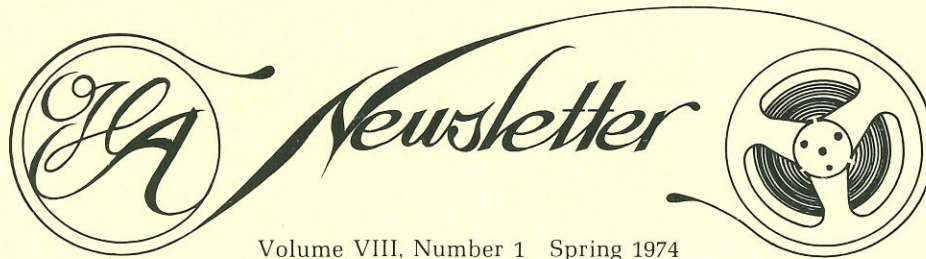


ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION



Volume VIII, Number 1 Spring 1974



1974 COLLOQUIUM STRIKES WESTERN THEME

A spectacular landscape of the West provides the setting as well as the inspiration for the Ninth Annual Workshop and Colloquium on Oral History, scheduled for September 12-15 at the Jackson Lake Lodge, Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming.

With the Grand Tetons as backdrop, participants in the colloquium will discuss topics such as "Oral History Prospects in Western Conservation," "Oral History and Western Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints," "The History of Western Mining through Taped Interviews," and "The Western Sense of Community."

Jackson Lake Lodge is situated on a bluff overlooking Jackson Lake; colloquium participants will be housed in the Main Lodge and the adjacent Motor Lodge. Four U.S. highways converge on the Grand Teton National Park. Jackson Lake is served by Frontier Airlines.

GRANTS

ROCKEFELLER GRANT EXPANDS PROJECT

Alice Lloyd College, Pippa Passes, Kentucky, will receive a \$25,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation of New York City to finance this summer's activities of the Appalachian Oral History Project.

Four Appalachian colleges participate in the project, which is directed by William Weinberg, assistant to the dean of Alice Lloyd College. These include—in addition to Alice Lloyd—Emory & Henry College, Emory, Virginia; Lees Junior College, Jackson, Kentucky; and Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina.

The grant will be applied toward the conducting of interviews with mountain

residents on the history of Appalachia and the completion of the cataloging of the 1,600 tapes already obtained.

Thus far, the project has sought personal recollections of life in the mountains at about the turn of the century. According to Weinberg, the project will now fill gaps in information already gathered. In addition, Weinberg is seeking a fifth college from West Virginia or Tennessee to participate in the project.

(A detailed report on the Appalachian Oral History Project will be featured in the Summer, 1974, issue of the *OHA Newsletter*.)

SANGAMON U. WINS MATCHING FUNDS

The Illinois Bicentennial Commission has approved a federally funded match-

ing grant that will ensure the participation of Sangamon State University, Springfield, in America's 200th anniversary celebration.

The Bicentennial Oral History Project 1974-75 will record reminiscences of residents of Sangamon County and its environs. The total project cost has been estimated at \$47,845, with \$18,963 to come from the commission.

Cullom Davis, associate professor of history at Sangamon State, will direct the project. Approximately 250 hours of tape-recorded interviews and 5,000 pages of oral history memoirs will be produced for deposit in local libraries. Duplicate copies will be placed in the Sangamon State University Library and the Illinois State Historical Library.

Continued on page 2

GRANTS

Continued from page 1

ROHO ANALYZES FOUNDATION GROWTH

The Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, has begun to undertake a small-scale, intensive study of the nature of foundation leadership in the Bay Area.

The project is made possible by joint funding from the Zellerbach Family Fund and the Van Loben Sels (San Francisco) and Rosenberg foundations. Gabrielle Morris, staff interviewer on public administration and business history, will be editor of the project, which is expected to take two years to complete. The resulting manuscript volumes will be available to research libraries.

With the advice and counsel of Charles Morrissey, former director of the Ford Foundation Oral History Project, and Charles Glock, former head of the UC Survey Research Center, the study has been designed to develop a body of research information on the development, direction, accomplishments, and goals of selected foundations in the Bay Area. Memoirists will include foundation trustees, staff persons, and grantees, in order to obtain a multifaceted view of foundation work.

WORKSHOPS

SESSION PROMOTES D. C. PROJECTS

Oral history projects currently underway in Washington, D.C., were discussed at a working session of the first annual conference on Washington, D.C. Historical Studies, January 11 and 12.

Chaired by Roderick French of George Washington University, the panel included reports by Martha Ross of the University of Maryland, who is conducting interviews for the National Park Service with old-time residents along the C&O Canal; Louise Hutchinson of the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, who presented examples of her videotaped

interviews; and Professor Okun Oya of Howard University, whose students are compiling a comprehensive oral history of Dunbar High School. A staff person for the D.C. Bicentennial Commission reported on neighborhood oral history programs that are being promoted throughout the city.

About 180 representatives of a dozen universities and several state and local historical societies attended the conference, which was cosponsored by George Washington University and the Columbia Historical Society.

1st STATE WORKSHOP IN NEW JERSEY

New Jersey's first oral history workshop, sponsored by the New Jersey Library Association, took place at St. Peter's College March 30. After general meetings, which covered the basics of oral history work, special interest sessions divided participants to discuss oral history and the public library, the historical society, and the classroom. Louis Starr of the Oral History Research Office of Columbia University was keynote speaker at the workshop.

The Newark Public Library, St. Peter's College Library, and the New Jersey Historical Commission cosponsored the conference.

MICHIGAN PROGRAM HOLDS SESSIONS

Two sessions on oral history were featured at the Sixteenth Annual Local History Conference, "Michigan in Perspective," held April 5 at the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, Wayne State University.

The first session, "Oral History: Projects and Prospects," included presentations by Patricia Pilling of the Birmingham (Mich.) Historical Society, David Olson of the Michigan History Division, and Ralph J. Jalkanen of Suomi College.

At the second, the luncheon meeting, Charles T. Morrissey of the Vermont Historical Society spoke on "The Historian as Listener."

The first **North Carolina Oral History Coordinating Conference** was held at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte December 4. The morning session was presided over by Joseph F. Boykin, head librarian and director of the UNCC Oral History Program. The session included reports by representatives of various oral history programs across the state. In the afternoon, a general discussion took place concerning "Ways to Coordinate Oral History in the State."

The second **Southern Appalachian Oral History Workshop** was held at Mars Hill (North Carolina) College, March 22 and 23. According to Evelyn Underwood, acting director of the Southern Appalachian Oral History Project, the workshop was directed towards two interests: to complete the organization of the project as initiated by the Appalachian Consortium and to promote the project's work; and to encourage the use of oral history in the area's secondary schools.

The Northwest Archivists Group, in cooperation with the Pacific Northwest History Conference, is sponsoring a panel discussion "**Oral History in the Archives**," to be held in Pullman, Washington, April 27. The panel will consist of Maclyn Burg of the Oral History Program at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, William J. Langlois of the Aural History Institute of British Columbia, and Terry Abraham of Washington State University Library, who will serve as moderator.

"From Print to Tape to Film: Oral History and the Changing Nature of Documentation" was the topic of a session chaired by Alice Hoffman of Penn State at the annual meeting of the **Eastern Communication Association** March 21. Peter H. Wood of the Rockefeller Foundation and Joseph Mingioli of the National Medical Audiovisual Center also participated.

SURVEY ON USE OF ORAL HISTORY IN TEACHING

In an effort to assess the growing use of oral history in teaching, the Executive Council has created a special study committee composed of Thomas Charlton, Johnye Mathews, and John Neuenschwander. The committee has mailed a questionnaire to each member of the Oral History Association, but since there may be a number of teachers outside the association who use or have used oral history, the committee asks OHA members to submit the names of such individuals so that they can be included in the survey. Names or inquiries should be directed to the chairman: Dr. John Neuenschwander, History Department, Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140.

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Editorial Office
136 Powell Library, University of California, Los Angeles, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90024

Bernard Galm, Editor
Joel Gardner, Associate Editor

BOOK REVIEW:

Hillbilly Women,

Mountain women speak of struggle and joy in Southern Appalachia.

by Kathy Kahn. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1973.
230 pp. Hardbound \$7.95

Reviewed by Sherna Gluck.

Hillbilly Women, a portrait of nineteen mountain women, is an important work, because it helps to destroy the stereotyped image of the sullen, beaten Appalachian woman. As a feminist researcher, I, too, feel we must begin to question the extent to which the oppressed have internalized the role and mentality of the victim. However, to fully understand the strength of women, it is not sufficient merely to show them engaged in battle; we must have a sense of their environment, their identity, and the source of their strength. For the most part, I find this lacking in *Hillbilly Women*.

Part of the problem is the editor's decision to include only brief portions of interviews with nineteen different women, resulting in an average of only nine pages devoted to each. As in other works which are basically a compilation of many different narrators, the total effect is fragmented, and the potential impact of the narrators' words diminished. The tremendous value of the oral history interview as a source for depicting a period, a place, a people—the cumulative effect, which provides a texture to the material—is weakened.

In her introduction, Kathy Kahn indicates that she "has tried to cover most of the major issues that affect the lives

of hillbilly women, like coal, cotton, working and living conditions, religion, music, family and kinship ties." Her purposes would have been better served had she selected only three or four interviews and offered them in greater length and detail. We gain the greatest understanding in the section in which she focuses on three women tied together in a kinship group. There is enough background information to provide a context for the women's current situation, their attitudes, and their anger.

Because of the way in which the interviews were edited—to fit into seventeen brief chapters—often the most significant material is in the editor's transition paragraphs or introductory statements. Thus, in a chapter with two women who participated in a large wildcat strike against Levi Strauss in 1966, the crucial material is not in the women's own words. It is Kathy Kahn, not Bernice Ratcliff or Lorine Miller, who describes the death of the strike and the eventual formation by the defeated strikers of a cooperative factory.

Despite the limitations inherent in the format chosen by the editor, the total effect of *Hillbilly Women* is both moving and convincing. The women represented in this work are indeed proud, angry and often quite conscious of their own strength, and it is an exciting experience to get to know them. I only wish that the editor had capitalized more on the potential of the detailed oral history interview so that we could know them better.

**Sherna Gluck is director of the
Feminist History Research Project, Venice, California**

PEOPLE & PROJECTS

RHODE ISLAND SERIES STUDIES TEXTILE MILLS

The textile industry of Rhode Island will be the subject of an oral history series undertaken by the Oral History Project of Rhode Island under the directorship of Harvey Kantor, assistant professor of history at the University of Rhode Island, Kingston.

Entitled "The Textile Mill Experience," the interviews will study various aspects of mill life, including changing technology and its effects, working conditions and unionization, social life of the workers, and the attitudes and values of plant managers and owners.

The Oral History Project of Rhode Island, formally organized in May, 1973, includes representatives of the University of Rhode Island, Brown University, Providence College, Rhode Island College, the Rhode Island Department of State Library Services, the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence Archives.

GRAPHIC ARTS UNION PROBES MERGERS

Issues associated with merger are of current concern in the American labor movement. A union that has had considerable experience with mergers is the Graphic Arts International Union, a new

entity composed of the Photoengravers, the Amalgamated Lithographers, and the International Bookbinders Union.

The GAIU has recently initiated an oral history project with the Department of Labor Studies at Penn State to conduct interviews with the architects of these mergers. The preconditions for merger—what facilitates it and what makes it more difficult—will be among topics to be considered.

The project is under the joint direction of GAIU President Ken Brown and Alice Hoffman, coordinator of Oral History Projects, Department of Labor Studies, Penn State University. Professor Greg Giebel of Huntingdon College is assisting on the project.

TOWN'S BIRTH TAPE-RECORDED

Bruce Stave, associate professor of history at the University of Connecticut, is using oral history to document the

birth of a controversial "new town." DevCo, the development wing of the Greater Hartford Process, proposes to build a 20,000-resident community in a section of Coventry, present population 8,600. Stave and his student assistants are interviewing citizens who either support or oppose the planned town.

The Coventry oral history project is part of a broader study of urban reform in the Hartford area. It is funded by an initial grant from the University of Connecticut Research Foundation.

DOOLEY TAPES TRANSCRIBED

Transcriptions of seventy-eight tape recordings of the late Dr. Thomas A. Dooley have been completed by the Oral History Program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The tapes were given by the Columbia Broadcasting System, through its St. Louis affiliate KMOX Radio.

Dr. Dooley, born and educated in St. Louis, was a co-founder of MEDICO (Medical International Cooperation Organization) which provides private medical assistance in Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia.

In the tapes, which were recorded from 1956 to 1960, Dr. Dooley describes in great detail the beauty of the countryside, family and tribal organization,

Continued on page 4

CORRECTION

In the caption to the photograph on page 2 of the December 1973 *Newsletter*, Robert C. Weaver, professor of urban affairs at Hunter College and former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, was incorrectly identified as Ralph Dungan.

cultural practices, and the need of the medical help that he and his co-workers brought.

Fisk University Library's **Black Oral History Program** has been presented the original tape recordings of "8 Profiles of Black Achievement" by Guidance Associates, Pleasantville, New York. The collection contains interviews with Margaret Walker Alexander, novelist; James Van DerZee, photographer; Aaron Douglas, artist; Arna Bontemps, author; Eubie Blake, musician; Noble Sissle, band leader; Sterling Brown, poet; and Alma Thomas, painter.

Alvin R. Sunseri of the history faculty at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, has organized an oral history program to interview the surviving World War I veterans living in Iowa. This past summer he conducted a similar project in New Hampshire, interviewing thirty-eight veterans.

The **Canadian Forestry Service** has presented tape recordings documenting its seventy-five-year history to the Public Archives of Canada. Under the direction of Dr. T. G. Honer, the project ran from April 1972 to October 1973. Eighty-five hours were recorded with men and women associated with the forestry service.

Linda Robertson of the Carnegie Public Library, Wabash, Indiana, became president of the Indiana Oral History Roundtable at that organization's meeting March 23 at the University of Indiana.

Raymond Henle, an OHA charter member, died January 21 at his home in West Palm Beach, Florida. He was longtime anchorman of the NBC radio news program, "Three Star Express."

PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL DOCUMENTS SOUTHERN STRUGGLES

The battles of the poor, both black and white, sharecropper and unionist, especially between World Wars I and II, are documented in *No More Moanin'*, *Voices of Southern Struggle*, the Winter, 1974 edition of *Southern Exposure*, a quarterly published by the Institute for Southern Studies in Atlanta, Georgia.

Featured in the issue are oral histories of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union; the United Auto Workers sitdown strike, Atlanta, 1936; East Tennessee coalmining battles; the Llano cooperative colony of Louisiana; and the Gastonia strike of 1929.

The magazine also provides historical documentation, including photographs from the Farm Security Administration WPA project. A book-review section analyzes some oral histories among relevant works. A brief bibliography of oral history materials concludes the publication.

Subscription information is available from SOUTHERN EXPOSURE, PO Box 230, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514.

CHRONICLE SPOTLIGHTS COLUMBIA PROGRAM

The variety and range of the oral history method were explored in an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 24, 1973. *Chronicle* assistant editor Larry Van Dyne traced the history of the discipline from Allan Nevins's first forays, placing particular emphasis on the Columbia University oral history collection. Selections from the 1967 Arden House colloquium proceedings were included, along with the standing debate "Does oral history perpetuate trivia?" in which Louis Starr of Columbia responded to historian Barbara Tuchman's 1971 remarks.

An index and summary of the oral history project at **Bethel College**, North Newton, Kansas, has been published, entitled *Voices Against War: A Guide to the Schowalter Oral History Collection on World War I Conscientious Objection*.

CALENDAR

Columbia University Oral History Research Office will offer a six-week course in oral history, **May 20-June 28**, for advanced degree credit in either history or library service. Enrollment is limited to 20, with preference given to individuals who have projects in the planning stage.

The **Ohio Historical Society** will again offer oral history seminars as part of the Fourth Annual Archives-Library Institute in Columbus, **July 15-26**.

Oral History Association Newsletter

136 Powell Library
University of California, Los Angeles
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90024