



DEG

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**Deutsch- Englische Gesellschaft  
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Braunschweig e. V.**

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President:

Paul Kavanagh, Otto-Finschstr. 29, 38108 Braunschweig

Tel. 0531 373935 [paul.kavanagh.deg@gmail.com](mailto:paul.kavanagh.deg@gmail.com)

Vice President: Katrin Landsmann [www.deg-bs.de](http://www.deg-bs.de)

Our yearly membership fee is

25 € for single and 40 € for couple or family

Konto: NordLB 328039 BLZ 250 500 00

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Newsletter

Dear Members and Friends,

**No Corona just a simple question. Are you prejudiced? Some food for thought!**

I am becoming increasingly worried at the lack of compassion, empathy and respect when it comes to debating some really sensitive issues in the media.

Perhaps social media simply mirrors real life, or maybe it does bring out the worst in some. Either way, it almost certainly leads to an over-simplification of issues and debates.

This may be why we are seeing so many 'All Lives Matter' posts in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign – one simple message being countered by another, because people haven't taken the time to look at the many complex and nuanced messages behind the Black Lives Matter campaign. The campaign is making the entirely correct point that black lives matter just as much as any other, and that sadly, the reality of our world doesn't reflect that at the moment. We do live in a racist society.

Because this issue has been misused. It's been misused for political ends (but that's another theme) and it's been misused by those who do hold prejudiced views. Of course, these prejudices need not be set in stone. Behind a lot of prejudice is misunderstanding and fear – so call out the prejudice, but help the people who hold these views to reflect and understand. Put yourself in their shoes, to help them do likewise with you.

These are the tactics of the far right, and they have been used time and time again to fuel hatred and prejudice against a number of different groups of people – including asylum seekers, immigrants, gay men and others.

The current discussion around self-ID has now been used as a platform to argue against rights that trans women and trans men already have! So many issues have now been conflated, it can be hard to remember the actual proposal, and that there isn't some concerted campaign to 'erase women'.

In terms of conflating issues, don't get me started on toilets! When was the last time you were asked for ID to use the loo!?! Nothing about the proposed changes will impact on who uses women's toilets. Trans women have been using women's toilets for years. Trans men have been using men's toilets for years. And frankly, the whole discussion around gender-neutral toilets is driving me up the wall. I don't really want to share toilets with anyone to be honest – regardless of gender. Do any of us? Let's focus on the entirely inadequate public toilet network that doesn't suit anyone – we need individual toilet facilities to ensure everyone can access this essential service with dignity. We need more changing places, disabled toilets, family toilets and private facilities. The horrendous set up of toilet facilities should not be a reason to deny anyone their rights.

Just see people as people, try to walk a mile in their shoes, and everything falls in to place from there.

**Paul Kavanagh**

**Pay Day Reminder:** The membership fee for 2020 was due in March and if you have not yet paid your membership fee for 2020, please do so as soon as possible. Nord LB IBAN DE3325050000000328039

## Conversation Group Programme – September - December 2020

### **Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September: How did I personally experience the lockdown?**

General Coronavirus discussion on how we dealt with the crisis.

### **Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> September: Bingo**

A fun evening with Bingo with Paul. Hope you will join us and try your luck.

### **Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> October: “The Rochdale Pioneers” – Co-operative Societies**

More than a billion of people are working co-operatively throughout the world, based on the same democratic principles.

After a short introduction to the context and the presentation of the main actors, Andreas Kernbeißer will also show a rare documentary (2012), a very thought-provoking film of the struggle to start a cooperative movement. You get a sense of what this meant for the factory workers of Rochdale in the mid-19th century, and what they believed and abandoned for a chance to attain it. (Talk & movie in English • discussion welcome)

### **Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> October: Reading**

Jürgen Kumlehn will read from his new book, "Jewish Families in Wolfenbüttel - The writer Werner Ilberg".

The Wolfenbüttel born merchant Werner Ilberg joined the Communist Party in Berlin in 1932 and worked in the Underground against the National Socialists. After escaping from a Berlin concentration camp and prison, he fled to Prague. Before the German Wehrmacht moved in there, he was able to flee to England in 1938. There he lived with his wife until 1947. He also worked in England for the Communist Party and was interned as an "enemy alien" in Liverpool for a while. Jürgen would like to read especially from his time in exile and give an impression of the life of German refugees in Great Britain. The reading is in German.

We welcome suggestions and ideas for future topics for our programme. Your input will be appreciated.

**Additional Event:** Paul's "Wednesday Painting Group" will exhibit their art from 19<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at the FSV, Parnitzweg 5 (poster attached).

### **Braunschweig Twin Cities links**

Bath / Braunschweig: [www.bath-braunschweigtwinningassociation.co.uk](http://www.bath-braunschweigtwinningassociation.co.uk)

Sousse / Deutsch Tunesische Gesellschaft: [www.deutsch-tunesische-gesellschaft.de](http://www.deutsch-tunesische-gesellschaft.de)

Nimes / Deutsch-Französische Gesellschaft e. V. Braunschweig: [www.dfg-bs.de](http://www.dfg-bs.de)

Zhuhai / Deutsch-Chinesische Gesellschaft Braunschweig e. V.: [www.dcgbs.de](http://www.dcgbs.de)

Bandung / Deutsch-Indonesische Gesellschaft: [www.dig-niedersachsen.de](http://www.dig-niedersachsen.de)

Kiryat Tivon / Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft e.V.: <https://braunschweig.deutsch-israelische-gesellschaft.de>

### **Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> November: California**

Dagmar Theeß recently visited California. She will talk about her interesting journey through the State including San Francisco, the good and the more difficult life in Silicon valley as well as Stanford and Berkeley Universities.

### **Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November: Short story**

Astrid Wagner will read a short story from a 1993 collection of short stories "The facts behind the Helsinki Roccamatios" by the Canadian author Yann Martel, best known for his 2001 Book Prize Winning novel "Life of Pi".

The short story title from this book is "The Vita Aeterna Mirror Company, Mirrors to Last till Kingdom Come".

A young man is visiting his elderly grandmother. She tries to tell him stories from the history of his family, but he refuses to listen; her dialogue is rendered as blah, blah, blah. Searching her house for a pair of moccasins, the narrator comes across a machine that makes mirrors and asks his grandmother how it works. She explains that it requires four ingredients oil, sand, silver, and memories. In fact the machine turns memories into mirrors bringing her grandson to an appreciation of his grandmother's life.

### **Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Party**

Our Christmas party will be at the Familiensportverein Braunschweig, Parnitzweg 5, 38108 Braunschweig. Same procedure as every year. Please bring a contribution to the buffet and a wrapped gift for the raffle. Regrettably this event is for members only.

Meetings take place at Wohnen mit Zukunft Ambet, Ilmenaustraße 2, 38120 Braunschweig, unless otherwise stated. Doors open at 7.30 pm (19.30) with the main topic at 8.00 pm (20.00). Topic may be changed due to unforeseen circumstances.

# Jürgen Kumlehn: Jüdische Familien in Wolfenbüttel



## **Klappentext:**

Dieses Buch dokumentiert die Tragik eines Mannes, der als Jude und Mitglied des Bundes proletarisch revolutionärer Schriftsteller in Berlin die Nationalsozialisten bekämpfte und nach der Befreiung vom Nationalsozialismus die totalitären Lebensverhältnisse in seinem Traumland DDR übersah. Eines Mannes, der während des 15-jährigen Exils in der Tschechoslowakei und in England immer bewusster Schriftsteller wurde und Kommunist. Eines Mannes, der der Partei gehorchte und 1947 nicht in die DDR zurückkehrte, sondern in seine Heimatstadt Wolfenbüttel mit dem Auftrag, hier den Sozialismus aufzubauen. Eines Mannes, der dann doch gegen den Willen seiner Kleinstadt-Genossen 1956 nach Ostberlin flüchtete. Eines Mannes, der dann schreiben und junge Autoren fördern konnte, in dem von der SED vorgegebenen Rahmen. Eines Mannes, der ein Stück deutscher Zeitgeschichte repräsentiert. Eines Mannes, dessen Leben verbunden war mit dem gesellschaftlichen und politischen Leben der Stadt Wolfenbüttel, in das Werner Ilberg im Jahr 1896 hineingeboren wurde.