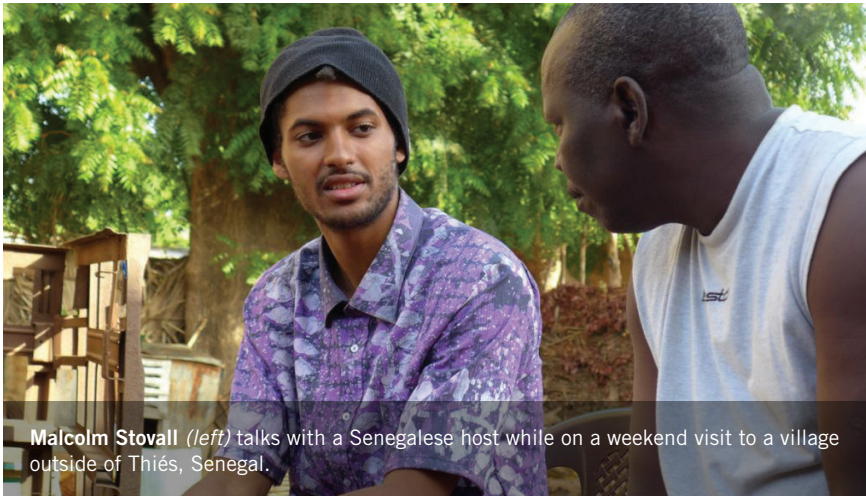


History Department Newsletter

STUDENT EDITOR: **Jenae Longenecker '18** | FACULTY EDITOR: **Steven Nolt**



Malcolm Stovall (left) talks with a Senegalese host while on a weekend visit to a village outside of Thiés, Senegal.

History classroom extends to Senegal

BY **Jenae Longenecker '18**

This summer GC history professor Jan Bender Shetler led a group of students to Senegal, West Africa. As part of the college's Study-Service Term (SST) the students, including history majors Malcolm Stovall ('17) and Kyle Stocksdale ('18), lived with host families and learned about Senegalese history and culture. For the first six weeks of the program, the students lived in Thiés, a city of one and a half million, just east of the capital, Dakar. Stovall, Stocksdale and their classmates spent time getting to know their host families as well as studying together each day in an attempt to master not only French but also Wolof, the most common language heard on Senegalese streets. But French and Wolof were not the only languages the students encountered. According to Bender Shetler, "Many of the homes also have Serer or Pulaar flying about."

During the first half of the summer experience, Bender Shelter and her husband Peter Shetler, a high school technology director, took the students on several fieldtrips to some of Senegal's historic locations. One such place was Gorée Island, once one of West Africa's main slave ports. Bender Shetler and her students were "struck viscerally" with the horrible reality of the slave trade. Goshen's Senegal SST group encountered the physical legacy of French colonization while touring the city

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Claassen Delves into Religion and Politics

With the U.S. presidential election in full swing this fall, Ryan L. Claassen ('94) will bring thoughtful commentary and assessment when he returns to campus to present his research on religion and politics. Claassen is an associate professor of political science at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, and an expert on electoral politics and political behavior. His recent book, *Godless Democrats and Pious Republicans? Party Activists, Party Capture, and the 'God Gap'* was published last year by Cambridge University Press and has received many positive reviews.

Claassen's research carefully assesses the way campaign activists represent religious and non-religious groups in American political parties dating back to the 1960s. The results of that research call into question the conventional wisdom that holds that recently mobilized religious and secular extremists have captured the Republican and Democratic parties and created a "God gap."

Claassen provides a new theoretical framework for investigating the connections between macro social and political trends, and reveals that very basic social and demographic trends

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Original Research Marks Class of 2016's Senior Theses

Seven students completed baccalaureate theses in History Senior Seminar this spring, projects which, in most cases, they had begun researching as Junior Seminar students a year earlier. Each project utilized primary sources and culminated in public presentations in April. This year's students and thesis titles:

Bryan J. Aponte Ortiz (Cayey, Puerto Rico), "The Formation of a Mennonite Puerto Rican Identity"

Natalie J. Hubby (Archbold, Ohio), "Authentic Mission: The Mennonite Ministry to the Navajo Reservation"

Theo Kuchar (Ann Arbor, Mich.), "The Ukrainian Scouting Organization Plast in the North American Diaspora and the Construction of a Ukrainian National Identity Abroad, 1950s-1970s"

Lynelle M. Leinbach (Souderton, Pa.), "Brewing Stereotypes: Apprehension of Party Dave Coffeehouse, 1966-1975"

Diana Navarro Esqueda (Berwyn, Ill.), "Seferina De Leon: Challenging Misconceptions of Apolitical Latinas"

Benjamin Shelly (Goshen, Ind.), "Mennonites at the United Nations: Building Peace from Palestine to New York."

David A. Zehr (Elkhart, Ind.), "Systemic Racism and Mennonites: Genesis of a Conversation, 1968-1974"

The Class of 2016 also included four students with minors or interdisciplinary concentrations in history: **Michael J. Oyer**, Hesston, Kans.; **Peter Meyer Reimer**, Goshen, Ind.; **Adrienne Schmucker**, Wauseon, Ohio; and **Kiernan J. Wright**, Orville, Ohio.

Congratulations to the class of 2016!

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of Saint Louis, which was the colonial capital of French West Africa. According to Bender Shetler, the city's architecture "embodies the tensions inherent in the accommodation to colonial rule."

For Bender Shetler, a specialist in African history, SST has been a time of re-immersion in African culture but also an experience of seeing the continent through a new lens. In the past, the Bender Shetlers led SST in Ethiopia and Tanzania, places where they had worked, researched and developed extensive networks in the 1980s and 90s. Senegal, on the other hand, was an unfamiliar location to the couple. According to Bender Shetler, "This meant brushing up on French, rusty for 30 some years, and a steep learning curve for everything else." She added that "functioning outside of our comfort zone is what we ask our students to do and we have been learning right alongside them."

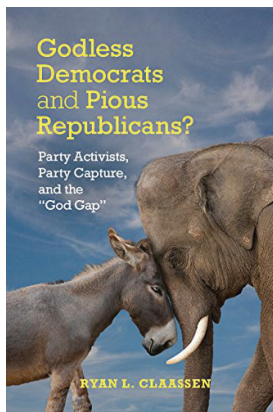
The group also explored Islam, the religion to which over 90 percent of Senegalese people adhere. Bender Shetler took the students to Touba, the holy city of the Mourid Muslims, where they toured the Great Mosque. With a capacity of nearly 7,000, this mosque is one of Africa's largest. According to Bender Shetler, Islam in Senegal is by and large "a very different expression of Islam than we are bombarded with in the [Western] press each day and an alternative worth noticing."

While Christians are clearly a minority in Senegal, Bender Shetler noted that "To an astonishing extent, tolerance of 'the other' is woven into the fabric of society and is a significant part of national pride." In fact, while the group visited the Catholic-majority island of Fadiouth, their tour guide was quick to point out the cemetery where both Christians and Muslims were buried.

During the second half of the SST experience, Bender Shetler sent the students in pairs across the country to do service assignments, working with local partner institutions. Throughout the six weeks of service, the Bender Shetlers visit each pair to check in and offer support.

Bender Shetler is excited to bring these learnings from Senegal back to her Goshen classroom in the form of stories and images. This fall, she expects to bring a renewed energy to the subject of African History. The aim of her course is to teach students "to discover the great ideas from Africa's past and their relevance for understanding and responding to current issues of governance and economy." 🌿

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matter far more than previously recognized and that mobilization matters far less. A "God gap" in voting is real, but it was not created by Christian Right mobilization or by a secular backlash. Where others see culture wars and captured parties, Claassen finds religious divisions in American politics are artifacts of basic social changes. This insight, in turn, leads to many profoundly different conclusions about the motivations of religious and non-religious voters.

Professor Edward Carmines of Indiana University has been among those impressed with Claassen's work, commenting that "Claassen provides a

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nanced and comprehensive account of how religion and politics have interacted during the last half century [that] will force scholars to reconsider conventional thinking on this important topic.”

After graduating from Goshen College with a major in history, Claassen earned a Ph.D. in political science at the University of California Davis in 2005. His research has been published in journals such as *American Politics Research*, *The Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, and *Public Opinion Quarterly*, among others.

Ryan Claassen will be on campus September 11-13, interacting with students and delivering the Frank and Betty Jo Yoder Public Affairs Lecture on Tuesday evening, September 13, at 7:30 pm, in Rieth Recital Hall. The lecture, “Godless Democrats and Pious Republicans? Is the religion-politics relationship really so clearly partisan?” is free and open to the public. 🌿

Austrian Scholar Joins GC History Faculty

BY **Jenae Longenecker '18**

Recent University of Notre Dame graduate Philipp Gollner will join Goshen’s faculty this fall as an assistant professor of U.S. history. Gollner, a native of Austria, takes a global perspective to his study of U.S. history and brings particular interests in immigration, race and religion.

Given Gollner’s areas of interest, Regina Shands Stoltzfus, Goshen professor of Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies, looks forward to “the possibility of Philipp’s teaching helping advance the work our campus is already doing around Mennonites and race.”

Gollner will enter a campus that has been doing work at the intersection of race and religion. This past spring, Dominique Burgunder-Johnson ('06), spoke to students on “Black, White, Mennonite: Reflections on African American student experiences at Goshen College from 1968-1983.” Burgunder-Johnson’s talk was rooted in her senior history thesis by the same title.

Earlier last spring, theologian Drew Hart challenged the Mennonite campus to consider the way the church views race in an address titled “Trouble I’ve Seen: Naming the Nightmare, Re-imagining the Dream.” Current students also organized the Spring 2016 Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship conference with the theme “Black Lives Matter.”

Gollner has accomplished a great deal of work related to the historical relationship of religion and race. His Ph.D. work at Notre Dame culminated in a dissertation entitled “Good White Christians: How Immigrants Shaped Race, Changed America – and Lost their Flavor.” Gollner’s scholarship traces the changes that took place in certain religious groups, including Mennonites, as race and immigration entered into their experiences.

Gollner also published an article in the April 2016 issue of the journal *Mennonite Quarterly Review* entitled “How Mennonites Became White: Religious Activism, Power and the Limits of Race.”

Gollner’s own encounter with the Mennonite church did not happen first in Europe, where one might expect, and where the Anabaptist Mennonite movement traces its roots. Rather, Gollner’s first interaction with Mennonites came as an active participant in a largely African-American Mennonite church in Chicago, Illinois. Gollner was living in Chicago at the time with his wife,



Philipp Gollner, assistant professor of U.S. history

Sarah, while working towards a master’s degree in social sciences from the University of Chicago.

Before pursuing graduate studies in history, Gollner also earned an M.Div. degree from Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida. He earned his undergraduate degree in American Studies at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, Germany.

Along his educational journey, Gollner became proficient in seven languages: English, his native German, Swedish, Norwegian, French, Latin and Greek. In addition to these skills, he brings to GC a well-honed sense of humor, “some literacy in true football—or soccer, as you call it,” a love of singing, an appreciation for the Midwest heartland and a self-proclaimed “drive to search for the true, the good, the beautiful and the ugly across disciplines.”

When asked to describe his teaching philosophy, Gollner stated his belief that “For good or for bad, history

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pushes us to see the most fascinating and the most repulsing ways in which humans have made sense of themselves and each other.”

In the classroom, Gollner believes that “Without working together to create a space big enough for questions and open enough for engaging stories, we’ll never get to know our own particularities and those of others, and we’ll leave without ever stretching our empathy and curiosity.” He adds, “What a waste of four years of life and tuition. I work hard to teach in a way so that doesn’t happen.”

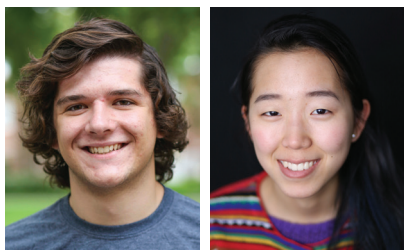
History professor John D. Roth is very pleased to have Gollner join the faculty. He “has thought carefully about questions of race, immigration, and ethnicity and is a gifted teacher with a deep commitment to Goshen’s Core Values.” 🌿

Scholarship Recipients

The 2016-2017 Willard and Verna Smith U.S. History Scholarship has been awarded to **Kyle A. Stocksdale** (Richmond, Ind.) (*left*).

Do Won Park (Abbotsford, B.C.) (*right*) is the recipient of the Oswin and David Gerber Scholarship in Mennonite Studies for 2016-2017.

The generosity of the Smith and Gerber families has been very helpful to many Goshen College students. The History Department welcomes donations to the Smith and Gerber scholarship endowments.



Recent History Alumni Activities

Annalisa (Harder) Brenneman ('11) and Jacob Brenneman are working in Cambodia with Mennonite Central Committee. They coordinate youth volunteers in that country who are serving through Young Anabaptist-Mennonite Exchange Network (YAMEN) and the Serving and Learning Together (SALT) programs.

David Harnish ('13) recently earned a master’s degree in sociology from the University of Alabama-Birmingham. He teaches social studies at Flanagan-Cornell High School, Flanagan, Illinois.

Matthew R. Hochstetler ('06) is an estate-planning attorney with DayKetterer in Canton, Ohio, and has published several articles in the *Probate Law Journal of Ohio*.

Jason B. Kauffman ('05) has been named the new Director of Archives and Records Management for Mennonite Church USA. He holds a Ph.D. in Latin American history from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Jacob Martens ('11) is completing his third year teaching English in Shingu, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan.

Jacob H. Martin ('15) is serving in the Democratic Republic of Congo through Mennonite Central Committee.

Mallori Norris ('11) works with the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association and the Lewis County (N.Y.) Historical Society.

Angeliky Santos ('15) is enrolled in a dual-degree (M.A./M.Div.) graduate program in counseling and Christian ministry at Eastern Mennonite Seminary.

Kelly Shenk Koontz ('08) graduated in 2016 with an M.B.A. from Boston University’s Public and Nonprofit Program. She is employed by Isaacson Miller, an executive search firm that works with nonprofit organizations in education, healthcare, arts, and philanthropy.

Peter Shenk Koontz ('08) earned a master of arts degree from Boston University School of Theology in 2016. He is currently a student in the psychiatric nurse practitioner program at Boston College’s William F. Connell School of Nursing.

Karl Stutzman ('03) has been appointed Director of Library Services at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. Previously he had been the library’s Assistant Director.

David Wiegner ('11), works with at-risk populations in Philadelphia as a staff person with Nueva Esperanza. He offers training in job interviewing and resume-writing.

Learn more about studying history at Goshen College: goshen.edu/history