

Dr. Nicole Andel

Associate Teaching Professor English and Humanities

Title of your research project.

The Shepherd Carolers and the Carpatho-Rusyn Diaspora in the United States (particularly Schuylkill County) and in Transcarpathia.

Description of research. Please provide a few sentences that explain the question and the methods employed in this research project.

While looking at presentations of the Shepherd Carolers in Transcarpathia that I found on Youtube, I was surprised to see one with a time/date stamp of 1991. Featuring small children and a Guba that looked like Sasquatch and Chewbacca had produced a child, the play it seemed must have been preserved despite the rabid atheism of the communist dictatorships in the area. Immediately, I thought "how did they manage this?" and "where did this processional come from?" and finally, "Was Christmas somehow responsible for its survival?" Dr. Aurand, who considers how the drama survived in Pennsylvania given the pressure on immigrants to assimilate and to not celebrate religious holidays publically, and I have embarked on a project to collect scripts, images, and interviews pertaining to the Shepherd Carolers and its main character the Guba. Eventually, we want to write a book featuring our findings.

Did this project include Penn State students as researchers?

No

If yes to the above question, please state where it was published.

Andel, N. (Co-Author), & Aurand, H. (2016). "Eastern European Gubi Tradition Lives on in County." Schuylkill Living Magazine. Winter 2016, (pp. 2). Pottsville PA: Republican Herald.

What problem do you address with your research?

The insidious erasure of culture that socialism causes and how the stateless minority of the Carpatho-Rusyns manage to triumph over such pressures.