle: "Grüss Gott."

Direction: They stand behind their chairs and fold their hands. Mama says grace

Mama: "Komm, Herr Jesus, sei unser Gast
Und segne, was du uns bescheret hast."

Alle: "Amen".

Directions: During the grace, while everybody else has the eyes closed, Peter grabs a piece of cake and is slapped on the hands for that after the "Amen" by Mama.

Papa unfolds his paper while all the children shout out for things on the table.

Alle Kinder:

" Kuchen, bitte!"

" Zucker, bitte!"

" Milch, bitte!"

" Kaffee, bitte!"

Direction: Since they all ask for a different item at the same time and try to grab it, they make a lot of noise and Papa slams the fist on the table and yells:

Papa: " Ruhe!"

Directions: They are very quiet right away. Hans looks around and spots the date on the calendar and shouts:

Hans: „Heute ist der sechste Dezember, heute kommt der Nikolaus!“

Directions: All the children jump up and fetch their slippers,
only Peter fetches one of Papa's boots, and exclaim joyfully:

Alle Kinder: " Heute kommt der Nikolaus, heute kommt der Nikolaus,
heute kommt der Nikolaus."

Directions: Papa can't stand that noise and yells again:

Papa: " Ruhe bitte!"

Directions: While the children line up their slippers on the window sill
They are very quiet and one can hear bells ringing and a deep voice
grumbling and heavy steps behind the stage or outside the auditorium. Heidi
looks through the window:

Heidi: " Horch, da ist er schon!"

Directions: Nikolaus enters. He has a big book and a big sack. Peter points toward
him and says in surprise:

Peter " Das ist der Nikolaus."

Directions: Then he runs and hides behind his mother's apron, or behind her
back. Nikolaus huffs and puffs and says:

Nikolaus: " Grüss Gott. Wohnt hier Familie Bayer?"

Direction: They look at Papa, who is lighting his pipe again with a smile.
Then they say:

Alle Kinder: "Ja, Nikolaus. Hier wohnt Familie Bayer. Setz dich, bitte."

Direction: They offer him a chair.
Nikolaus opens his big book:

Nikolaus: " Hans Bayer."

Directons: Hans steps forward, bows and recites a little verse:

Hans: " Lieber, guter Nikolaus,
Komm in unser kleines Haus
Und bring uns deine Gaben,
die wir so gerne haben."

Directions: Nikolaus is very pleased and fills Hans' slipper with nuts and apples and an orange, while he says:

Nikolaus: "Sehr gut, mein Kind, sehr gut."

Directions: Then he calls the next child:

Nikolaus: " Maria Bayer."

Directions: Maria courtesies and recites a little prayer:

Maria: " Ich bin klein,
Mein Herz ist rein,
Soll niemand drin wohnen
Als Jesus allein. Amen."

Directions: Nikolaus fills her slipper saying:

Nikolaus: " Sehr gut, mein Kind, sehr gut."

Directions: Then he calls the third child,
whose name he also finds in his book:

Nikolaus: " Heidi Bayer."

Directions: Heidi recites:

Heidi: " Lieber, guter Nikolas,
Bring den kleinen Kindern was.
Lass die grossen laufen,
Die können sich was kaufen."

Directions: Nikolaus laughs and fills her slipper, too.
Then he calls the youngest boy, who is still hiding behind his mother.

Nikolaus: " Peter Bayer."

Directions: Peter has not learned a poem or prayer and sticks his tongue out and makes a long nose at Nikolaus and tries to run out of the room, but his brother and sisters hold him back. Nikolaus gets up. He is obviously upset. He opens his big sack. Peter starts to struggle and to scream:

Peter: " Nein, nein, nein! Ich will nicht! Nein, nein!"

Directions: Hans, Maria and Heidi help Nikolaus to put Peter into the sack. Nikolaus leaves with Peter. At first all the remaining children look happy to get rid of their naughty little brother, but then they feel sorry for him and cry very loudly. Maria falls on her knees and mumbles a prayer while she sobs, Heidi runs to her Papa:

Heidi: " Papaaaaa! Papaaaaaaa!"

Directions: Hans pulls out a big handkerchief and runs to Mama:

Hans: " Mama, wein doch nicht. Bitte, Mama, wein doch nicht."

Directions: Then the mother starts to cry.
She covers her face with the apron and cries out:

Mama: " Mein Peterle! Mein Peterle!

Directions: Papa slams his fist on the table once more:

Papa: " Ruhe, zum Donnerwetterh"

Directions: He looks at his sobbing family and decides to try to put an end to their misery. He walks to the door and calls Nikolaus back:

Papa: " Nikolaus! Nikolaus!"

Directions: Nikolaus appears in the door

Nikolaus: " Na und?"

Directions: Papa puffs on his pipe for a while and asks finally:

Papa: " Lass das Peterle bitte bei uns, Nikolaus."

Directions: Nikolaus hesitates, then he carries the sack to the middle of the stage, mumbling:

Nikolaus: " Na gut, na gut."

Directions: All the other children beg him:

Children: " Bitte, Nikolaus, bitte,",,

Directions: When Peter emerges from the sack, they help him saying:

Children: " Peterle, Peterle."

Directions: Peter hugs his father and says:

Peter: " Danke schon, Papa. Ich will jetzt immer lieb sein."

Directions: Then he runs to his mother and the rest of the family groups around them, facing the audience and looking sideways to where Nikolaus gathers his things. They wave at him:

Familie Bayer "Auf Wiedersehen, Nikolaus! Auf Wiedersehen."

Directions: Then they all bow to the audience.

ENDE

Some Terms Translated

Komm, Herr Jesus, sei unser Gast
Und segne, was du uns bescheret hast.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest
And bless what you have given us.

Lieber, guter Nikolaus,
Komm in unser kleines Haus
Und bring uns deine Gaben,
die wir so gerne haben.

Dear, good Santa Claus,
Come to our little house
And bring us your gifts,
that we like so much.

Ich bin klein, I am small,
Mein Herz ist rein, My heart is pure,
Soll niemand drin wohnen Nobody should live there
Als Jesus allein. Amen. As Jesus alone. Amen.

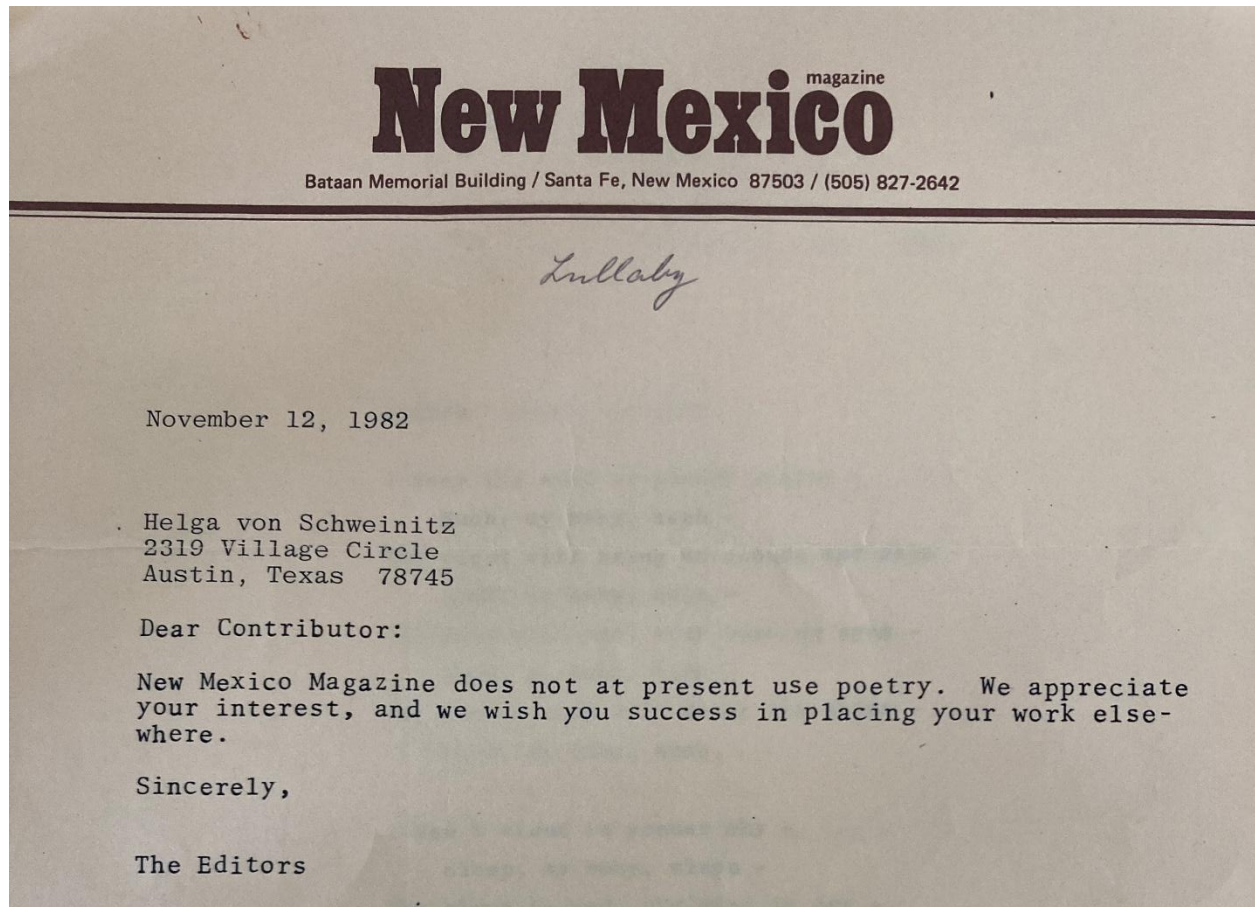
Lieber, guter Nikolas, Dear, good Nikolas,
Bring den kleinen Kindern was. Bring something to the little children.
Lass die grossen laufen, Let the big ones run
Die können sich was kaufen. They can buy something."

Donnerwetter Thunderstorm [but also used a cuss word]

Lullaby

While living in Alabama, 1972-1974, Helga wrote a poem titled either "Chaves County Lullaby" or "Indian Lullaby". In 1982, after moving to Texas, Helga submitted the poem to the New Mexico Magazine. On 12 November 1982, Helga received a reject letter from the Magazine. There is no indication that this poem was ever published.

Submission



Lullaby

Titled either “Chaves County Lullaby” or “Indian Lullaby”

I hear the wind on yonder plains-

Hush, my baby, hush -

The night will bring us clouds and rain -

Hush, my baby, hush -

The rain will cool your burning eyes -

Hush, my baby, hush -

The desert sand will drink the skies -

Hush, my baby, hush. -

I see a cloud in yonder sky -

Sleep, my baby, sleep -

The cloud is red, the wind is dry -

Sleep, my baby, sleep -

And what the wind will bring this land -

Sleep, my baby, sleep -

Is tumbleweeds and dust and sand -

See not your Mama weep.

Helga von Schweinitz
223 Murfee Drive
Prattville, Ala., 36067

CHAVES COUNTY LULLABY

I hear the wind on yonder plains -
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Is tumbleweeds and dust and sand -
See not your Mama weep.

Helga may not been able to get her own articles, plays, or poems published, but the newspapers were interested in her. In 1973, while in Alabama, Helga was interviewed by Elizabeth Via for the Montgomery Advertiser.

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1973

The Montgomery Advertiser

PAGE 55

Determination is Key to Phi Beta Kappa

By Elizabeth Via
Staff Writer, Today's Living

Helga von Schweinitz had some college credits from her homeland of Germany before she entered the University of South Carolina and to make the grades and credits from the German college count toward her degree, she had to take advance courses and pass with either an A or a B grade. Her professors doubted that she could take the heavy load of all advanced courses but to prove her desire for a college degree, she passed all the courses with flying colors, graduated after only a year and a half of study and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, one of the highest collegiate scholastic honor societies. She graduated from the University of South Carolina in August and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in April in recognition of outstanding scholarship, high moral character and promise of future service.

Helga first came to the United States about 15 years ago, but after she had graduated from high school, she came to the U.S. Helga said, "Like all young people, I was anxious to be independent and at the time, the United States seemed like a good place to be on my own." She stayed with relatives for a while but moved into the YWCO "to be more on my own." She met her husband, an officer in the Air Force and also from Germany, while living here and after they married, she put aside her dream of a college degree to be a wife and mother. When they were stationed in South Carolina several years ago, Helga decided to continue her education and now has her degree.

The von Schweinitz family moved to Prattville in September and Helga is now a Spanish and French teacher at the Heritage School. She is also a writer of poetry and short stories and has joined the Creative Writing Roundtable in Montgomery to get inspiration to write and think in English.

She has written several articles about her life in Alabama for her hometown German newspaper; and says the articles deal with the differences between German and American housewives. According to Helga, German women take great pride in their homes and are satisfied being housewives. She said they only take jobs outside their homes if their husbands don't like the way they keep house.

Helga takes great pride in her home, her family and her teaching job and has successfully combined all three careers.

Today's Living

MADERA SPENCER, Editor

Via

Helga Uses Hand Puppet as Teaching Aid



We still have this puppet.

Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts

Transcript of Article

Determination is Key to Phi Beta Kappa.

The Montgomery Advertiser, Thursday, May 24, 1973 pg 55

By Elizabeth Via

Staff Writer, Today's Living

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Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts

Helga takes great pride in her home, her family, and her teaching job and has successfully combined all three careers.

Writing club memberships in Alabama

Not only was Helga a member of the Creative Writers Roundtable, she also did presentations of her research. This was the beginning of Helga researching German subjects and presenting to an American audience.



Helga was invited to become a member of the Alabama Writers' Conclave.

Helga's English Articles Publish Attempts

ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE

FOUNDED AUGUST 20-25, 1923

6 June nineteen '73..

3918 Southmont Drive

Montgomery, Alabama

36105

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Samford University
800 Lakeshore Drive
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Birmingham, Ala. 35216

Public Relations Director

Joe Mitchell Pilcher
3918 Southmont Drive
Montgomery, Ala. 36105

Encl.: Xerox copy:

Elizabeth Via's
photo-article,
featuring Helga
von Schweinitz

Membership ap-
plication, Ala.
Writers' Conclave

Mrs. Helga von Schweinitz
223 Murfree Drive
Prettville, Alabama

Dear Helga von Schweinitz,-

Congratulations on Elizabeth Via's

photo-article, featuring you as Mother, Teacher, University

Woman, Housewife and Creative Writer and Journalist!

All of us in the Creative Writing

Roundtable appreciate your contribution to Jack Mooney's

group of student and professional writers.

I will have a release in the local

papers, announcing our Alabama Writer's Conclave Literary Com-

petition Awards offered for Poetry, Fiction and Non-Fiction.(**)

With that in mind, I'm enclosing an application for membership

in the Conclave, if you would like to join. Our annual meeting

and workshops will be held at Samford University, August 8-10.

Bea Shearon and Sue Scalf are members and plan to attend with our

Montgomery members. If you would like to join, just complete the

application and send it to me. I'll forward it, with my recommen-

dation for your membership, to Dr. Irons, Samford University.

You'll enjoy the workshops, lectures and association with profes-

sional poets and authors, from north and south-central Alabama.

The xerox copy (which I arranged) of the
photo-article about you, is yours with the compliments of The Na-
tional Poetry Day Committee, Inc., Miami Beach, Florida. . . Best wishes,

for Mitchell
Joe Mitchell Pilcher, PR (Ala. Writers' Conclave)

(**) Release will appear in Advertiser & Journal, this week (J.M.P.)



ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE

FOUNDED AUGUST 20-25, 1923

OFFICERS FOR 1973-1974

President

Mrs. Irma R. Cruse
136 Memory Court
Birmingham, Alabama 35213

Immediate Past President

Dr. Hugh C. Bailey
Samford University
800 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, Alabama 35209

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Treasurer

Dr. George V. Irons
316 Gran Avenue
Birmingham, Alabama 35209

Historian

Mrs. R. M. Rieves
1201 Shades Crest Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35216

5621 Sixth Avenue South
Birmingham, Alabama 35212
October 6, 1973

Dear Mrs. Von-Schweinitz:

This letter is to officially welcome you to membership in the Alabama Writers' Conclave. We are delighted to have you as a member of the oldest writers' conference in the United States.

You will receive from time to time Newsletters from our Publications Chairman, Mrs. Annie F. Wheeler, giving news items of our members and interesting plans which are being made for our annual meeting. If you have anything interesting to report for our Newsletter, please send it to Mrs. Wheeler, Samford University.

The annual dues for the Conclave are \$5, payable to Dr. George V. Irons, our treasurer.

Cordially yours,

Raecile G. Davis

Mrs. Raecile Gwaltney Davis
Corresponding Secretary
The Alabama Writers' Conclave

Mrs. Helga H. Von-Schweinitz
223 Murfree Drive
Prattville, Alabama 36067

Phi Beta Kappa 1973

In the above correspondence and articles there is mention of Helga being a member of Phi Beta Kappa.



Elected to the Phi Beta Kappa



Prattville Progress April 26, 1973

Mrs Helga von Schweinitz, a resident since September of 233 Murfee Drive, has recently been informed of her election as a member in course of Phi Beta Kappa. The election is in recognition of outstanding scholarship, high moral character, and the promise of future service. Mrs. Von Schweinitz graduated from the University of South Carolina in August 1972, with a Bachelor of Arts in Education.

A native of Hereford [Herford] Germany, Mrs. von Schweinitz interrupted her studies at a German University for what was intended to be a year of travel and adventure. During a visit to Milwaukee, Wisc. She met and married her German born husband. She decided not to pursue her own career as long as their children were small. They lived in Wisconsin, Germany, New Mexico, England, and South Carolina and travelled extensively.

With her youngest child in school she felt free to go back to college, and is presently teaching French and Spanish at Heritage School in Montgomery. She hopes to work towards a MA degree.

Mrs. von Schweinitz is a member of the Creative Writing Roundtable in Montgomery and a den leader of Den 7 of Pack 25.

She along with her husband, Hans, and children, Tina and Chris, will be in Columbia SC to attend the initiation dinner of Phi Beta Kappa.

The End