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## Then Dig

### Title

Linda Shevitz, Maryland Women's Heritage Center

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# THEN DIG

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## Linda Shevitz, Maryland Women's Heritage Center



Why the West Side Matters: Linda Shevitz, Maryland Women's Heritage Center. Photo by Baltimore Heritage.

It's easy to take women's equality for granted. Particularly if you're a man. In my own case a female friend said that Prof. X.\* had a habit of ignoring female grad students. I replied he'd never noticed that when I'd had to see him and, after about five minutes, I realised why. But we have history books, empowered rap artistes and occasionally a middle-aged politician will helpfully highlight what has changed by ranting about feminists promoting drug abuse, communism or inappropriate transport for marine life. Do we need physical places as well? Whatever the state of equality, it's hard to see removing an old building changing the law.

At Baltimore Heritage, you can read why it matters as part of a series on Baltimore's West Side. The Center acts as a focus for research and community based around women's heritage, and there's plenty there as you can see at their website. But even if the center were rubbish, I'd still argue it's physically important. As Eli notes in his post, the corner was a site of a major open-air rally, that eventually lead to the passing of the 19th amendment. Places don't just have locations, they have associations. They can be personal, the place where you first kissed your beloved or where you were first arrested. They can be communal. I used to live somewhere that has markers for plague infested traders, public

hangings and a small but thorough massacre.<sup>+</sup> Having somewhere that has positive connotations as a touchstone for a community is something worth holding on to.

The reason I've chosen this photo is partly because Baltimore Heritage has been up to a lot of interesting work this summer with their public Civil War digs. There's also a chance to work there yourself. If you're in the USA, you can access this page advertising a post for a Historic Preservation Officer. If, like me, you're not American you can visit the page, get blocked and logged and then ask for a link to the site. The reply was impressively fast. The other reason is that often when I take photos indoors near displays I get a colour cast on my photos. This photo is well-lit, evenly exposed and has what looks like a good white balance.

Photo: Why the West Side Matters: Linda Shevitz, Maryland Women's Heritage Center by Baltimore Heritage. Photo licenced under a Creative Commons BY-SA licence.

\*Unnamed as it's my friend's decision not mine whether or not to give details, and as you can see she had enough problems already.

+They were Vikings, so they tend not to get much sympathy.

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### Alun Salt

Alun Salt is an ancient historian / archaeologist based in the University of Leicester, UK. His PhD thesis was an archaeoastronomical analysis of Greek temple alignments in Sicily. He also has an MPhil in World Archaeology. His research interests include ancient technology, cosmology and colonisation processes. He is currently dividing his time between a few part-time jobs in the university and at the Annals of Botany. [View all posts by Alun Salt](#) →

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