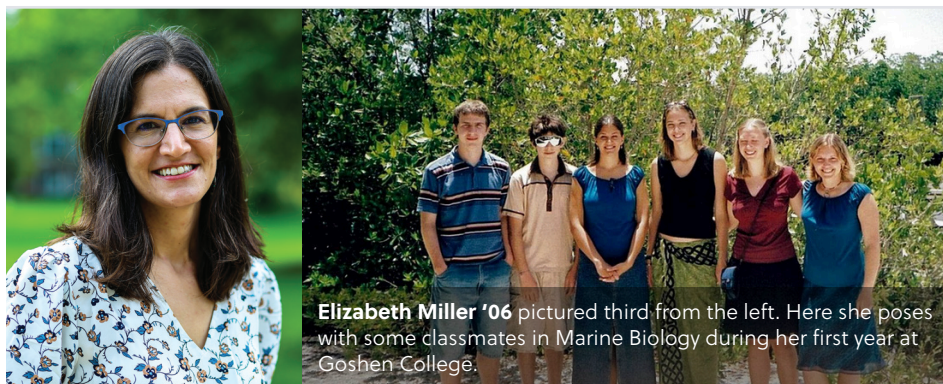


History Department Newsletter

STUDENT EDITORS: **Olivia Krall '23** AND **Naomi Klassen '25** | FACULTY EDITOR: **Philipp Gollner**



Elizabeth Miller '06 pictured third from the left. Here she poses with some classmates in Marine Biology during her first year at Goshen College.

A new voice in the History Department, Mennonite Historical Library, and Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism

BY **Naomi Klassen '25**

In June 2022, after 37 years of teaching, John D. Roth retired as a Goshen College History Professor. This year marks a major transition for Roth, as he moves on to a new role within MennoMedia, the publishing arm of the Mennonite Church USA and Canada. MennoMedia is working to produce a suite of products, devotional materials, historical resources, and essays to celebrate the landmark of Anabaptism's 500th anniversary in 2025. In July, Roth began work as Director of the Anabaptist Bible Project, a connected initiative to collect self-conscious commentary on the Bible from Mennonite and Anabaptist scholars.

As he begins this work, Roth hopes to highlight global perspectives throughout Mennonite history, "I have a deep appreciation for the historical theological tradition as I received it, but I am also aware that there are many untold stories within the Anabaptist/Mennonite Tradition." Roth describes this work within MennoMedia as, "inherently interesting and important, as a historian but also as a contemporary

believer who cares about my little corner of God's kingdom." Despite his absence, Roth is sure that Goshen College will continue to be enriched by the tradition of scholarship within the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism and the Mennonite Historical Library. He looks forward to how these features of historical memory will extend into the next generation, with alumn and historian Elizabeth Miller as his successor.

Roth's work as an educator and director of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism will be passed on to Miller, who has claimed a wide breadth of global education and historical research. "She has had deep experience as a historian and as a Mennonite Central Committee country representative in a Latin American context." Elizabeth Miller, Goshen's newest assistant History professor, graduated from the college in 2006 with a history degree. Her experience at the college is one reason she is especially energized by this role. "The history department here was incredibly

formative, not just for me as a student scholar but for me as a person. Being a part of the history department here, the mentoring that I received from the history professors was very formative for me."

As a post-grad, Miller attended Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary for a master's in theological studies. Throughout her early career, Miller expressed deep interest in Latin American Anabaptist history and thought. After seminary, a specific connection with a Colombian Mennonite pastor brought to her attention a research opportunity to write a history of Anabaptist churches within Colombia. Miller spent four years collecting oral histories from local elders and church leaders. Her work culminated in a book published in Colombia that reveals how Colombian Anabaptists have shaped and redefined Anabaptism. Miller claims that this position was "personally transformative for me." She used interests and clues gained in Colombia to expand her work as an administrative assistant during the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism's first years. After this role, Miller returned to Colombia for five years to direct MCC's Colombia and Ecuador programs focused on peacebuilding work.

Now back in Goshen, Miller notes how influential the history program was for her later career and faith journey, "I feel passionate about history's ability to do that, I'm excited to be a part of that with GC students and faculty members." In her new position as Director of the Mennonite Historical Library and ISGA, Miller hopes to encourage student engagement. As an assistant history professor, Miller wants to create momentum for transformative potential; "This work will serve global churches in their own scholarship, just as it enriches GC." 🌿

GC History Students Take on New Role Working In The MCUSA Archive

BY **Olivia Krall '23**

Lydia Stauffer and Andrew Ness have spent hours combing through the life and letters of Alan Kreider. Once a week, these two Goshen College history majors make the drive out to Elkhart to get real-world archival experience. Lately, the two have been categorizing boxes containing the papers of Kreider. Kreider, now deceased, was a former GC history professor and leading thinker on non-violence in the nuclear age. Recently, his documents and letters entered the archive's holdings and have become the focus of Ness and Stauffer's internships as they organize, label, and digitize the documents.

Stauffer and Ness have had the unique opportunity to complete a year-long internship with the Mennonite Church USA archive. Beginning in mid-September, the two will continue to work in the archive until the end of this school year. Through this program, the two historians have gained experience

that they say will benefit them both during the rest of their time here at Goshen College and beyond as they look forward to their careers. Ness, in particular, referenced how the archival work supports his academic pursuits, stating that it "will be really helpful for my senior thesis" and emphasized that historians need to be familiar with how archives work.

Stauffer also mentioned the value of this internship, saying that working at the archive presents a unique opportunity to expand on what she has learned in class. She described that, on campus, history classes "focus on how to use primary sources, and how to find primary sources," but that working in the archive allows her to "broaden her understanding of primary source material" by also learning how "to prepare primary sources." Stauffer reflected on how this work has helped her in her study of history, and mentioned that her time there has made her "feel more comfortable going to an archive" and gain a better understanding of the processes that govern archival work.

Working with the MCUSA archives has also led to some interesting finds for both Ness and Stauffer. Ness loves that he can find "weird little nuggets



of information" that can be "really fascinating" as he pages through the collections. His favorite find so far has been a stack of love letters that Kreider sent to his fiancée just before they married. Stauffer has also found some interesting documents. She said the one thing from the archive she'll "probably remember forever" is an unsigned piece of notebook paper in one of the boxes, with a message scribbled on it that read, "Since you helped me out recently, I'll try to help get you out of that speeding ticket." For both of these students, working at the MCC archive has been an internship to remember and will help them engage in historical work throughout their time here and beyond. 🌿

Conversations with Senior History Majors

What is your favorite history class that you have taken at GC?

Grace Hitt: If I had to pick one, though, I would have to say junior seminar. I learned so much about how the field works and appreciated the opportunity to build community with fellow history majors over thought-provoking discussions.

Ruam Barbosa: Anabaptism in a Global Context, with Dr. John Roth. This class was challenging at first, because it covered timeframes that I have studied before, but not with an Anabaptist perspective. It was interesting to look at some remarkable events with different lenses.

Olivia Krall: Latino Community Histories with Julia Schiavone Camacho was one of my favorites!

Andrew Ness: It has got to be the History of American Foodways. I initially took this class my first semester at Goshen because it was an elective for Sustainable Food Systems, but it was so interesting that I decided to declare a history major as well.

What is the most important thing that you have learned during your time with the GC hist. Dept.?

Olivia Krall: How to have empathy with figures from the past and clearly structure an argument in my writing.

Grace Hitt: Learning how to write well and how to craft an argument are definitely up there as things that will serve me well in the future. I also think learning about the importance of considering the agency of historical actors and about conceptualizing the past as a foreign country has helped me

approach the world from a position of humility and openness.

Caleb Gingerich: Probably the most valuable lesson I've learned has been how to think critically. Studying primary source documents and critically reading scholarly arguments has made it easier to come to my own conclusions about said material, and the same critical thinking skills are applied when I'm reading/watching the news. Studying history at GC has cultivated my growth as an individual as well as a member of society.

What advice would you give to your first-year self?

Lydia Nolt: Take more electives in adjacent departments or just things you are interested in!

Caleb Gingerich: Find what interests you intellectually and look into it. Don't

let it take over your social or personal time, but just know that it might be rewarding to spend an extra hour each week reading about something you skimmed over on wikipedia that one time that caught your attention.

Andrew Ness: I would definitely advise my first-year self to make deadlines for myself early on in the semester and stick to them. Easier said than done, but it would have saved me some late nights.

Can you give us a preview of your thesis for this spring semester?

Lydia Nolt: I intend to look at the work of Mary and Ralph Smeltzer in resettling Japanese from U.S. internment camps in Chicago with the Brethren Service Commission from 1942-1944. I aim to

examine the complex relationships between the War Relocation Authority, Brethren Service Commission, and the experiences of the resettled Japanese community.

Olivia Krall: I plan to study the role of gender in the downfall of the New Harmony utopian community in southern Indiana from 1824-1828. I will examine how despite claims of gender equality, the community failed to alter gendered patterns of labor or give women autonomy, which lead to the fragmentation of the community.

Ruam Barbosa: I will talk about Mennonite missions in South America. I will basically talk about the reasons for their migration and the kind of work they did/do there and how they managed

to establish themselves in a continent where Catholicism was predominant and relatively aggressive to other religions.

Caleb Gingerich: Ideally, I'd love to explore different approaches to childrearing within the Mennonite Church during the late 20th century.

Andrew Ness: I will be working with the Plow Creek Collection at the MCUSA archives, a collection of records from a Mennonite intentional community that closed in 2017. I want to write about Mennonites' understanding of "discipleship" and how midwestern Mennonites seek to resolve the contradictions between their faith tradition and their lifestyles in a country where they must participate in systems which are discordant with their beliefs. 🌿

Faculty Updates



Elizabeth Miller is getting settled at Goshen College and currently preparing to teach Anabaptism in Global Context next semester. At the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism (ISGA), she is supporting MHL Curator Joe Springer in digitizing portions of the Portuguese and Korean-language collections of the MHL. These will serve Korean and Portuguese-speaking Anabaptist communities globally, who may not have the ability to visit the MHL in person. Miller and the ISGA Research Fellows are also planning ways to expand the global content accessible on GAMEO (Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online) and CREA (Centro de Recursos Electrónicos Anabautistas).



Philipp Gollner presented a paper on teaching the history of "Christian nationalism" in the U.S. at a symposium hosted by Valparaiso University, and on the idea and problems of interdisciplinarity in Mennonite higher education at the Marpeck Fund's conference at Bluffton University. He is currently a Young Scholars in American Religion fellow through the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture and the Lilly Endowment. He continues to serve as the interim chair of the History department, which has included launching a new major in History/Pre-Law and an emphasis on promoting the History major at Goshen College as a path to many life-giving careers.



Julia Schiavone Camacho continues to work on a project that received faculty funding to explore the mixed unions of Chinese sailors and British women in Liverpool during World War II, the expulsion of the men following the war, and subsequent family journeys and trauma. She is also preparing to submit an article emerging from her second book project *Chinese Latinos: Forging the Transpacific Family, Diasporic Community, and Memory*. Set on a bigger canvas, this work is a spinoff from Chinese Mexicans (University of North Carolina Press, 2012). She is also preparing to submit a short historical fiction piece. Her short nonfiction appeared in a recent issue of *Hayden's Ferry Review* (Spring 2022).



John D. Roth, recently retired from teaching at Goshen College, remains active in a new position as project director of "Anabaptism at 500," a suite of projects initiated by MennoMedia that are intended to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the beginnings of the Anabaptist movement in 2025.

The major focus at the moment is the Anabaptist Bible Project that will include introductions to all the canonical books by 50+ biblical scholars, commentary from 16th and 17th century Anabaptists gleaned by a group of historians, and insights, applications, and questions from 500 Bible study groups from a wide range of Anabaptist faith communities. He enjoys working out of his new office on the second floor of the AD Building, with a window overlooking the Adelphian Fountain.



Jan Bender Shetler is in the second year of a three year National Endowment for the Humanities grant to create the Mara Cultural Heritage Digital Library. The project website maraculturalheritage.org went live in June. Student assistants, transcribers and linguistic experts continue to add material to the database. Jan traveled to Tanzania this summer to introduce the website there among academics and collaborators in the Mara Region. She also published a chapter entitled, "Floating Reed Islands: Gendered Stories of Resilience during Ecological Disaster in the Mara Region, Tanzania," in *Oral History and the Environment: Global Perspectives on Climate, Connection, and Catastrophe*, Edited by Stephen M. Sloan and Mark Cave. Oxford Oral History Series, Oxford University Press, 2022."

Updates from Alumni: Featuring Melissa MacGregor, Ben Gerig Shelly, and Rachaelann Klink

Can you give us a quick 2-3 sentence update about your career and what you have been doing since graduating Goshen in 2009?

Melissa MacGregor: Immediately after college, I was an immigration paralegal via Americorps and Mennonite Voluntary Service in South Texas with the American Bar Association. I subsequently avoided long Midwestern winters for most of my twenties – living in SE, DC + Seattle. I currently work at Microsoft in the company's Research + Insights organization, which is what took me to the Pacific Northwest. However, during the pandemic, I relocated back to the Midwest to be close to family. I'm still reacclimating to the Midwest winter weather!

Ben Gerig Shelly: Soon after graduating from Goshen, I joined Americorps and spent a year working for a legal aid clinic in Buffalo, New York. I spent

the next three years in New Haven, Connecticut, at Yale Law School, before returning to the midwest to begin my legal career in Chicago. I'm now in the midst of completing my second federal clerkship; the first was with the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, and my current one is with the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Rachaelann Klink: After graduation, I went on to obtain my M.S. in Criminal Justice and moved back to my home state of Pennsylvania. Right now, I work as a Legal Secretary for the District Attorney's office in Lancaster, PA. I plan to continue my education and go for my JD.

What do you do on a typical day in your current position?

Melissa: Great question! It varies greatly. I have the privilege to do time-sensitive trend reporting as well as deep, exploratory research on a wide range of topics for a wide range of stakeholders at Microsoft. One public example is supporting Microsoft's research efforts to better understand the psychology of privacy in the digital age and the need for user trust and resilience.

Ben: Clerking is a great opportunity to work with judges to resolve cases filed in federal court. On a typical day, I'll read briefs submitted by lawyers on both sides of a dispute, conduct my own legal research, and draft judicial orders. And then, periodically, I'll meet with panels of judges to finalize and publish the orders.

How has your time at Goshen College and in the history department influenced you?

Melissa: As a first-year student, I planned to take biology in order to fulfill a science requirement. However, during the orientation weekend ahead of my first semester at GC, Dr. Jan Bender-Shetler told me about her Human Stories course. I immediately switched – and soon after ferociously read *History in Three Keys*. Her colloquium continues to shape how I think about perspective, narrative, and memory. It shapes how I approach the research questions I investigate as well as how I absorb what others share with me. Studying other histories – like *Albion's Seed* or *Histographies* – built on this framework.

I've leaned on this foundational coursework throughout my career from my paralegal days in Texas to today at Microsoft.

Ben: I learned a great deal from the many wonderful professors on Wyse 3rd about how to write clearly, think critically, and live ethically.

Rachaelann: My history degree from Goshen continues to be an excellent investment. Particularly when it comes to writing and critical analysis. There is a learning curve with every job, but my education has provided me with a strong foundation that I use to excel in the workforce.

Do you have any advice for current GC history students?

Melissa: As history students, we're trained to contextualize information, synthesize the materials and then communicate a clear, compelling point of view to peers and professors. This is an incredibly useful skill set. Regardless if you continue in academia or not, these skills will 1) help you share complex insights credibly and 2) quickly make sense of information others share with you. Do not underestimate the value of either.

Also, play around with R if you can! And think about the questions in the world you want to help answer after your time as a Maple Leaf is complete.

Ben: Build relationships with your professors outside of class and/or in small-group classes. These types of interactions with professors often lead to intellectually stimulating conversations, and forming that relationship is instrumentally valuable if/when you apply for a job or graduate school after leaving GC.

Melissa, This past year you received an award for your work in social intelligence. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

Melissa: Sure! It's a fast-growing research discipline, so I was honored to be included on the inaugural list. As I told the SILab, social intelligence is one of the most fun and exploratory research disciplines. From memes and emojis to linguistics and analytics, it is full of untapped possibilities. It has been so great to meet so many formidable researchers from around the world and learn about their work! 🌱

Scholarship Recipients



The 2022-2023 Willard and Verna Smith U.S. History Scholarship has been awarded to **Olivia Krall** (left), Senior, of Carmel, IN.

The Oswin and David Gerber Scholarship in Mennonite Studies for 2022-2023 was awarded to **Lydia Nolt** (right), Senior, of Lancaster, PA.

The generosity of the Smith and Gerber families has been helpful to many Goshen College students. The Department of History welcomes donations to the Smith and Gerber scholarship endowments. To donate, contact finaid@goshen.edu.