



ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

Oral History of the Principalship:

Virginia Tech Enriches the Record through Interviews and Progressive Databasing

By Patrick W. Carlton

The twentieth century has been characterized by rapid social change and episodic experiences suggesting that the "present" becomes the "past" faster than ever before. Practically no other field of endeavour epitomizes this change more fully than does public education in the U.S. At Virginia Tech, the Oral History of the Principalship project has provided a way to capture the turbulent pendulum swings within public education during the past several decades — information that can be pondered and utilized by today's educational policy makers. Since 1986, advanced graduate students in Educational Administration at Virginia Tech have been engaged in the collection of the "institutional wisdom" of retired public school elementary, middle and secondary school principals. Under the direction of Patrick Carlton, Project Director, the interviewers have, during the past five years, collected 174 first-person accounts of school administrative service stretching from the 1920s to the late 1980s.

Ages of the respondents range from 55 to over 90 years. Until recently, it has not been usual to seek the counsel of principals in a systematic fashion once they have left the work force. This has left unused an important reservoir of professional information at a time when so many critical organizational and personnel problems plague America's public schools.

All interviews have been completely transcribed and partially indexed. A set of the transcripts, reproduced on archival grade paper and stored in acid-free containers, has been placed in the Special Collections Department of the Carol M. Newman Library, Tech's main repository in Blacksburg, Virginia. These materials

total approximately 7600 pages of text. Also available at Newman Library are copies of the 247 original audio cassettes.

The interviews are geographically limited due to financial restrictions, having been generated primarily within Virginia, District of Columbia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, with small "clusters" from Colorado, Wisconsin, New York, and Florida.

The one- to three-hour interviews cover a wide variety of topics, based on a 56-question interview protocol. Topics include dealing with discipline problems; handling substance abuse; providing a positive and safe climate for learning; managing dropouts; improving employee morale; school and community relations; positive approaches to teacher evaluation; identification and mentoring of future administrative personnel; career ladders, differentiated staffing and merit pay; fostering building level instructional improvement; philosophies of leadership and of education; working conditions during the early years; and a host of other important and interesting topics.

Also of note is the wealth of information on administrative practices and social conditions during the period of desegregation in the public schools of the region. Thirty-five of the interview subjects were black principals who lived and worked during the fifties and sixties — consequently, they have much information and emotion to share with future educational leaders concerning those fascinating and difficult times.

Another significant aspect of the project concerns the use of computer technology to support the research effort. In addition to the employment of traditional preserva-

tion and archival methodology, the project staff use a computer to scan the 174 transcripts into memory, forming a massive computer database. This database has been indexed using a highly sophisticated text-searching software package, the ZYINDEX, which has the ability to catalogue and search up to 15,000 separate files of up to 300 pages each — a total of 450,000 pages of text.

Once the indexing process is complete, by-word and by-phrase text searching is readily accomplished. Doctoral and other legitimate researchers can quickly and conveniently engage in elaborate searches of the database, with the primary limitation being the creativity of the researcher involved. Initial analyses have suggested the presence of an exceptionally rich information source — one that will be "mined" for many years to come. Since 1988, three articles and several research papers have been produced through use of the database.

Plans are being laid to transfer the database to CD-ROM to facilitate distribution to research users nationwide. It is also hoped that application of Interactive Video Disk technology within the project may become possible within the decade.

This powerful research tool makes possible qualitative research as well as quantitative analysis based on qualitative data — an approach with which many educational researchers are not familiar. The project demonstrates new approaches to historical, ethnographic, and anthropological research. It provides for employment of the database by the traditionalist user as well as by his/her technologically sophisticated brother or sister. For the educational researcher, the system provides ease

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OHA Meets in Utah, October 10-13

A Message From The President Think Snowbird

Sound the word: OHA will host an exciting, innovative conference in one of North America's most beautiful mountain settings when we gather for the 25th Annual Meeting on 10-13 October 1991 at the Snowbird Conference Center, a few miles southeast of Salt Lake City, Utah. Not unlike a series of movable feasts, the association's annual meetings have never disappointed me in twenty-one years. Our feast now moves to the region generally known as that served by the Northwest Oral History Association, but the scope of the conference's content will be far-reaching, even international.

My judgment this year may be particularly biased, but the conference planned by the 1991 committees is among the best ever. This is why I urge both members and non-members to mark their calendars now, call their travel agents, contact Delta's conference desk for discount air fares, and return the preregistration materials when they arrive with the annual-meeting printed program. Spread the news about this year's meeting in the breathtaking Wasatch Range of the Rocky Mountains and assure all interested oral historians that we have planned appropriate sessions for just about everybody this year.

Regional flavor will be sprinkled throughout the meeting. There are sessions on such regionally focused topics as Native Americans, folk medicine, state-level wartime experiences, and Hispanic women. Plenary sessions will include addresses by ethnic-gender-history specialist Vicki Ruiz of the University of California at Davis, Navajo tribal representative Clyde Benally, and a program of western music and cowboy poetry led by folklorist Hal Cannon. There will be opportunities to tour mining districts, Mormon emigrant trails, and several parts of nearby Salt Lake City, including its famous Temple Square. Outdoor activities, mountain trails, and spectacular vistas await OHA members who prefer to concentrate their time in the Snowbird vicinity.

The conference will also appeal to those who want to hear and participate in sessions of great variety — sessions on public history, technical processing of oral history, immigration, psychology and psychiatry, political disadvantage, digital recording technology, and many others. Of

special interest will be those sessions featuring foreign scholars from Australia, Canada, England, India, and the Soviet Union. Irina Sherbakova of Moscow State University and a scholar who focuses on the gulag experiences of women will address the final evening's plenary session. The executive secretary of the Soviet Oral History Association, Victor Berdinkikh, is expected to report on oral history research in that rapidly changing nation. We are eager to welcome a growing number of visiting foreign scholars to this year's OHA meeting; their commitment to attend is evidence of increasing interest in sharing oral history research experiences and methodologies.

The modern conference resembles the pilgrimage of medieval Christendom in that it allows the participants to indulge themselves in all the pleasures and diversions of travel while appearing to be austere bent on self-improvement.

To be sure, there are certain penitential exercises to be performed — the presentation of a paper, perhaps, and certainly listening to the papers of others. But with this excuse you journey to new and interesting places, meet new and interesting people, and form new and interesting relationships with them; exchange gossip and confidences (for your well-worn stories are fresh to them, and vice versa); eat, drink and make merry in their company every evening; and yet, at the end of it all, return home with an enhanced reputation for seriousness of mind.

— David Lodge, in *Small World*

This year, OHA will offer several types of workshops — some for veterans, others for newcomers. Separate tracks will be available for participants especially interested in family history and education: three family-history sessions on Thursday, and a daylong workshop for teachers on Saturday. Leading these will be William Hartley and Barry Lanman, respectively, both highly experienced. Former OHA President Waddy Moore of the University of Central Arkansas will lead an introductory workshop on interviewing, sure to meet the needs of many newcomers. Not to be overlooked are workshop sessions on legal concerns (led by John Neuen-schwander of Carthage College), radio production for financial gain (led by radio personality Tumbleweed Smith of Big

Spring, Texas), and starting a community oral history project (led by Madeline Buckendorf of Boise, Idaho). Please tell the association's officers how you feel about having so many types of workshops in the same conference, for there may be divergent views on this.

Your attendance and support for OHA's 1991 conference is encouraged to offset some unforeseen circumstances and to demonstrate our common commitment to the advancement of oral history. As most of you know, OHA annual meetings move from region to region according to a predetermined order of eight geographical areas. Region 8 (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) is our host region this year, and we hope to feature the work of many oral historians who are members of the Northwest Oral History Association during the conference. Some OHA members have recently questioned the appropriateness of the association meeting in a state whose legislature has created much controversy in the passage of one of the nation's strictest anti-abortion laws; a very few are considering boycotting conferences — including ours — for this very reason. Our officers are keenly aware of the various issues related to such questions of personal choice.

It is important that all of us remember that the Snowbird site selection was made some three years ago and that the association's binding contract with the hotel has been in force for almost as long, making it financially difficult (\$4,500 penalty) for OHA to consider, as a few have suggested, that an alternate site be used this fall in hopes of meeting in a place less politically "charged." Be assured that all of the people we have worked with in the Salt Lake City area — from the institutions committed as cohosts of the OHA conference to the local tourism organization are aware of OHA's sensibilities. All conference planning has enjoyed splendid support at the local level.

I look forward to the honor of working with all of you during the week at Snowbird. My hope is that you are planning now to be with us. A fine program awaits you; the association needs you. Thanks for your thoughtful consideration of this year's unusual situation.

— Thomas L. Charlton

Think Snowbird

Program and Local/Arrangements Committees

Program Committee Members for the Snowbird meeting are: Jay Haymond (Utah State Historical Society, Co-Chair), Rebecca Sharpless (Baylor University, Co-Chair), Ronald Coleman (University of Utah), Rose Diaz (University of New Mexico), Jessie Louise Embry (Brigham Young University), Cliff Kuhn (Georgia State University), Laurie Mercier (Washington State University), Mary Murphy (Montana State University), Alva Stevenson (University of California, Los Angeles), John Terreo (Montana Historical Society), and Joe Todd (Oklahoma Historical Society).

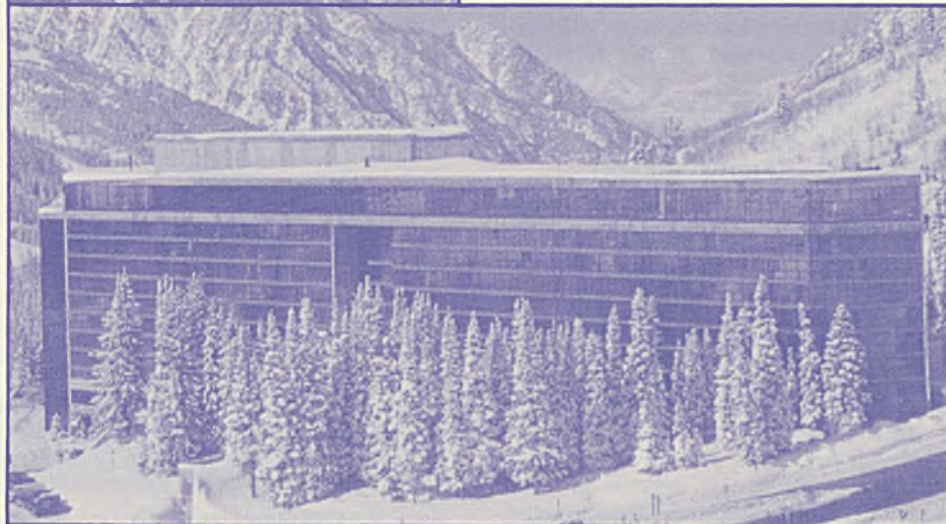
Local Arrangements Committee Members are: Floyd O'Neil (University of Utah, Co-Chair), Gregory Thompson (University of Utah, Co-Chair), Jessie Louise Embry (Brigham Young University), Robert Goldberg (University of Utah), Jay Haymond (Utah State Historical Society), Phil Notarianni (Utah State Historical Society), Kent Powell (Utah State Historical Society), John Sillito (Weber State University), and Robert Staab (University of Utah).

Featured Speakers

Clyde Benally is a member of the Navajo nation and lives in Cortez, Colorado, where he is employed by Mobil Oil. He grew up in a Navajo-speaking family and has drawn from his own experience to work for the integration of Native American oral traditions into the school curriculum.

The Deseret String Band is comprised of **Hal Cannon**, who during the day is director of the Western Folklife Center and researcher and author of folk art topics in the West; **Tom Carter**, a folklorist and architectural historian on the faculty at the University of Utah; **Leonard Coulson**, who makes banjos and owns a guitar and banjo shop specializing in vintage instrument repair and sales; and **Ron Kane**, who is an avalanche expert at Alta Ski Resort.

Rod McQuery, cowboy poet, lives in Ruby Valley, Nevada, where he ranches, guides, and packs into the Ruby Mountains, and shoes horses part-time. The subjects in his poetry include his neighbors, his work, and the changing times in the valley.



Hotel Accommodations

Cliff Lodge, the newest and most spacious unit in the Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort, is the site of the OHA meeting. Suites, dormitory accommodations and condominiums are available as well as single- and double-occupancy rooms—all with scenic views of the Wasatch Range.

Vicki L. Ruiz is Associate Professor of History at the University of California, Davis. A longtime oral historian, her publications include *Cannery Women*, *Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950*, and most recently, with Ellen Carol DuBois, *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*.

Irina Lazarevna Sherbakova was educated at Moscow State University, receiving a degree in German literature and history in 1971. She has been involved with oral history since 1979, and her primary research has concentrated on women's experiences in the Soviet gulag, or correctional labor camps. She is affiliated with the Institute for Oral History in Moscow and serves as correspondent in literature for a Soviet newspaper.

Workshops: OHA is again offering workshop sessions taught by experienced faculty to provide hands-on training for oral historians. Pre-registration is required for all these workshops, and the family, radio, and teachers' workshops also require special fees to defray cost of equipment and related materials. Enrollments may be limited, so interested participants should reserve places for themselves through early conference registration.

Travel

By car: For those who wish to drive, Snowbird is located on a scenic mountain road (Utah State Road 210) southeast of the junction in Salt Lake City of Interstate 80 and Interstate 15.

By rail: Amtrak serves Salt Lake City with both east-west and north-south routes, and uses the Rio Grande Railway Station, which is also the home of the Utah State Historical Society.

By air: The Salt Lake City airport is a hub for Delta, OHA's official airline. For discounted air fares, call Delta at 800/241-6760 Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m.-11 p.m. EDT and Sat.-Sun., 8:30 a.m.-11 p.m. EDT, and ask for Reference Number E0628.

Canyon Transportation — 801/251-1841 — will provide transportation from the Salt Lake City airport to the Snowbird Cliff lodge and return. Upon registering for the conference, please include in the information sent to the association secretary the flight numbers, times of arrival and departure, and dates of travel. The Local Arrangements Committee will be on hand at the airport and hotel to assist in grouping transportation to and from the airport. Call ahead to Canyon Transportation to make reservations.

Nominees for 1991 OHA Election

The nominating committee has completed its work for another year. The following candidates will be voted on later this summer, with results announced at the October Annual Meeting. Additional nominations may be made by submitting a petition containing at least twenty signatures by OHA members to the executive secretary.

In an attempt to provide members with more information about each candidate, this year's nominating committee asked all nominees to respond to the following questions:

1. What is the most critical issue(s) facing the Oral History Association today and how should OHA respond?

2. How do you think the OHA can better address issues of gender, race, and multiculturalism in its programs and activities?

Vice President/President Elect: Albert S. Broussard

Albert S. Broussard is Acting Chair of the History department at Texas A & M University, where he teaches courses in Afro-American history, comparative slave societies, urban history, and recent United States history. He received his Ph.D. from Duke University in 1977 and served as director of the San Francisco Oral History Project (1976-77). He worked on oral history projects in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and served as an interviewer for the U.S. Department of Commerce study on the status of black farmers and sharecroppers in the South. He has published articles in the *Oral History Review* and the *Hawaiian Journal of History* and is currently writing a biography of T. McCants Stewart.

1. The most critical issues that the Oral History Association must resolve in the coming decade are similar to those that many relatively young professional organizations are forced to grapple with at this stage of their development. I do not believe that there is one overriding concern but instead a series of interrelated issues that this organization collectively must attempt to address. They include increasing the size and composition of our membership, striving to improve our standards of professionalism, and exploring innovative ways to reach out into our respective communities and utilize oral history.

Although our membership remains strong, it is imperative that we expand the size of the organization in the coming decade. We are at an advantage, relative to many professional organizations, for the OHA has always catered to specialists and nonspecialists, academics and individuals with little academic training. Our appeals for membership should continue to be directed at scholars from a variety of disciplines, but not to the exclusion of other

groups such as students or non-affiliated oral historians.

Similarly, we must continue to be dedicated to rigorous standards of professionalism. I think that it is safe to say that the legitimacy of oral history as a serious methodological tool has been firmly established; yet the OHA should continue to monitor the ethical, methodological and legal standards of all practitioners of oral history, while improving our own standards and techniques through a rigorous process of self-examination and critical appraisal.

Finally, I believe that the OHA must continue to explore new ways to reach out into our communities and classrooms and utilize oral history, for the benefits will be multiple. First, we will tap a potential reservoir of oral historians, some of whom may eventually take an interest in the work of the OHA. Second, this strikes me as a potentially important way to diversify our membership, as well as the content of our sessions at the annual meeting. Third, it will present an important opportunity to bridge the gap between the OHA and the local community and illuminate the vitality and richness of our local resources.

For Council:

Joel R. Gardner — UCLA Oral History Program, 1972-80; Director, "Oral History in Louisiana," "Louisiana Carpenters Project," "Folklife in the Florida Parishes," 1980-83; Assistant Director, Louisiana Division of the Arts, 1983-85; currently president, Gardner Associates (Cherry Hill, N.J.), oral history and historical research. Assistant editor, *OHAN*, 1972-75; Chairman, Annual Workshop, 1982; Council Member, 1982-83; Membership Committee, 1982-84; First Editor, Pamphlet Series; Chair, Endowment Committee, 1990-. Wrote or edited 10 books and pamphlets, wrote 25 articles and reviews. BA, Tulane; MA, journalism, UCLA.

1. The most critical issues facing OHA today are the same ones it has faced for the past decade: How can we reach the enormous market of practicing and would-be oral historians? How can we reach the broad populations of community, ethnic, and other groups that correctly perceive oral history as the appropriate method through which they can gather and publicize their history (and therefore their existence)? How can we achieve the fiscal stability that will permit us to engage in the kind of meaningful outreach that is necessary? How can we develop organizational stability?

Let us begin by articulating clear goals and objectives, and obtaining a consensus on their validity and appropriateness. We can then start raising the money to achieve them through grants and fund-raising campaigns.

With our financial status improved, we can respond to our consensual needs. My proposals would include a permanent executive directorship to establish consistency and continuity, im-

proved outreach by assessing the needs of the broad oral history community and then providing appropriate services, and expansion into geographic and cultural areas that have eluded us in the past.

2. The question as posed, limited as it is to "gender, race, and multiculturalism," is too narrow. What about sexual orientation? What about the elderly? What about the rural poor, the newly unemployed, the victims of economic dislocation? Our outreach as oral historians must be to all of those and more, and we must empower them to collect and make public their own stories.

My experience in Louisiana is reproducible: I founded an Interest Group within the Louisiana Library Association (though I am not a librarian), then developed programs that reached out to community and ethnic organizations and projects. We developed collaborative grants and ran an annual workshop.

Each of us can identify representative individuals and organizations in our communities, then encourage and assist them to engage in the oral history process. We can help to train them in oral history skills, help them network with local and regional associations, grantmakers, and the media.

OHA must be the focal point of the network, the center of information exchange. Through these new members, OHA will enrich itself: a larger membership base will enable us to provide greater services, and a more varied membership base will render us better equipped to serve an ever-broader audience.

Art Hansen — I became active in oral history in 1972 when I launched, with Betty Mitson, the Japanese American Project in the Oral History Program at California State University, Fullerton (OHP-CSUF). In addition to directing that project until the present, I have completed two stints as director of OHP-CSUF (1975-1979; 1987-1989) and begin still a third one this fall. From 1981 to 1987 I edited the *Oral History Review* and was program co-chair for the 1986 OHA colloquium in Long Beach, California. A founding member of the Southwest Oral History Association (SOHA), I have been a SOHA Advisory Council and Education Committee member, vice president, program chair for two conferences, a James V. Mink Award recipient, and the current presidential nominee. During my 25 years as a U.S. sociocultural historian in the CSUF Department of History, I have coordinated its graduate studies program and now serve as departmental vice chair. Finally, since 1988 I have coedited a semiannual regional publication, the *Journal of Orange County Studies*.

1. From my perspective, four overlapping and interpenetrating areas that are crucial to OHA are: (1) finances; (2) multiculturalism; (3) publications; and (4) regional associations. What the OHA leadership needs to appreciate, even more than it already does, is the integral relationship of the latter three of these concerns



BROUSSARD



GARDNER



HANSEN



HILL



RITCHIE

to the first of them. If OHA is to achieve fiscal as well as intellectual and moral health, it needs actively to recruit new members from America's diverse population sectors. Much of this recruitment process should occur at the regional level where the phenomenon of multiculturalism (and so much more) is most palpably experienced and best negotiated. Accordingly, OHA must redouble its efforts to promote the formation of affiliated regional associations to perform this vital function. At the same time, if OHA is expected to bear the enormous expenses of its assorted undertakings — most notably, the ambitious publication program — it should devise equitable dues-sharing arrangements with these affiliates. Naturally, it then becomes incumbent upon the OHA consistently to sponsor programs and produce publications that are pertinent to the varied needs of its regionally-rooted, multicultural constituencies.

There is no easy "fix" available for OHA in this area. Almost certainly the solution does not lie in the mere incantation of pious proclamations about participatory democracy, the adoption of mechanical multicultural formulae governing the composition of, say, conference panels and the contents of journal and newsletter issues, and the imposition of rigid prescriptive rules for transacting and evaluating fieldwork. More promising, it seems to me, is for the OHA to concentrate its immediate efforts upon attracting a more diversified membership and leadership through sponsoring "incorporative" programs and publications of the sort that have been almost routine in recent years. Once this new constituency sees itself reflected in (and its interest represented by) OHA, it will have become "their" organization. When this point is reached in the organization, addressing issues of gender, race, and multiculturalism will cease to be a problem and instead become standard procedure.

Ruth Edmonds Hill— Audiovisual coordinator, 1984–, Oral History Coordinator, 1977–84, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College; library positions, 1948–68, including Bennington College; Berkshire Community College and Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield, Mass.; Harvard University; New York Academy of Medicine; Yale University. B.S., University of

Massachusetts; B.S. in L.S., Simmons College; Certificate in Theatre Librarianship, Columbia University; Certificate in Library Automation and Information Storage and Retrieval, University of Southern California. OHA Nominating Committee, 1988–89; Program Committee, 1990; Committee on Multiculturalism, 1989–. Member: New England Association of Oral History; Oral History Center, Cambridge, Mass.; Refugee Arts Group advisory committee; Wheaton College Oral History Project advisory committee. Conference presenter/moderator/workshop leader: Berkshire Conference, National Council of Negro Women, National Women's Studies Association, New England Association of Oral History (also recipient of Kantor Award), New England Women's Studies Association, Oral History Association, Oral History Center, Society of American Archivists. Articles in *Behavioral and Social Sciences Librarian*, *Boston Globe Magazine*, *Harvard Advocate*, *Radcliffe Quarterly*; Editor, *Women of Courage: an Exhibition of Photographs*, 1984; Editor, *The Black Women Oral History Project*, 1991.

1. Critical issues:

- need for increased endowment and general operating funds to provide more and better services to members, to support publications, and for outreach; this means continued examination of sources of funding and grants, membership fees, publication costs, etc.

- ethnically diverse membership and programming; the means would include active outreach to ethnic community organizations for new members, and encouragement of the oral history work being done in such communities

- ongoing discussion of ethical concerns and the guidelines and standards for collecting and preserving oral history materials through offering basic and advanced education and training in the theory and philosophy of oral history

- OHA involvement in developing national and international oral history data bases, and not leaving it only to competing publishers

- strengthening alliances with regional and international oral history organizations, and with other professional groups such as archivists and historians

2. Diversity

- including the issues of race, gender, and

multiculturalism in OHA's long-range planning and mission statements, and constant vigilance in addressing these concerns

- developing a list of OHA members (volunteer or paid consultants) to work with communities and organizations in developing oral history projects that meet their needs; publicizing the projects in the Newsletter, with project participants on annual meeting programs

- financial support/scholarships/work-study for attendance at annual meetings

Anne Campbell Ritchie — Oral historian at the National Gallery of Art, received master's degrees in history and library science from the University of Kentucky, where she also coordinated the Appalachian Collection. She has done oral histories on the Frontier Nursing Service, John Jacob Niles, the community of Indian Head, Maryland, and women journalists. From 1985–1988 she served as OHA's Executive Secretary. A member of the Endowment Committee, she has also chaired the Nominating Committee as well as the Local Arrangements Committee for the 1984 annual meeting. Currently she is president of OHMAR (Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region).

1. and 2. Since the questions asked seemed interrelated, I have combined my answers. I believe that because oral history is a dynamic and constantly changing field, the OHA can never afford to stand still. It must continue to broaden its base to include all those engaged in oral history. The real strength of the organization depends upon the diversity of its members. In its recruiting efforts, the OHA must be especially sensitive to issues of gender, race, and multiculturalism, and must provide services to the full spectrum of its membership.

Expanding the membership base is a challenge that will require careful thought and planning. The OHA council should work together with interested colleagues and state and regional organizations to develop a plan for identifying potential members and encouraging them to join the association. We should make serious efforts to attract oral history practitioners from various locations and fields, both academic and community-based. Further, we need to encourage more international participation

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tion in the association.

OHA must also address the question of membership retention, and make certain that it is meeting the needs of its members. The organization should continue to offer exceptional publications and annual conferences that involve and are accessible to all segments of the membership. Once members, individuals should be encouraged to participate in all levels of the organization, through the meetings, publications, and various committees.

In order to continue the quality of publications and programs, it is vital to put the OHA on a firm financial standing. I will work to expand the endowment program so that someday it might provide financial assistance for attendance at annual meetings, and extend services in general.

Carlos Vasquez is the newly appointed oral historian at the University of New Mexico, formerly directed the UCLA California State Archives State Government Oral History Program where he conducted extensive oral histories with members of the California legislative and executive branches, campaign specialists, commission members and reapportionment experts resulting in over 200 hours of interviews. He took his undergraduate training at UCLA in political science, graduate training in political theory at Stanford University and is finalizing his doctoral dissertation in history at UCLA.

For Nominating Committee:

Celia Alvarez - I received a doctorate in Linguistics from the University of Pennsylvania and my research interests over the last twenty years have focused on the study of oral language, culture and identity in communities, specifically in the Puerto Rican community. Since 1974, I have been associated with the Centro de Estudios Puertorriquenos at Hunter College and have participated in several projects of the Culture and Language Policy Task Forces, including the Oral History Project which focused on the experience of workers, families and women in the Puerto Rican migration experience. I have been a member of the OHA Committee on Multiculturality since its inception, served on the Program Committee 1989-90, and am on the Editorial Board of the *Oral History Review*.

I have come to appreciate the power of oral history in documenting, validating and naming the range of diverse cultural and historical experiences which are part of our American legacy. Unfortunately, much of this experience and knowledge is unknown to the general public and society at large. I am committed to ensuring the presence and voice of multicultural diversity in our association. As a member of the Nominating Committee, I would work to ensure excellence and diverse representation in the OHA Council, building on the increasingly diverse constituency of the association.

Rose Diaz - Arizona State University, B.S. History, 1980. University of New Mexico, Graduate Coursework, 1982-83. Diaz is research historian with the University of New Mexico General Library where she has held a variety of research, administrative and archival positions since 1983. At present she serves as an Associate Director for the General Library's Center for Southwest Research. Her principal duties include: community outreach, program planning and collection development with a multicultural emphasis on Southwest regional studies. Her special areas of interest are: the twentieth century west, minority urban history, cultural and community history, and women's oral history.

As technology increases our ability to gather information, effective dissemination of that information becomes critical. The role which libraries and repositories play in these efforts is significant to contemporary and future research. The field of oral history will greatly benefit from the development of national databases and regional networks. A national organization representing faculty, scholars and community based projects spearheading these collaborative efforts continues to be of great importance. I would be pleased to represent the Oral History Association on its Nominating Committee promoting such cooperation.

Michael A. Gordon is Assistant Professor of History and the Coordinator of the Public History Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He has just completed a book on the "Orange and Ribbon Riots" in New York City in 1870 and 1871, which devotes much attention to collective memory, and is about to begin a study on the sources of worker consciousness in Milwaukee in the 1930's. He has conducted oral history projects on Wisconsin grocery store workers, the alternative agriculture movement in Wisconsin, and the effects of automation at a GM assembly plant, among others. Currently, he is developing cooperative community oral history projects in Milwaukee.

I believe that while we must continue to promote professional standards and encourage the critical analysis of interviews, we must also develop ways to broaden our membership base. We can do that by helping to develop state and local oral history associations, and by working with these groups on cooperative projects that will attract more people to the field and improve the overall quality of oral history.

Andor Skotnes is currently assistant professor of history of the Americas at Russell Sage College in Troy, New York and was previously assistant director of the Oral History Research Office at Columbia University. His earlier working experience included teaching at a number of colleges and several years of employment as a factory worker and machinist. He was the co-chair of the 1988 OHA Annual Meeting in Baltimore and a founder of the OHA Committee on Multiculturality. His research focuses on the workers' movement and the Black freedom movement in the United States.

Of all of the challenges facing the OHA, the most important one, in my view, is improving the multiculturalism of the social composition

and the overall orientation of the organization. If elected, my primary efforts on the nominating committee will be directed toward meeting this challenge.

Alva Moore Stevenson's involvement with oral history dates back to 1984 when she joined the staff of the UCLA Oral History Program. She has been heavily involved in the Southwest Oral History Association as program participant, member of various local arrangements committees, the Membership Committee and the Executive Council. On the national level, she has been a member of OHA's Committee on Multiculturality since 1988, the local arrangements committee of the OHA 1986 Long Beach meeting, and program participant at the 1988 Baltimore meeting. At UCLA, involvements outside oral history include the UCLA Trimentor Program, the Library Committee on Diversity, and the California Black Faculty and Staff Association.

First, I believe we should expand our definition of multicultural to include such groups as the differently abled. Secondly, we need to move beyond just having a Committee on Multiculturality, to having diverse representation on all of our standing committees. In addition, I would like our commitment in this regard to expand to the use of diverse vendors, hotels and meeting sites for annual meetings and of more involvement in diverse communities. Hopefully, through our future efforts, there will be no need for a Committee on Multiculturality. As the OHA becomes more multicultural on all levels, all of us are enriched.

George C. Wright is Vice Provost and Mastin G. White Professor of Southern History at the University of Texas at Austin. He received his Ph.D. from Duke University where he held an Oral History Fellowship. Wright has written three books and numerous articles that have relied heavily on oral history, the most recent book being *Racial Violence in Kentucky, 1865-1940: Lynchings, Mob Rule, and "Legal Lynchings."* Wright served on the OHA's 1984 Program Committee and has spoken at several OHA Annual Meetings and at the most recent international oral history conference.

It is very important that the Oral History Association is devoting considerable attention to the issue of multicultural education. As Vice Provost at The University of Texas at Austin, I work on multicultural issues and our undergraduate curriculum on a daily basis. I believe, therefore, that my expertise in this area can be of assistance to the Association. As a member of the Nominating Committee I would work to ensure that the Association has a good ethnic and gender balance at all levels.

Deaths

Peter D. Olch

by Charles Morrissey

Dr. Peter D. Olch, who served as the fourth president of the Oral History Association in 1970, died of a pulmonary embolism on April 26, 1991, at Suburban Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland. Stricken the previous evening at his home in near-by Kensington, Peter had been engaged in a fierce battle against cancer since October, 1990. He was receiving intensive therapy while confined to a wheel chair in the weeks preceding his death, but happily had celebrated his 61st birthday at home with friends on April 10, 1991.

Born in St. Louis and raised in Los Angeles, Peter received degrees from Pomona College (A.B., 1951) and Johns Hopkins (M.D., 1955) and after training in surgery and pathology he devoted his life to his intense love of the history of medicine. As Deputy Director of the History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine (NLM) he initiated the NLM's oral history project in the mid-1960s. He attended the first national oral history colloquium at Lake Arrowhead, California, in 1966, served on the OHA Executive Council in 1968-1969, was elected Vice-President of the Association in 1969, and succeeded Oscar O. Winther as President when Professor Winther died on May 22, 1970.

Peter was also a past president of the Washington Society for the History of Medicine, the Washington Academy of Medicine, the American Osler Society, the Halsted Society, and past Sheriff of the Potomac Corral of the Westerners. He combined his pursuit of medical history with a deep interest in the history of the American West, especially frontier medicine as practiced among fur-traders and early travelers on the trails to Santa Fe, California, and Oregon. In 1989 he founded "The Owl and the Buffalo," a rare-book firm specializing in western Americana and the history of medicine which he operated from his home. Following his retirement from NLM in 1981 he joined the Section of Medical History at the Uniformed Services University School of Medicine, where he was active until the time of his death.

In addition to two daughters, Karen and Janice, Peter is survived by his spouse, Mary Bingham Olch, of 9699 Connecticut Avenue, Kensington, Maryland 20895. An occasion for recalling his warm personality and numerous friendships with OHA

members is scheduled as part of the OHA business meeting at Snowbird, Utah, on October 13, 1991.



Randall G. Lawrence

by Martha Ross

Oral history has lost a friend, a scholar and a gentleman with the death of Randy Lawrence on May 15, 1991, in Birmingham, Alabama.

Randy and I should never have seen eye-to-eye: he with his impressive physical height, approaching seven feet, and I with my negative pulchritude, somewhere short—literally—of five feet. (He always said I was the only person whom he would allow to comment on his height.) He was as good looking and sweetly dispositioned as he was bright and hard working. He was of a younger generation than I, but from the first time I met Randy, at OHMAR's Spring Conference in Canaan Valley, West Virginia, I was considerably impressed—by his work and by his manner.

Randy was the son and grandson of Appalachian coal miners and became interested in the social history of the industrial South while investigating his family's past. His undergraduate history degree was from Berea College in Kentucky. In the early 1980s, Randy was finishing his doctoral studies in history at Duke University and

already applying his scholarship in Charleston, West Virginia. Dedicated to making that scholarship accessible to the public, he reported to the OHMAR conference on the walk-through exhibit of a coal mine that he had developed. As visitors toured the exhibit, they would hear excerpts from oral history interviews with miners. Both the concept and execution were impressive, placing oral history material in a contextual setting.

As a native Alabamian, I was delighted a year or so later to hear that Randy had been named Director of the new Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark in Birmingham. Throughout my early years, Sloss Furnace was a towering reminder of Birmingham's industrial origins, belching its gritty vapors throughout the downtown area which it adjoined. Now closed as a steel mill, it would be transformed into a museum, commemorating the history of Birmingham and of the steel industry in America. With Randy in charge, I anticipated the success that it has indeed become, with exhibits and tours, concerts and community events.

I was further cheered that Randy would be in the Southeast for OHA's 1985 national conference in Pensacola, for which I as OHA president was responsible. Randy not only served faithfully on the program committee, he arranged for the design and production of the printed program and, when Hurricane Juan ("The Hallowe'en Howler") conspired to restrict attendance, he was one of those who graciously stepped in and helped rescue a conference that none of those attending will ever forget.

I was pleased when I heard that OHA would meet in Birmingham in 1993 and that Randy would be making the local arrangements and be in charge of the program. I knew it would be a first class production. Unfortunately, it was not to be.

At the beginning of this year, I heard that Randy was ailing, and when I visited Birmingham in April, I called to inquire about him. He was able to answer the telephone but unable to have a long conversation. On May 15, Randy died of AIDS.

When a cure or preventive for this terrible disease is found, Randy will be one of those who we particularly remember and whose loss we continue to mourn. OHMAR, OHA and oral history won't be at all the same without Randy, but I hope that his spirit will be with us — guiding, inspiring and smiling upon us all.

STATE & REGIONAL

Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region will hold its fall meeting at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Archives, in New York City, on Saturday, September 21, 1991. The meeting will convene in the tenth floor Tamiment Library, a labor history collection with an extensive oral history component. The program committee includes Debra Bernhardt of Tamiment, Ron Grele of Columbia University, Rena Benmayor of Hunter College's Center for Puerto Rican Studies, and Joe Doyle of the NYU Public History Program.

Keynote speaker **Lawrence L. Langer**, professor of English at Simmons College, is the author of the recent book, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory*, which drew much critical acclaim. His study of how survivors remember their traumatic experiences in the Holocaust was based on a selection of the 1400 video interviews with survivors at Yale University's Fortunoff Video Archives.

The meeting concludes with a walking tour of Chinatown, conducted by members of the N.Y. Chinatown History Project, and with a Chinese banquet dinner.

The Kentucky Oral History Commission will be publishing in July *The Guide to Kentucky Oral History Collections*. The guide sells for \$10.

New England Association of Oral History will hold its fall meeting October 26, 1991 at Simmons College in Boston with the theme Technology and Oral History. The morning program will focus on the advantages, disadvantages, costs, and quality of analog and digital tape recording and will also examine microphones. The afternoon session will include a panel of archivists and practitioners discussing computers and oral history archiving, including demonstrations of software. Program organizer is Allen Smith, GSLIS, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02215.

Opportunities

The Institute for Oral History at Baylor University has two temporary staff openings beginning 1 September 1991. Deadline for application is 20 July 1991.

Post-doctoral fellow: Professional staff position involving field research, public programming, and research design. One-year appointment, renewable, Ph.D. required, experience in oral history preferred, \$25-26,400 salary. Send letter of inquiry, academic dossier, and letters of reference to Thomas L. Charlton, Director, Institute for Oral History, Baylor University, P.O. Box 97271, Waco, TX 76798-7271; 817/755-3437.

Oral Historian/Editor: Staff position to assist in research design, field research, and editing of oral memoirs. One-year appointment, renewable, B.A. required, M.A. and experience in oral history preferred, \$22,200 salary. Send letter of inquiry, academic dossier, and letters of reference to Baylor University Personnel Services, P.O. Box 97053, Waco, TX 76798-7053; 815/755-2219.

Newsletter Editor Wanted

The OHA is looking for a new editor for the *Oral History Association Newsletter*. Persons interested in the job of editing the association's quarterly newsletter should contact Eva McMahan, Department of Speech Communication, University of Alabama, Box 870240, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0240; telephone 205/348-5995.



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Address membership, change of address, subscription and delivery inquiries to: Richard Candida Smith, Executive Secretary, Oral History Association, 1093 Broxton Avenue, # 720, Los Angeles, California 90024.

Address editorial matters to: Jaclyn Jeffrey, Editor, Oral History Association Newsletter, BU 7271, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798, or phone (817) 755-3437.

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Oral history figured prominently at the annual meeting of the **Society for History in the Federal Government**, held on 22 April 1991 at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Luncheon speaker, the Honorable Lindy Boggs, recalled her involvement in many historical projects during her tenure at the U.S. House of Representatives. She applauded the establishment of a history office at the Environmental Protection Agency, noting that its many long-time staffers were ideal subjects for oral history. In the afternoon, representatives from the United States Air Force, Army, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Corps, and Navy discussed their recent efforts to document Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, at a session moderated by Benis M. Frank of the Marine Corps Historical Center. Each branch of the service is conducting oral history interviews as part of this documentation efforts.

Principalship, continued from page 1

of use combined with exceptional searching power.

Of even greater import is the fact that this research approach "removes the interpretative veil" all too often interposed by quantitative research techniques between the "seeker after truth" and the reality to which s/he seeks access. This is accomplished by allowing the investigator direct access to the actual words — the raw thoughts — of those whose wisdom is sought, rather than continuing the requirement for dependence on the work of previous researchers whose research designs — and modes of interpretation may or may not be subject to question. In business parlance, the "middle man" is cut out of the research transaction. This exciting series of developments suggests untold research possibilities within the next few years.

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