

Co-Conveners: UNC–Chapel Hill, Dept. of History and German and Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Duke University, Dept. of History and German Languages and Literatures

Sunday, 20 January 2019

5:00 – 7:00 pm | UNC–Chapel Hill | Hamilton Hall 569

GEORGE S. WILLIAMSON

Professor, Florida State University, Department of History



**“Russian Spy,” “German Voltaire,” “Fickle Genius”:
August von Kotzebue as a Problem for German History
and Literature**

The author of over 200 plays, August von Kotzebue (1761-1819) was one of the most prolific and successful writers of his day. Yet Kotzebue’s career was shadowed by controversy and bitter disputes, which culminated in his assassination by the student radical Carl Sand. After his death, Kotzebue was largely forgotten by literary history and, despite some recent interest, he remains understudied. This talk argues that a reconsideration of Kotzebue’s turbulent life and complex legacy has the potential to reshape our understanding of the so-called *Goethezeit*, pointing to new interpretations of the intellectual and political history of this era.

George Williamson is Associate Professor of History at Florida State University. He is the author of *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), as well as articles and book chapters on German religious history, Schelling’s theory of race, debates on the historicity of Jesus, and the death of Kotzebue and its aftermath. His current book project is entitled *August von Kotzebue (1761-1819): A Political History*.

Moderator: Karen Hagemann | UNC Chapel Hill, Department of History

For more information see: <https://ncgsws.web.unc.edu/>

CONVENERS: Carolina Seminars | The Carolina-Duke Graduate Program in German Studies | Duke University (Dept. of Germanic Languages & Literature | Dept. of History) | The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Center for European Studies | Dept. of Germanic and Slavic Languages & Literatures | Dept. of History)

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