

PHA 2015 Conference Poster Session

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## PHA 2015 CONFERENCE POSTER SESSION

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The Pennsylvania Historical Association sponsors a poster session at its annual meeting for undergraduate and graduate students to present their research as emerging scholars in the field of Pennsylvania and Mid-Atlantic history. Beginning this year, posters were divided between graduate and undergraduate levels with first, second, and third places at the undergraduate level.

At the Fall 2015 meeting held October 8–10 in Grantville, the following undergraduate and graduate posters were selected as the best in their categories. The first-place posters are reproduced on the following pages, along with their abstracts. A list of all entries and winners follows.

### **FIRST PLACE, GRADUATE**

“Internationalizing the National Park Service (NPS): A Study of the NPS Division of International Affairs, 1956–1970”

Joana Arruda, Temple University

Faculty Sponsor: Hilary Iris Lowe

The United States National Park Service (NPS), founded in 1916 to conserve America’s natural and historic landscapes, established a Division of International Affairs (DIA) in 1961. The NPS, as scholars Lary Dilsaver and Terence Young explain, has always participated in international work in some capacity since its agency’s origins. I argue that this rich unexplored history of overseas engagement at the height of the DIA is a telling narrative of how the NPS contributed to the “containment through nation-building” phenomenon at the height of the Cold War era both at home and abroad.

The decision to create an office specifically dedicated to foreign engagement was directly related to the expansion of the Park Service at home following World War II. Relaxation of wartime travel restrictions and the creation of the national interstate highway system made national parks more accessible than ever before. Travel accessibility, in addition to the postwar economic boom and surge in nationalism, spurred a 30-million increase in visitors to national parks between 1941 and 1956. The parks, however, were unequipped to accommodate this unprecedented increase in visitation. Armed with a solution, NPS director Conrad “Connie” Wirth approached President Dwight Eisenhower’s cabinet in 1956 and proposed Mission 66, a ten-year initiative to completely expand the park system in time for the agency’s fiftieth anniversary in 1966. A Mission 66 pamphlet advertised, “The very idea behind the parks is America—that the country belongs to the people for the enrichment of all.” This expansive initiative was a physical and thereby ideological rebuilding of the American landscape to reflect its democratic and powerful postwar image on the world stage. Mission 66 was an example of nation-building at home.

As the NPS expanded its authority at home, the United States extended its powerful postwar image abroad. The Kennedy administration secured the passage of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which created initiatives such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to contain communism overseas through economic means. The formation of the NPS’s Division of International Affairs that same year converged with the United States’ larger mission to exert its influence internationally. It distributed pamphlets overseas that glorified American heritage and democratic values reflected in parks such as Yellowstone and Independence National Historical Park. In 1966 the DIA began its first official international project in Jordan, where twelve NPS employees were assigned to develop a Jordanian national park system at Jordan’s request. Using USAID funds, the NPS developed national parks to drive Jordan’s economy as a containment measure. The expansion of the NPS at home through Mission 66, argued Wirth, was necessary to remind Americans of the democratic values that the national parks represented. In many ways, the NPS’s project in Jordan was an extension of the ideological and economic models of Mission 66 to legitimize foreign nations in the American image.

Not only did the NPS participate in nation-building overseas, but it also invited foreigners to visit the United States to see for themselves the American way of life. In the 1960s, the Park Service developed the African

Internationalizing the National Park Service (NPS): A Study of the NPS Division of International Affairs (DIA), 1956-1970

Joana Arruda, *History/Public History M.A. '16*  
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**Summary/Argument**

The United States National Park Service (NPS), founded in 1916, was committed to conserving and preserving the nation's natural and cultural landscapes. Described as "America's best idea," the NPS self-identified as the global leader in conservation. While the NPS was influenced by the global conservation movement and participated in foreign conversations since its founding, not until 1961 did the NPS establish its own Division of International Affairs (DIA). The DIA, upon requests from other nations, often received funds from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to construct national parks overseas.

*Most literature on the NPS omits this international history. However in studying the establishment and work of the DIA, I contend that the NPS contributed to the nation-building phenomenon of the Cold War era at home and abroad. The "Mission 66" expansion and redefinition of the Agency at home during the Cold War years was writ large abroad.*

**Methodology**

This project used NPS government documents, DIA correspondence letters, and newspapers to reconstruct a narrative of the NPS's international participation. It also looked to recent scholarly trends in transnational history to shake the nationalist narrative used to trace the history of "America's best idea."

"Growth and development of national parks and reserve programs throughout the world are important to the welfare of the people of every nation."  
 - President John F. Kennedy, 1962, First World Conference on National Parks

**NPS Expansion: MISSION 66, 1956 – 1966:**

**Reshaping and Redefining the American Landscape**

Following World War II, Americans flocked to national parks in unprecedented numbers – a 30 million visitor increase between 1941 and 1956. To solve the parks' inability to accommodate this staggering growth, NPS Director Conrad Wirth proposed in 1956 what became a ten-year, \$1 billion congressionally-funded project to expand the national park system. This included renovated camp and housing accommodations, new interpretative programs, highways to connect parks, and resettlement of park boundaries. These enormous costs were warranted, argued Wirth, because, "Pride in their government, love of the land, and faith in the American Tradition – these are the real products of our national parks." Mission 66 elevated the visibility of the NPS within the United States, as new and existing parks were built to reflect the new democratic remainings of a powerful postwar America. In essence, the NPS participated in rebuilding the American nation-state.



P. 77 of USAID/NPS joint publication of the Master Plan for Petra National Park.

**NPS Division of International Affairs (DIA): "National Parks are not islands unto themselves."**

In the midst of MISSION 66, the NPS made a vested interest to create an office that initiated formal international conversations. Sparked by the U.S.'s new visibility on the global stage, particularly in nation-building and global development, the NPS DIA was established in 1961 to formally respond to foreign requests to build national parks overseas. Projects were frequently funded by USAID. These funds were used to take "America's best idea" overseas, in a claim that national parks were a universal, moral, and democratic project, a quasi- "civilizing mission."

**NPS in Jordan: Development of the Jordanian National Park System**

In 1965, the NPS DIA and USAID began negotiations with the state of Jordan to develop a Jordanian national park system. A year later, twelve NPS officials left for the DIA's first official project in Jordan to construct six historic sites using USAID funds. The Park Service "Team" released the Master Plan for Petra National Park in June 1968 as a model for the "use, development, interpretation, protection, and general administration" of Petra. Modeled after the American system, the Master Plan served as a model for future projects overseas.

**African Student Program, 1961**

The NPS and the U.S. State Department often organized trips for foreign dignitaries to tour U.S. national parks throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The NPS, in 1961, took cues from other programs that sought to teach foreigners about the United States and established the African Student Program. African students attending American universities were invited annually to tour American national parks to learn about national park management in the hopes that they would return to their respective countries and implement national parks in the American image. Furthermore, staple American parks such as Yellowstone and Yosemite were used to dispel negative stereotypes of the United States and demonstrate the democratic ideals infused into the national park system as a symbol of American progress.

"Mission 66"

Mission 66 was a ten-year, \$1 billion congressionally-funded project to expand the national park system. This included renovated camp and housing accommodations, new interpretative programs, highways to connect parks, and resettlement of park boundaries. These enormous costs were warranted, argued Wirth, because, "Pride in their government, love of the land, and faith in the American Tradition – these are the real products of our national parks." Mission 66 elevated the visibility of the NPS within the United States, as new and existing parks were built to reflect the new democratic remainings of a powerful postwar America. In essence, the NPS participated in rebuilding the American nation-state.

THE MISSION 66 PROGRAM



**Conclusions/Future Research**

- Studying the NPS DIA allows historians to understand how the NPS directly and indirectly helped to reshape and redefine both America and the global sphere in the Cold War era.
- The establishment of the DIA was Mission 66 writ large abroad.
- 2016 marks the NPS's centennial, a cause for NPS reflection of the overarching networks it participated in so as to maintain relevancy in natural and cultural conservation work.

**References**

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- "Mission 66 Program." The Critical Document Project, America's National Park System.
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- Wirth, Conrad. "National Parks in Global Historical Perspective." New York: Berghahn Books, 2012.

FIGURE 1 The first place graduate student poster.

Student Program. It invited African students attending American universities to tour American national parks such as Yellowstone and Yosemite. This program was developed to teach students about the democratic meanings and inherent universality of the national parks in the hopes that they would return home and champion national park development in their respective nations. The NPS, on the behalf of the United States, was demonstrating how to literally build democracy through a national park system.

These overseas projects were tied to the expansion of the NPS at home and the growth of American influence abroad. Tracing the DIA's involvement in this history is a vital piece to more fully understanding the agency's contributions to world development through national parks.

**FIRST PLACE, UNDERGRADUATE**

“Every Town Has . . . Half a Dozen Lunatics’: Insanity  
in Snyder County, Pennsylvania”

Rachel Baer, Susquehanna University

Faculty Sponsor: Edward Slavishak

Between 1860 and 1904, court officers in Snyder County, Pennsylvania, identified fourteen residents as “lunatics” in county court records. These records, known as lunacy papers, detail the legal proceedings surrounding insanity. The papers naturally document the process of officially declaring a person insane and appointing a guardian. More importantly, however, they are heavily invested in the economics of insanity, including the financial accounts of insane persons, the payment of court fees, and the sale of estates and possessions. Those people declared insane, moreover, were often farmers or laborers or had close family members in these working-class professions. The intense focus on economics in these records emerged in the context of a period of transition in Snyder County's history. After Snyder County's boundaries were officially formed in 1855, the rural central Pennsylvania area experienced years of troubled growth until the early twentieth century, especially in transportation, agriculture, and industry. The region's briefly booming canal network was scrapped in favor of a railroad system, which then faced many failed attempts before it ultimately succeeded. Furthermore, agriculture was slowly expanding beyond the boundaries of the county and professionalizing via new modes

# “Every Town Has...Half a dozen lunatics”: Insanity in Snyder County, Pennsylvania

Rachel Baer

Susquehanna University

## INTRODUCTION

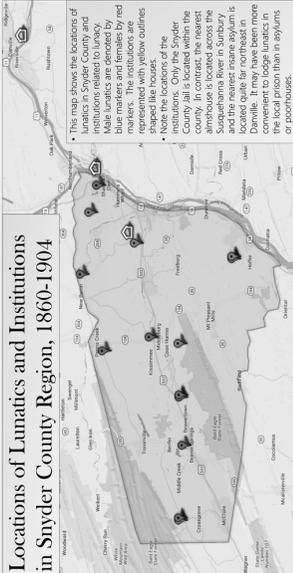
A quiet rural area in central Pennsylvania, Snyder County would at first glance seem to be a relatively unexceptional part of the U.S. However, a closer look shows that this region possesses a wealth of information about a little-known but important part of Pennsylvania history. In the past, legal proceedings are called lunacy papers, which reveal fourteen lunatics in Snyder County between 1860 and 1904 (the total population of Snyder County was 15,035 in 1860 and 17,304 in 1900). Since Pennsylvania law required that a lunatic be committed to an institution, the area provides an excellent representation of how lunacy was dealt with in a rural setting.

With this in mind, the goals of this project were to:

- Investigate how lunacy functioned within a rural community
- Study perceptions held by the public about lunacy
- Discover what made people susceptible to being declared lunatics
- Understand what purpose lunatics served in the life of the “safer” public



Hon. Harold M. McCandless, a judge in Snyder County from 1860 to 1894.



- SELECTED REFERENCES**
- Fox, Richard W. *So He Disappeared in Mind: Madness in America*. University of California Press, 1978.
  - McCandless, Peter. *Moonslight, Magnolias, and Madness: A Story of South Carolina from the University of North Carolina Press*, 1996.
  - Wagnon, George Washington, and Clara R. Wagnon. *Snyder County: A Collection of County from the Settlement of the First Settlers in the Year 1682 to 1927-28*. Middleburg, Pa. The Middleburg Post, 1919. <http://archive.org/details/snydercountyand1869/wagnon>

**Every Town Has...**

A town in Snyder County, Pennsylvania, where a lunatic was committed to an institution. The town is located in the northern part of the county, near the town of Danville. The lunatic was committed to an institution in 1860. The town is now a ghost town.

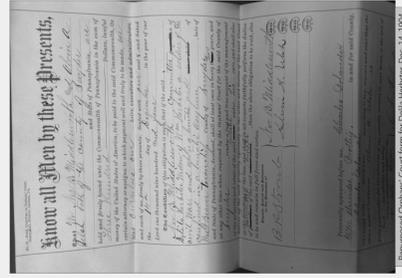
**Middleburg Post**  
July 27, 1883

**Free Madmen, the Poor and the State**

The Middleburg Post, July 27, 1883.

The Middleburg Post, July 27, 1883.

The Middleburg Post, July 27, 1883.



**Leave work William Tetter, a man of high level of interest in lunacy. He has many lunatics' lives and not many in urban and rural areas. People with economic problems or whose families could not afford to be declared lunatics.**

**CONCLUSIONS**

- Snyder County residents had a high level of interest in lunacy. The county had many lunatics' lives and not many in urban and rural areas.
- People with economic problems or whose families could not afford to be declared lunatics.
- Local lunacy fed the public's existing fascination with lunacy and gave the public material of lunatics' property and possessions.
- Though lunatics were not considered "normal," they were an important part of life in Snyder County between the mid-19th century and early-20th century.

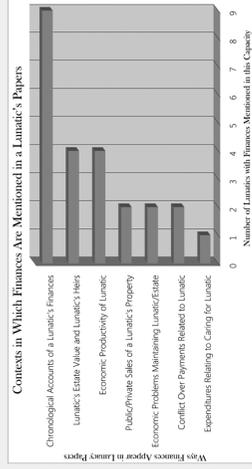


FIGURE 2 The first place undergraduate poster.

of transportation and farm organizations, while extractive industries such as lumber began to replace other forms of industry after the Civil War. Such an uncertain economic situation created an atmosphere conducive to exploitation of people from the lower classes—perhaps by declaring them lunatics in order to remove their ability to control their own finances and also sell their property. In Snyder County, relatives of the legally insane and other local residents could feasibly derive economic benefits from lunatics' loss of financial independence.

Through close study of these lunacy papers as well as newspapers, census records, and Pennsylvania lunacy laws, this project uncovers the social, cultural, and economic meanings of insanity in Snyder County. It also aims to add to the existing literature on insanity by studying the experiences of the insane poor in a predominately agricultural, rural area that lacked an insane asylum and almshouse. This project moreover challenges scholars who emphasize the marginalization of the insane, instead showing that those declared lunatics could become a beneficial part of life for both their immediate family members and the community at large.

**ALL UNDERGRADUATE-LEVEL INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS**

Rachel Baer, Susquehanna University, “Every Town Has . . . Half a Dozen Lunatics’: Insanity in Snyder County, Pennsylvania” (first place)  
Faculty Sponsor: Edward Slavishak

Marie Gorman, Lebanon Valley College, “LVC at War: Vietnam” (third place)  
Faculty Sponsor: Rebecca McCoy

Erich Lenz, Kutztown University, “The Light Shines On: How America Preserves Its Historic Lighthouses”  
Faculty Sponsor: Michael Gabriel

Taylor Mason and Devon Newcomer, Shippensburg University, “Inside These Walls: The Stewart Hall History Project” (second place)  
Faculty Sponsor: Steven Burg

Jennifer Wendt, Susquehanna University, "How the Past Defines the Future: A Historiography on Maximilien Robespierre"

Faculty Sponsor: Edward Slavishak

Lebanon Valley College Sesquicentennial History Projects

Faculty Sponsor: Rebecca McCoy

Marie Gorman, "LVC at War: Vietnam" (third place)

Cody Kelly, "This Ringing Song We Raise: Spirit, Song, and Passion of the LVC Music Department"

Brianna Leiter, "LVC's Presidents: 'Taking Courage for an Ever-Inspiring Future'"

Becky Sausser, "A Beginning Grounded in Religion"

Cody Stryker and Michael Mango-Puglisi, "LVC's Tradition of Athletics"

Jeannette Tropp, "Science on the Bunsen Burner"

#### ALL GRADUATE-LEVEL ENTRIES

Joana Arruda, Temple University, "Internationalizing the National Park Service (NPS): A Study of the NPS Division of International Affairs, 1956–1970" (winner)

Faculty Sponsor: Hilary Iris Lowe

Tiffany Dacheux, Millersville University, "A Little of Most Things': The Intellectual World of Elizabeth Drinker"

Faculty Sponsor: Robyn Lily Davis

Grace DiAgostino, Temple University, "Selective Chinese Inclusion during an Era of Exclusion: American Unilateral View of Development and the Exhibit of a 'Native' Chinese Village at the National Export Exposition, 1899"

Faculty Sponsor: Hilary Iris Lowe

Michael Fitzpatrick, Millersville University, "The Northampton Insurrection: John Fries' Rebellion as America's Thermidorian Reaction, 1799–1800"

Faculty Sponsor: Robyn Lily Davis

ADAM T. BENTZ is an Adjunct Professor of History at Lebanon Valley College