

Public History

at Middle Tennessee State University

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Welcome Dr. Molly Taylor-Poleskey



Molly Taylor-Poleskey

Last semester, the History Department welcomed Dr. Molly Taylor-Poleskey to the Public History program. Dr. Poleskey recently received her Ph.D. from Stanford after completing her dissertation, “The Great Elec-

tor’s Table: Food and the Rise of Brandenburg-Prussia,” which used food as an interpretive tool to trace the dissemination of culture through Brandenburg-Prussia in the years following the Thirty Years War. In conjunction with her doctoral work, Poleskey’s work in digital interpretation reflected her involvement with such programs as Stanford’s Humanities +

Design Lab in its Center for Textual and Spatial Analysis, as well as her consultation on the development of the digital program, Palladio, which allows researchers to explore their data via an opensource platform. Describing digital history as a way to use computer-based innovation to bolster traditional historical methodology, Poleskey sees “a natural integration” point in which to incorporate digital history into the existing MTSU Public History program. To this end, Poleskey hopes to create a curriculum that will draw on the digital work currently being done by professionals in museums, archives, and libraries in order to provide graduate and undergraduate students with the “key skills that will prepare them for those jobs in the public arena.” Ultimately, Poleskey hopes to create an innovative and engaging digital history curriculum that will bolster the Public History Department’s reputation as “one of the strongest [programs] in the nation” for students interested in professional careers in history. 🔑

News from the Centers

ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

The new academic year brings new students and new projects to the Albert Gore Research Center. We welcome new graduate students Zachary Kautzman and Kelsey Lamkin, who have joined returning graduate students Bradley Harjehausen and Julie Maresco. Also working at the Gore Center is a team of talented undergraduates—Demundre Irvin, Sage Kafsky, Kat Parmalee, and Shalon Mooney.

This past election season has given the Albert Gore Research Center many opportunities to engage the public with its collections and staff expertise. Gore Center staff and students, led by University

Archivist Donna Baker and graduate assistant Zachary Kautzman partnered with MTSU’s Todd Art Gallery to help mount an exhibition: “Politics, Persuasion, and Propaganda.” The exhibit featured artifacts and political ephemera from our political collections, which were paired with original artworks inspired by political campaigns.

Kent Syler, instructor of political science and special project coordinator at the Gore Center, published two important op-ed columns that connect his research in the papers of Sen. Albert Gore to the current presidential campaign. In

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**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

Incoming Students

PABLO CARRILLO
University of
Tennessee-Chattanooga
B.A., History

ELIZABETH FOSTER
Tennessee
Technological
University
B.S., History
B.A., English

KELLI GIBSON
University of North
Carolina at Chapel Hill
B.A., History

LYDIA HARRIS
Middle Tennessee State
University
B.S., Anthropology
B.A., History

VICTORY HENSLEY
University of North
Carolina at Chapel Hill
B.A., History
B.A., Peace, War, and
Defense

JOSHUA ETHAN HOLDEN
Middle Tennessee State
University
B.A., History

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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"JFK asked Gore to head secret debate strategy group," which appeared in the September 26, 2016, edition of the Daily News Journal, Syler drew upon Gore's work in preparing John F. Kennedy for his debates with his Republican opponent, Richard M. Nixon, in the 1960 presidential debates. As documented in Gore's papers, the senator pulled together a group of seasoned political leaders that included Senator J. William Fulbright, of Arkansas, and Truman advisor Clark Clifford to prepare the young Democratic presidential nominee for his context with Nixon. In "Johnson and Stein Supporters Could Decide Presidency," USA Today (October 6, 2016), Syler and his co-author, Dr. John Vile (dean of the Honors College), relate Gore's criticisms of polling in the 1960 election to the complexities of our current presidential election. The column highlights correspondence between Gore and two pioneers in this history of polling, Elmo Roper and George Gallup. These articles are part of the extensive research Syler is doing in the Gore Papers, starting with his article "JFK's religion 'death blow' to 1960 election in Tennessee" in August.

In keeping with this historic election, Kelsey Lamkin has been processing and doing basic preservation work on the League of Women Voters Records. As the Murfreesboro LWV chapter will celebrate an anniversary next year, Lamkin is hoping to provide better description and access to the collection to support any activities the chapter might organize.

Center Director, Dr. Louis Kyriakoudes, and graduate assistant Julie Maresco completed the Humanities Tennessee-funded exhibit "The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966: Commemorating 50 years of Preserving Tennessee's Cultural Heritage." Over the summer, Maresco completed the research and drafted the exhibit text. The exhibit was first installed in Tusculum College's Andrew Johnson Museum and Library, and will later move to locations across Tennessee.

Maresco also presented a poster at the annual meeting of the Oral History Association in Long Beach, California, titled: "Oral History and the Public: Creating Podcasts with Open Source Software and Social Media." Maresco drew upon her work creating podcasts at the Gore Center to inform her poster. You can listen to these and other center podcasts at soundcloud.com/AlbertGoreResearchCenter.

Bradley Harjehausen serves as the president of the Society of American Archivists-MTSU Chapter. He

represented the chapter in a poster session at the Society of American Archivists conference in August in Atlanta. During Archives Month (October), Harjehausen and the MTSU-SAA group co-hosted with the Gore Center the webinar "Caring for Archives: Fundamentals for Everyone."

Sarah Calise, a recent graduate of the Public History program, is conducting a full inventory of the Bart Gordon Papers as project archivist. She also carries out most reference related to the Gordon materials. She continues to update the Forrest Hall Digital Archive, an online collection to provide access to the documents, accounts, and history of the individuals and organizations involved in the debate over the name of Forrest Hall. She represented the Gore Center at the Association for the Study of African American Life and History conference in October, where she delivered her paper, Deconstructing Whiteness in the Archive: Documenting Black Student Protest at Middle Tennessee State University. You can access this collection through the Walker Library Digital Collections at <http://digital.mtsu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15838coll11>.

Our undergraduate student workers have been working on a number of interesting projects. Kat Parmalee scanned a large collection of mid-20th century correspondence and is now scanning the scripts of Sen. Gore's radio broadcasts. Sage Kafsky scanned and transcribed the diaries of Louise Warden and is now working with oral histories from the Centennial Memory Capsule project. Sharon Mooney has been working on the first phase of a preservation/rehousing project with the Clement Soil Conservation Service photos, and Demundre Irvin has been assisting in the creation of an updated inventory of MTSU's Faculty Senate records.

Matt Norwood, a recent graduate of MTSU's Public History Program, has been working at the Gore Center on oral history and indexing projects. These projects help diversify his skill set after working on processing the Tennessee Aviation Hall of Fame archives over the last two years.

Future Gore projects include an exhibit on presidential inaugurations and additional podcasts drawn from the Gore Center's extensive oral history collections. You can keep up with the progress of these and other projects on the blog for the center, found at AlbertGoreResearchCenter.wordpress.com.

CENTER FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

During 2016, we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA), one of the Center for Historic Preservation's signature programs. Congress created the TCWNHA in 1996 to tell the whole story of the Civil War and Reconstruction in Tennessee. We have worked hard to accomplish this goal across the state by collaborating with wonderful partners who are equally dedicated to sharing a fresh view of the war and its aftermath with Tennessee's citizens. MTSU Public History graduate students have been terrific contributors to the TCWNHA program, and they have also benefited greatly from the many opportunities it has offered for project-based graduate assistantships.

Once we realized that we wanted to commemorate the Heritage Area's milestone, we decided to combine it with the celebration of two other significant historic preservation-related anniversaries in 2016: the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Centennial of the National Park Service. We joined with one of our primary statewide partners, the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, to sponsor six events to thank the Heritage Area's friends for their support.

During the month of November, with the theme of "Help Us Cut the Cake," we



We gathered near the Parker's Crossroads Battlefield in West Tennessee to celebrate the Heritage Area's twentieth year.

celebrated at the Franklin Theatre, the Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County, Glen Leven Farm in Nashville, the Hiwassee River Heritage Center in Charleston, the East Tennessee Historical Society in Knoxville, and the Parker's Crossroads Visitor Center. Rather than have a formal program, we showed slides of the sites of our many projects—places that have inspired exhibitions, driving tours, National Register nominations, conferences and symposia, historic structure reports, digital media resources, heritage development plans, and brochures, books, and other publications.

Search for "Civil War" on our Southern Rambles blog (chpblog.org) to learn more about our many TCWNHA-related projects.

—Antoinette G. van Zelm,
Assistant Director



Glen Leven Farm was the site of our anniversary celebration in Nashville. Courtesy of the Land Trust for Tennessee.

Incoming Students

JACK HUMPHREY
University of Leicester,
UK
B.A., History and
American Studies
University of Alabama
M.A., History

ZACHARY KAUTZMAN
North Dakota State
University
B.S., Public History
and History

KELSEY LAMKIN
Middle Tennessee
State University
B.S., Anthropology
Jackson State
Community College
A.S.

ANDREW McMAHAN
Middle Tennessee
State University
B.A., History

JAYME SAVERY
Northwest Missouri
State University
B.A., History

TYPHANIE SCHAFER
North Dakota State
University
B.A., Public History
and History

I AM *true* **BLUE**

Incoming Ph.D. Students

APRIL BLEVINS
Dartmouth College
B.A., Classical Studies
North Carolina
Central University
M.L.S. with
concentration in
Archives

LINDSEY FISHER
Youngstown State
University
B.S., Education
M.A., History

ELIZABETH JOHNSON
California State
University
B.A., History
Arkansas State
University
M.A., History

TIFFANY MOMON
Tennessee State
University
B.S., Political Science
and Government
The University of
Memphis
B.A., African and
African American
Studies
Middle Tennessee
State University
M.A., History

LANE TILNER
Millsaps College
B.A., European
Studies
Middle Tennessee
State University
M.A., History
Advanced Certificate
in Museum
Management

BRADLEY WRIGHT
University of Arkansas
B.A., Philosophy
Middle Tennessee
State University
M.A., History
Vanderbilt University
M.A., History

CENTER FOR POPULAR MUSIC

This fall semester, the Center for Popular Music continues to focus on processing their many archival collections, mounting new exhibits, and developing new audio projects through the CPM's in-house record label, Spring Fed Records. CPM staff have begun their \$19,000 grant from the Grammy Foundation to preserve, digitize, and make available the Marvin Hedrick Collection of 167 open-reel audio tapes consisting of live bluegrass recordings from the Bean Blossom Music Festival in Indiana.

The center is busy sponsoring numerous programs for MTSU students, staff, and the Murfreesboro community this semester, including programs with blues-rock singer and songwriter Tracy Nelson and celebrated author and music critic Peter Guralnick. The CPM also instituted a monthly "Popular Music Studies Brown Bag Lunch" series for members of the MTSU community that are interested in any aspect of popular music studies. This casual get-together is designed to foster collaboration and learn about each other's work in the field.

Two graduate assistants from Public History are working in the CPM this semester. Leah Valley joined the staff this fall and has been checking



Leah Valley (left) and Emily Boersma (right)

new donations against our current holdings. Leah has also begun a second processing of the Joel S. Herron Collection which consists of correspondence, commercial and manuscript sheet music, photographs, and business records. Emily Boersma continues adding newly processed materials to the Tom Morgan Collection of bluegrass papers and ephemera. Additionally, Emily is digitizing manuscript music notebooks and is creating a research guide on sacred harp singing, a tradition of sacred choral music using shape notes.

Congratulations to Dr. Martha Norkunas for her election to the Executive Board of the International Oral History Association.



News from the Rutherford County Archives

We are excited to announce that after 10 years, the Rutherford County Archives has finally added another full-time staff member. Kathryn Slover joined us in August and serves as the new Archives Assistant. She obtained her B.A. in History from the University of Redlands in California and she recently graduated with her M.A. from MTSU's Public History program where she focused on archival management. Kathryn is excited to continue learning new things here at the archives and to also bring some of the knowledge and experience she gained through her time in the program.

Our graduate students are still hard at work. We are happy to have Gena Henderson back from her summer internship at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville. In the spring, Gena processed the Bobbi Woodruff Collection, which includes pictures and genealogical information for the Blackman, Woodruff, and Baskin families, as well as history on the Blackman community. She is currently working on processing chancery court records.

Bradley Boshers joined us as a graduate assistant in January and is still working with us while finishing up his last semester at MTSU. We are sad to see him go, but we wish him the best of luck after graduation in December. This spring and summer Bradley worked on inputting photographs from the Bill Jakes Collection into our photo database. He has also been working on processing court records.

We were also lucky to have an undergraduate intern, Hillary Borders, working with us this spring and summer. Hillary had the task of processing the Little Garden Club Collection this spring. The Little Garden Club, formed in 1938, is a subset of the Women's Club here in Murfrees-


boro. Hillary processed the club's scrapbooks, and in October the archives was invited to do a small exhibit for their 80th anniversary. This summer, Hillary also worked on cleaning bound volumes of newspapers from the Daily News Journal. The county acquired the DNJ property to build a parking garage as a part of the new judicial building complex. As they were cleaning out the "morgue" at the DNJ building, the archives obtained the DNJ bound volumes and microfilm reels of the newspaper. We now have the Daily News Journal microfilm readily accessible for researchers. We are very thankful to our interns and graduate assistants for their hard work toward preserving the important records and history of the county.



(Left to right) Bradley Boshers, Kathryn Slover, and Gena Henderson

Alumni Spotlight ~ Martha Akins

Martha Akins has received degrees from both Auburn University and Middle Tennessee State University. After earning her M.A. in historic preservation at MTSU, Akins worked in several different capacities, most notably as the Historic Sites Program Director for Tennessee's State Historic Preservation Office. As Program Director of the Historic Preservation Office, Akins oversaw the maintenance of several of Tennessee's most treasured historic sites. Her exemplary work earned her notable award recognition, including the Historic Preservation Award for her work with the Clover Bottom historic site and the 2012 Historic Preservation Non-Residential Award for contributions to the Presidential James K. Polk Home. Looking to bring her talents to one site rather than several, Akins recently began work as the Deputy Director for Facilities for

the National Historic Landmark site of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens in Miami, Florida. Akins is currently helping oversee a Master Plan revision of the site in which improvements in several different fields, notably public programming, will help the site thrive and grow in the coming years. Reflecting on her career, Akins is quick to credit MTSU's professors for providing the necessary impetus for seeing "all of the possibilities available to [her] with a degree in public history." Akins offers this salient advice for students interested in a professional career in public history: "...do as much fieldwork as possible. Historic Preservation is a big field with a lot of different opportunities. The more varied one's exposure is, the more valuable that person will be to an employer." 



Graduating Students Spring and Summer 2016

SPRING 2016

Ph.D. students in Public History

Elizabeth Rhea Catte

B.A., University of Tennessee

M.A., Middle Tennessee State University

Thomas Robert Flagel

B.A., Loras College

M.A., Kansas State University-Manhattan

M.A., Creighton University

Joshua M. Howard

B.S., Virginia Polytechnic Institute

B.A., Virginia Polytechnic Institute

M.S., Virginia Polytechnic Institute

M.A., West Virginia University

M.A. students in History:

Erica Raquel Bettross

B.A., Georgia College and State University

Sarah Elizabeth Calise

B.A., University of Florida

Joshua Lee Crutchfield

B.S., Middle Tennessee State University

Sarah Fry

B.S., Southeastern University

Casey Lynn Gymrek

B.A., University of Florida

Lindsay Taylor Hager

B.A., Pennsylvania State University

Ashley Nicole Layhew

B.A., Tennessee State University

Haley Seger

B.A., Xavier University

Kathryn Michelle Slover

B.A., University of Redlands

Olivia Lane Tilner

B.A., Millsaps College

M.A., Middle Tennessee State University

Kayla S. Utendorf

B.A., Bowling Green State University

Lindsey Robinette Whitley

B.A., University of Tennessee-Knoxville

SUMMER 2016

Ph.D. students in Public History:

Dallas Clayton Hanbury

B.S., University of Montevallo

M.A., Middle Tennessee State University

Cassie Sade Turnipseed

B.A., San Francisco State University

M.B.A., Golden State University

Cyrana B. Wyker

B.A., University of South Florida

M.A., University of South Florida

M.A. students in History:

Aja L. Bain

B.A., Vanderbilt University

Tiffany Nicole Momon

B.S., Tennessee State University

B.A., University of Memphis

Ethan K. Morris

B.A., Western Kentucky University

Matthew Tyler Norwood

B.S., Tennessee Technological University

M.A. Internships

FAITH BAGLEY



This past summer, Faith interned in the collections department at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage in Nashville. She helped with the daily cleaning of the mansion and museum, but most of her time was spent completing an inventory of the textile collection. This involved filling out a condition report of each item, sewing on an identification tag, and then entering the data into the cataloguing software. She also helped with photographing the textile collection once the inventory was finished.

EMILY BOERSMA

Emily worked at Stones River National Battlefield this summer as a Park Operations Intern. Her responsibilities included: working with visitors, developing and giving talks and tours, helping out in natural resources, and working on the museum inventory and artifact rehousing. Her internship with Stones River National Battlefield helped her better understand working for the National Park Service and the federal government. During her time at the battlefield, Emily was able to acquire and build upon different skills. She also gave a Stones River Stories presentation on the Cemetery Community, bringing in a more diverse and broader narrative to the history of Stones River Battlefield.



DAKOTA ELLIOTT

Dakota spent her summer as a collections intern at the Park City Museum in Park City, Utah. She was responsible for researching, cataloguing, handling, photographing, and housing objects, photographs, and archival documents within the museum's collection.

BRADLEY HARJEHAUSEN

Bradley spent his summer with the Noyes School of Rhythm Foundation Archives Project as an archives expert. The NSRF is a movement practice summer camp. He spent the first two and a half weeks of his internship at the site in Portland, Connecticut, scanning newsletters, assisting in rehousing materials, and meeting with a local repository in this first stage of preservation efforts. The second half of the internship was spent off-site notating oral histories, scanning a book, and composing a finding aid.

ANNABETH HAYES

Annabeth completed her internship at Colonial Williamsburg, in Williamsburg, Virginia, in the Grainger Department of Architectural Preservation. She worked primarily with the wallpaper collection that was recently transferred to the department. She catalogued, renumbered, rehoused, and researched the collection that was composed of over 500 fragments.

GENA HENDERSON

Gina interned at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in the Education Outreach department. She participated in teacher workshops, worked in the conservation lab, tagged items in the collection, and wrote metadata for them. She also researched in the Governors' Papers for primary sources for the annual Summer Teachers' Institute where she presented her findings. Pictured is a Tennessee Valley Authority Handbook from Governor Prentice Cooper's collection.

JULIE MARESCO

For her summer 2016 public history internship, Julie worked at the Parthenon Museum and Travellers Rest Plantation and Museum in Nashville, Tennessee, as a collections management intern. At the Parthenon, she conducted a complete inventory of the museum's collections and updated their Past Perfect museum software. She also assisted the curator and collections manager with exhibit removal and installation, environmental control needs, and collections research. At Travellers Rest, she worked with the curator and collections manager to assemble a book conservation manual for the historic house museum staff to reference when caring for their historical book collections. She also assisted the staff with

displaying and storing objects, treating the house for summer weather conditions, inventory work for an upcoming collection appraisal, conducting archeological research on Native American Indian site beneath Travellers Rest, and operating the visitors center when needed.

STEVE T. PHAN

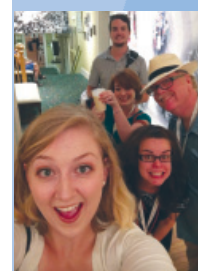
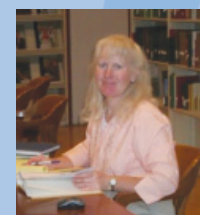
Steve worked as an interpretive ranger for Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C., the fifth National Park. His duties included giving formal/informal interpretation program (nature and cultural) and guiding National Park Service Centennial Hikes, designed to engage visitors in the 100th Anniversary of the service by interpreting Rock Creek Park's natural and historical narrative and altered landscape. He also led nature and historic hikes, Junior Ranger Camps, and living history programs, in addition to operating sites throughout the park. He also led formal programs at the 152nd Battle of Fort Stevens. The highlight of the summer was being interviewed for a Smithsonian Channel documentary about the First Ladies of the United States at War (Mary Todd Lincoln), which will air in February 2017.

KATE SPROUL

Kate did her internship at the historic Croft House at the Nashville Zoo at Grassmere. The house was built by Michael Dunn in 1810 and was lived in by five generations of his descendants until his great great-granddaughter Elise Croft died in 1985. Her duties were to inventory the book collection and to research the enslaved people who used to live at Grassmere. Other internships could focus on the textile collection, photographing and numbering other artifacts and placing that information into Past Perfect, or doing research on other people who lived and worked at Grassmere during its almost two centuries of occupation, then adding that information to existing interpretation.

TAYLOR STEWART

Taylor's internship was with the Alabama Historical Commission in Montgomery, Alabama. She received hands-on experience in GIS data input, fieldwork, and conference planning, and was able to attend the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions conference in Mobile, Alabama. The photo is from that conference, which allowed her to make many important connections both within the Alabama Historical Commission and within the preservation community as a whole.



Photos: (Top-Bottom) Elliott, Harjehausen, Hayes, Henderson, Maresco, Phan, Sproul, Stewart.

Ph.D. Residencies

HEBA ALI ABD ELSALAM

Heba Ali Abd Elsalam recently finished her residency during which she worked both with the British Museum and the Center of Cultural Heritage at Heidelberg University in Germany. For her work with the British Museum, Heba served as a facilitator with the International Training Program. At Heidelberg University, Heba taught an undergraduate museum class.

RACHEL LEWIS

Rachel Lewis did her residency at the Frances Willard Historical Association in Evanston, Ill., during the 2015–2016 academic year. The primary project for the residency was the design and implementation of a new interpretive plan for the museum, which Lewis wrote with an eye toward bringing the museum's interpretation into line with modern public history practice. Not long after Lewis began her residency, the museum closed for restoration of four rooms of the original house, allowing Lewis to experience a variety of tasks related to the restoration in addition to general museum management.

Since becoming a Ph.D. candidate, Lewis has continued to work with the museum one day a week to assist with the restoration and preparations for the reopening. These activities range from helping make decisions about a new gift shop to sewing new curtains for a bookcase in the parlor. There is photo-documentation that the bookcase had curtains during the period of significance, but the 120-year-old drapery disappeared years ago. One of the things that attracts Lewis to small institutions is the need to be a "Jill of all trades," and she is very excited that she can continue to help FWHA during this transition.

Lewis holds an MTSU Provost's Writing Fellowship for 2016–2017.

KAYLA PRESSLEY SEAY

Kayla Pressley Seay recently completed a residency with the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Western Office in Asheville. Kayla was able to use her time with the Department to work with regional museums and heritage sites, as well as trail the Historic Preservation Office on National Register projects in the area. The main project

of Kayla's residency was the creation of an exhibit in the Western Office designed to showcase the impact pop culture has across generations of society through the exploration of Star Wars as a cultural phenomenon. Titled "Star Wars: The FORCE of Popular Culture," the exhibit was a notable success in drawing both tourists and locals to the Western Office, subsequently surpassing previous exhibits' visitations at the site by 700%. The exhibit provided Kayla with the opportunity to hone her curation skills, and its implementation and success further reinforced her dissertation focus on creating historical interpretations that employ unique focuses in order to draw in diverse crowds.

JENNA STOUT

Jenna Stout recently completed a two-semester residency with the Kentucky Heritage Council (KHC) in Frankfort, Kentucky. Jenna was interested in pursuing a residency that would relate to her dissertation work on architecture and material culture as it relates to tuberculosis. Working under the supervision of the state coordinator for the National Register program, Marty Perry, Jenna focused on developing a National Register of Historic Places multiple-property submission (MPS) on tubercular sanatoria in Kentucky. Jenna focused her MPS on five tuberculosis hospitals that had been erected in Kentucky shortly after the end of World War II. In order to gain the most from her residency, Jenna created a blog to help her manage her workload and attended several architectural review meetings. Aside from aiding in her dissertation research, the residency helped Jenna expand her architectural vocabulary, as well as bolster her knowledge of 20th century tuberculosis hospitals.



Historic photograph that is the basis for the curtains. It is from Frances Willard's biography *Glimpses of Fifty Years: the Autobiography of an American Woman* and shows her mother sitting in the parlor.



A photo of the Art Deco façade of the main hospital building in Madisonville, Kentucky. According to Stout, the design of tubercular hospitals in Kentucky followed a standardized format.