

**Curriculum Vitae:  
David Thomas Benac**

**Personal:**

Address: Department of History  
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Western Michigan University  
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**Education:**

Ph.D. University of Missouri, 2003, History.  
Dissertation: “‘This Land is All Terrible Rough’: A History of  
Access to Forest Resources in Carter County, Missouri”

M.A. Indiana University--Purdue University at Indianapolis, 1997,  
Public History.

B.A. Michigan State University, 1995, History.

**Current Positions:**

Dec. 2013 to present: Public History Coordinator, Western Michigan University.

Aug. 2016 to present: Co-Chair, Consultants’ Committee, NCPH—joined June 2015

Oct. 2015 to present: Member, Education Committee, Michigan Historic Preservation  
Network.

Feb. 2014 to present: Commissioner, Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission.

Dec. 2013 to present: Member, “Fountain of the Pioneers” Restoration Committee.

Aug. 2013 to present: Associate Professor, Western Michigan University.

July 2009 to present: Book review editor for H-Environment.

### **Other Academic/Professional Positions and Projects:**

- July 2014 to present: *Fountain of the Pioneers/Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish* band of the Pottawatomie interpretive tour and digital exhibit.
- Aug. 2003 to May 2013: Associate Professor (promoted 2010), Southeastern Louisiana University. Created and directed public history program.
- June 2006 to May 2013: Architectural Historian/Historic Preservation Specialist contractor. Conducted site assessments and historic district reviews in Louisiana and Ohio for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; creation and evaluation of mitigation measures; researching and writing determinations of eligibility, historic and cultural resource reports, and national register nominations.
- Nov. 2010 to Jan. 2012: Vice President for Research and Publication, Humanities Network
- 2011: Member of program committee, National Council on Public History Conference.
- Dec. 2009: Historic Preservation Specialist, Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for Dog Creek Wind Energy Development, Van Wert and Allen Counties, Ohio
- June 2006 to Aug. 2009: Historic Preservation Specialist, Architectural resource surveys under 36 CFR §60.4 (c) for architecture in Central City, Mid-City, Faubourg Marigny, and Parkview, New Orleans.
- June 2006 to Dec. 2008: Historic Preservation Specialist, Architectural field surveys after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, application of 36 CFR §60.4 (c) for architecture.
- Dec. 2008 to Oct. 2008: Application of 36 CFR §60.4 [a-d] in determinations of eligibility or non eligibility for The American Can Company Building; the treescape along Banks Street; the Canal Street Guest House; the Carondelet Canal/Bayou St. John corridor; Jefferson Davis Parkway; Dixie Brewery; Schoen Funeral Home; and the Mardi Gras Indians, all in New Orleans.
- March 2000 to July 2003: Instructor, University of Missouri's Center for Distance and Independent Studies.
- Jan. 2002 to June 2003: Adjunct Instructor, William Woods University, Fulton, MO.

Aug. 2002     Teaching Assistant, University of Missouri.  
to May 2003:

Oct. 2002:     Creation of Missouri History course for non-traditional students,  
William Woods University, Fulton, MO.

Aug. 2001     Graduate Instructor, University of Missouri.  
to Dec. 2001:

Aug. 1997     Teaching Assistant, University of Missouri.  
to June 2001:

May 2000     Graduate Instructor, University of Missouri.  
to Aug. 2000:

May 1997     Graduate Student Intern, Schroeder Saddletree Project, Madison,  
to Aug. 1997: Indiana,

May 1996     Teaching Assistant, Indiana--University Purdue University at  
to Aug. 1996: Indianapolis.

July 1996     Graduate Student Intern, Huddleston Farmhouse Inn Museum,  
to Aug. 1996: Cambridge City, Indiana.

May 1996     Researcher, Jesse Besser Museum, Alpena, Michigan.  
to June 1996:

Aug. 1995     Graduate Student Intern, Indiana State Museum.  
to May 1996:

**Awards/Fellowships/Grants/Scholarships:**

2016   Alfred D. Bell, Jr., Travel Grant, Forest History Society

2015   Resident Scholar, Oregon State University, Special Collections and  
Archives, Research Center

2013   Donald J. Sterling—Senior Fellowship in Pacific Northwest History,  
Oregon Historical Society.

2006   State Historical Society's *Missouri Historical Review* Article Award for  
best article of 2006 for "Whose Forest Is This? Hillfolk, Industrialists,  
and Government in the Ozarks."

2004   Teaching Enhancement Grant, Center for Faculty Excellence,  
Southeastern Louisiana University.

- 2005 Faculty Development Grant, Center for Faculty Excellence, Southeastern Louisiana University.
- 2005 Support Grant, Louisiana State Parks.
- 2002 Dissertation Fellowship, Frank F. and Louise I. Stephens History Scholarship and Fellowship Fund, University of Missouri
- 2000 Allen Cook White, Jr. Fellowship
- 2000 Jonas and Ruth H. Viles Memorial Scholarship
- 1994 Jess Bircher Memorial Scholarship

**Publications (book/articles/reports/chapters):**

- Benac, David, Joseph Helzer, and Jenifer Blouin. "Fountain of the Pioneers and The Match-She-Be-Nash-E-Wish." Next Exit History, launched October 14, 2016
- Benac, David. Criffield-Whiteley House, Dowagiac, Michigan. National Register of Historic Places. Approved by MI State Historic Preservation Review Board, September, 23, 2016.
- Benac, David. Oral Histories of the Vernonia (Oregon) Friendship Jamboree and Logging Show, 2015 (OH 33). Corvallis: Special Collections and Archives Research Center, Oregon State University, 2015.
- Benac, David. "The Value of a Historical Landscape: Heritage and Nature at Bridal Veil." *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 116, no. 4. Winter 2015.
- Benac, David. "The New Orleans Lakefront: Created Land and Planned Development." *Journal of Urban History*. May 2015.
- Benac, David. "Whose Forest Is This? Hillfolk, Industrialists, and Government in the Ozarks." In *The Ozarks in Missouri History: Discoveries in an American Region*, edited by Lynn Morrow. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2013.
- Benac, David. *Conflict in the Ozarks: Hill Folk, Industrialists, and Government in the Courtois Hills*. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2010.
- Eberwine, James, David Benac, Emily Crowe, and William P. Athens, *Phase I Cultural Resources Survey and Archeological Inventory of the Proposed 97.6 ha (241.1 ac) River Birch Landfill Borrow Location Project, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana*. Submitted by R. Christopher Goodwin &

Associates, Inc. to River Birch Inc., Highway 90, LLC, 2008.

Benac, David. "Whose Forest Is This? Hillfolk, Industrialists, and Government in the Ozarks." *Missouri Historical Review* (Oct. 2006).

Benac, David. "Ozarkers and Industry: The Integration of Economic and Social Behaviors." *Big Muddy: Journal of the Mississippi River Valley* (Spring 2006).

Benac, David and Susan Flader. "History of Missouri Forests in the Era of Exploitation and Conservation." Gen. Tech. Rep. SRS-73. (Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station, 2004). pp. 36-41.

**Invited Professional Activity:**

Aug. 2015: "Log Rolling, Axe Throwing, and the Owl: The Heritage Legacy of the Timber Industry in Oregon," Resident Scholar Presentation, Oregon State University Libraries and Press.

Oct. 2014: "Finding Meaning and Debating Value in a Historical Landscape: The history and commemoration of Bridal Veil, OR," Boston Environmental History Seminar.

Sept. 2014: Workshop Facilitator, Midwest Historical Archaeology Conference

Sept. 2011: Keynote Speaker, Ozarks Studies Symposium

Jan. 2008 to July 2009: Consultant, Pearl River and Honey Island Swamp Museum. Strategic planning included long-term funding and marketing strategies, exhibit content and design, and administrative structure.

2007: Consultant, Genealogy Research Lab, Tangipahoa African American Heritage Museum.

**Publications (reviews):**

Thomas Andrews, *Coyote Valley: Deep History in the High Rockies*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015. 352 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, and index. In *Environmental History*, vol. 21, no. 4, October 2016

Adrienne Sams, site manager, Arcadia Mill Archaeological Site, a Division of West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc., Milton, FL. In *The Public Historian*, vol. 33, no. 4, November 2011, pp. 80-83.

Robert G. Pasquill. *Planting Hope on Worn-Out Land: History of the Tuskegee Land Utilization Project, Macon County, Alabama, 1935-1959*. Montgomery, Ala., and Louisville, Ky.: NewSouth Books, c. 2008. Pp. 152. \$24.95, ISBN 978-1-58838-205-4). In the *Journal of Southern History*, vol. 76, no. 3, Aug 2010, pp. 776-777.

National Conference of State Historic Preservation Offices website <http://www.ncshpo.org>. In *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship*, Summer 2006

James E. Fickle. *Mississippi Forests and Forestry*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2001, xiv, 347 pp. \$35.00. ISBN 1-57806-308-6 and James E. Fickle. *Timber: A Photographic History of Mississippi Forestry*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004, xv, 151 pp. \$35.00. ISBN 1-57806-710-3. In the *Gulf South Historical Review*, Fall 2005.

Tom Rumer. *Unearthing the Land: The Story of Ohio's Scioto Marsh*. In *Ohio Valley History*, vol. 1, no. 3, Fall 2001, p. 48.

### **Work in Progress:**

#### **Ongoing Projects:**

Benac, David. *Town For Sale: A History of Sawmill Towns in Oregon's Space and Memory*. [Book]

Randy Hayes Oral History Collection. Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Benac, David. *The Grassroots of Global Environmentalism: Randy Hayes, Rainforest Action Network, and the Late-Twentieth Century*. [Book]

### **Conference Panels—Papers, Posters, and Working Groups:**

Benac, et al., "Changes in the Professional Landscape: Preparing students to practice interdisciplinary, environmental history," American Society for Environmental History, March 2017.

Benac. "The Vernonia Friendship Jamboree and Logging Show: The Creation of Heritage and Identity." American Society for Environmental History, March

2016.

Benac, et al. "Sustaining Historic Preservation as a Cultural Practice." National Council on Public History, April 2015.

Benac. "Finding Meaning and Debating Value in a Historical Landscape: Wendling, Oregon." American Society for Environmental History, March 2015

Benac. "The Multiple Lives of Bridal Veil: Towards an Environmental Discussion of a Vanished Sawmill Town." Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association, August 2014

Benac, et. al. "Beyond Saving: Achieving Sustainability in Historic Preservation." National Council on Public History, March 2014.

Benac. "Gilchrist: A Community in the Forest Designed to Last." Western Historical Association, October 2013.

Benac. "Online Reviewing: Before and After it was *De Rigueur*." American Historical Association Conference, January 2013.

Benac. "Modern Life in the Courtois Hills: The Evolving Social and Political Geography of a Missouri Ozarks Company Town." Southern Historical Association Conference, October 2011.

Benac. "Self Determination in the Ozarks" keynote address to the Ozark Studies Symposium" September 2011

Benac. "Configuring Boundaries and Determining the Historical." National Council on Public History Conference, April 2011.

Benac. "Four Neighborhoods, Four Stories." National Council on Public History Conference, March 2010.

Benac. "Milneburg: Federal Actions Bury A Recreational Landscape." Joint conference of the Pioneer America Society and the Eastern Historical Geography Association, October 2008.

Benac. "Trees, Corn, and Cattle: The Ozarks After the Timber Boom." Agricultural History Society, June 2006.

Benac. "Creating the Woods, Shaping the Forest: Ozarkers' and Industrial Timber Companies' Manipulation of the Ozark Forests." Southern Historical Association, November 2005.

Benac. "Government to the rescue? The growth of governmental power in the Missouri Ozarks." Missouri Valley History Conference, March 7, 2003.

Benac. "The Use and Exploitation of the Missouri Ozarks." Upland Oak Ecology Symposium, October, 2002.

Benac. "Manhood in the Ozarks." Mid-America Conference on History, September, 2002.

Benac. "A Company Town in the Missouri Ozarks: A Social and Environmental Study of Grandin, MO, and the Missouri Lumber and Mining Company." Ohio Valley History Conference, October 21, 2000.

Benac. "Lessons in the Past: Local Reaction to the Missouri-Ozarks Timber Industry." Great Lakes History Conference, October 6, 2000.

Benac. "The Importance of Independence." Mid-American History Conference, September 22, 2000.

Benac. "Clinging to Independence: The Rise and Fall of the Missouri Ozarks Timber Industry." Missouri Graduate Conference on History, March 2000.

**Public Lectures/Presentations:**

Benac, David, et. al. "The Fountain of the Pioneers and Controversial Public Art." Online exhibit completed with students, available after April 2014 at <http://hst4080.omeka.net/exhibits/show/controversial-public-art>.

Benac. "What is Public History." Friday Forum, Western Michigan University, March 2014.

Benac. "The New Orleans Lakefront: Created Land and Planned Development." Ernst Breisach Faculty Research Colloquium Series, January 2014.

Benac. "Opportunities in Public History." Friday Forum, Western Michigan University, November 2013.

Benac. "Conflict in the Ozarks: Life in a Lumber Town." Then and Now: Fanfare History and Politics Lecture Series, October 2011

Benac. "Careers in Public History." Workshop for graduate students, Southeastern Louisiana University, April 2009.

Benac. "Milneburg: 150 Years of Recreation." Christwood Lecture series, Covington, LA, March 2009

Benac. "Graduate Mentoring: A Heavy Responsibility." Susan L. Flader Conference on Missouri Environmental and Cultural History, February 2008.



Benac. "Taking Charge: Women in Historic Preservation." Southeastern Louisiana University's women's history month lecture series, March 2005.

Benac. "Respecting Historic Properties in Tangipahoa Parish." Guest lecture for the Louisiana Preservation Alliance, May 2005.

Benac. "The Question of Race in Louisiana During the 1940s." One Book program, St. Tammany Parish Library, Covington, April 2004.

**Conference Panels--Chair and Commentator:**

Benac. Chair and commentator, "Place of Discourse." Great Lakes History Conference, October, 2014.

Benac. Chair and commentator, "Exploiting the Land: The Agriculture and Timber Industries in Missouri and Arkansas." 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Missouri Conference on History, April 2009.

Benac. Chair "Urban Landscapes I." Joint conference of the Pioneer America Society and the Eastern Historical Geography Association, October 2008.

Benac. Chair "Forests, Logging, Tourism and Memory" Joint conference of American Society for Environmental History and National Council on Public History, April 1, 2004.

Benac. Chair "Regulating the Environment and Public Health in the Gulf South" Gulf South History and Humanities Conference, October 2003.

**Manuscript Reviews:**

Truman State University  
*The Public Historian*

*The Michigan Historical Review*

**Seminars and Training Sessions Attended:**

National Preservation Institute, "Section 106: An Introduction," October 2007.

**Teaching:**

Undergraduate Courses:

Western Civilization (both halves)

United States History to 1865 (Freshman Lecture)

United States History to 1877 (Freshman Lecture)

United States History Since 1865 (Freshman Lecture)

United States History Since 1877 (Freshman Lecture)

History of Missouri (Writing Intensive)

United States Since 1945 (Writing Intensive)

The United States in the Global Era (Writing Intensive)

United States Environmental History (Junior Seminar)  
The American Environmental Movement (Baccalaureate Writing)  
Introduction to Public History (Senior Seminar)  
Audience and Media (Senior Seminar)  
Introduction to Historic Preservation (Junior Seminar)  
Introduction to Oral History (Junior Seminar)  
Family History (Junior Seminar)  
Local/Regional History (Junior Seminar)  
Introduction to Heritage Tourism (Junior Seminar)  
Senior Thesis

Graduate Courses:

Readings in American History  
Material Culture  
Archival Practice  
Seminar in Heritage Tourism  
Historical Editing  
Seminar in Historic Preservation  
Public History Seminar

**University Service:**

Aug. 2016 Chair, Speakers and Events Committee  
to present:

Aug. 2016 Graduate Studies Committee, Admissions/Recruiting  
to present:

Sept. 2013 Departmental representative (elected) to the Association Council  
to present: of the American Association of University Professors

Aug. 2015 Departmental Executive Committee (elected)  
to May 2016:

Aug. 2015 Graduate Studies Committee, Admissions/Recruiting  
to May 2016:

Aug. 2014 Graduate Studies Committee, Curriculum/Evaluation/Awards  
to May 2015:

Aug. 2014 Advisor, Phi Alpha Theta  
to May 2015:

Sept. 2013 Public History Ad Hoc Committee  
to May 2014:

Sept. 2013 Graduate Studies Committee, Admissions/Recruiting  
to May 2014:

**Professional Affiliations:**

Member, American Society for Environmental History

Member, National Council on Public History

Member, Forest History Society

Member, National Trust for Historic Preservation

Member, Michigan Historic Preservation Network

Member, Kalamazoo Public History Roundtable