

AWARD

John L. Cotter Award in Historical Archaeology: Lydia Wilson Marshall

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Dr. Lydia Wilson Marshall is the 2018 recipient of the Society for Historical Archaeology's (SHA) John L. Cotter Award. She has made excellent contributions to historical archaeology in research and scholarship during graduate studies, postgraduate service, and now as an assistant professor of anthropology at DePauw University in Indiana. Marshall's accomplishments and contributions to historical archaeology are exemplified in her edited volume, entitled *The Archaeology of Slavery: A Comparative Approach to Captivity and Coercion*

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(Marshall 2015b), her numerous peer-reviewed articles, teaching, and service.

Marshall earned her B.A. degree in anthropology with summa cum laude honors at Bryn Mawr College. She then undertook graduate studies at the University of Virginia, with a focus on the historical archaeology of enslaved and emancipated individuals in Kenya. Marshall's excellence in scholarship has been recognized with a breathtaking series of prestigious scholarships and fellowships from the Fulbright-Hays Program, the Social Science Research Council, the National Science Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and the American Council of Learned Societies. Her dissertation study (Marshall 2011) on the households of enslaved, escaped, and emancipated individuals in Kenya in the 19th century represented a significant application of the theories and methods of historical archaeology in that understudied region of the world.

Upon completing her doctoral work, Marshall next engaged the challenging position of visiting scholar at the Center for Archaeological Investigations at Southern Illinois University. She organized a conference in 2012 with the theme: "The Archaeology of Slavery: Toward a Comparative, Global Framework." This two-day conference included a tremendous array of scholars with subjects spanning several centuries and diverse sites in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Marshall's intensive efforts to convene this broad exchange of studies, research questions, and theoretical debates were highly valuable to the participants and attendees. This field has seen very little scholarly exchange in these subjects and at such broad and diverse scales of time and geography.

Marshall promptly transformed the insights of the conference presentations and debates into an edited volume of 18 peer-reviewed chapters that was published by the Southern Illinois University Press (Marshall 2015b). In doing so, she again provided remarkable, scholarly service to historical archaeology. She solicited and coordinated the numerous peer reviews, provided her own editorial recommendations for each chapter, and worked with the authors to revise and finalize their studies for the publication. The resulting book has received critical acclaim and is now required reading for global perspectives and comprehensive studies of the historical archaeology of slavery, captivity, diasporas, and emancipation. Such a comparative and global scope of studies yields significant insights for methods of combating networks of captivity, coerced labor, and human trafficking still going on today.

Dr. James F. Brooks, professor of history and anthropology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, author of *Captives and Cousins* (Brooks 2002), and past president of the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, provides one example of the impact of Marshall's book on historical archaeology:

Lydia Wilson Marshall and colleagues have performed an essential service for those working across disciplines on the global reach and temporal range of human bondage. *The Archaeology of Slavery* is more than its ambitious title intends: it is an impressive collection of comparative world history, of methodologies within and beyond the disciplines, and of muscular theorizing. This will be our go-to collection for years ahead. (Brooks 2015)

With the conference and the publication, Marshall succeeded in meeting a challenge she raises in the book's introduction: "to balance archaeologists' use of different scalar approaches [and] also to integrate and relate these approaches to one another—to knit together the material fragments of everyday life with a consideration of slavery's impact on a larger scale" (Marshall 2015a:2). A highly enthusiastic appraisal in the *Choice* journal of book reviews emphasized her success in this effort, concluding that she "brings the archaeological study of slavery to a global level" (Ryan 2015). Marshall now drives home the usefulness of this analytic framework for the SHA's broad, international membership. She has distilled the book-length treatments of these debates and her insights into a comprehensive,

article-length framework for the readers of the SHA's journal, *Historical Archaeology*. Her article, entitled "Maroon Archaeology beyond the Americas: A View from Kenya," provides a state-of-the-art review of the literature and debates, and articulates a concise and powerful model for future, multiscalar studies (Marshall [2019]).

Marshall's research commitments have exemplified such comparative frameworks. Her dissertation study applied historical archaeology's methods to diverse communities in rural Kenya in the 19th century. She is now working on a new project to extend those methods to study 19th-century households in southern Tanzania that were targeted by the institution of slavery. In recent articles, such as "European Colonialism and Globalization in Africa in the 19th Century," she explores the applicability of theories of globalization to better understand the impacts of such colonial regimes in additional, diverse locations (Marshall 2017).

Marshall's research methods include a heightened emphasis on the importance of oral histories. This focus represents a vitally important contribution to global historical archaeology advanced by analysts who have conducted studies in Africa. Marshall and her Africanist colleagues pursue this goal for activist reasons. She advocates in her scholarship that "[o]ral histories are another tool that may help decentre Europeans from histories of Africa's colonial past. Interpretations that foreground oral histories help to privilege African voices and understandings about past events" (Marshall 2017:135). This emphasis opens new insights into the agencies of present and past social actors, "helping us understand how Africans strategically adopted pieces of colonialists' cultural repertoire for their own ends" (Marshall 2017:135).

Marshall is now working to shift the gaze of her theoretical contributions to help reshape research frameworks for sites in the Americas. She brings her emphasis on multiscalar analysis and global perspectives to bear on the regional movements of African American families in the United States. As an assistant professor at DePauw University, her new project focuses on "Exoduster" communities in Indiana and accompanying dynamics of displacement, agency, and diaspora in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Like many other diaspora populations impelled in part by self-initiative, the Exodusters in Indiana worked constantly to achieve "greater control over their everyday lives" (DePauw University 2014). As Marshall emphasizes, historical

archaeology can be used to show how their “freedom was achieved by degree” in step-by-step, strategic progression (DePauw University 2014). Her new project in Indiana also follows a strong commitment to teaching, as she trains the next generation of archaeologists. As in her earlier fieldwork projects, she emphasizes an intense commitment to community collaboration.

Her diverse research commitments embody a bridging effort of great importance within the SHA, in which a greater dialogue is developing between researchers in the Americas and those investigating historical period sites in Africa, Asia, and Australia. Marshall’s work to enhance this dialogue has expanded with her ongoing efforts to solicit researchers outside the Americas to publish their studies and analytic frameworks in peer-reviewed journals accessible to a broad, international readership. In view of these skills and remarkable commitment, she has also been recruited to serve as the future editor of the peer-reviewed *Journal of African Diaspora Archaeology and Heritage* (published by the Taylor & Francis Group), with a focus on displaced populations across Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Her willingness to take on such time-consuming and labor-intensive editorial roles demonstrates her remarkable commitment of service to this profession.

Marshall has made highly significant contributions to comparative historical archaeology in the United States and Africa very early in her career. Her edited volume on comparative studies of slavery and emancipation, and her forthcoming article in *Historical Archaeology*, for example, provide comprehensive resources for researchers and students in the field. We look forward to seeing Marshall’s career develop to the great benefit of historical archaeology and the SHA.

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