

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Book review editor transition at the *Oral History Review*

By Andrew Maynard, Editorial Assistant, University of San Francisco



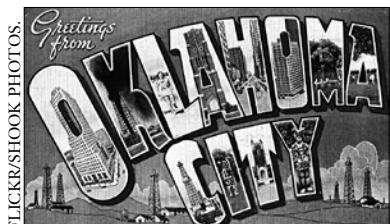
David Caruso

THE ORAL HISTORY Review welcomes our new book review editor, David Caruso. Dave joins us from the Chemical Heritage Foundation where he serves as the oral history program manager. Since beginning graduate school, Dave has worked at several academic journals as an article reviewer, an editorial assistant, a copyeditor, and a book reviewer. With this wealth of experience, Dave said, "I have had a great appreciation for what journals can do for the vibrancy and progress of a society focused on a common area of intellectual study and engagement." Even more: "There is also a piece of me that really enjoys getting to be the first to read a book review—it is kind of like getting to open presents regularly throughout the year."

The editorial team also celebrates our outgoing book review editor, John Wolford, who produced the book review section for thirteen issues of the journal. John leaves behind a substantial legacy of diligent work, innovation, and charm. Since joining the *OHR* editorial team, John has expanded the number of reviews

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Fall 2013 OHA conference overview



FLICKR/SHOOK PHOTOS

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES, BOOK signings, preserving the history of indigenous peoples and examining Oklahoma's rich circus tradition are among the disparate features of the 2013 Oral History Association annual conference, set for Oct. 9-13 at the historic Skirvin Hilton Hotel in Oklahoma City, Okla.

With the theme "Hidden Stories, Contested Truths: The Craft of Oral History," the conference will feature presenters from North and South America, Europe, Asia, Oceania and throughout the United States.

People who (mistakenly) believe Oklahoma City is part of the vast fly-over country between coastal metropolitan areas will have a chance to learn more about the rich cultural and historic landscape of this Southern Plains community of more than a half-million people.

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President's letter

By Mary Larson

OUR ANNUAL MEETING in Oklahoma City is swiftly approaching, and I'm excited by the range of topics being covered and the number of local groups that are involved. This conference gives those of us in Oklahoma a chance to show off our state and all of its cultural and natural wonders, and I hope that all of you will take advantage of Oklahoma City's centrally located position and join us in October. The state's stories are being featured in plenaries, keynotes and panels, including sessions that focus on Native American heritage, African-American history, rural communities and circus life, among other themes.

As always, of course, the scope of the annual meeting extends far beyond its host location, so we encourage you to come hear about hidden stories and contested truths from around the globe. Please see the related articles in this *Newsletter* for more program specifics.

As always, there will also be formal and informal conversations throughout the conference about issues of ethics and legality, a dual theme that has been a constant throughout my term as president. In large part because of a constantly changing landscape contextualized by the Boston College subpoena case and proposed changes to IRB regulations, these concerns are at the forefront for many oral historians. Through publications, social media and other formats, OHA will continue to keep members apprised of new developments, but I encourage everyone to be active participants in this discussion — online, at meetings or in the places where you practice oral history.

A number of us have had the opportunity to bring various forms of this conversation to other conferences as well, with sessions at the American Historical Association meetings

in January, the National Council on Public History in April and the Society of American Archivists in August. The questions raised by different groups have been interesting, and they indicate diverse concerns from the multiple segments of OHA's broad constituency that we need to keep in mind.

Since this *Newsletter* article will be my last before I hand the gavel to Stephen Sloan in October and take up the cloak of past president, I want to express my appreciation to those OHA members who have accepted committee appointments of various stripes throughout the past two years. Because we have been in a transition period, the workload has probably been greater than it would have been otherwise, but so many of you have willingly thrown yourselves into the fray and helped to move OHA forward during this crucial period in its organizational history.

I feel fortunate that my term straddled this administrative shift, because it gave me the opportunity to be in regular communication first with Madelyn Campbell and later with Cliff Kuhn and Gayle Knight, and I thank all three of them for the enthusiasm and concern they have for our association. One thing that has become clear during all of our strategic planning is that we have a core group of people who care very much about OHA, and I feel honored to have been able to work so closely with them throughout my time in office. Many thanks to all of you for your ongoing efforts. ♦



Mary Larson, OHA president

Executive Director's Report

By Cliff Kuhn

AT LAST YEAR'S annual meeting, I said that it takes a village to run the Oral History Association. This year it has been my privilege to be in contact with many of the people who make up this dynamic village.

Vice-president Stephen Sloan, Program Committee co-chairs Beth Millwood and Todd Moye and their committee, and Local Arrangements co-chairs Larry O'Dell and Tanya Finchum have assembled a truly dynamic program for Oklahoma City. One highlight that stands out for me personally is the Wednesday night event hosted by the Southern Oral History Program honoring Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, who is stepping down after 40 years (!) at the helm of the SOHP. As is obvious when one surveys the field and the OHA, the impact of Jacquelyn and the SOHP has been profound. First vice-president Paul Ortiz, Program Committee co-chairs Natalie Fousekis and Kathy Newfont, and Local Arrangements chair Troy Reeves are already planning for OHA 2014 in the vibrant city of Madison, Wisconsin. By early August, the call for papers

will be finalized and disseminated. And we're beginning to think about OHA 2015, to be held in Tampa (thanks to Barbara Lewis for assisting with hotel selection), and even OHA 2016, which will mark the 50th anniversary of the organization.

The OHA committee chairs and members have been busy. The committees have appointed liaisons to the OHA website and have started blogs as part of our effort to upgrade the site and our use of digital and social media. We have revived the Finance Committee, with Roger Horowitz as chair, to help us make optimal use of our resources as we move forward. The committees also provided input with regard to



Cliff Kuhn, OHA executive director

PHOTO: MICHELLE LACOSSE

Oral history pioneer Martha Jackson Ross dies

MARTHA JACKSON ROSS, 89, a long-time resident of Bethesda and Frederick, Md., and award-winning former president of the Oral History Association, died April 5 in Fremont, Ohio.

In 1976, Ross helped co-found the Oral History in the Middle Atlantic Region (OHMAR) regional professional organization, and in 1982, she received OHMAR's Forrest C. Pogue Award "for distinguished, unique and continuing contributions to oral history." In 2001, the Oral History Association honored Martha's contributions to the field by establishing the Martha Ross Teaching Award, and later the University of Maryland Baltimore County created the Martha Ross Center for Oral History.

Ross taught oral history at University of Maryland, College Park, where she earned her master's degree in 1978, mentoring many oral history practitioners. Ross also conducted numerous oral history projects in the Washington, D.C., area, including for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, National Park Service and the American College of Dentists.

Throughout her life, Ross radiated her passion for principled excellence and truth telling, combined with absolute good humor and respect. A native of Selma, Ala., one of her most courageous acts was walking the final day of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery civil rights march, carrying a handmade sign that read, "Here's One Native Selman for Freedom and Justice."

Ross was the first child of Alabama educator Walter Mahan Jackson and Anna Bell Seymour. She graduated from Montevallo College for Women in 1945 with majors in history and English. In 1988, her alma mater (now University of Montevallo) named her Distinguished Alumnus.

Martha Ross met her husband, Dr. Donald M. Ross, during World War II while both were working on the Manhattan

THROUGHOUT HER LIFE, ROSS RADIATED HER PASSION FOR PRINCIPLED EXCELLENCE AND TRUTH TELLING, COMBINED WITH ABSOLUTE GOOD HUMOR AND RESPECT.



Martha Jackson Ross

Project at Oak Ridge, Tenn. Throughout their 66 years together they enjoyed traveling, reading and playing bridge, and she was the life of every party because she played piano by ear.

In addition to her husband, Ross is also survived by her children: David (DanQing) Ross of Houston; Michael (Lillian) Ross of San Jose, Calif.; Kathryn (Rev. Joseph Lees) Ross of Fremont, Ohio; Gregory (Jan) Ross of Cary, N.C.; John Ross of Los Angeles; and Maria (Jim) Ross-Lyons of Kent, Wash. In addition she is survived by 13 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was in Fremont. The family asked that memorials be made to the Alzheimer's Association or Oral History Association (OHA, Georgia State University, P.O. Box 4117, Atlanta, GA, 30302-4117). ♦

EDITOR'S NOTE: A roundtable remembrance of Martha will be held on Friday morning, October 11, at the OHA conference in Oklahoma City.

OHA MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE

The Martha Ross Teaching Award

By early July, OHA members had contributed \$2,575 in memory of the late Martha Ross to the fund supporting a teaching award in her name.

Contributors include:

Martha Myers, John Neuenschwander, Donald Ritchie, Donald Ross, Linda Shope and Richard Williams.

Recipients of the Martha Ross Teaching Award receive a \$200 prize.

Book review editor transition

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John Wolford

published in each issue with a keen eye for discovering new works that challenge our understanding of the role of oral history. Before joining the OHR, John had long been interested in becoming a book review editor: "I grew up in a house full of books, because I myself had a huge library, and because obviously I loved scholarship, oral history, and books."

Initially nervous about the reality of having to cold-call and write people he had never met, John seamlessly acclimated to the role, developing a friendly rapport and cultivating relationships with the many reviewers he worked with. He provided thoughtful guidance and edits, and he allowed his reviewers the freedom to explore diverse and fruitful avenues. One reviewer, María A. Beltrán-Vocal, recently wrote to John: "I want to thank you for your understanding and your professionalism when it came to cultural issues.... I appreciate the freedom that, as an editor, you provided for me. Your edits and advice were

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Candidates for OHA elections

OHA MEMBERS WILL vote this summer on candidates for first vice president, one OHA Council seat and three members of the OHA Nominating Committee. Online elections will begin in mid-August. Details will be available on the OHA website, the OHA Facebook page and through H-Oralhist.



FOR FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

ANNE M. VALK, BROWN UNIVERSITY



Biographical Information

My work in oral history began at Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies, on the African American Life project. Since 1993 I have been a regular participant at OHA conferences, co-chairing the 2001 annual conference and sitting on OHA's finance, nominating and awards committees. At various institutions, public and private, I

have taught oral history and collaborated with students and community organizations to conduct, preserve and share interviews. Currently at Brown University's Center for Public Humanities I develop programs that use the humanities to

link the university to local and regional communities. In 2010, I co-authored (with Leslie Brown) *Living with Jim Crow: African American Women and Memories of the Segregated South*, which won the OHA book award in 2011, and I have published several articles in the Oral History Review describing my work with students in Rhode Island.

Candidate Statement

Over the past 20 years—in the time since I started attending OHA meetings—the field of oral history has changed tremendously, and with it the organization. As vice president, I would be dedicated to balancing OHA's growth and transformation with a commitment to continuing the initiatives that make the OHA a leading advocate for oral history in academic and public spheres. I am interested in bringing renewed attention to oral history education as technical, economic and sociopolitical changes reshape the agenda of schools and universities, of departments and programs. I also support expanding the association's programs and publications in order to reach out to, and learn from, not only innovators in academics and communities but also workers and producers in the arts, culture and media. ♦

FOR OHA COUNCIL (ONE VACANCY)

AMY STARECHESKI, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



Biographical Information

Amy Starecheski has been working in the field of oral history for more than 15 years and has been a member of the Oral History Association since 2002, where she chaired the education committee from 2004-2007 and has served on the Martha Ross Teaching Award and Stetson Kennedy Award committees. Amy is now the associate director of the Oral History M.A.

Program at Columbia University. She consults and lectures widely on oral history education and methods, and is co-author of the **Telling Lives Oral History Curriculum**

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SHARON UTAKIS, BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



Biographical Information

I am a tenured professor at Bronx Community College, where I teach English as a Second Language. With colleague Nelson Reynoso, I have been collecting life histories of Dominican immigrants since 2006. I have presented our work at the OHA, IOHA and other national and international conferences, and we have published the article, “No Tengo Otra Opción—Ya Me Voy”: Stories of Family Separation Told by Dominican Immigrants,” in the 2009 Oral History Forum. I have been a member of the OHA since 2008, have attended the annual conference every year since then, and have brought several colleagues to the

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Conference overview

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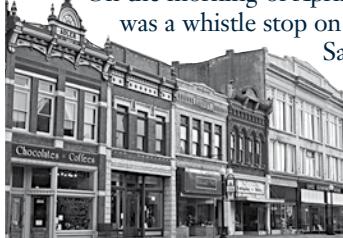
- **Thursday night, Oct. 10,** will feature the presidential reception at the new **Oklahoma History Center**, with its soaring, 80-foot glass atrium overlooking the Oklahoma State Capitol.
- **Friday night, Oct. 11,** conference attendees will visit the **Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum**.
- Off-site tours will enable visitors to explore **Guthrie, Okla.**, the state's first capital and one of the largest contiguous historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as the **National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum**.

These and other features of the annual conference, including speakers, plenary sessions, workshops and interest group sessions are described in this **Newsletter**. Go online at www.oralhistory.org to register for the conference. Make hotel reservations directly through the Skirvin Hilton Hotel, 405-702-8512. The conference rate, \$140 a night, plus tax, is available until Sept. 16 or until the OHA room block is filled.

TOURS

Explore Guthrie, Okla., the state's first capital

FRIDAY, OCT. 11, 9 A.M. – 4 P.M.



On the morning of April 22, 1889, Guthrie, Okla., was a whistle stop on the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway that had been designated as a federal land office where participants in the great Oklahoma Land Run had to file their claims for parcels in the Unassigned Lands of the Indian Territory.

By nightfall, it was a city

of 10,000 people.

Wooden and then brick buildings quickly followed the tent city nestled in the hills along Cottonwood Creek, and within four months, it boasted six banks, two cigar manufacturers, five newspapers, numerous barbers, blacksmiths, hotels, druggists and even 39 doctors and 81 lawyers.

The following year, Oklahoma became a U.S. territory and Guthrie was named its capital. When the territory became a state in 1907, it became Oklahoma's first state capital. But, as was common in other states, political infighting among competing cities resulted in the state capital being moved to Oklahoma City in 1910.

Guthrie, however, still has about 10,000 inhabitants, and hundreds of buildings within the Guthrie Historic District make it one of the largest contiguous historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The elegant, restored brick buildings are striking examples of classic late 19th and early 20th century architecture.

OHA members who sign up for the Guthrie tour will travel by bus to the town, about 30 miles north of Oklahoma City, where they will visit the Scottish Rite Temple, whose architecture and interior design make it one of the top three Masonic temples in North America. Visitors also will take a trolley tour of the city's historic areas and will have lunch on their own before visiting the Oklahoma Territorial Museum, which documents the early statehood years.

The cost of the tour is \$50, which includes everything except lunch.

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

SATURDAY, OCT. 12, 9:30 A.M.-NOON



If all you know about cowboys is what you learned from watching old John Wayne movies, you owe it to yourself to sign up for the tour on Saturday, Oct. 12, to the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, a short bus ride from the conference hotel.

The museum is renowned as the nation's foremost institution documenting Western history, art and culture, featuring a dozen permanent exhibit spaces that highlight an in-depth look at the Old West and cowboy culture.

The museum's 18-acre grounds feature dramatic outdoor sculptures nestled in a landscape of flowers, trees, ponds and streams, and inside, exhibits allow visitors to go back in time at Prosperity Junction, a turn-of-the-century cattle town, complete with church, school, railroad depot, blacksmith shop, livery stable and other features typical of such communities.

Other exhibit galleries feature:

- The history and culture of cowboys from the Spanish colonial era to modern times;
- The diversity of Native American cultures;
- Art of the American West, featuring some of the 2,000 art pieces in the museum's collection;
- Rodeos, the only truly indigenous Western sport;
- The history of photography in the American West;
- A collection of fine firearms that are works of art as well as weapons.

And for movie fans, there's a Western Performers Gallery that includes John Wayne's collection of personal firearms, artwork and other memorabilia.

The fee for the morning tour is \$45, which includes transportation and museum entry fee.

Amy Starecheski

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Guide. She was a lead interviewer on Columbia's September 11, 2001 Narrative and Memory Project. Amy is a member of the Core Working Group for Groundswell: Oral History for Social Change, where she facilitates the Practitioner Support Network. She holds a B.A. from Columbia College, an M.A. from Columbia Teachers College and is completing a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology at the CUNY Graduate Center, working with former squatters on New York's Lower East Side to study the roles of history and property in their lives.

Candidate Statement

I would like to find ways to make the OHA relevant to more people, a process that will also serve to enrich the OHA. There is so much exciting work happening in oral history that does not benefit from or contribute to the Oral History Association. As a member of the Core Working Group of Groundswell: Oral History for Social Change, I have been actively involved in building a vibrant network of diverse oral history practitioners from multiple fields, from the grassroots to the academy. I have watched this network function to support and transform the practice of so many people over the past few years, and would like to explore ways to enliven and expand the OHA as a network. This could include building up peer support, mentoring and teaching and learning activities, both in-person and virtual, as well as developing multiple, focused, active networks within the OHA. I would also like to help continue to develop collaborative, interactive spaces for sharing work and making connections at the Annual Meeting. ♦

Sharon Utakis

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conference. I am active in my union, the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York, and am a member of the union's Archives Committee. I am currently working on an oral history project about the fight for paid parental leave at CUNY.

Candidate Statement

If elected to the OHA council, I will work to increase connections between the OHA and other related organizations. In addition, I believe that the OHA awards are an under-utilized way to bring people into the organization. Having served on two OHA award committees, I see a need for more outreach to encourage members to nominate themselves and others for awards. ♦

Nominating Committee Positions

Seat No. 1

Rosemarie Esber, independent scholar based in Maryland
Maria Beltran-Vocal, Latin American and Latino Studies, DePaul University

Seat No. 2:

Curtis Austin, African American Studies, Ohio State University
Alva Stevenson, UCLA Center for Oral History Research

Seat No. 3

Irene Reti, Regional History Project, University of California, Santa Cruz
Norma Smith, independent scholar based in California

Executive Director's Report

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our ongoing strategic planning process. The OHA Council also has been actively involved with strategic planning, meeting in person and over the phone with Janet Rechtman, our strategic planning consultant, and otherwise moving us nearer to a strategic plan. By the annual meeting we will be quite close to finalizing what amounts to a road map for the OHA over the next four years. A particular shout-out goes to Mary Larson, who has served as president for two years and who really made the transition to the new executive structure possible.

Editors Kathy Nasstrom, Troy Reeves, Doug Boyd and others associated with the *Oral History Review* deserve great credit for turning out a journal that ably addresses oral historical issues of the 21st century. We welcome David Caruso, the new book review editor for the journal, and we salute outgoing book review editor John Wolford for his years of exemplary service. *Newsletter* editor Mary Kay Quinlan continues to produce a high-quality newsletter that is increasingly coordinated with the other activities of the organization.

Associates at various scholarly organizations have provided assistance as we prepare our application for membership in the American Council of Learned Societies. We also have been in communication with colleagues at the American Folklore Society, National Council for Public History, American Historical Association, National Humanities Alliance, Veterans History Project, Federation of State Humanities Councils, the History Channel (now History®) and elsewhere about how we can work together in common cause.

Last but not least, the folks in the OHA office have been superb. Students Sara Patenaude and Amy Rocamora have done a great job with the upgraded website. And Program Associate Gayle Knight has handled everything with aplomb, from the new and improved on-line meeting registration software to membership services. We look forward to many of you who have corresponded with Gayle meeting her in Oklahoma City.

It takes a village . . . ♦

OHA Fall 2013 Conference

Conference overview

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WORKSHOPS

OHA conference attendees have a wide assortment of workshops to improve their oral history skills.

Wednesday, Oct. 9, workshops include:

- **An Introduction to Oral History**, from 8 a.m. to noon. Jeff D. Corrigan of the State Historical Society of Missouri is workshop leader.
- **Thinking & Writing Digitally: Bringing Multimedia Content to the Writing of Oral History**, from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Workshop leaders are: Kathryn Nasstrom, University of San Francisco; Doug Boyd, University of Kentucky Libraries; and Troy Reeves, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- **Oral History and IRBs**, from 1-4:30 p.m. Barbara Truesdell of Indiana University is workshop leader.
- **Oral History and the Law**, from 1-4:30 p.m. John A. Neuenschwander, Carthage College emeritus, is workshop leader.

- **Turning Oral History Transcripts into Performance Texts**, from 1-4:30 p.m. Julie Pearson-Little Thunder, Oklahoma State University Library, is workshop leader.

Saturday workshops include:

- **Folk Music and Oral History, Folk Music AS Oral History: Teaching with Folk Music, Photographs and Vices from the Depression and New Deal**, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Workshop leaders are: Mike Frisch, professor of American Studies and History at the University of Buffalo, Peggy Milliron, music educator, and Tom Naples, folk singer.
- **Oral History and Digital Preservation**, 8:30 a.m.-noon. Doug Boyd, University of Kentucky Libraries, is workshop presenter.

The cost for each workshop is \$40 for OHA members and \$50 for non-members, except for the folk music workshop on Saturday. That workshop has no fee, but there is a \$10 charge for lunch. Registration is required.

NETWORKING

Everyone attending the OHA conference in Oklahoma City will have several structured and unstructured opportunities to make the acquaintance of like-minded oral historians.

- **Newcomers Breakfast.** People attending the OHA conference for the first time should indicate on their reservation forms that they plan to attend this Friday, Oct. 11, continental breakfast to meet other newcomers, OHA officers, committee chairmen and publications editors. The breakfast is complimentary for first-time attendees and is a prime opportunity to become involved in the organization.
- **State and Regional Forum Breakfast.** People from state and regional oral history groups will have a chance to network with others at this informal breakfast, Saturday, Oct. 12. Buy your own breakfast and chat with fellow state and regional oral history folks as well as Cliff Kuhn, OHA's new executive director.

- **Interest Groups.** Whether your passion is military history, community history, education or any of a half-dozen other areas of interest, plan to spend Thursday afternoon, Oct. 10, meeting with like-minded oral historians. Sign up for a specific interest group when you register. (See related articles elsewhere in this issue of the *Newsletter*.)

- **Dine-Around Dinner Groups.** Meet in the Skirvin Hilton Hotel lobby at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 11, for a chance to make new friends and sample Oklahoma City's local cuisine. Sign up at the conference registration desk for the fare of your choice.

- **Coffee Break/Book Signing.** Plan to bring an extra bag to take home with you some of the great new oral history books you'll find at the OHA exhibit hall. Meet some of the authors at the Friday, Oct. 11, coffee break and book signing from 3:15-3:45 p.m.

Book Review editor transition

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always friendly, professional, and understanding of cultural differences and approaches to writing and reviews.”

Dave Caruso joins the *OHR* with first-hand experience working with John. “I know that when I have written book reviews for John, it has seemed like an individual endeavor, that I was the only book reviewer that John was working with at the time.” Having now witnessed John’s intensive workload—cultivating relationships with publishers, perusing book catalogues, and the plethora of reviews being handled simultaneously—David fully understands and appreciates John’s efforts to create a culture of individuality with each review.

Kathy Nasstrom, *OHR*’s editor agreed. She said, “John helped me learn how to do my job. Not only was he the

OHR’s most senior editor when I took over, but he also helped me see how much individual authors—whether of reviews or articles for the journal—appreciate and value personal attention. Reviewers picked up on that and enjoyed working with him. So have I—I’m going to miss him.”

All of us at the *OHR* are thankful for the six plus years John spent redefining the possibilities of his position, and we wish him well as he turns his attention back to his own research projects. We are also delighted to hand over the reins to Dave’s capable hands. With admiration of John’s time at *OHR*, Dave said, “I hope that at the end of my time in the position people will appreciate me even half as much as they have John, because even half would be spectacular.” ♦

Groundswell group focuses on social justice

By Sam Robson

IN MAY 2013, 25 people from across North America met in Ossining, N.Y., to share their experiences using oral history for movement building and social justice work. Over three days, attendees presented their work in Black Women’s Blueprint, the Transgender Oral History Project, Sandy Storyline and other path-breaking projects and organizations. They reminisced about “turning points” in their lives as activists, organizers and artists, and attended breakout sessions on topics such as Collaboration & Participation and Archives & Longevity. They reminisced and celebrated each other’s work, asked questions and invited feedback – and above all, they forged connections with each other. The meeting was organized by social justice movements by providing mutual support, training and resources in the practice of grassroots oral history.

The idea for an ongoing Groundswell network emerged from a fall 2011 gathering of activist oral historians. That first Groundswell gathering was organized by Sarah Loose, the director of the Rural Organizing Project’s Roots & Wings Oral History Project in Oregon, and Alisa Del Tufo, an activist oral historian whose work has made policies regarding intimate partner violence in New York more responsive to the experiences of violence survivors. Sarah initially envisioned Groundswell while working on her M.A. in Oral History at Columbia University. The network has since expanded and strengthened, in part through connections made at Oral History Association annual meetings and with the support of several members of Oral Historians for Social Justice.

Groundswell has developed several ways to engage with fellow social-justice-oriented oral historians. In July, Groundswell launched six Working Groups that welcome all who are interested:

- **Local Gatherings**, which brings together current and potential network participants for a series of in-person workshops, skill shares, potlucks and listening sessions in different regions of the country. Point Person: Amy Starecheski, amy.starecheski@gmail.com

- **Oral History for Social Justice Mixtape**, which develops and publishes a case-study based tool-kit, featuring the variety of ways that oral history can support work for justice and offering concrete tools, tips and resources. Point Person: Alisa Del Tufo, alisa@thresholdcollaborative.org
- **Oral History & Anti-Oppression**, which articulates ways that oral history work can help challenge oppression. Point Person: Shane Bernardo, shanebernardo@gmail.com
- **Tech Team**, which expands Groundswell’s presence and impact via social media, the Groundswell blog and website. Point Person: Terrell Frazier, terrell.frazier@gmail.com
- **Practitioner Support Network**, which offers online video chats for small groups of practitioners focused on specific topics of interest. Point Person: Sarah Loose, sarahloose@gmail.com
- **Teaching & Learning**, which is organizing a peer-to-peer mentoring program for individuals using oral history in a social justice context and developing an online webinar/course on using oral history for movement building. Point Person: Alisa Del Tufo, alisa@thresholdcollaborative.org

Together with the annual meeting of the Oral History Association, Groundswell has been a powerful way for me to feel supported by a passionate, critical community. At the May meeting, I shared my work on oral histories with people with dementia and their friends, family members and caregivers. The feedback was extraordinarily helpful.

If you are interested in finding a space for conversation and collaboration regarding social justice work, Groundswell is a great place to look. You can contact one of the Working Group point people listed above, check out Groundswell’s website and blog at oralhistoryforsocialchange.org or find Groundswell on Facebook. You can also attend this year’s OHA annual meeting, where Groundswell will be co-sponsoring a roundtable discussion with Oral Historians for Social Justice. ♦

OHA Fall 2013 Conference

Conference overview

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KEYNOTE



National Public Radio listeners will recognize the voice, if not the face, of OHA luncheon speaker **Wade Goodwyn** on **Friday, Oct. 11**. The NPR national desk correspondent who covers Texas and the surrounding region will talk about the art of storytelling, a subject he knows well.

Goodwyn, who holds a history degree from the University of Texas, is also the son of noted historian Lawrence

Goodwyn, co-founder of the Duke Oral History Program.

As an NPR correspondent, Goodwyn has covered most of the major news stories coming out of Texas in the past two decades: the implosion of Enron; the siege of the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas; the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building and subsequent trials of Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols in Denver; wrongful convictions of black and Hispanic citizens in Texas and Louisiana; the fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas; Republican politics in Texas and on the national stage; and the aftermath of tornadoes in Moore, Okla., just outside Oklahoma City.



World-renowned storyteller, author and indigenous cultural educator **Dovie Thomason** will share “Lessons from My Old People” at the **Saturday, Oct. 12**, awards dinner.

Thomason’s Kiowa Apache grandmother nurtured her interest in the family oral traditions that led her to listen and tell the old stories that form the foundation of tribal values and memories.

Thomason has won international recognition for her work and has performed for audiences at locations as varied as Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, the Smithsonian, the Kennedy Center, the National Museum of the American Indian and at storytelling festivals from Ireland to New Zealand. Her audio recordings and other work have received countless awards, and she has consulted for a wide array of groups, including numerous universities, the UCLA Film School and NASA, where she has presented on indigenous views of science and technology.

AWARDS

At the awards dinner, winners of the following OHA awards also will be presented: **Article Award**, **Book Award**, **Non-print Format Award**, **Martha Ross Teaching Award**, **Elizabeth B. Mason Project Award**, **Emerging Crises Research Grant** and the **Vox Populi Award**.

Winners of each award also will discuss their work at sessions on **Saturday afternoon, Oct. 12**.

PLENARY

Indigenous oral history is the focus of the Thursday, Oct. 10, plenary session moderated by William Schneider, professor emeritus at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where he headed the Oral History Program for many years and worked extensively with Alaskan native communities.

Presenters include:

- **Deputy Chief Judge Caren Fox** of the Maori Land Court in New Zealand, who will describe how oral history is introduced in the formal hearing process and how it is evaluated with other evidence in adjudicating Maori Land Claims.

- **Annette Freiburger**, who is completing a master’s degree in Northern Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her thesis is a life history of her mother, Effie Kokrine, an Athabascan Indian noted for her tireless efforts to bring Native history and culture to schools and communities in Interior Alaska.

- **Candessa Tehee**, manager of the Cherokee Language Program for the Cherokee Nation and a doctoral student at the University of Oklahoma. She will describe the use of oral history in the Cherokee language to communicate culture, language and lifeways for Cherokee youth.

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Conference offers chance for like-minded gatherings

GLANCE AT PROGRAMS for recent Oral History Association conferences, and it's easy to see the wide array of subjects that interest attendees and varied settings in which they engage in oral history. Conferees this year will have a chance to meet in groups reflecting some of those interests in a time set aside for discussing common concerns.

THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY'S EXPERIENCE WITH SECTIONS, BOTH GOOD AND NOT-SO-GOOD, MAY OFFER SOME GUIDANCE AS OHA CONSIDERS HOW TO PROCEED WITH CREATING FORMAL INTEREST GROUPS.

— Tim Lloyd, AFS executive director

When you register for the Oklahoma City conference, you can sign up for one of the following interest group sessions, which will be held Thursday afternoon, Oct. 10:

- Oral history and archives,
- Oral history in government,
- K-12 education,
- Oral history and digital humanities,
- Independent scholars,
- Oral history and social change,
- Military history, and
- Community oral history.

OHA Executive Director Cliff Kuhn said cultivating such interest groups is one way to strengthen the organization. Such interest groups could suggest panels for the annual OHA meeting and meetings of other organizations, contribute to the *Newsletter* and the *Oral History Review*, be involved with awards and foster and develop leadership within OHA.

While formal interest groups of oral historians would be a new development for OHA, similar kinds of interest groups have been enshrined for decades in the bylaws of the American Folklore Society, a scholarly association somewhat similar to OHA.

The AFS experience with sections, both good and not-so-good, may offer some guidance as OHA considers how to proceed with creating formal interest groups, suggested Tim Lloyd, AFS executive director.

AFS bylaws establish a procedure by which 10 members can petition the board of directors to create a new section, the purpose of which the petitioners must describe. Lloyd said AFS boards have never turned down a proposed section unless its purpose overlapped an existing section, but there is sentiment within the organization for making it somewhat more difficult to start new sections to assure they're viable.

AFS has 32 such groups, ranging from its Africa Section to a Women's Section. Some focus on regional folklore, such as sections for British folk studies, Eastern Asia folklore, and Nordic-Baltic folklore. Other sections focus on children, folk arts, dance and movement analysis, foodways, medieval folklore, music and song, and, folklore and social justice. Still others are sections for graduate students, historians and independent folklorists.

Lloyd said sections are required to submit annual reports of what they've done and, if they charge dues in addition to the AFS dues all members pay, they must submit annual financial reports. AFS charges sections that collect dues an administrative fee for handling the finances.

If a section doesn't meet for two consecutive years or doesn't submit required reports, the board can disestablish it, he said. Sections also can petition to dissolve themselves.

Lloyd said AFS sections range in size from a dozen or so members to more than 100. Some do little more than have a business meeting during the annual AFS conference and share what section members have been doing. Others, however, award prizes for lifetime achievement, sponsor lectures and award prizes for student papers.

Five sections publish peer-reviewed journals, and one publishes an annual newsletter.

Lloyd said the AFS is beginning a year-long process of evaluating the sections, with an eye toward helping less active ones improve or moving to disestablish them.

"It's somewhere between false advertising and an institutional embarrassment to say we have a section X that doesn't do anything" he said. Of particular concern, he added, are sections that charge dues but are inactive.

Lloyd suggested that in establishing formal interest groups or sections, OHA should keep in mind that there are some "risk and liability concerns" associated with creating formal groups within the organization.

It's important to make clear at the outset, he said, that the sections are just that, not independent entities, and that the governance of the parent organization takes precedence.

In AFS, for example, sections have sometimes wanted to issue policy or political statements related to public concerns, like the section that in 2003 wanted to issue a statement against the impending war in Iraq, Lloyd said. The AFS board made clear that only the board, not sections, can speak for the organization. ♦

OHA Fall 2013 Conference

Conference overview

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PLENARY



Hugo, Okla., population 5,326 in the southeast corner of the state, was the winter home to some 17 circus shows since the 1940s. Only three such shows winter over there today.

The **Friday, Oct. 11**, plenary session will explore the

circus culture with **"Popcorn sacks and elephant tracks: Oklahoma's rich circus tradition."**

Oklahoma State University faculty members Juliana Nykolaiszyn and Tanya Finchum will draw on interviews conducted as part of "The 'Big Top' Show Goes On: An Oral History of Occupations Inside and Outside the Canvas Circus Tent." The project, funded by an Archie Green Fellowship from the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, documents the culture of circus entertainment occupations and their interactions with and impact on the community.



People who like to eat will be intrigued by the **Saturday, Oct. 12**, plenary session, "**Table Talks: Oral History and the Documentation of American Foodways.**"

Elizabeth Engelhardt of the University

of Texas at Austin, Allison Varzally of California State University at Fullerton, Rebecca Sharpless of Texas Christian University and Amy C. Evans of the Southern Foodways Alliance will explore myriad aspects of food and culture, such as Texas barbecue and Southern California food entrepreneurs. Their work continues a long tradition of documenting food traditions that began in the 1930s when Works Progress Administration writers traveled the nation asking people about food.

EVENTS

Wednesday evening, Oct. 9

The documentary film **"Anne Braden: Southern Patriot"** recounts the civil rights activism of a woman who rejected her segregationist upbringing and became a leading proponent of civil rights and civil liberties.

Following the film a reception will celebrate the leadership of the Southern Oral History Program and its founding director, Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, and coordinator, Elizabeth Millwood.

Thursday, Oct. 10

The annual Presidential Reception at the Oklahoma History Center will feature an introduction to the state's history by Bob Blackburn, executive director of the Oklahoma Historical Society, and performance of a musical piece, **"Polango,"** by

composer Scott McAllister. The piece was inspired by oral histories of Appalachian coal miners in central Pennsylvania from the early to mid-20th century.

Friday, Oct. 11

Visit the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum and hear featured speaker Edward T. Linenthal, a leading scholar of American historical memory and memorialization, who will address **"The Predicament of Aftermath: Oklahoma City and 9/11."** Linenthal is the author of *The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory* and was a member of the Federal Advisory Commission for the Flight 93 Memorial in Shanksville, Pa.

The memorial and museum will remain open after hours for OHA members, who may tour the site before and after Linenthal's talk.

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Do you have colleagues who use oral history in their classrooms? Or in their ongoing research projects?

Do you know of community groups exploring the use of oral history to document their work? Or local museums eager to engage area residents?

Chances are you do. And there's also a chance those people are not members of the Oral History Association. But you can fix that. Share this **Newsletter** with them. Brag about the *Oral History Review* online. Tell them about the workshops and thought-provoking sessions and like-minded new friends they'll find at an OHA conference.

And then encourage them to join OHA. They'll be glad they did.

Visit www.oralhistory.org for more information