

HISTORY DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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Grad Pursues Historic Preservation Career

BY SETH A. MILLER '15

Jackson Beck's twin passions for history and community development have come together in the field of historic preservation. Beck ('13) is currently enrolled in a historic preservation master's degree program at the University of Georgia. The impulse behind historic preservation is not simply a desire to save structures for nostalgia's sake, Beck explains, but "a recognition that historic buildings, sites and community heritage are valuable resources—and limited ones at that."

Beck is focusing on policy and program development. "One of my favorite classes involves learning about historic building materials. ... [Now] I can date buildings based what kind of saw marks are visible on the wood, what kind of nails were used, what kind of construction techniques were employed, and what architectural style was followed. It's essentially like being a building detective."

In a class on preservation law he "learned about the legal tools available to preserve buildings, the process of setting up historic district ordinances, design guidelines and preservation tax credits." For Beck, "learning these practical tools was encouraging

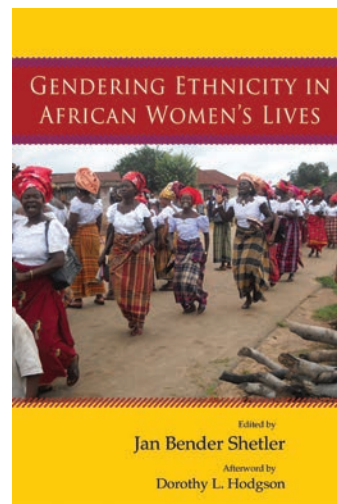
see Grad, p. 2

Professor's New Book Explores African Women's History

Do African men and women think about and enact their ethnicity in different ways? This question has intrigued GC history professor Jan Bender Shetler since she began doing oral history in East Africa and noticed striking differences in the ways her female and male interviewees recounted and made sense the past.

Bender Shetler recently edited a collection of essays, *Gendering Ethnicity in African Women's Lives*, which directly engages woman's history in Africa and explores how and why women's movements have a unifying role in African political organization and peace movements. The book is published by University of Wisconsin Press and contains eleven chapters by North American and African historians, linguists, anthropologists, and political scientists.

Many of the contributors to the book are younger scholars whose research had not previously appeared in print. Bender Shetler



see Professor, p. 3

Grad, continued from pg. 1

and it helped me picture the economic viability and sustainability of preservation efforts.”

During May 2015 Beck participated in a hands-on preservation field school project on Jekyll Island, Georgia. He was part of a team that restored the cypress porch of an 1868 “folk Victorian” cottage in the town of Brunswick in cooperation with the Historic Brunswick Foundation.

In recent years preservation has developed into a serious professional field with a wide variety of public and private sector career options. “There are definitely opportunities history graduates to explore,” Beck says. Those interested in governmental jobs may find themselves working with the National Park Service or as a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) doing work in physical restoration, site interpretation, or project management and development. In the private sector careers include consultation, contracting, and design with and for architectural firms, municipalities, and other institutions to assess and conserve historic resources. Nonprofits also preserve community heritage through advocacy, conservation easements, managing historic sites, and assisting municipalities.

There are also international career possibilities with organizations such as UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) helping preserve sites on the World Heritage List or in developing field of intangible cultural heritage preservation (folklore, music, art, etc.).

Beck’s experience is extending beyond the classroom. He obtained an assistantship with Professor James Reap and was able to help with research on legal pathways to preserve intangible cultural heritage, specifically Quinoa plant culture in Andean region of South America. “The United Nations had declared the year 2013 as “The International Year of the Quinoa.” This was in part reaction to the increasing stress put on its cultivation. As such, protecting the indigenous peoples who grow it and their growing tradition was the subject of a meeting in January 2015 that Professor Reap was attending.”

A variety of disciplines feed into historic preservation programs. Beck comments, “Overall there is a good mix of hands-on work and theoretical studies. I haven’t had a hard time adjusting to the area of study. Most people come from history backgrounds,” although “most historic preservation programs admit people with a variety of academic backgrounds.” At the University of Georgia it’s also possible to combine historic preservation with law school in a dual-degree program.

Given his opportunities, the small class sizes, and his assistantship, Beck reports that “all in all I’m having a good time.” And, he adds, “Goshen’s History Department prepared me well for grad school.”

Primary Sources and Original Research Propel Class of 2015 Senior Theses

A dozen 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:

Thomas A. Applegate (Columbus, Ohio), “Kennedy, Mennonites and Anti-Catholicism: Mennonite Opinions on Kennedy in the 1960 Presidential Race”

Madeline Krehbiel Baskfield (Saint Peter, Minn.), “The Legal Evolution of Conscientious Objection in the United States and the Role of Historic Peace Churches, 1940-1975”

Grace E. Boehm (Merriam, Kans.), “Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College: Changes and Continuities, 1964-2014”

Sara Garcia (Goshen, Ind.), “Goshen Community’s Initiative and the Development of Goshen School’s ENL Program, 1974-2015”

Micah A. Helmuth (Goshen, Ind.), “Proceeding Through the Gate’: Beginnings of the Woodlawn Amish-Mennonite Church, 1948-1960s”

Jacob H. Martin (Colorado Springs, Colo.), “Torchbearers and Boy Scouts: Mennonite Masculinity and Pacifism, 1941-1984”

Seth A. Miller (Wellman, Ia.), “The Mennonite Home Mission, 1893-1956: A Narrative of Diversity within a Little Westside Church in Chicago”

Brad J. Sandlin (Valley Center, Kans.), “Olive Mennonite Church Conflict: Bishop David A. Yoder’s Role in the Olive Mennonite Church Conflict of 1949”

Angeliky H. Santos (Goshen, Ind.), “Bienvenido: A Mental Health Program Created by the Community, for the Community”

Lizbeth S. South (Goshen, Ind.), “Dr. Florence Coopridger Friesen’s Role in the American Mennonite Mission in India, 1916-1941”

Elizabeth L. Wittrig (Hopedale, Ill.), “Her Open Table: The Peace Witness of Marian Claassen Franz (1930-2006)”

April L. Zehr (Tiskilwa, Ill.), “World War I Mennonite Conscientious Objectors in Camp Grant: The Emergence of a Pacifist Identity in the Face of Opposition”

The Class of 2015 also included two students with minors or interdisciplinary concentrations in history: **Jacob B. Greaser**, Goshen, Ind., and **Anastasia R. Smith**, Salem, Ore. Congratulations to the class of 2015!



Work in Immigrant Advocacy Brings Delight and Challenge

BY MARA WEAVER '13

After graduating from Goshen College I moved to Mexico City for a year with Mennonite Central Committee's Serving and Learning Together program. There I worked and lived at Casa de los Amigos,

a Quaker center for peace and international understanding. The Casa focuses on offering hospitality, fostering inter-cultural relationships and education, supporting immigrants and refugees as they establish their lives in Mexico City, and growing alternative local economic networks.

As a volunteer at the Casa, I worked directly with the immigrants and refugees who became a part of our home. Many of the migrants I met in Mexico still had dreams of making it to the United States some day. I returned to the United States wanting to better understand my place and understand the legal obstacles that prevent so many individuals from also belonging to this place.

I found work as a paralegal at the National Immigrant Justice Center, a Chicago-based non-profit with an office in Goshen that offers immigration legal services to low-income individuals. I have had the opportunity to work on a wide variety of cases, including "U visas" for victims of crimes, individuals qualifying for relief under the Violence Against Women Act, family petitions, refugee adjustment of status, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, asylum, and more. I have worked most frequently with persons from El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico, but I have also worked with people from Iraq to Sudan to Cambodia to Rwanda and beyond.

It turns out that everything history professors tell their students about how applicable academic training in history can be in the job field is true! With my background in history, particularly in research and writing, I have been able to begin to dive into writing legal arguments, working with primary sources, and analyzing details in the law and its implications for a client's particular case.

Studying history also poised me to interact with clients with an open mind. By and large, I love working with the people who come to our office. I admire their strength and resilience, especially the survivors of domestic violence I have come to know. I also have a deep appreciation for my female supervisors and consider myself lucky to work with brilliant, empowered women

who are gracious enough to share their wisdom and expertise with me while offering trailblazing leadership in the field.

Much to my surprise, I have found learning to navigate immigration law to be extremely interesting. Working through legal puzzles and applying the law to real people and specific circumstances, is actually a lot of fun.

At the same time, while I have been glad to gain knowledge about the U.S. immigration system, it is frustrating to know that even when we accomplish something important for a client, I am still working within the constraints of a system that is deeply flawed. My coworkers have done a lot to show me that even though comprehensive immigration reform is the goal, we can continue to push the limits of the system through interpretation of the law, litigation, and advocacy. Maintaining hope for such reform and for improvement in individual situations, however, has been a major challenge, and the last two years have taught valuable lessons on secondhand trauma, self-care, and finding way to keep hope alive.

As I am sure anyone who with a liberal arts education will love to hear, at Goshen College I learned how to keep learning, and it has been an amazing gift to have the opportunity to do that while working with people from Michiana communities, individuals who want desperately to live with a sense of safety and belonging. More than anything, I hope that if I master one tangible skill in this work, it will be that I can extend the dignity, understanding, patience, and love that each person warrants as a holy creation of God.

Professor, continued from pg. 1

found it especially gratifying to bring these new voices into the scholarly conversation.

Most studies of ethnicity in Africa rely on men's experiences and some scholars have even invoked the adage "women have no tribe" to mean that a woman loses her ethnic identity when she marries into her husband's community. The essays in *Gendering Ethnicity*, however, demonstrate that women do make choices about the forms of ethnicity they embrace, in some cases rejecting a specific ethnic identity in favor of an interethnic alliance. The analysis helps explain why African women may be more likely to champion interethnic political movements while men often promote an ethnicity based on martial masculinity.

Bender Shetler wrote the book's introduction and opening chapter, which draws on her extensive research in the Mara Region of Tanzania. In the coming months she will be completing a full-length book based on her own research.

The publication of *Gendering Ethnicity* was made possible, in part, by a generous gift from retired Goshen College history professor James Hertzler and his wife, Diane.

Some Recent History Alumni Activities

Matthew Amstutz ('13) is teaching English at Sichuan University of Science and Engineering, Zigong, China, with Mennonite Partners in China.

Lydette Assefa ('09) is a student at Northwestern University School of Law, Evanston, Ill.

Jamie Louise Bissell ('03) is an attorney in Trenton, Michigan.

Jacob Geyer ('11) is a social studies teacher at Merit Learning Center, Goshen, Ind.

Karrie Goelz ('10) teaches social studies and English at Goshen (Ind.) Middle School.

Matthew Y. Harms ('09) is a Program Officer, based in Jerusalem, with The Abraham Path Initiative, a long-distance walking trail across the Middle East that aims to inspire understanding, prosperity, and hope for all people in the region.

Jeff Hochstetler ('08) is Pastor for Family Life at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Jason B. Kauffman ('05) completed a Ph.D. in Latin American history at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 2015. His dissertation was "The Unknown Lands: Nature, Knowledge, and Society in the Pantanal Wetlands of Brazil and Bolivia."

Josh Keister ('04) is Associate Athletic Director and Director of the Gingerich Recreation and Fitness Center at Goshen College.

Greg Koop ('06) is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Arienne Johnson McShane ('10) received a master's degree in Islamic studies from Harvard Divinity School in 2014 and is a Program Officer at the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution, at George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

Stephanie Swartzendruber ('03) teaches social studies and is media specialist at Clay Middle School, Carmel, Indiana.

Jacob S. Yoder ('14) has been working in the Global Programs Support office of the development agency Cultivating New Frontier in Agriculture, a non-governmental organization based in Washington, D.C. He says, "My history degree has not only shaping my general knowledge, but my entire worldview in a way that helps me more effectively engage my responsibilities. I especially recognize the process of writing my senior thesis as crucial to the way I've transitioned to the working world."

Crystal Zook ('10) spent three-years in Laos serving with Mennonite Central Committee and then worked in refugee resettlement with Church World Service in Pennsylvania. In May 2015 she began a three-year assignment with M.C.C. in Nebaj, Guatemala.

Student and Recent Alumni Presentations and Publications

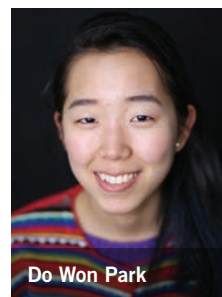
Jacob Martin ('15) and **Seth Miller** ('15) presented their history senior seminar research at the 17th annual Goshen College Student Academic Symposium, March 28. Miller and **Micah Helmuth** ('15) also presented versions of their senior seminar theses to the spring gathering of Michiana Anabaptist Historians, a group of community and congregational historians, on March 21.

Ted Maust ('12) published "Union with such as we might perhaps otherwise never know": John F. Funk and the *Herald of Truth*, 1854-1864" in the journal *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 38 (April 2015), 40-54. The article grew out of his GC senior history thesis. Maust was also one of three speakers at an October 2014 event entitled "What Young Historians Are Thinking," held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and sponsored by the Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Pietist, and Wesleyan Studies of Messiah College and the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

Liz Wittrig ('15) is the recipient of the Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission's summer archival internship for 2015. As an intern, she will spend five weeks visiting each of the MB archival centers in North America (British Columbia, California, Kansas, and Manitoba) during the months of June and July, and will explore the stories and images housed in them, especially pursuing her interest in women's voices in relation to the Anabaptist peace witness. Liz will begin a fulltime job with the Mennonite Church USA Archives in Goshen, in mid-July.



Lynelle M. Leinbach



Do Won Park

Scholarship Recipients

The 2015-2016 Willard and Verna Smith U.S. History Scholarship has been awarded to **Lynelle M. Leinbach** (Souderton, Pa.).

Do Won Park (Abbotsford, B.C.) is the recipient of the Oswin and David Gerber Scholarship in Mennonite Studies for 2015-2016.

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.