



# ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume XV, Number 3

Summer 1981

## REAGANOMICS HITS OHA

By Mary Jo Deering

The Colloquium program committee experienced firsthand the impact of the political transition in Washington and the economic consequences of the new austerity program.

Carter-appointed leaders of a certain government agency had O.K.'d a request for funds to bring foreign oral historians to the Burlington Colloquium. Several of the top names in Europe were contacted and plans set in motion for their participation in the program. Then came November 4, followed all too quickly by January 20th, and Reagan's new broom went to work. The high-level official who had personally approved the OHA request disappeared January 21, and as of late spring there was no replacement at either that level or the one immediately beneath it. This created an obvious power vacuum. While nature may well abhor vacuums, politics (or Reagan) can apparently live quite nicely with the situation. Meanwhile, the poor bureaucrat at the operating level, whose office would actually disperse the funds and who was very positive about the grant, was left with no direct budget orders except "prepare to retrench." With great regret and an equal amount of embarrassment, he could only respond to our frequent inquiries with an "I don't know; call back in two weeks." When the budget orders finally came through, all travel funds had been slashed. But with a typical government quirk, there was a bit of money for more esoteric purposes: we could bring someone from Antarctica or Outer Mongolia who specialized in nonliterate societies, for example. Then too, confided the bureaucrat, there was always the end-of-the-fiscal-year slush fund which might open up toward the end of August. We could gamble on getting a bit of that on the sly.

Preferring creative practicality to shady, uncertain politics, your program committee put together a first-rate panel on *International Perspectives of Oral History* by drawing on people who will be in the U.S.

or Canada under other auspices. The high-caliber speakers represent a broad spectrum of work with oral material and their analyses will interest and challenge us all.

Regardless of the long-term prospects for government subsidies, the OHA will continue to monitor the inflow of foreign scholars under diverse programs in order to extend invitations to those working in related areas to join us at future colloquia as participants or observers. Maybe we should thank President Reagan and Mr. [David] Stockman for prompting us toward ever wider professional outreach.

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*Mary Jo Deering (Potomac, Md.) holds the B.A. from Smith College and the M.A. from the Institute of European Studies of the University of Geneva where she is doctoral candidate in contemporary European affairs. A longtime OHA member, she will chair the 1981 OHA Colloquium session on International Views of Oral History Methodology.*

## SwLA PUBLIC PROGRAM- ING COMPLETED

The Southwestern Library Association's model project on oral history in public programming is complete. Thomas J. Friedlund directed the NEH-funded work at sixteen libraries in six states.

The Cochise County Library in Bisbee, Arizona, researched miners of the 1920s. Colleen Crowlie directed a videotape of Bisbee in the twenties which contains interviews, photos, and live scenes, including a panel discussion of three interviewees, a photo exhibit with captions from tapes, and a tour of a miner's home filled with period pieces.

In Arkansas, twenties life in Fayetteville's historical district was the topic of the Ozarks Regional Library. Greg Kaiser plans to publish the oral histories; Carol Wright established a walking tour, augmented by a pamphlet with interview quotes, and a slide-tape show featuring social customs and life styles. The Hot Springs Tri-Lakes Regional Library created a readers theater featuring four actors representing attitudes about the controversial

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## HISTORIOGRAPHY AT MIAMI OF OHIO

For the past year and a half, Jeffrey Kimball, associate professor of history at Miami University of Ohio, has been interviewing eighteen selected historians to augment a study of scholarly, historical literature on the question of why the United States participated in the two world wars, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The historians have discussed their understanding of the concept of causation, their explanations of the causes of twentieth-century American wars, their theories explaining these causes, and the sources of disagreement between them about these explanations.

Oral history is supplementing Kimball's analysis of the writings of those historians making significant contributions to dip-

lomatic, military, and peace history and historiography. Kimball reads each historian's published works and then employs interviews to avoid "mistakes found in that historiography based solely on a reading of the written word." He believes interviews "can contribute to a clarification of statements, ideas, and terms, and an elucidation of the methodological, theoretical, ideological, analytical, and personal foundations of the historical writing." Each interviewee is asked to clarify published statements, whether he/she has since modified his/her views; to react to criticism; and to assess the impact of his/her work.

Kimball plans to publish articles and a book; however, he says that transcripts will not be available "in the raw."



The president's column will reappear in the fall issue.

## ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION ARCHIVES OPEN AT N. TEXAS STATE

Administrative papers reflecting the annual operations of the Oral History Association, beginning with the planning of colloquiums through the publication of *The Oral History Review*, are being preserved at the North Texas State University Archives. Since 1978 the NTSU Archives has served as the repository for Oral History Association records, which currently occupy twenty feet of shelf space.

Types of material contained in the expanding collection include correspondence, printed material (e.g. brochures and programs), financial documents, photographic material, literary productions (e.g. reports and speeches), and audio recordings.

The OHA Collection encompasses planning by association leaders in three major areas of activity. Records of colloquiums and workshops, the *Oral History Association Newsletter*, and *The Oral History Review* are preserved from their inception.

The collection is processed at NTSU in line with the principal organizational approach which consists of the examination and arrangement of materials at the organic collection, series, file unit, and document levels. Acceptance of the original order at the series, file unit, and document levels is applied wherever possible.

Access to the OHA papers is facilitated through guide sheets, collection cards, and a subject-name-place catalog. The contents of early acquisitions to the OHA Collection are included in short summaries in *The American Archivist* (April 1979), *The Journal of American History* (June 1979), and the 1979 *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*. Accession updates are planned for the fall.

Contributors to the OHA Collection during the past three years include Thomas L. Charlton, Enid H. Douglass, Bernard L. Galm, Samuel B. Hand, Alice M. Hoffman, Ronald E. Marcello, James V. Mink, William W. Moss, John A. Neuenschwander, Forrest C. Pogue, Richard Sweterlitsch, John E. Wickman, and O. O. Winther. Other officers and members may contribute their OHA papers to the collection.

The NTSU Archives is located on the fourth floor of the A. M. Willis, Jr., Library on the university campus. The archives is open from 8 to 5, Monday through Friday, to interested researchers. Robert La Forte is university archivist; Richard Himmel, assistant archivist and a professional librarian, supervises the OHA Collection.

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## COLLOQUIUM PROGRAM NOTES

The name of Michael Frisch (Philadelphia Social History Project) was omitted from the preliminary Colloquium program in the spring issue of the *Newsletter*. Frisch will be a panelist on the Sunday morning, September 27, concurrent session, Your Past Will Make you Move: Oral History and Community Action.

Nicoué Gayibor (U. of Benin, Togo) has been added to the panel of the final session of the Colloquium, International Views of Oral History Methodology.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE SUGGESTS 1981-82 OFFICERS

At the Colloquium in Burlington, Vermont, next September, the OHA nominating committee will propose Elizabeth B. Mason (Columbia U.) for 1981-82 vice president/president-elect. Nancy N. Whistler (Denver, Colo.) and Ronald J. Grele (U. of Calif.-L.A.) will be nominees for the three-year Council seat. John J. Fox (Salem State C.) is chairman of this year's nominating committee.

## KENNEDY BOOK AWARDS TO OHA COLLOQUIUM SPEAKERS

First-place winner of the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award for 1981 is William H. Chafe (Duke U.) for his *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro and the Black Struggle for Freedom*. John Langston Gwaltney (Syracuse U.) received honorable mention for his *Drylongso: A Self-Portrait of Black America*. The awards are made possible from the proceeds of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (1979). Both Chafe and Gwaltney will be on the 1981 OHA Colloquium program.

## OHA PROGRAM CALL

Proposals for papers, sessions and participants for the 1982 Colloquium at San Antonio are requested by Program Chairman John J. Fox, 134 Burley St., Danvers, MA 01923. (617) 744-8031. A keynote speaker, two dinner speakers and a speaker for the past presidents' luncheon are needed.

## TEACHERS AND HIGH- SCHOOL STUDENTS SOUGHT TO TEST OH MANUALS

*Union Women Speak: An Oral History Unit for High Schools* is a group of five-week, teacher-student study manuals being prepared by Eve Berton and Debi Duke of the University of Michigan under an NEH Youthgrant. The curriculum seeks to develop innovative, inexpensive ways for high-school students to explore the role of women in the labor movement while also presenting them with oral history techniques for self-discovery. Included is a brief overview of women in labor history; excerpts from interviews which are part of the Twentieth Century Trade Union Woman: Vehicle for Social Change oral history project; suggestions for working outside the schools; and a resource guide, including films, books, and speakers.

The manuals will be ready in September and Berton and Duke are seeking teachers with significant numbers of working-class students to test the material and provide comments and criticism. Write: 108 Museums Annex, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

September		
10-12	<b>Kentucky Oral History Commission</b>	Owensboro, Kentucky
14-17	<b>American Association for State and Local History</b>	Williamsburg, Virginia
24-27	<b>Oral History Association</b>	Burlington, Vermont
October		
12-14	<b>Duquesne University History Forum</b>	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
14-17	<b>Western History Association</b>	San Antonio, Texas
31	<b>Oral History Society Conference on Women's History, City of London Polytechnic</b>	London, England
November		
11-14	<b>Southern Historical Association</b>	Louisville, Kentucky
December		
28-30	<b>American Historical Association</b>	Los Angeles, California
March 1982		
26-28	<b>Oral History Society Annual Conference, Hull University</b>	Hull, England





**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESENTS UNCF WITH PATTERSON MEMOIR**—The first transcript of the memoirs of Frederick D. Patterson, founder of the United Negro College Fund, was presented to UNCF by Columbia University at UNCF headquarters in New York. Martia Graham Goodson (Baruch C.) conducted the interviews for Columbia University's Oral History Research Office (OHRO) and UNCF. Patterson's memoir is the first of a series funded by NEH, documenting the history of UNCF. L-R Gregory Hunter, director, archives/history, UNCF; Elizabeth B. Mason, acting director, OHRO; Patterson; Christopher F. Edley, executive director, UNCF; and Goodson.

## COQUILLE INDIANS PRESERVE TRIBAL TRADITIONS

In 1978, the tribal council of the Coquille Indians in the Coos Bay area of Oregon requested the assistance of Oregon State University anthropologist, Roberta Hall, in recording the oral history of the tribe's elders. Bud Chase, council chairman, and others feared their cultural heritage might be lost forever with the passing of the older generation.

With funding and volunteers from EARTHWATCH, a nonprofit scientific expeditionary group, and the Oregon Arts Council, Hall conducted a series of interviews with elders recounting legends, early life styles, traditions, and family histories. "For many years, people didn't talk about being Indian," says Jerry Running Fox. "Now our older ones are bringing up things they had almost forgotten . . . this project has given us a sense, an awareness, of being a tribe."

The EARTHWATCH team also began an extensive tribal genealogy in 1978, and volunteers continue to update the family tree. In addition, the team studied the ways plants were used for basketry, medicines, and crafts.

## LISTENING TO AMERICA: THE BOOK THAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE

The Center for the Book, a subdivision of the Library of Congress and Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI) are sponsoring a work *Listening to America: The Book That Made the Difference*. Gordon (VPI) and Patricia Sabine interviewed 500 persons for six months, asking what books affected their lives. They traveled 32,000 miles on four, three-week trips into all sections of the U.S.; the center received \$18,000 from private donations for funding.

Interviewees ranged in age from four to 101 years; they included a storyteller, a mountain climber, actors, writers, a ranch wife, storekeepers, cartoonists, a professional football player, a governor, taxi drivers, a survivor of Auschwitz, teachers, a philosopher, a bookmobile driver, farmers, and laborers. No single book dominated the responses. However, the Bible, mentioned most often, accounted for about five percent.

The Sabines plan to publish their findings; a three-part series on National Public Radio has focused on excerpts and Books Make a Difference was the theme of the second American Book Awards.

## ARCHIVISTS CREATE ORAL HISTORY PAG

After two years of being in limbo, oral historians in the Society of American Archivists (SAA) will soon again have a group through which they can discuss their work. The SAA's executive council has approved creation of an Oral History Professional Affinity Group (PAG), to be organized at the fall 1981 meeting at Berkeley, California.

The SAA had an oral history committee from 1970 to the association's reorganization into PAGs in 1979. The committee planned seminars and workshops on oral history. James V. Mink (UCLA), Marjorie A. Fletcher (The American College), and others led the SAA's oral history efforts during the seventies.

In April 1981, over fifty members petitioned the SAA to add a PAG for oral historians. Parallel activities of archives and oral history appropriate for the PAG are provenance, evaluation, acquisitions, arrangement, appraisal, preservation, access, legal agreements, and ethical guidelines as they pertain to interviews as original documents. Fletcher and her copetitioners hope the new PAG will develop a manual for archivists and management forms for office use. Last year, when the SAA met in Cincinnati, an "oral history interest group," discussing such topics as oral history as manuscripts, assisted the movement in the association to reinstitute a subgroup of the SAA for oral-history-minded archivists. In September 1981, the new Oral History PAG will consolidate these gains.

## ORAL HISTORY GROWS IN BAYOU COUNTRY

Oral history activity in Louisiana continues to grow apace, according to Joel Gardner (Louisiana Archives and Records Service).

Several factors seem to point to creation of a statewide association of oral historians. In March, at the Louisiana Historical Association's annual meeting, Gardner was asked to develop a round table or association. An oral history interest group was recently formed by the Louisiana Library Association, with plans also under way for library-oriented workshops. An oral history component is being planned for the Louisiana Division of Folk Life. Workshops in all parts of the state are now scheduled, including a summer event in Houma and September meetings in Ruston and Monroe.

A grant from the Louisiana Committee for the Humanities and support from Secretary of State James H. Brown has made available 2,000 additional copies of *Oral History for Louisiana*. Address: Archive and Records Service, P.O. Box 44125, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.



## URBAN ORAL HISTORIES DRAMATIZED

In Baltimore and St. Paul, groups are using oral memoirs in producing plays about the histories of their areas. *Baltimore Voices* is a Baltimore Theatre Project, Inc., work based on life in six city neighborhoods. The St. Paul History Theatre, with Lance Belville, playwright-in-residence, has produced nine plays since 1978.

*Baltimore Voices* grew out of the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project, organized in 1977 to "explore, promote, and present in popular forms the social history of Baltimore's oldest neighborhoods." Funding came from the NEH and the Maryland Committee for the Humanities. A professional historian, a graduate assistant, and two specially trained community historians interviewed over two hundred persons; the tapes and transcripts were then divided into common topics: family, neighborhoods, ethnicity, religion, work and labor, income, wages and expenditures, education, immigration and migration, race or prejudice, and the Depression. The result was hundreds of one-page stories, broken down by neighborhoods to focus on one or two topics. The stories deal with the unique community heritages: in Hampden, descendants of cotton-mill workers; in South Baltimore, German, Irish, Russian, black, and Jewish factory and shipyard workers; in West Baltimore, blacks in full- and part-time jobs; in Little Italy, immigrants from southern Italy; in Highlandtown, Slovaks, Poles, Greeks, Germans, and Italians; and in Park Heights, Jewish families.

A grant from NEH provides funds for interviews on labor, public education and the inclusion of a seventh neighborhood. *Baltimore Voices* is performed by permanent members of the theater project company; the original cast of twelve dropped to six after cuts in CETA funding. Grants to the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting funded a PBS television version of the program, released to Baltimore stations last May and to be broadcast nationwide in the fall.

The St. Paul History Theatre researched primary and secondary source materials before conducting oral history interviews. Audience discussion following performances is important; after viewing *The Deadly Decades*, a story of Prohibition in the city, a distinguished-looking woman complained of the portrayal of a political boss—her father. *You Can't Get to Heaven Through the U.S.A.*, the tale of Swedish and Italian immigrants, was previewed by descendants of the immigrants to verify its authenticity. Other productions and their subjects include: *We Win or Bust*, the 1922 railroad shopcraft strike begun in St. Paul; *The Man Who Bought Minneapolis*, empire-builder James T. Hill; *Nina! Madam to a Sainly City*, police corruption and the proprietress of a famous bordello; *Four*

*Hearts and the Lords of the North*, interaction between Ojibwa and Dakota Indians, the military, and the fur companies; *Bronko*, Bronko Nagurski, Minnesota's football legend; *A Servant's Christmas*, servant life in a Summit Avenue mansion; and *Children of Tyrone*, the gift of the Guthrie Theatre by Sir Tyrone Guthrie.

The St. Paul Theatre is made up of professional actors; they are touring with *These Folks are Mostly Gone Now*, a series of excerpts from other productions, and they conduct workshops on the research, writing, and production of such plays. As theater critic David Hawley says, history theater is "a bridge between art and our own significant local culture."

## NEW ENGLAND GROUP ELECTS OFFICERS

At its May meeting, the New England Association of Oral History elected Louis Silveri (Assumption C.) president and Bruce Stave (U. of Conn.) vice president/president-elect. They will assume their duties on September 1.

The association's 1981 Harvey A. Kantor Memorial Award for Significant Work in Oral History was awarded, posthumously, to Louis Starr, director of the Columbia University Oral History Research Office from 1956 to 1980. The award will be presented to Mary Belle Starr at OHA's annual meeting in September.

The meeting included a session on black women presented by Ruth Edmonds Hill (Radcliffe C.) and Cindy Cohen (Cambridge, Mass., Arts Council). The session, "Oral History in the Trenches: Interviewing Veterans," featured Benis M. Frank (Marine Corps Hist. and Museum Div.), John Puzzo (U. of Conn.), and R. Wayne Anderson (Northeastern U.).

## LIBRARIAN RECORDS OH OF LONG ISLAND JEWS

"My Father Was a Dreamer: 100 Years of Jewish Small-Town Life" is the culmination of over seventy interviews by Helene Gerard. The study, as yet unpublished, portrays the lives of turn-of-the-century immigrants, or their children, who still live in the rural villages of eastern Long Island. Gerard, a librarian in the Westhampton Beach public schools, began six years ago with a grant from the America the Beautiful Fund and has interviewed in fifteen villages. She has created an exhibit of interviewees' photos, captioned with interview excerpts; initial funding is from local sources, including The Friends for Long Island's Heritage. In April she presented a workshop at the Long Island Archives Conference at the State University of Stony Brook. Address: Basket Neck Lane; Remsenburg, NY 11960.

## BRITAIN STRIKES BA

By Paul Thompson, University of Essex

Until quite recently it was accepted that the name "oral history" was a recent American invention—even if the practice of the art might be traced back into the mists of time. This was what I argued myself in *The Voice of the Past* in 1978. After all, the brochure of the (American) Oral History Association proudly declared that "oral history was established as a modern technique for historical documentation when Columbia University historian Allan Nevins began recording the memoirs of persons significant in American life," and the label was widely thought to be Nevins's too; so much so that from this side of the Atlantic voices could be heard grumbling at this newly coined term as yet another instance of the innuendo-laden infelicities of Americanised English.

It then emerged that the phrase had not been invented by Nevins himself. He had apparently picked it up, maybe indirectly, from a failed author called Joe Gould, alias "Professor Seagull," who haunted the bars and dosshouses of Greenwich Village, New York, between the wars, muttering incoherently about his unfinished masterpiece, an "Oral History of Our Time," which was intended to give voice to the unwritten history of the "shirtsleeved multitude." There is a telling and pathetic portrait of Gould in Joseph Mitchell's *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon*, published in 1938.\*

Now quite suddenly it seems possible that the words "oral history" would have been understood in their modern sense (barring tape recorders) on both sides of the Atlantic 200 years ago, and that it survived unnoticed in America—along with other preindependence forms of English—while disappearing in Britain. Certainly the late 18th century was the period when the modern study of folklore and oral tradition in Europe first developed alongside the parallel beginnings of anthropology and social science. Some of the questions which still concern oral historians today were being discussed among writers of the time. Did they toss the magic phrase "oral history" across the fireside? Two new clues suggest that now and then, and unaware of the significance that later generations might find in their choice of words, they did. A few months ago a leading American oral historian, Charles Morrissey, was working late one night in a little-known subscription library on an obscure volume of local history, the Vermont Historical Society *Proceedings* for 1863-70, and dutifully scanning an unpromising paper by one Winslow Cossoul Watson on the life of a former Vermont politician. Suddenly the comatose Morrissey was jolted awake. For here was Watson first emphasizing the need to gather the early history of the colony while it was



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# BRITAIN STRIKES BACK: TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF "ORAL HISTORY"?

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still possible, and then lamenting, from his own experience—"the ravages made by a single decade, among the *fountains of oral history in a community*" (my italics). Too often, said Watson, he had been greeted in district after district by the response, Had these inquiries been made a few years ago, persons were then living who could have imparted all the information you desire. A stunned Morrissey rubbed his eyes in disbelief. But there it was. And out of his discovery eventually came the delightful article, "Why Call it 'Oral History'?", tracing the American origins of both the practice and the term, which appears in the *Oral History Review* for 1980 (pp. 20-48). Morrissey ends with a resounding challenge to whomever can predate Watson, to receive the first (and only) Winslow C. Watson award for obsolescence—his and mine!

I am glad to say that within months the call had been answered from over here. I was sitting in my own study close to the heart of Britain's oldest recorded town (Colchester), somewhat half-heartedly perusing James Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, 1786, including "his Conversation, Literary Anecdotes, and Opinions of Men and Books" on their memorable joint expedition to the wilds of northern Scotland in 1773. The purpose of their journey was itself interesting, for it was inspired by the hope of gaining some firsthand experience of a more "primitive" society within Britain itself: one might almost say a pioneering case of "literary-anthropological" fieldwork. But unfortunately I was finding Dr. Johnson disappointing, for whenever he visited somewhere where his observations might have helped me, he seemed to have had nothing to say. I had almost closed the book with his return to Edinburgh—only to find his blossom in a completely unexpected way. He commonly ate and talked at length over breakfast. The very last day for which Boswell recorded his conversations on the tour was Thursday, 11th November 1773. Johnson was in an expansive mood, encouraged by the notable company among whom he now found himself at Boswell's own home. The first to join him at the breakfast table—quoting a line from Virgil as his morning greeting—was William Robertson, principal of Edinburgh University, philosopher-historian and leading figure of the Scottish Enlightenment; followed by Lord Elibank the advocate, and Sir William Forbes the banker, both equally well known in their time for their literary distinction.

After some "studied compliments" from each in turn had been wittily rebutted by Johnson, the conversation turned to the last great revolt of the Scottish Highlands against English rule, the 1745 rebellion.

Boswell commented that "it would make a fine piece of history" and Johnson agreed. "Lord Elibank doubted whether any man of this age could give it impartially." Dr. Johnson turned to him—and as I read his words, I wondered whether we would have proposed him as Patron of the Oral History Society—and said (the italics are mine):

A man, by talking with those of different sides, who were actors in it and putting down all that he hears, may in time collect the materials of a good narrative.

*You are to consider, all history was at first oral.* I suppose Voltaire was fifty years in collecting his *Louis XIV*, which he did in the way that I am proposing.

Robertson, who also knew Voltaire, confirmed Johnson's comment:

He did so. He lived much with all the great people who were concerned in that reign, and heard them talk of everything; and then either took Mr. Boswell's way, of writing down what he heard, or, which is as good, preserved it in his memory; for he had a wonderful memory.

At this point Boswell's methodological hackles were sufficiently roused for him to jot down a note of his private dissent with "this elegant historian," for "no men's memory can preserve facts or sayings with such fidelity as may be done by writing them down when they are recent." However, like the good oral historian he was, Boswell suppressed his urge to interrupt, and heard the first great professional historian of Scotland go on to urge the need for an active collecting project on the 1745 uprising:

It was now full time to make such a collection as Dr. Johnson suggested; for many of the people who were then in arms, were dropping off; and both Whigs and Jacobites were now come to talk with moderation.

So they too were concerned about bias? About how time alters the perspective of memory; and the need to represent testimony from differing standpoints? Indeed, they go on to discuss how there was right on both sides in the rebellion, and the conversation ended with a stirring radical comment from Johnson who (with a broad smile) "wondered that the phrase of *unnatural* rebellion should be so much used, for that all rebellion was natural to man." A pity that he wasn't on tour in the American colonies in the next five years: for 1773 was also the year of the Boston "Tea Party." But it is Robertson's first two lines, following Johnson's earlier declaration, which must linger longest in the mind of the oral historian. Was this the earliest of those subsequently innumerable unan-

swered calls to record the experience of a generation who "were dropping off"? Or shall we find others?

\*See also Joseph Mitchell, *Joe Gould's Secret*, New York 1965. Gould (who was an ex-Harvard man) did succeed in publishing two articles in journals (in 1929 and 1931) which use the word "oral history" in the title, and he was given some publicity from time to time in the *New York Herald Tribune* (1934) and *New Yorker* (1942).



Paul Thompson

Paul Thompson is a social historian and chairman of the sociology department at the University of Essex, Colchester, England. A member of OHA, he is founder-editor of *Oral History*, journal of the Oral History Society, and is the author of *The Edwardians* (1975), *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (1978), and other works concerning his pioneering work in social history within sociology. Thompson holds the M.A. and D.Phil. from Oxford U. He is known for his study of 500 life-story interviews on family life, work and the community in pre-1918 Britain. He has also studied middle- and upper-class families in the early twentieth century and the family and community lives of fishermen. Thompson is at work on the subject of car workers and on women and social mobility. Address: Department of Sociology, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, U.K. CO4 3SQ.



# BACK: TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF "ORAL HISTORY"?

still possible, and then lamenting, from his own experience—"the ravages made by a single decade, *among the fountains of oral history in a community*" (my italics). Too often, said Watson, he had been greeted in district after district by the response, Had these inquiries been made a few years ago, persons were then living who could have imparted all the information you desire. A stunned Morrissey rubbed his eyes in disbelief. But there it was. And out of his discovery eventually came the delightful article, "Why Call it 'Oral History'?", tracing the American origins of both the practice and the term, which appears in the *Oral History Review* for 1980 (pp. 20-48). Morrissey ends with a resounding challenge to whomever can predate Watson, to receive the first (and only) Winslow C. Watson award for obsolescence—his and mine!

I am glad to say that within months the call had been answered from over here. I was sitting in my own study close to the heart of Britain's oldest recorded town (Colchester), somewhat half-heartedly perusing James Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, 1786, including "his Conversation, Literary Anecdotes, and Opinions of Men and Books" on their memorable joint expedition to the wilds of northern Scotland in 1773. The purpose of their journey was itself interesting, for it was inspired by the hope of gaining some firsthand experience of a more "primitive" society within Britain itself: one might almost say a pioneering case of "literary-anthropological" fieldwork. But unfortunately I was finding Dr. Johnson disappointing, for whenever he visited somewhere where his observations might have helped me, he seemed to have had nothing to say. I had almost closed the book with his return to Edinburgh—only to find his blossom in a completely unexpected way. He commonly ate and talked at length over breakfast. The very last day for which Boswell recorded his conversations on the tour was Thursday, 11th November 1773. Johnson was in an expansive mood, encouraged by the notable company among whom he now found himself at Boswell's own home. The first to join him at the breakfast table—quoting a line from Virgil as his morning greeting—was William Robertson, principal of Edinburgh University, philosopher-historian and leading figure of the Scottish Enlightenment; followed by Lord Elibank the advocate, and Sir William Forbes the banker, both equally well known in their time for their literary distinction.

After some "studied compliments" from each in turn had been wittily rebutted by Johnson, the conversation turned to the last great revolt of the Scottish Highlands against English rule, the 1745 rebellion.

Boswell commented that "it would make a fine piece of history" and Johnson agreed. "Lord Elibank doubted whether any man of this age could give it impartially." Dr. Johnson turned to him—and as I read his words, I wondered whether we would have proposed him as Patron of the Oral History Society—and said (the italics are mine):

A man, by talking with those of different sides, who were actors in it and putting down all that he hears, may in time collect the materials of a good narrative.

*You are to consider, all history was at first oral.* I suppose Voltaire was fifty years in collecting his *Louis XIV*, which he did in the way that I am proposing.

Robertson, who also knew Voltaire, confirmed Johnson's comment:

He did so. He lived much with all the great people who were concerned in that reign, and heard them talk of everything; and then either took Mr. Boswell's way, of writing down what he heard, or, which is as good, preserved it in his memory; for he had a wonderful memory.

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L-R Burt Tietje interviews Mrs. Ward A. Davis, for the Jefferson Davis Parish: An Oral and Visual History project funded by the Fred B. and Ruth B. Zigler Foundation and the Louisiana Committee for the Humanities. The interviews will be used in a traveling museum exhibit to open at the Zigler Museum, Jennings, Louisiana, in October. Tietje and Stan Dark codirect the project.

## BAPTIST CONSORTIUM BEGINS NEW PROJECTS

The Texas Baptist Oral History Consortium, begun in 1975 and expanded in 1978 to include the centennial Mexican Baptist Oral History Project, has initiated several projects since that time. The first of these studies emeritus missionaries from the Southern Baptist Convention home and foreign mission boards. The Brazil Baptist Mission and the Interior China Mission are receiving special attention. A second emphasis involves the 1920s fundamentalist era among Baptists in Texas; excerpts of various memoirs concerning J. Frank Norris, a powerful and controversial pastor-evangelist, were featured in a convention-wide exhibit and in the new *Journal of Texas Baptist History*.

Research design and interviewing are in process for the National Baptist Project which will reconstruct the past of this historically black denomination. The inquiry will examine the National Baptist Convention's interaction with the traditionally white Southern Baptist Convention.

Other recent projects include a study of women deacons and ministers in Baptist churches, and the development of church music among Baptists. TBOHC is also working in cooperation with the Baylor University Program for Oral History on documentation of the 1940s Baylor student-led revival movement. Information: L. Katherine Cook, editor TBOHC, Box 228, Baylor University, Waco, Tx. 76798.

## GREENWICH FRIENDS VIEW TOD'S POINT

The Friends of the Greenwich Library (Connecticut) have completed an oral history study of an area known at various times as Monakewaygo (c. 1000), Elizabeth's Neck (1640), Tod's Point (1889), and Greenwich Point (1945-present). Approximately 125 persons worked in gathering or processing information that led to publication of a recent book by the library.

*Tod's Point: An Oral History* is an edited version of the oral memoirs related to the Greenwich project. Rather than presenting intact portions or all of the transcribed recollections of local inhabitants, the book is arranged topically and chronologically, with excerpts of interviewees' statements which relate to subjects and times such as the "era of the Tods," a reference to the period (1889-1939) when the family of industrialist-railroader J. Kennedy Tod developed the area of 147 acres and built a mansion, a golf course, and a bird sanctuary. Subsequently the land belonged to a Presbyterian hospital and the town of Greenwich. From 1946 to 1961, World War II veterans resided in the mansion prior to its destruction. Park development and soaring real estate values have characterized Tod's Point's recent history.

The Greenwich Library houses the project's collection of tapes and transcripts which are open to researchers.

SwLA continued from page 1

former mayor, Leo P. McLaughlin. Jean Ledwidge, Felicia Denny, and Dorothy Wise were in charge.

In Louisiana, domestic, cultural, and industrial use of the Mississippi River was the focus of St. Charles Parish Library of Luling. Director Garland Strother presented a slide-tape show. A flood of the river in 1927 was under research by the Richland Parish Library in Rayville, Louisiana. Charles Branton and Evelyn Cochran recreated a large-scale refugee camp, including photos, interviews, books, maps, artifacts, and newspapers. As a reenactment of a portion of the event, the National Guard served red beans and rice to 850 people.

In New Mexico, the Farmington Public Library studied area energy development for the period 1945-55. Diana Hansen invited several guest speakers on local and oral history; edited cassettes accompanying photos; and directed car-pool tours to historic sites. Bessie Begay led Ramah's documentation of Navajo education in the town and produced a radio script in both Navajo and English. A special edition of *Tsa' Aszi'* magazine contained a project summary and several transcripts. The Arthur Johnson Memorial Library studied the effect of the closing of Raton's mines. Richard Azar, Lynette Hunnicutt and Honey Nieman conducted the project. Richard Melzer lectured for the project. They created a brochure, a captioned photo display, a radio presentation with interviewees, and a topical newspaper series. They will write a book for the University of New Mexico Press. In Taos, the Harwood Foundation focused on the electrification of the area. Jim Levy and Juanita Jaramillo-Lavadie documented changes through a slide-tape show followed by public discussion and radio programs in English and Spanish.

In Oklahoma, economic and personal adaptation to the Great Depression in Southwest Oklahoma was the Altus Southern Prairie Library System's project. Kathy Hale, Loweta Chesser, and Alvin Turner developed a slide-tape show and photo-artifact exhibit, captioned with quotes; a lecture with tape excerpts and analysis, and a display.

In Texas, the Castroville Public Library traced Alsatian customs and traditions. There, Sandra Schott and Connie Rihn produced a program combining narration, scripted oral history dialogue, music and dance. A case study of a farming community turned suburb was the work of the Cedar Hill Public Library. Pat Bonds initiated a panel discussion of interviewees and a photo display with quotes. In Denton, the Emily Fowler Public Library gave a USO-style dance to illustrate the impact of World War II on the area. Debra Beil coordinated a display of wartime memorabilia. A slide-tape show and a pamphlet

Continued on page 7



## OHA PUBLICATIONS

(prepayment required)

5th & 6th Colloq. <i>Proceedings</i>	\$1.00
<i>Review</i> (except 1976 & 1980)	\$1.00
<i>Evaluation Guidelines</i>	\$2.00
10 or more, each	\$1.50

SwLA continued from page 6

were the goals of the Public Library of Sherman. Directed by Theresa Seale, the project centered on the Woodlake Resort Area. The impact of three industries on Texas City between the world wars was the subject of the Moore Memorial Library. Project Director Susie Moncla, Laurie Miller Stevens, Jerry Anderson, and Meriworth Mabry produced a slide-tape program which was followed by public discussion. Wacoans recalled the 1953 tornado in a slide-tape show and display at the Waco-McLennan County Library. Jaclyn Jeffrey and Sue Kethley directed the research.

## BILLY GRAHAM CENTER EMPLOYS ORAL HISTORY

The Billy Graham Center of Wheaton College, Illinois, is using oral history to preserve accounts of North American missionaries. The project, called the Missionary Sources Collection, collects personal papers and conducts oral history interviews with each missionary. Full-time staff members include Director Robert Shuster and Associate Archivist Galen Wilson. Begun in 1978, the project employs Wheaton College students as part-time interviewers.

The Billy Graham Center houses other sources for evangelical history, including microfilm reproductions of the papers of Billy Sunday and Kenneth Scott Latourette. The center is also the depository for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Oral History Program, begun approximately ten years ago and directed by Lois Ferm, who serves as a liaison between the two centers. Address: C.P.O. Box 607, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Archon Books invites oral historians to submit book-length manuscripts. Address: Hila Yanai, associate editor, P. O. Box 4327, Hamden, CT 06514.

## POSITIONS

**DIRECTOR.** Columbia University Oral History Research Office. Responsibilities entail supervising two full-time and a pool of part-time personnel and 50-100 outside contract interviewers; fund raising; and teaching in the School of Library Services and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Requirements include administrative experience; writing, editing, speaking, and interviewing skills; and strength in teaching. Preference will be given to candidates holding graduate or professional degrees in a relevant field. Salary is negotiable. Send application and recommendations by Nov. 13, 1981, to: Oral History Research Office Director Search Committee; Box 35, Butler Library; Columbia University; 535 W. 114th St.; New York, NY 10027. EO/AEE.

## GRANTS

**NEH:** University of Washington Libraries, \$36,953 for two-year collection development of the Seattle Jewish Archives.

**KY. OH COMMISSION:** William Berge, \$1,400 to complete Coal Company Towns oral history.  
Charles Reedy, \$1,200 for oral history, Kentucky's Prison System: The View of the Keepers.

**SKAGGS FOUNDATION:** Pacific Lutheran University, \$11,067 for New Land-New Lives: Scandinavian Experiences in the Northwest.

**OTHER:** Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson, CSJ, \$5,000 from the Grotto Foundation of St. Paul to record contributions of the Sisters of St. Joseph to the state of Minnesota.

## BOOK NOTICES

Karady, Veronika Gorog. *La littérature orale africaine—bibliographie analytique*. 15, rue Victor-Cousin, 75005 Paris, France: Editions G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, October 1981. 400 pp. 88F.

Key, Betty McKeever, comp.; and Sullivan, Larry E., ed. *Oral History in Maryland: A Directory*. 201 West Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201: Museum and Library of Maryland History, 1981. 44 pp. Index.

Montell, W. Lynwood, and Allen, Barbara. *From Memory to History: Using Oral Sources in Local Historical Research*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1981. 176 pp. Index. \$12.50.

Baker, Mark. *Nam: The Vietnam War in the Words of the Men and Women Who Fought There*. West Caldwell, N.J.: Wm. Morrow, 1981. 315 pp. \$12.95.

Beck, Jane. *The General Store in Vermont: An Oral History*. Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1980. 44 pp. Bibliog. Notes. Photos. \$4.50.

Folklife by Vermont's state folklorist.  
Bethel, Elizabeth Rauh. *Promised Land: A Century of Life in a Negro Community*. Philadelphia: Temple U. Pr., 1981. 347 pp. Index. \$16.95.

Eisenberg, Azriel. *Witness to the Holocaust*. New York: Pilgrim Pr., 1981. 650 pp. \$17.95.

Flammer, Philip M. *The Vivid Air: The Lafayette Escadrille*. Athens: U. of Georgia Pr., 1981. Illus. \$17.50.

Fontenay, Charles L. *Estes Kefauver*. Knoxville: U. of Tennessee Pr., 1980. 410 pp. \$18.50.

Interviews with Kefauver, his family, and friends within a biography.  
Fry, Garry L., and Ethell, Jeffrey L. *Escort to Berlin: The Fourth Fighter Group in World War II*. New York: Arco Pub., 1981. Appendixes. \$16.95.

Glass, Mary Ellen. *Nevada's Turbulent '50s: Decade of Political and Economic Change*. Reno: U. of Nevada Pr., 1981. 137 pp. Index. Bibliog. Notes. Illus. Photos. \$5.75.

Politics, gambling, education, labor, and mining.  
Grainger, Jane Atkins, ed. and comp. *El Centenario de la Palabra: El Rito Presbyteriano Church, 1879-1979*. Albuquerque: Menaul Historical Library of the Southwest, 1980. 140 pp. Photos. Illus. Notes. Appendixes. Poetry. \$11.

Harper, Francis, and Presley, Delma E. *Okefinokee Album*. Athens: U. of Georgia Pr., 1981. 194 pp. Photos. Bibliog. \$14.95.

Irwin, Paul. *Liptako Speaks: History from Oral Tradition in Africa*. Princeton: Princeton U. Pr., 1981. 250 pp. Maps. Bibliog. Index. \$16.

Johnson, David. *The London Blitz: The City Ablaze, December 29, 1940*. New York: Stein & Day, 1981. Illus. \$13.95.

Kahn, Kenneth. *Joe Rapoport: The Life of a Jewish Radical*. Philadelphia: Temple U. Pr., 1981. Photos. Illus. Index. Notes. 297 pp. \$17.50.

Mayfield, Chris, ed. *Growing Up Southern: Southern Exposure Looks at Childhood, Then and Now*. New York: Pantheon, 1981. \$17.95, \$7.95.

Miller, Michael B. *The Bon Marche: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store, 1869-1920*. Princeton: Princeton U. Pr., 1981. 285 pp. Illus. Bibliog. Index. \$13.50.

North Slope Borough Commission on History and Culture. *Qin-iquagagrat Utuqqaana Inuiniagninisiqu: The Traditional Land Use Inventory for the Mid-Beaufort Sea*. Vol. 1. Barrow, Alaska: North Slope Bor. Com. on His. & Culture, 1980. Bibliog. Illus. 209 pp.

Thirty-two Eskimos' experiences, 1908-1979.  
Ornstein, Barbara, ed. *Tod's Point: An Oral History*. Greenwich, Conn.: Greenwich Library, 1981. 100 pp. Index. Appendixes. \$6.50.

Philipson, Lorin, and Llerena, Rafael. *Freedom Flights: Cuban Refugees Talk about Life under Castro and How They Flew His Regime*. New York: Random House, 1981. 201 pp. \$12.95.

Rothchild, Sylvia, ed. *Voices from the Holocaust*. Foreword by Elie Weisel. New York: New American Library, 1981. 456 pp. \$14.95.

Rust, Claude. *The Burning of the General Slocum*. New York: Elsevier-Nelson, 1981. \$11.

1904 tragedy and scandal in New York.  
Santoli, Al. *Everything We Had: An Oral History of the Vietnam War As Told by 33 American Soldiers Who Fought It*. New York: Random House, 1981. \$12.95.

Torbado, Jesus, and Leguineche, Manuel. *The Forgotten Men: An Account of Courage and Tenacity during the Franco Years*. Translated by Nancy Festinger. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1981. Photos. \$14.95.

Trunk, Isaiah. *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*. Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.: Scarborough-Stein & Day, 1981. Illus. \$9.95.

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Baum, Willa K. "Therapeutic Value of Oral History." *International Journal on Aging and Human Development* 12 (1980-1981):

Issue contains other o.h. material.

Hoopes, Roy. "Tape." *Washington Journalism Review* 2 (March 1980): 48-51.

Hubner, Mary. "Drama Based on Oral Tradition." *History News* 36 (June 1981): 12-16.

Morrissey, Charles T. "Evoking the Vermont Experience: Oral History and the Forms of Remembrance." *Vermont History* 49 (Spring 1981): 85-91.

Sternberg, Mary Ann. "Oral History: Voices of the Past." *Baton Rouge Sunday Advocate*, 5 April 1981, *Sunday Magazine*, pp. 3-5.

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Estelle and T. Harry Williams.  
Winkler, Karen J. "Historians Begin an Oral History of Their Own Discipline." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 4, 1981, p. 6.

Blatz, Perry K. "The All-too-youthful Proletarians." *Pennsylvania Heritage* 7 (Winter 1981): 13-17.

Breaker Boys of the Anthracite Coal Region, early 1900s.

"Blending Facts, Figures, and People to Understand Our Yesterdays." *American Inquiry*, September 1980, pp. 25-27.

Cybriski, Roman A. and Hardy, Charles, III. "The Stetson Company and Benevolent Feudalism." *Pennsylvania Heritage* 7 (Spring 1981): 14-19.

Evans, Derro. "Lillian Hellman's Truth." *Vision*, April 1981, pp. 18-19.

Sandmel, Frances Fox. "The Sayings of the Sibyl." *Vision*, April 1981, pp. 14-16.

Shaw, Daniel G. "Archives Is Workin' on the Railroad (History)." Potential, 18 December 1980, pp. 68-84.

Louisville & Nashville Railroad project by U. of Louisville-Belknap.

Wigginton, Eliot. "Introduction." In *Foxfire 6*, pp. 7-24. Edited by Eliot Wigginton. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor, 1980.

Five ideas for improving public schools through experiential learning. *Foxfire 6* includes cumulative index for volumes 4, 5, and 6.

*Drexel Library Quarterly* 15 (October 1979): entire issue, "Managing Oral History Collections in the Library."

*HANDS ON: Newsletter for Cultural Journalism* 4 (Winter 1981): 1-32. Quarterly. \$4/yr. Write: Foxfire Fund, Inc., Rabun Gap, GA 30568.

Jawodimbari, Arthur. "Culture in a Changing Society." *Culture* 3 (December 1980): 3-4. Write: Dr. J. Kolia, Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, P.O. Box 1432, Boroko, P.N.G.

*Kiabara*. Semiannual mag. Write: School of Humanities, U. of Port Harcourt, P.M.B. 5223, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. \$4.50 in Nigeria. \$3.40, \$6.75 elsewhere.

Folklore, literature, criticism.  
*Short-Timer's Journal* 1, 1 (Sept.-Oct. 1980): 1-112.

Entire issue comprised of Steve Hassana's Vietnam oral memoirs, combat infantryman's point of view. Write: Winter Soldier Archive, 2000 Center St., P.O. Box 1251, Berkeley, CA 94706. Bimonthly, \$25/\$15, individuals; \$5, veterans.



#### **OHA OFFICIAL BUSINESS:**

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## **DALLAS PBS STATION FOCUS ON HELLMAN**

"Lillian Hellman: A Profile," a five-part, thirty-minute miniseries produced by KERA-TV, Dallas, premiered April 5 on PBS. Journalist Marilyn Berger conducted nine hours of interviews with the elderly American writer and playwright. Though most of the interviews took place in Dallas, tapings also occurred at Hellman's homes on Park Avenue and at Martha's Vineyard.

"The value of this series is to offer television audiences a living, oral history told by one of the great figures of this century," commented Director David Dowe. Renate Cole was project director for KERA.

## **NEWS**

The Oral History Society (Gr. Britain) Conference on Women's History, October 31 at City of London Polytechnic, Moorgate, will include sessions on Women's Work in London between the Wars, Women at Birth and Death, Women in the Silk Industry, Women's History and Community History, and Work in Progress. Contributors will include Sally Alexander, Mary Chamberlain, Jill Norris, and Ruth Richardson. Contact: Eve Hostettler, 91 Alderney Street, London SW1.

Interviewing for purposes of archival recording was the topic of a session conducted by Stephen Peet at the University of Sheffield, England, in April. The meeting was a part of "The Living Past: Audio-Visual Archives in Education," the British Universities Film Council Annual Conference.

Former Congressman William Robert Poage (11th Congressional District of Texas, 1937-1979) is the subject of an extensive oral history project at Baylor University to augment his papers. Thomas

L. Charlton and Phillip A. Thompson are conducting the interviews. Poage was chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee from 1967 to 1975.

Neumann College in Aston, Pennsylvania, presented a March workshop entitled "Oral History: The Art of Asking Questions." The event was sponsored by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, organized by Sr. Jeanette Clare McDonald, O.S.F., and chaired by Sr. Adele Francis Gorman, O.S.F. The group, principally nuns, included archivists, historians, teachers, and interested persons from the Philadelphia-Wilmington area. Charles T. Morrissey conducted the workshop.

Sr. M. Georgiana Rockwell, S.B.S., is employing oral history to document the story of the congregation's missions for Indians and blacks. The interviews will be part of a series of documented monographs.

Students in Salem State College's Oral History Institute employed newfound methodology in a group project to document the history of the college. John J. Fox coordinated the course entitled "Window to the Past."

The National Park Service, through the American Museum of Immigration, has processed 130 interviews for the Immigrants on Tape project. Copies of tapes and transcripts, to be preserved in the museum's archive, are for sale. Contact: Harvey Dixon, Librarian, American Museum of Immigration, Liberty Island, New York, NY 10004.

The Long, Long, Ago Oral History Project at Suva Intermediate School, Los Angeles, won the 1981 California Conference of Historical Societies Scholastic Award in a statewide competition. Michael A. Brooks is project adviser.

The University of Connecticut has changed the name of its Oral History Project to the Center for Oral History to reflect

its broadened activities. Bruce M. Stave is director.

David B. Stricklin, former associate and contributing editor for the *OHA Newsletter*, is combining his interests in oral history and church history with studies in the School of Theology at Duke University. Stricklin was formerly the editor of the Texas Baptist Oral History Consortium and oral historian for the Dallas Public Library.

The Idaho Conference on Oral History met on June 12-13 in Boise. Primary speakers were Leonard Arrington (Brigham Young U.), Willa K. Baum (Univ. of Calif.-Berkeley), Carl Oblinger (Pa. Hist. and Museum Comm.), and Nancy Whistler (Denver, Colo.). Topics emphasized were women's history, family history, Mexican-American history, labor history, and practical information in a workshop setting.

The Indiana Oral History Roundtable and the Indiana State Library sponsored their second annual workshop in May. Charles T. Morrissey, independent consultant, and Cullom Davis (Sangamon State U.) were the main faculty. Participants viewed a performance of *Sitdown '36*, a play based on oral history interviews from the Michigan Labor Oral History Project in South Bend.

In the June meeting of the Kentucky Oral History Commission (KOHCC), John Ed Pearce was elected to succeed Robert Martin as chairman. Kim Lady reported on the KOHCC Level I program, and the commission decided to produce a filmstrip illustrating recent work.

The commission took favorable action on small grants to study coal-mining towns and the state prison system.

The Fresno County (Calif.) Free Library, under the direction of local history librarian Sam A. Suhler, has completed 204 interviews. The project emphasizes ethnic heritage; 120 of the memoirs are with Japanese Americans.

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**Oral History Association Newsletter**  
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