



LancasterHistory

For Immediate Release

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Fashioning Ethnicity: Clothing and Culture in Early Pennsylvania

LancasterHistory to Host Dr. Judith Ridner for a Discussion on 18th-Century Fashion

LANCASTER, Pa. – LancasterHistory is pleased to welcome [Dr. Judith Ridner](#) for a talk entitled “Fashioning Ethnicity: Clothing and Culture in Early Pennsylvania.”

The event will occur **online via Zoom** on **Wednesday, March 22, at 5:30 p.m.** and is part of LancasterHistory’s continuing Regional History Colloquium lecture series. Additionally, this event is part of LancasterHistory’s ongoing commitment to providing educational and engaging programming that explores the rich history of Lancaster County and its surrounding areas.

During the discussion, Dr. Ridner will explain how Pennsylvanians routinely identified their neighbors as being of Irish, Scottish, or German ancestry or the Quaker, Moravian, or Jewish faiths and how the process of identifying and labeling others worked. Through her research, Dr. Ridner has demonstrated that clothing played a crucial role in forming ethnic identity in Pennsylvania during the 1700s.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Ridner to LancasterHistory for this exciting event," Director of Education and Exhibition Planning, **Dr. Mabel Rosenheck**, said. "We are excited to showcase a scholar who has researched the LancasterHistory collections. Her expertise on the topic of clothing and culture in early Pennsylvania is sure to be of interest to anyone curious about our region's history and how our ancestors expressed their cultural identities through fashion."

Dr. Ridner's presentation will focus on the various ways in which clothing was used by different ethnic groups to assert their identity and establish their place within the larger society. Specifically, how did how people dress, their accessories, how they styled their hair, or the tools or implements they carried with them determine how others perceived and reacted to them? Dr. Ridner's talk on ethnic clothing and styling draws upon research for her latest book project, *Clothing the Babel: The Material Culture of Ethnic Identity in Early America*.

Attendees can look forward to an engaging and informative presentation, followed by a Q&A session with Dr. Ridner. "Fashioning Ethnicity" is a free event that will take place virtually on Zoom. The program is free and open to the public but requires advanced registration. For more information and to register, please visit the event page at [Fashioning Ethnicity: Clothing and Culture in Early Pennsylvania](#).

About Dr. Judith Ridner

Dr. Judith Ridner is a former fellow at LancasterHistory and a History professor at Mississippi State University. She also is an editor of [Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal](#). Her research focuses primarily on immigrant communities in early America, particularly the Scots-Irish. She is the author of two books, [A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior](#), and [The Scots Irish of Early Pennsylvania: A Varied People](#), as well as various articles and book chapters. She is currently working on two new book projects, *The Dirty History of Soap*, under contract to Reaktion Books, and *Clothing the Babel: The Material Culture of Ethnic Identity in Early America*.

About LancasterHistory

LancasterHistory is a community-based, not-for-profit organization established to educate the public on the history of Lancaster County and its place in the history of Pennsylvania and the United States, to advance the missions of regional historical organizations, and to promote the acquisition, preservation, and interpretation of resources representing the history of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania within the broader context of state and national history, including the life and legacy of America's 15th president, James Buchanan, and to preserve and maintain Wheatland, his home.

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