

A Glimpse of German Healthcare

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While we were in Ingolstadt, Germany for a conference a few of us had the fortune, due to misfortune, to glimpse Germany's health care system. We stayed in a youth hostel located near the University which housed large rooms for groups of eight or twelve. The rooms were furnished with bunk beds. Late into the night, one of us was injured trying to climb down from an upper bunk. Luckily, she was with 18 social workers who quickly took action get her taken care of.

On the way to the emergency room my usual American instincts kicked in. Aside from the language and cultural barriers, I worried how long we would wait. I imagined the noisy overcrowded waiting room, white walls, and glaring fluorescent lights. I estimated I'd be awake well into tomorrow afternoon.

It was clear that my anxiety was unfounded. The emergency room was silent; there was barely anyone there. Dr. Lawson spoke with the triage nurse who asked a few brief questions. Almost immediately, the student was taken back to be treated. The rest of us settled into the waiting room, where there was only one other group waiting. The walls were a pleasant yellow. It was still. There were lamps, and few fluorescent lights.

In Germany, you are required to have health insurance. Around ninety percent of the population are insured under the compulsory state insurance program. If you make enough money you can opt for private insurance that has a few advantages. Private insurance covers alternative methods like acupuncture. You also have more flexibility on where you

choose to get care. German citizens pay out approximately forty percent of their salary for the various state benefits, and about fifteen percent is for health insurance.

Is it worth it? Thirty minutes after we arrived, a doctor came out to speak with us. They had done as much as they were equipped to do for the student. In order to save one of her teeth, she strongly recommended we head to a hospital about an hour away in Regensburg. An oral surgeon in Ingolstadt would not be available until eight in the morning. If we left now, we had a better chance of saving her tooth. We clambered into a taxi and sped off to Regensburg. Again, we were seen immediately.

Throughout the rest of the evening and into the morning hours, we were (continued on page 2)

A German Refugee Camp?

Two oversized trailers with broken windows sit in the middle of a parking lot, which doubles as a traffic island, just outside central Munich. I walked through the fence and there I stood at the next agency visit on our trip. My eyes were in

disbelief. It looked much like an abandoned construction site with busted asphalt and wires hanging loosely from one building to the other. This was one of seven such places in Munich. This was a refugee camp. It is within these

fences that the German government sends foreigners seeking political asylum in their country. Germany does not have a refugee resettlement program like the U.S. However, those escaping their home countries (continued on page 2)

A Glimpse of German Healthcare, cont...

bounced to different sections of the hospital. We rarely waited longer than five minutes to be seen. The total bill for all services, including surgery and emergency room care was less than four hundred dollars. Of course, we were shocked, impressed, and delighted. What a novelty to receive such immediate and affordable health care! I was immediately a fan of Germany's health care system. I was moderately humbled, however, after returning home. After doing some minor research, I discovered that this was just one side of the coin. In a report on Germany's health care system, the National Coalition on Health care

reports that "19.4% of Germans reported waiting more than 12 weeks between being seen by a specialist and receiving surgery" (NCHC, 2008). The report described long waits as a particular problem in Germany. Essentially, it appears that the German health care system is also overcrowded. It's just not overcrowded in emergency care.

It's hard to really know which system works better without a deeper understanding of both systems. However, I do believe that this experience has taught me that the answer lies somewhere in be-

tween. With so many Americans uninsured there is a serious lack of preventative care. There is also an over utilization of emergency care. Perhaps further cross cultural communication about health care with countries like Germany will produce solutions for both of us.

References:

National Coalition on Health care (2008). *Health care In Germany*. Retrieved March 31st, 2008 from <http://www.nchc.org/facts/Germany.pdf>.

-Colette Henderson

"The total bill for all services, including surgery and emergency room care, was less than 400 dollars" [and would have been even less with a better exchange rate!]

Note from the editor/accident victim:

My first visit to a dentist in the U.S., which consisted of a consultation and one X-ray, cost more than my emergency dental surgery and several X-rays in Germany!

A German Refugee Camp? cont....

due to war and political unrest that make it to the German border can ask for asylum. Currently, the largest numbers are coming from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Contained in these two buildings are 200 asylum seekers. The room in which we sat for our lecture was no bigger than my living room at home, and we were told that a family of four lives in a space only half the size of this! The rooms these families must live in are hardly big enough for all four people to sit comfortably, much less have any personal space. As we did not have the opportunity to look into one of these "apartments," I could only visualize conflict within families over one of a multitude of reasons, such as the volume of the TV or bedtimes. This made me feel helpless and shiver in disgust over my own privilege.

Imagine not only sharing this small space with your family, but having to share only eight burners with every other person in your building located in the only kitchen that is available to you. A place bustling with so many people is sure to experience challenges; but imagine sharing such enclosed quarters and not being able to communicate with your neighbors because of the vast diversity of individuals and languages in this camp. It goes without saying that many fundamental beliefs within the camp differ even more than the ethnicities themselves.

Asylum seekers in Germany are not expected to be part of society, and the government makes it so they do not want to stay. They are restricted from any type of employment during their first year in the country, are not offered German language

lessons, and often are not even allowed to shop for their own food. Instead they receive merely a food package put together with no logical thought. Perhaps the German government believes that by providing them with some type of food, shelter, and water, they are providing a good life. And yes, perhaps it is better than the life they left behind; but why do conditions like this still exist in modern day countries?

Conditions like these destroy family structure, isolate individuals, and eliminate any hope for integration. I understand that outside groups may pose certain threats to a country's stability and resources, but there are certain human rights every human being is entitled to, regardless of their country of origin. It was amazing to see the intense control the German government has on

political refugees; to control their family structure, cultural exposure, and even their eating habits.

However, despite these realities, these individuals strive for a better tomorrow. They seek hope in the eyes of their children. And they are supported by a number of passionate advocates and volunteers. Thus, hope remains alive in such dismal places.

-Kelly Buntain



View of a "refugee camp" in Munich, Germany

Fuggerei: Social Settlement House

The Fuggerei is the oldest social settlement in the world today, located in Augsburg, Germany. Jakob Fugger the Rich founded the Fuggerei in 1521 as a social settlement for needy citizens.

The Fuggerei is made up of eight lanes and seven gates. The brochure considers it to be a



Fuggerei settlement house in Augsburg, Germany

“city within a city having its own church, city wall and city gates.” In 1581 Markus and Philipp Edward Fugger commissioned the construction of the Markus church. It is a small building that has been redesigned a number of times including reconstruction after World War II. Presently, the sacristy and the apartment of the Fuggerei priest are found in a house. In former times the house served as the school as well as the home of the sexton of the Markus church who was also the schoolmaster in the Fuggerei. The school of the social settlement was

founded in the mid 17th century. Around the

1520 the medical facility for employees and servants of the Fuggerei was founded and maintained into the 17th century. The house provided space for six patients at the most and included a small library.

Each house/apartment includes four rooms, the kitchen that used to also act as the bathroom, the living room and two bedrooms. Some of the apartments include sheds and a small backyard. An interesting thing about the houses was the bell pulls. Each house had a bell pull in a different shape. Allegedly, the bell pulls at the house entrances

were designed so that at night, on the unlit lanes, residents could find the right entrance by feeling their way home. However today the lanes are lit up at night. The Fuggerei is the last location in Augsburg where gas lights can still be found. The annual rent for an apartment is still the value of 0.88 euros as well as three prayers a day for the founder and the Fugger family. Presently 150 persons occupy 140 apartments in 67 buildings. The most prominent resident of the Fuggerei was the master builder Franz Mozart, the great-grandfather of the composer Wolfgang Mozart.

-Brittany Carrithers

MOSAİK Student Photography Project

The 13th LOSS conference, “Migration-Chances and Risks of Diversity” at Katholische Universität Eichstätt in Ingolstadt, Germany was an opportunity for Kent students to learn about immigration patterns and the effects of migration and cultural adjustments experienced by families transitioning and living abroad, from Hungarian, German, Finnish and US Professors. An interesting part of this conference was a photographic documentary of immigration issues in Germany presented by a group of Ingolstadt’s high school students. Their photo documentary, entitled the MOSAİK project, was an escape from the conference’s air of academia and gave an introspective view on the divisions between immigrants and native Germans as well as the opportunities available to the privileged students on the gymnasium track of the German education system.

The MOSAİK project had six different photo projects that showcased the German world through the eyes of the students; it was truly sociology by camera! The first group of students contrasted the auto maker Audi’s investment in the community via employment opportunities in factory/assembly line work with their lack of concern for surrounding impoverished and blighted areas. The photos captured glistening cars and silver modern buildings with dilapidated houses occupied by families living in abject poverty in the background.

The second group of students focused on the effects of immigration through the lives and traditions of immigrant children. Ingolstadt’s immigrant children (primarily Turkish) were photographed playing soccer and sports in the shadows of high rise low income houses. Muslim

children were photographed in places of worship alongside Russian and German children in orthodox or traditional Catholic churches. This photo project contrasted German and Turkish culture and spoke to the cultural issues both tangible and intangible facing Germany’s native and immigrant youth.

Another photography series focused on play areas for native Germans and Turkish immigrants, you can guess the differences. Areas that are primarily inhabited by “true Germans” had cushy, shiny new slides and playground equipment; areas that were primarily low income or inhabited by Turkish immigrants were run down, rusty, and in some cases broken and falling apart. This project mirrored the varied social circumstances and opportunities available (continued on page 4)

“This project gave an introspective view on the divisions between immigrants and native Germans”



A playground, built by volunteers, located at the camp in Munich for those seeking asylum in Germany

Visit to a Hauptschule in Ingolstadt

One portion of our trip we visited a Hauptschule, or secondary general school in Ingolstadt, Germany. The school system in Germany is completely different than in the United States. Traditionally a Hauptschule teaches basic general education and vocational training. When we first arrived at the school we were introduced to the principal and then escorted to a language class. The class was made up of kids from the ages of 11 to 15. The kids were from all over the world; Afghanistan, India,

Russia, Turkey, and Brazil. They were learning German and English.

Each of us sat down next to a student to chat. The young girl that I sat next to was Eugenia. She and her family are originally from Russia, but moved to Germany five years ago. Eugenia explained to me, in her budding English, that her family came to Ingolstadt to find employment and have better educational opportunities, the basic reasons I believe many families immigrate from their home to other parts of the world.

The students were expecting our visit and had prepared a short history about Ingolstadt. Eugenia was a shy girl and reluctantly told me about a few places in her home. She said that Ingolstadt is

located along the banks of the Danube River, which is Europe's second longest river. She also pointed to a picture of an Audi vehicle. She said that the German automobile's headquarters was based in Ingolstadt. She ended by showing me a picture of a fortress called "New Castle" that was built by Louis VII, Duke of Bavaria but is now a museum.

We had also prepared a short presentation for the kids. With overhead slides we showed them pictures of the U of L campus, Churchill Downs and a few other points of interest in Louisville. We also explained to the kids what the profession of Social Work entailed and the different fields we were each involved in. After that we just sat and pieced together a conversation about our lives.

Eugenia asked me about the music in the United States and if I had a boyfriend. When I told her I wasn't married and had no children she grimaced and asked me how old I was. A reaction not uncommon in the United States as well. Apparently being 29 years old and unmarried grants you old maid status in Germany as well as the United States. She told me she was 15 years old and had a 17-year-old Russian boyfriend. She said her favorite past times were to spend time with her boyfriend and listen to music. At the end of our visit we said our farewells. Meeting with the students proved to be an important part of our trip and education of the kids and school system of Germany.

-Andrea Lopp



Kent student Maggie Evans with the a secondary school student in Ingolstadt

MOSAİK Student Photography Project cont...

to native Germans and those classified as immigrants.

With immigration comes cultural exchange. In Germany, this is evident in the enclave societies that harbor ethnic groceries, restaurants and clothing stores. One photo in this series was entitled, "All the little shops." Small business owners, the majority from Africa, Turkey and the Mediterranean smiled for the camera showing off their fresh foods and

produce, culturally appropriate clothing, native music and blooming flowers. This photo project spoke of the hard work and struggle of small business owners facing the added hindrance of being an immigrant in Germany.

The photography projects by these high school students spoke volumes to the social and economic issues ever-present in Germany. It was incredible to see these

largely German youth, privileged to be in the gymnasium tract in the education system, criticizing the institutional racism and discrimination against immigrants and refugees in Germany. While the projects were small and informal, they were the unpolluted eye into the issues of residents and immigrants in Germany.

-Olivia Bourke



Some anti-immigrant sentiment found in Munich

Day Trip to Nuremberg

Nuremberg, written as “Nürnberg” in German, was one of the cities we visited on our school trip to Germany. Also referred as the “secret capital” of Bavaria, Nuremberg is located about 93 miles north of Munich and has a population of about 500,000 people; it is the second largest city in Bavaria. With its many sights, economic strength and a rich culture, Nurem-

berg makes sure that no visitor gets bored once you step off of the train and enter the city walls.

Nuremberg has been generously designed for pedestrians. For visitors who like to explore, the first stop should be the imperial castle (Kaiserburg): a symbol of Nuremberg as it stands high above the entire city. The castle housed emperors of the Roman Empire until the 16th century. Down the street from the palace is the Albrecht Dürer-Haus where Germany's most famous artist lived and worked. Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), the world-renowned genius was born in Nuremberg.

few churches, all rich in sculpture and history. An example is St. Sebald church, built in a Baroque style, and although it went through major damages during World War II, some of the old interior decor survived like the shrine of St. Sebaldus and the stained glass windows. St. Sebaldus interior carries many sad memories from the war; several Jews were killed there during the Nazi era.

crafts and trade thanks to its central location within the European economic region.

Before you leave Nuremberg, visitors are invited to stop by the Nuremberg Ring; legend has it that it brings good luck to those who turn it around... Some of us tested this rumor and it turned out to be true because we had the best time in Germany!

**-Louise
Nyiramulinda**



The imperial castle—Kaiserburg—located in Nuremberg, Germany

While touring the city, plan to visit a

Nuremberg is the northern Bavarian economic centre. For many people, the city's associated with its gingerbread products, roast sausages, and



St. Sebaldus Church

Salzburg, Austria

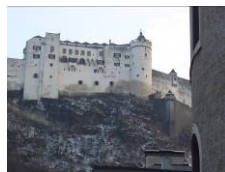
The historic city of Salzburg may be known for many things including the classic movie *The Sound of Music*, Mozart's birthplace, cultural festivals, museums, palaces, and salt mines. One could easily spend a few days taking in the sites, sounds, and tastes of the city, but since we were limited to a brief day trip, we diligently made our way to the Hohensalzburg Fortress. The 900 year-old Fortress is considered to be one of the largest and most well maintained Medieval Fortress's throughout Europe. Construction first began in 1077, by Archbishop Gephard in order to protect the clergy and population of the area. The

Fortress is the city's landmark and considered to be a must see for visitors.

Visitors wanting to tour the Fortress may choose a footpath or the funicular, a fast moving, cable railway. The Hohensalzburg Fortress provides a stunning view of the city and surrounding mountains from the outer grounds. For an extended tour, visitors may choose to purchase a ticket into the Fortress Museum. The museum provides a closer look into the history of the fortification

of Hohensalzburg, as well as its role as the defense system of the city during the 11th century. Access into the inner rooms is also granted with the general admission into the museum. The inner rooms include the torture chamber, dungeon, state apartments, and the highest point within the Fortress.

**-Meredith
Horn**



The Hohensalzburg (high Salzburg) Fortress



Top: On the funicular (lift) to the fortress

Bottom: Mozart's Birthplace



Kloster Benediktbeuern Monastery

The Benediktbeuern Monastery is considered to be one of the oldest monasteries in Bavaria dating back to 739. In 955 the monastery was demolished by the Hungarians. However, under the power of Emperor Henry III and with the assistance of Saint Ulrich (Bishop of Augsburg), the monastery was reconstructed.



The Benediktbeuern Monastery

Then the Benedictines once again settled in the property in 1031. As a result of the colonization of the Benedictines, the monastery experienced many years of success as the arts, cultivation of agriculture, education, and sciences were developing. Additionally, by 1250 the monastery had a rich library containing approximately 250 handwritten documents. Among these documents was the famous "Carmina Burana" which dates back to the Middle Ages and is a collection of sacred and secular songs.

Following this success, the monastery experienced fires in 1248, 1377, 1378, and the most severe in 1490 damaging the central area of the monastery. Nevertheless, the monastery was able to restore the damaged areas each time. Then in 1611 tragedy struck again with the plague resulting in the death of many of the community members. Over the course of the Thirty Years War, the monastery's grammar school was suspended, however was reopened by 1689.

In 1803, secularization, or change which removed religious control, marked the termination of the monastery. From 1808 to 1818 the monastery operated as a

secular-private property, and during this time, Joseph von Fraunhofer (a famous scientist) had worked there. In 1819 the property had been established as state owned and was used for many purposes. It acted as a recovery center for injured soldiers, a prison, barracks, an invalid home, and a military base. A new beginning for the monastery started in 1930, when the Congregation of the Salesian of Don Bosco (SDS) purchased the property. Upon the purchase, the SDS instituted the center for Religious Education and Science. Currently the monastery contains two thriving universities.

-Jennifer Blum



Sprechen Sie English? An American's Struggle with Language and Connectedness

Many people talk about language barriers in regards to clients and the ability to communicate with an individual or family. On the surface, this is what most people think of when language is an issue. This perspective, however, is how things are seen from a place of authority or dominance. To be on the other side of that continuum, the side of disadvantage and alienation, is a very different experience. It is my opinion that to truly understand what it is to live in a culture that is not your own and to not be able to use the most powerful tool of inte-

gration (communication) is to feel isolation and disempowerment that most people never experience.

Although language is obviously a huge component of any culture, most do not realize the psychological impetus that language has on individuals. While in Germany, I began to tune out others around me for no other reason than not being able to understand them. As time went on, one begins to disconnect and ignore outside stimuli until all you have is you and your thoughts. Such a self-imposed isola-

tion can become a way of life; it gets harder and harder to reconnect.

As social workers, the importance of language barriers and the effects it has on an individual's psychological well-being are only the tip of the iceberg of issues that need to be addressed with our clients. It will take patience, empathy, and dedication to serve these clients and their families effectively. I hope we are all up to the challenge.

-Kimberly Frierson

"While in Germany, I began to tune out others around me for no other reason than not being able to understand them. As time went on, one begins to disconnect.."

Bavarian Cuisine: A Description of Beer and Food in Southern Germany

Since 1516, Germany, and specifically Bavaria, has been proud of the fact that its 1,400-odd breweries were still bound by the "purity laws." These laws known as Reinheitsgebot, mandate that there can only be four ingredients used in the production of beer. These ingredients include hops, malt, yeast and water.

Many Germans will tell you that they stake claim to several world renowned beers. The first beer called "Helles," is a lighter colored beer that often has a sweeter flavor. In contrast to Helles, the "Dunkel" beer is their dark beer. It can be described as having a thicker and more robust flavor. Most Americans would categorize it in a similar category of Guinness beer, but it often has a much smoother flavor. A "Pils" beer is thinner and slightly bitter. It tastes much like a regular American Budweiser beer. Most of the beer that I consumed while in Bavaria was called "Weissbier." This beer is a yeasty, cloudy brew



"Weissbier" served in a typical Bavarian restaurant

that has a taste similar to a Blue Moon, but not as sweet and overwhelming. My favorite beer overall was a strong beer called "Starkbier." This beer is only served in the month of March in accordance to Bavarian tradition and was produced by monks during the time of Lent. These monks were not allowed to eat food, but were allowed to drink this extra thick and viscous brew.

Like beer, the foods that comprise Bavarian cuisine were developed out of very basic ingredients, which were readily available to the peasant population. Germany's cooking depends on a meat-and-potatoes foundation, which are both items that can easily be grown in a cold and harsh climate. This is why you will rarely see fresh leafy green vegetables in a typical Bavarian entrée. This was quite evident during our trip,

which one would have to specifically order a salad or vegetable plate, to get more "exotic" vegetables that are grown from warmer climates.

Most Bavarian dinners consisted of roasted pork (Schweinebraten), red (Blaukraut) or white cabbage (Kraut), and a potato dumpling (Knödel). My favorite meal was called Schweinshax'n. This consisted of roasted pork knuckle served encased in a crispy layer of bubbling fat or crackle. It took me a while to figure out how to eat this tasty hunk of pork, but you can basically pick it up and eat it like a large turkey thigh. Schweinshax'n is typically served with kraut and a potato dumpling.

Unfortunately, I did not get to try the Spanferkel

(suckling pig) which may have tested the limits of my American palate. This traditional dish can be described as a roasted baby pig, with pale and tender meat. The kicker is that it comes in either whole body (including the head), or simply the head, served on a large dish. To me, this would be no different than eating pork at a summer "pig roast," except the pig is up close and personal, at your table.

In summary, Bavarian cuisine took a little getting used to, but once you have drank beer without preservatives or impurities, and have eaten fresh meats and sausages that have been seasoned and cooked to perfection, one can't help but miss this mouthwatering cuisine. I am off to find a Bavarian cookbook, so that I can avoid eating so much of our fine American cuisine consisting of McDonalds, Arby's, and Taco Bell!

-Brian Baker



Example of a traditional Bavarian meal

Adolph Mathus House: Men's Homeless Shelter

On the 2nd Wednesday of our exploration of Bavaria, we walked to a very unique homeless shelter for men. Unique for the States, this shelter is one of 20 similar shelters around Munich, many of which cater to different needs of their homeless population. The Adolph Mathus House tailors their program to recovering addicts of "soft" drugs, such as alcohol, marijuana, and pills. Other programs assist the

elderly, women, people with mental illness and others.

At the Adolph Mathus House, the men are referred to treatment by the courts, family, therapist, the prison system, church, other institutions, or themselves, and begin completing an 18-month recovery program. The house has beds for up to 24 clients and the program is broken up into three 6-

month phases. When the client comes to the house, they spend the first six months learning to get along with others in the house. They are not allowed to get a job because they must focus on their independent living skills. They learn how to cook, clean, remove their debts, and get along with others as well as practice sober living.

(continued on page 8)

"This shelter is one of twenty in Munich, many of which cater to different needs of their homeless population"

Life Changing: Visit to Dachau

I could not have completely prepared myself to visit Dachau, Germany's first concentration camp. Dachau was opened in March 1933 to house the Jews, gays and criminals overflowing from prisons. Dachau was also well known for their training of Secret Service personnel in preparing them to work in other camps including Auschwitz.



View of the Dachau memorial site

From Munich our class took a fifteen minute train ride and arrived in the small medieval town of Dachau. The weather had been rainy and bleak all day creating dull gray haze on the buildings and trees. To my surprise, the memorial camp is surrounded by recently built family homes whose backyards overlook one of the largest concentration camps in Germany. Upon liberation in 1945, there were 30,000 prisoners living there. Walking to the front gate of the prison I saw a short piece of train track still on the wet, cold ground. Seeing the actual track was a reminder of the prisoners brought to the camps by train and forced to live and work there. On the front of the metal

gate read "Arbeit Macht Frei," which means in English "freedom through work."

Many medical experiments were also done at Dachau by Dr. Siegmund Rascher who was well-known for using gruesome medical experiments involving freezing people in cold water or air then trying to warm them up with hot water. He also subjected people to high altitude simulations until they died. The memorial has built a model barrack to simulate the prisoners housing situations. The beds were made of board confined in a small room made for hundreds of people who were overworked, cold and hungry.

Walking through the large grounds, I was reminded of the people who died during World War II, but I also thought of the genocides since then and the ones still going on today. I will remember my walk in Dachau forever and will hold it close to my heart by empathizing with ones own experience in life. I am very proud to have gone on this trip with Dr. Lawson and the graduate class of 2008. Social workers have proven they can build connections within the classroom and in the world abroad.

-Mera Chaney

Adolph Mathus House, cont...

During the second phase, the clients learn how to work. They can begin the work therapy program at the house or they can get an outside job. The clients are expected to arrive on time and stay throughout the shift. All the crafts that the men work on at the house are sold in a shop attached to the shelter to raise additional funds and reward the clients for good work.

The last phase of treatment is to learn how to use their leisure time. Time spent away from work is very important to the German culture, and spending this time appropriately is essential to keeping people out of homelessness. They learn how to relax and have fun in ways that will not jeopardize their hard work, health and home.

Munich has a population of about 1.5 million people and they have approximately 350 people living on the street. As a comparison, Louisville has a population of about 700,000-800,000 people and approximately 600 people living on the streets.

-Maggie Evans

"Time spent away from work is very important to the German culture, and spending this time appropriately is essential to keeping people out of homelessness"

Christian-Muslim Dialogue

During the trip to Germany to study social work in the state of Bavaria, the Kent students attended a conference in Ingolstadt, Germany. One of the lectures discussed Christian-Muslim relationships in the state of Bavaria.

Our group was invited to the Muslim mosque located in Ingolstadt, where the main architect of the new mosque being built gave a lecture. The audience at this meeting included not only the Kent School students, but also

Germany social work students, various members of the Muslim community in Ingolstadt, and the vice mayor of Ingolstadt.

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Muslim mosque in Ingolstadt, Germany

Christian-Muslim Dialogue, cont...

According to the lecture, after WWII there was a high demand for manpower to rebuild European cities and economy. During this period, Germans in particular were not very active in rebuilding their country. Therefore, immigrants were welcomed into Germany to help with the reconstruction process. The majority of these immigrants were Turkish Muslims, and they were employed as physical laborers. These immigrants commonly had little or no education and often hailed from low-income backgrounds.

After the country's physical and financial infrastructures were restored, Germany became one of the strongest economic states in Europe. This was fortunate for the Germans, but it caused resentment amongst the Muslim immigrants. The main problems immigrants faced after restoration were communication barriers, decreased availability of low-skill jobs, and poor quality of education provided by the state.

Current social and economic conditions reflect these difficulties. In 2003, 30 million Muslims lived in Europe, of which 3.5 million resided in Germany, with 800,000 born in that country. The increase in highly technical labor particularly associated with the Internet caused a major reduction in employment opportunities, leaving a large number of Muslim immigrants jobless. Not only are they jobless, they still face communication barriers and low education opportunities due to discrimination against the Islamic religion. What's more, many German Muslims feel separated from their religious base because Islamic undertakers often transport remains to Muslim holy lands. Perhaps worst of all, though, is that they must deal with the fact that they have few places to worship. Thus, the construction of a new mosque in Ingolstadt would provide Muslims there a place to worship openly and publicly.

Such a structure also supports the community's commitment to fostering Muslim-

Christian dialogue. Taking a cue from the religious disparities surrounding the 9-11 tragedy in the United States, German communities like Ingolstadt are finding ways to help Muslims learn and live in harmony with Christians and other non-Islamic German citizens. The ensuing dialogue focuses on the groups assuring one another of their respective intentions, and Muslims emphasize their desire to play integral roles in German society. These steps also include understanding that Christians have little or no understanding of Islam, taking the position of the victim, and pointing out the common points of both religions. These common points include, but aren't limited to, respecting both men and women, carrying out responsibilities to God, following the Ten Commandments, carrying out duties to your family, and living in peace and harmony with others. When religious practices do not intersect, Muslims want other citizens to respect their religious traditions. For instance, many Muslim

women want non-Muslims to respect their decision to wear headscarves, a custom that, though not dictated as law by the Koran, nonetheless signals a traditional sign of respect.

In short, Muslims recognize that dialogue between the two religions is a two way street. These talks on Christian-Muslim unity have been going on for ten years and are slowly raising awareness. The construction of the new mosque in Ingolstadt will further this understanding by providing a space for worship and cross-religion education, especially since its magnificent architecture may well attract tourists of various cultural and religious backgrounds. Muslims hope this push for dialogue between Christians and Muslims will lead to freedom of religion, a neutral state, and the dignity of human rights.

-Melissa Walls



Mosque under construction

Physical Health: Germany vs. United States

When analyzing health in general, I feel it is important to make my own biases known because this has definitely determined how I tackled this topic. I have done research on obesity rates in the United States which basically demonstrated that we are a fat country getting fatter and one of the main reasons for this is lack of physical activity, especially with regard to access (i.e. access to side-walks and bike lanes that go from your home to the gro-

cery store, or to school or work, etc.). Here I feel it is important to put the FDA guidelines for physical activity in perspective. The FDA recommends 35 minutes of moderate cardiovascular exercise per day (walking for 35 minutes a day, or even biking to/from work meets this guideline) and a total of 60 minutes per day of physical activity. When most people meet me they tend to think I am a fitness freak or something which makes me feel a bit odd and here's

why: I try to work out for one hour per day, but like most Americans, some weeks I can only make it 3-4 days instead of the 6-7 the FDA recommends. I don't even eat all that healthy, but I try: I hate salads, so in its place I try to eat more fish and cooked vegetables than meat in a week's time, and I try to only have soft drinks 2-3 times per week. When we went to Germany I realized, at least in part, how our country got to be so unhealthy (continued on p. 10)

“When we got to Germany I realized, at least in part, how our country got to be so unhealthy”

Physical Health: Germany vs. U.S., cont...

After getting ourselves acclimated to the time change and learning what foods were available, it became apparent that we were walking quite a bit: at least 3-4 miles per day which translates to about 1-2 hours spent walking throughout the day. We did this even when we took the bus or train to our destinations as well. What was also interesting: the sidewalks were often crowded with other people walking or biking to work/grocery store/school, to/from meals, etc. The irony, I feel, was that everywhere we went, no matter the time of day, sausage, potato salad and beer were always on the menu. You'd think we would have put on a bunch of weight from all the meat and carbs. Actually, research suggests that just moving (walking or biking are safe to do) after meals basically burns off some of the meal before it can be digested and absorbed, resulting in

higher metabolism. It is also worth noting that the most effective exercise (other than swimming) for fat-burning is walking.

So why don't we walk, or bike, more in the United States? The main reason is that our communities are not set up for outside exercise (unless you live dangerously or in downtown Louisville), which results in not very many people able to walk to the store, work, school, etc. like most people are able to do in Germany. I don't think anyone in our group complained about the walks (unless it was raining), which is important to note to urban planning officials who think access to walking areas is not important. Whose job is it to take a stand for walkable communities?

This is where health has become a social work issue. Our country is fat, in a recess-

ion, and not built to do anything but drive. In the mean time, individual health costs keep increasing because of a combination of cheap fast food and lack of access to physical activity; money is hard to come by, which means those monthly gym membership payments and gas prices cut a little deeper than anticipated; and biking, which is a great alternative to driving, is often unsafe due to people not paying attention while driving (i.e. cell phones, PDAs, eating, yelling at bikers, etc. while driving). Prices everywhere are rising and causing people who would ordinarily be able to afford things like healthcare are now not able to and need financial help. Also, people are dying younger and younger due to obesity related conditions. No one wants to die young, but its happening and someone needs to help. Unfortunately, personal responsibility for these problems (in this

country of capitalistic independents) is something no one seems to be taking. Our country doesn't seem to want people to know their options anymore because funding for social work jobs was cut dramatically just this year.

It's sad to note that in a country that prides itself on the independence of its citizens and the limitless choices they have, that its not that citizens choose not to take care of themselves, but don't have anywhere to turn. It's not the media's fault, it's not the teachers fault, and after a certain point, it's not your parent's fault. We live in a democracy where we can make the choice to vote, go to college, go to church, or even go to drug treatment. When are we going to choose to take care of ourselves?

-Laura King

Differences Experienced

As we make our way through the airport in Germany the stillness feels so foreign. It was not like typical airports in the United States, in that, people all over are talking loudly to one another or are on cell phones. This was the first of many differences we would experience during our stay in Germany.

We could dedicate probably several pages in this newsletter that describe the differences between the States and Germany. I will focus on only a few. The water in Germany was wonderful. Water straight out of the tap tasted

like our bottled water...the ones we pay \$1.25 for out of the machine. However, don't expect to get water for free in the restaurants. While dining, water is served in glass bottles and it is unacceptable to bring in your own water bottle.

Another difference was on occasion we had to pay for public restrooms. Most of the restrooms cost .50 cents (in Euros) to use. The downside was obviously the expense, but the upside was the restrooms were well kept. The last difference was how they treat animals in

Germany. So many people had their pets with them on the streets, in stores, and in restaurants. These dogs were so well behaved they could walk beside their owner and not run or wonder off.

Germany really was a breathtaking country with many differences from the States. I am so grateful to have had this opportunity to experience all the gifts another country has to offer.

-Brittan Mefford



An example of the water served in restaurants in Germany. Overall, Germany appeared to be much more environmentally conscious and conserve their resources. Unlike a U.S. restaurant where a glass is filled with unnecessary ice and numerous refills, in a German restaurant you are limited to a small amount of water for a price.

The Hostel Experience

When you say the word “Hostel” many thoughts come to mind, and when arriving in Munich, Germany my mind was racing. I knew very little about staying in a hostel, but my fears and worries were quickly put to rest. Upon walking in the entry was bright and open with several common areas to meet people and converse with fellow students. There were two computers which provided a link to the world-wide web and always a helpful face at the front desk. It amazed me that everyone spoke such great English and the employees were willing and ready to help.

The room was much more spacious than I expected. While the first three floors were typical of a hostel, with shared rooms and bath-

rooms, we stayed on the top floors that provided the guests with a hotel style accommodation. The room had three twin beds, several lamps, a large closet, a desk for two, a television, and a large bathroom with a shower that always had hot water! The room had large windows that opened to a street view and an added safety feature of a fire ladder right out our window. The hostel had strict rules of quiet time and cleanliness. The room was cleaned daily and also had ample power outlets, but don't forget your adapter to convert to a European plug!

In the restaurant area, the guests can choose from a wide-range of breakfast foods, all buffet style. From 7.30-10.00 am, you were

able to help yourself to a variety of items such as meats, bread, cereal, yogurt, juices, and coffee.

It was nice to just get up, go downstairs and enjoy friends and pretty good food. If the food just isn't your style, close by you could also find many snack places, local markets or other options such as the main train station or coffee shops, where you can get an authentic taste of local Bavarian food for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

-Abby Schell



Top: Our accommodations in Munich, in the hotel portion of the hostel

Bottom: Our accommodations in a more typical hostel in Ingolstadt—six bunk beds to a room



The Lutheran Church

During our visit to Germany, we had the opportunity to visit several beautiful churches. Most that we saw were Catholic, but we also visited Lutheran churches. Martin Luther, one of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation, was a German monk. On a day trip to Augsburg, Germany, we were able to visit St. Anna's Church; a 14th century Gothic church notable for its artwork and role in Lutheran history. It was built in 1321 by Carmelite monks. In 1518, Martin Luther stayed with the friars. This church later converted to Lutheranism. In 1999, Catholics and Protestants signed an important joint declara-



St. Anna's Church in Augsburg, Germany

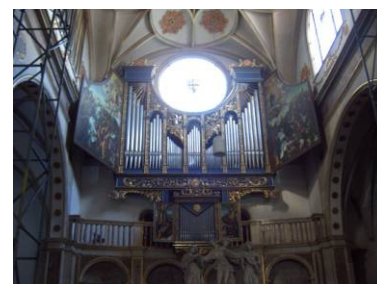
tion on the doctrine of salvation in this church.

The Lutheran church is one third of the Protestant Evangelical Church. The Lutheran church focuses on liturgical (a form of ritual) approach to worship services. Music is a huge part of the Church; the hymns of the Lutheran church are often called chorales. Some components of the music are choirs, handbell choirs, children's choirs and carillon. The Lutheran

churches also participate in Communion.

The Lutheran church believes that the Bible is the source of all revealed divine knowledge. The church also refer the Book of Concord which is a book that consists of ten documents. A huge component of the Lutheran faith is justification. The Lutheran church believes that people are saved from their sins by the grace of God. The Lutheran church has been a huge component of German history; since then it has continued to uphold its faith and tradition through generations to come.

-Oliene Toussaint



Overview of my experience in Germany

As I was editing and compiling the newsletter, I realized I wanted to have the opportunity to share my experience as well. The following is simply observation and a reflection on what I learned. No research or evidence based practice here, just my thoughts.

The trip to Germany was an amazing experience. Not only did we see some great, historical sights and experience a new culture, we were also able to get a brief look at how another country does social policy and welfare, by attending lectures and visiting various social service agencies.

Personally, I loved Germany. There is a lot about their culture that I wish I could bring back to the U.S. Not only the delicious beer, sausage, and coffee, but things like an increased consciousness of conserving resources and cities set up for public transportation, biking and walking. For instance, lower levels of water in toilets, limited ice served in drinks, recycling bins in the hotel rooms, the presence of Smart cars, mass transit systems, a deposit system for glass bottles, and a sign asking to reuse your towels were a few more environmentally friendly observations. In the U.S., we have the tendency to forget that things that are free to us, like water, really are not free. Now on to some more complex differences.

Germany is considered a Social State. It was described to us as capitalism combined with the belief or principle that society is responsible for the well-being of its members. Therefore, the legislature has a man-

date to equalize social differences in order to ensure social justice and to create and maintain the social security of its citizens. Five types of social insurance are provided to all Germans, including health, pension, nursing care, unemployment, and accident (i.e. worker's comp). A large portion of one's income goes to these social insurances, but they are guaranteed to everyone.

One easily observable difference when visiting the social service agencies (aside from the refugee camp), was how nice they were. Obviously they had bigger budgets to work with. Another difference was when we asked one agency about their success rates, they could not tell us. Measurable outcomes and logic models are familiar terms to social workers in the U.S. This is how we get our funding; it is necessary to demonstrate the success of programs to apply for grants and compete for the limited money that is out there. However, this was a concept unfamiliar to a homeless shelter in Munich.

Due to my accident, I was able to experience the German healthcare system firsthand. While I can not make a sound argument from my one personal experience, I can say that from what I saw, I was very pleased. How wonderful it was to go in to a hospital and the first question not be "do you have insurance?" As my classmate already described, the cost for everything I had done was extremely low compared the U.S. And they did a great job. Upon my return, I have become extremely frustrated with the high costs of healthcare and the red tape I have to go through just to get my insur-

ance company to pay anything. Isn't that why I paid for private insurance? One would think, but the system here is clearly broken. Since my return, I have heard the typical arguments against socialized medicine. People have to wait forever, there is no specialized treatment, and my favorite, doctors do not make any money over there. Well, there may be some truth in that first statement, although my experience was completely the opposite (but of course, it was an emergency). However, with over 40 million uninsured in the U.S., the over-utilization of emergency rooms as primary care, and the rising healthcare costs, something needs to be done.

While the U.S. could definitely learn some things from Germany, I realized they can also learn from us. When it comes to policies for refugees and asylum seekers, the U.S. is doing a far better job. The system set up by the German state to deal with this population is extremely restrictive, as previously described in another article. Isolation is extreme and makes integration impossible. Why? According to a social worker at the camp, the government does not want them to learn German culture, but instead hopes they will leave. It was stated by another social worker that immigration is needed in Europe to support the economy due to the increasing aging population, just as in the U.S., but that integration is an old and current problem in Germany. Open-mindedness regarding different cultures and diversity is lacking. The U.S. has its fair share of restrictive immigration policies and discrimination as well, but in some aspects, we are doing a better job.

This description only briefly touches on the differences between the U.S. and Germany when it comes to social policy, and of course there are successes and challenges to both systems. However, these two weeks were very valuable in taking a look at another way to deliver social services and care for vulnerable populations.

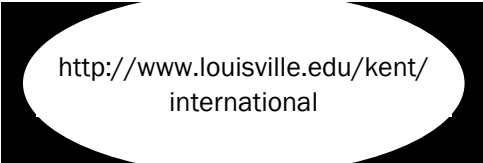
-Maria Blough



A small sample of the amazing sights and food in Germany

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The Kent School International Exchange Program started in 1990. Since that time Kent students have studied in Germany, Italy, Hungary, South Africa, Argentina, and Russia. Students receive lectures on social welfare programs and interact with students formally and informally from our host universities. Visits to social service agencies differ in each country but have included agencies for: elderly, homeless, substance abuse, child welfare, and refugees, as well as hospitals and community centers. Time is provided for students to experience the culture of the host country as well as historical and tourist attractions.

Music in Social Work

*Newsletter compiled
and edited by
Maria Blough*

While in Munich, we were taken to a lecture on music in social work, led by Susanna Filesch. The University offers a wide variety of creative classes in the social work curriculum, including art, theater, and film editing and production. Agencies we visited had a few drums sitting in the therapy area.

This type of therapy does not require a specialized degree other than social work, unlike in the US, where a therapist would have a degree in music therapy. Professor Filesch has a musical background; she was a pop star earlier in her career. Today, she is a well-respected professor of social work, specializing in music therapy.

During the session, students were each given a

percussion instrument to play. The instructor indicated a rhythm and the students mirrored it. This led up to playing the instruments along with music. Students were also given music to sing, and the opportunity to dance as a group.

Once activity the instructor suggested for clients who are not participating is dividing up into lines of approximately five people. Then, the person at the front of each

line performs a dance or movement while the others behind him or her mimic it. After a few seconds, the client at the back of the line moves to the front, and the line shifts back to make room. The new leader performs a movement and the cycle continues. Our class had the opportunity to participate in this activity to fast paced, energetic music.

Professor Filesch stated music uses both parts of the brain. It can be very important for development; classical music works especially well since it so complex. During pregnancy, hearing is the first sense to develop. Music is beneficial for all groups of people, especially those with communication difficulties, such as children with autism or ADHD, those with cognitive disabilities, and kindergarten groups.



Kent Students participating in a lecture on music and social work

-Amber Zak