



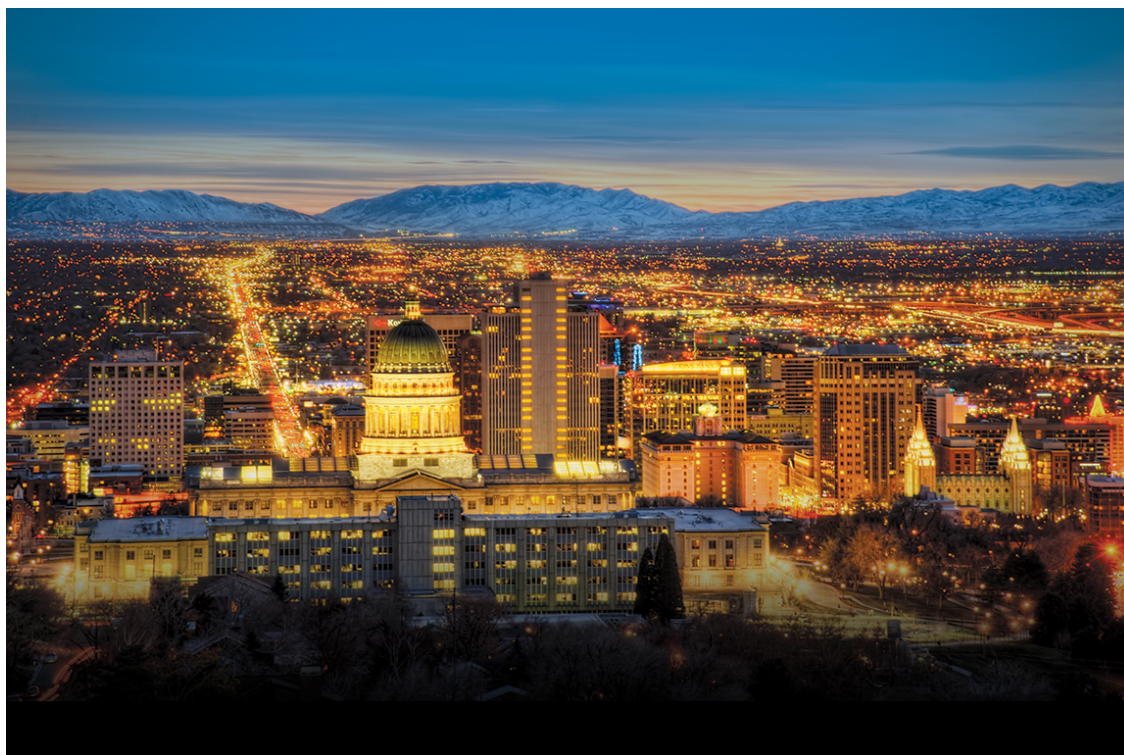
**ORAL HISTORY
ASSOCIATION**

NEWSLETTER

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Salt Lake City conference details

If you haven't had a chance to troll through the OHA website for conference details, you can see the highlights here. This edition of the **OHA Newsletter** offers an overview of the city, a guide to workshops, a program roundup and an outline of featured speakers, plenary sessions and receptions you'll enjoy. You'll also find registration and reservation links for your convenience. So read on....



Local guide to Salt Lake City

By Farina King and Jedediah Rogers

Local Arrangements Co-Chairs and Committee

On behalf of the 2019 Local Arrangements Committee, it is our pleasure to welcome you to Salt Lake City this October for the Oral History Association's 2019 Annual Meeting. We acknowledge that this meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the *Newe* and *Noochee* (the word for "the people" in Shoshone and Ute respectively) and Indigenous peoples who have stewarded this land throughout generations.

Utah is home to eight tribal nations, and the Salt Lake Valley is the ancestral homeland of several diverse peoples, including but not limited to the Ute, the Shoshone, the Paiute and the Goshute people. We seek to pay respect to their elders and ancestors.

From 1846 to 1868 Brigham Young led Mormon pioneers from Nauvoo, Illinois, the Eastern United States and Northern Europe to what became the state of Utah. They were the primary non-Indigenous settlers of the region. Utah bears many sites of historical and cultural significance, and it is our wish that this community of oral historians grows by connecting with the Salt Lake area.

Salt Lake City offers a rich array of events and activities. It is home to the Utah Jazz and Real Salt Lake, and in 2002 it hosted the Winter

Olympics. Utah showcases the “Greatest Snow on Earth,” with access to world class ski resorts within 30 minutes of Salt Lake City. The Olympic Park near Park City is open year-round; so too are ski lifts at Snowbird and Alta, offering a spectacular view of the mountain landscape. Salt Lake City’s cultural offerings include the Utah Symphony and Utah Arts Alliance.

Salt Lake City is the capital of Utah, and the Capitol building offers free tours to those who want to learn more of the political history. In downtown is Temple Square, owned and operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The visitor centers, as well as free tours by missionaries, offer background information about the church and related religious beliefs and practices. Temple Square is the most visited site in the state. Adjacent to Temple Square is the LDS Family History Library, the world’s largest genealogical research center, which is free and open to the public. Visitors can also tour the Beehive House, LDS church headquarters and the primary residence of Brigham Young and some of his large family from 1855 to 1877.

In 2012 Salt Lake City residents welcomed the City Creek Center, which is an upscale open-air shopping center south of Temple Square, designed to revitalize the downtown central business district. It is home to some of the finest shopping and restaurants in Salt Lake City.

The Gateway, an open-air retail complex, was built to facilitate tourists for the 2002 Olympics. It is an entertainment center with shopping that welcomes fine dining and nightlife. It is located north of the Rio Grande Depot, which houses the Utah State Historical Society.

The city is home to a diverse array of cultural, ethnic and religious communities. The Sheraton Hotel stands in the traditional Old Greek Town where migrants immigrated in the early 20th century. Tongans, Samoans, Maoris, Tahitians and Hawaiians also settled in Salt Lake City due to Mormon missionary efforts in the Pacific during the late 19th century. Particularly in recent decades, the city has welcomed and resettled thousands of refugees and immigrants from more than 15 nations, including Myanmar, Iraq, Bhutan, Somalia and Eritria. Salt Lake City is also home to one of the largest LGBT communities that host an annual Pride Parade in June.

The Local Arrangements Committee has organized four tours for the conference. You can get more details about all of them here:

<https://www.oralhistory.org/annual-meeting-tours-and-events/#tours>

To honor the 150th anniversary of women in Utah legally casting the first votes since the suffrage movement, Better Days 2020 will host a two-hour tour of women’s suffrage sites in Salt Lake City.

The LDS Church History Library and Archives will host a guided tour

that will offer some behind-the-scenes views of the library, showcasing some of its major oral history projects. With the Topaz Museum, conference attendees can tour Topaz, Utah, the site of a Japanese American internment camp during World War II. This full-day tour includes transportation to the historic site, located 16 miles northwest of Delta in central Utah.

The Inland Sea tour will take visitors to Antelope Island, the largest island on the Great Salt Lake. This tour will showcase the island's archeology, history and views of the dramatic landscape, including wild bison.

We hope that you all explore and appreciate the diverse beauties and lived experiences of Salt Lake City and Utah as we gather on "pathways in the field" of oral history.

Hózhóó naasháa doo. Walk in Beauty.



President's Column



Co-Executive Directors' Report

Nearly 100 paper, panel, roundtable sessions offer something for everyone

Hawaiian outrigger canoe racing. Southern food, like oysters and sorghum. The ethics of oral history and fundraising. What happens if you're wearing political blinders and collecting oral histories. What does it mean to *really* listen to an oral history?

Anything strike your interest yet? If not, there's plenty more to choose from among the nearly 100 paper, panel and roundtable sessions on the oral history conference agenda between Oct. 16 and 20 at the Sheraton

Salt Lake City Hotel.

Conference planners have assembled program options that feature at least a half-dozen sessions focusing specifically on Indigenous people, about 10 that deal with teaching oral history, more than a half-dozen that deal with community engagement in various forms and multiple sessions on medicine and health, civil rights activism, arts and culture and Muslim American oral histories.

This year's OHA conference is a concurrent meeting with the Southwest Oral History Association, and SOHA-branded panels will also feature work being done by SOHA members in the Southwest region.

Panels and individual presenters will focus on a variety of ethical issues, such as informed consent, fundraising and subtitling and captioning video oral histories. Others will address oral history outside academia, including in museums, the military, religion and other institutions.

One session will focus on oral history in the Harry S. Truman and Lyndon B. Johnson presidential libraries, and several sessions will focus on the challenges facing independent or freelance oral historians and their work.

Conference attendees also will be able to dive into sessions that deal with refugees, trauma and crisis, and Japanese American internment survivor stories.

Several sessions will deal with pre-interview planning and post-interview responsibilities. Transcription, technology and archive issues also are on the agenda.

And these are just the highlights. Check out the preliminary conference program here: <http://www.oralhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Updated-Preliminary-Version.pdf>

Your biggest problem? Figuring out how to be two—or three—places at once.

Keynote speaker and two plenary sessions offer challenges, inspiration for OHA conference

To understand the Great Migration, in which some six million black Americans from the South trekked north and west in search of better lives, consider the stories of individuals. That's what award-winning journalist and historian Isabel Wilkerson did in her widely acclaimed masterpiece, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

Wilkerson is the OHA conference keynote speaker at the Friday, Oct. 18 luncheon. The acclaimed author—winner of the Pulitzer Prize and National

Humanities Medal, among many other accolades—spent 15 years working on her best-seller *The Warmth of other Suns*. First and foremost a journalist, she interviewed 1,200 people to distill what she has called one of the major unreported stories of the 20th century.

In addition to immersing themselves in Wilkerson’s keynote address, OHA conference attendees will have the opportunity to attend two plenary sessions.

The first, set for Thursday morning, Oct. 17, will explore “Potholes in the Path: Navigating the Mishaps in Oral History.” Oral historians from various backgrounds will address their experiences in the sometimes boneheaded and sometimes unavoidable mishaps they’ve encountered in conducting and curating oral history interviews. Moreover, they will reflect on what they learned—or lost—when encountering those potholes.

The second plenary, set for Saturday afternoon, Oct. 18, will focus on “Hearing Indigenous Voices: The Challenges and Rewards of Cultivating Relationships with Utah’s Native American Communities.” A panel of scholars with wide-ranging experience in Indian and First Nations oral history will share insights from their many-layered work in communities that are not necessarily their own, a fitting focus for the Utah-based conference.

Whether novice or expert, oral historians can learn something new at workshops

Oral historians eager to hone their skills can choose from six pre-conference workshops set for Oct. 16.

If you’re new to oral history or just need a basic refresher, plan to attend the **Introduction to Oral History** workshop. Taught by Jeff Corrigan, an academic librarian at California State University Monterey Bay, the workshop offers an overview of how an oral history idea becomes a finished product. Corrigan, who previously was the oral historian for the Missouri State Historical Society, will outline the pre-interview, interview and post-interview steps of creating oral histories.

If you want to learn how to use oral history interviews to tell audio stories, sign up for **Radio Storytelling: Scripting and Editing and Telling Stories in Sound**. Award-winning radio documentarian Molly Graham will cover the basics of equipment, professional sound recording techniques, scripting a podcast, voicing a narration and editing. Turning oral history interviews into audio stories is one way to reach broader audiences than you otherwise might reach.

If you're intrigued with the prospects of video recording oral history interviews, this workshop is for you: **Video for Oral History: A Crash Course in Filming and Archiving Video Interviews**. Workshop leader Christa P. Whitney directs a born-digital-video oral history project at the Yiddish Book Center and knows what it takes—equipment to choose, rules for getting good video footage, managing enormous video files and more. This workshop will help you navigate the fine line between avoiding video because you're intimidated and getting in over

If you're trying to make a go of freelancing as an oral historian—or thinking of doing so—it will be worth your time to sign up for **Protect the Value of your Labor: Survival Skills for Freelancing in Oral History**. Workshop leader Liz Strong has been recording life stories as a freelancer since 2010 and has planned a workshop that will cover labor rights, structuring work agreements and figuring out how much to charge, among other topics. Experienced freelancers as well as novices are encouraged to participate in the workshop as a way to share experiences, troubleshoot challenges they face and swap ideas about self-employment.

If family history is your passion, you'll have two workshop opportunities: **"Tell Me About the Old Days, Grandma!" New Technologies and Enduring Best Practices for Capturing your Family's Oral Histories** and **Oral History and Genealogy: Partners in Storytelling**. The first workshop will focus on applying best practices in oral history to family history interviewing, with information about how best to capture, preserve and publicly share family memories. Roger Bell of Family Search, Daniel Horowitz Garcia of StoryCorps and Sue VerHoef of the Atlanta History Center are the workshop presenters.

The second genealogy-related workshop is sponsored by AncestryProGenealogists and will explore how oral historians can use genealogy and genealogists can use oral history to piece together family history. Workshop leaders Dawne Slater and Sandy Olney work for AncestryProGenealogists in Salt Lake City.

Learn more about the workshops and sign up here:

<https://www.oralhistory.org/pre-conference-workshops/>

The cost is \$40 for OHA members and \$50 for non-members. AncestryProGenealogists is underwriting the second genealogy workshop, which will cost \$30 for OHA members and \$40 for non-members.

Social events cement camaraderie at OHA conference

The OHA annual conferences are known in academic circles as being among the least stuffy, most welcoming gatherings for oral historians of disparate experience and walks of life. What helps cement that reputation are the variety of receptions that dot the conference agenda. Make plans to attend the following:

Wednesday, Oct. 16, will mark the opening **Welcome Reception**, sponsored by the OHA Diversity Committee, to kick off the conference at the Sheraton Salt Lake City Hotel. The 2019 annual meeting is a concurrent event of the OHA and the Southwest Oral History Association, whose regional members will be joining OHA colleagues in Salt Lake City. Welcome Reception attendees will hear Dine oral histories while learning how to make traditional frybread.

Thursday, Oct. 17, is set for the OHA **Presidential Reception** honoring President Natalie Fousekis and winners of the OHA annual awards. The reception will be held at The Leonardo Museum, which calls itself a place to celebrate genius in all its forms—a fitting locale for OHA achievers.

Friday, Oct. 18, is on the agenda for the **International Reception**, sponsored by the OHA's International Committee and the International Oral History Association. All are welcome to expand their networking around the globe.

Saturday, Oct. 19, is a chance for OHA members to join Southwest Oral History Association members at a **SOHA Award Reception** honoring recipients of SOHA scholarships and the prestigious Mink Award. SOHA members have been major contributors to oral history achievements, and this event is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate their work.

Sunday, Oct. 20 wraps up the annual meeting with the **Sunday Sendoff**, a chance to learn about and network with regional oral history groups active across the country, making connections close to home.

Reserve hotel space soon

Discounted hotel rates of \$189 single/double occupancy are available at the Sheraton Salt Lake City Hotel, the OHA conference headquarters, until Sept. 24 or until the OHA room block is full. Reserve online <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1555957490592&key=GRP&app=resvlink> or call 888-627-8152 and ask for the OHA conference rate.

And to complete your online reservation for the conference, go here: <https://www.oralhistory.org/annual-meeting-registration/>

OHA leadership

OHA members who voted in the online elections this summer chose the following leaders for the coming year. Taking office at the annual meeting in October will be:

- Amy Starecheski of Columbia University, first vice president
- Olanda Chavez Leyva of the University of Texas El Paso, Council member
- David Cline of San Diego State University, Nominating Committee
- Nishani Frazier of Miami University of Ohio, Nominating Committee

Sharon Utakis of Bronx Community College and Christa Whitney of the Yiddish Book Center tied for the third open seat on the Nominating Committee. The tie will be resolved at the annual business meeting in Salt Lake City.

In Memoriam: Yale scholar Vivian Perlis conducted ground-breaking interviews with 20th century American musicians

If your passion is 20th century American music, you have Vivian Perlis to thank for pioneering oral history interviews with colossal musical figures of the century.

The Brooklyn native and founder of Yale University's Oral History of American Music died July 4 at age 91.

Perlis was a harpist, pianist, wife, and mother of three who took a job at Yale as a reference librarian while she was performing in the New Haven Symphony Orchestra in 1959. By 1969, that visionary reference librarian had established OHAM, dedicated to exploring the stories and preserving the voices of groundbreaking 20th century musicians.

Her book *Charles Ives Remembered: An Oral History*, published in 1974, was the first time oral history methodology had been used to document the life of a musical figure. The book won the American Musicological Society's Kinkeldy Prize, making Perlis the first woman to win that honor. Her many other awards included a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society of American Music.

OHAM today is considered a living archive with nearly 3,000 interviews, many with the giants of the American music world, including Aaron Copland, Eubie Blake, John Cage, Duke Ellington, Leonard Bernstein and many, many others.

To hear Perlis talking about oral history, here's a link to a YouTube video you'll enjoy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mD8BulFiArc>

And for additional details about her long and remarkable life, here's a remembrance by current OHAM director Libby Van Cleve:

<https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/a-few-things-you-might-not-know-about-vivian-perlis-1928-2019/>



Vivian Perlis, seated left, interviewing composers Aaron Copland, center, and Leonard Bernstein. The photo is believed to have been taken in 1978 in Peekskill, New York. Copland and Bernstein were among the many 20th century musical giants Perlis interviewed for the collections in Yale University's Oral History of American Music, which she founded

Reminders for OHA members

Reminder No. 1

Thinking about committing to a new professional service in the coming academic year? Organizations like the OHA can't exist without members who volunteer to serve on OHA committees. Let the OHA know of your willingness to serve as a committee member for this unique professional and scholarly organization.

To sign up, see <https://forms.gle/8zJNwPEagA8epJULA>

Reminder No. 2

Put a note on your calendar to donate to the OHA on Sept. 4, our Annual Day of Giving. Last year's giving day raised just over \$4,600 from more than 30 members, with the funds to be used to support oral history projects that promote diversity.

This year, the Day of Giving goal is to build up the OHA endowment, which has about \$475,000. The endowment was started in the 1990s, and it's time for OHA members to push it over the goal of \$500,000. A big reach? Maybe. But the endowment is an ongoing source of revenue to support critical OHA initiatives at a time when the importance of history—and humanities generally—sometimes seems forgotten.

A giving-day donation to OHA is an investment in our future.

Reminder No. 3

A few slots are still available for the OHA-sponsored trip to Cuba, Dec. 13-20. The professionally guided tour will include sessions with professors of history, economics and sociology from the University of Havana as well as museum visits and talks by art historians and activists along with an introduction to Cuban music and food.

For more information, check out <https://www.oralhistory.org/2019/03/27/oha-in-cuba/>

Prestigious opportunities for humanities scholars

The **National Humanities Center** and the **American Council of Learned Societies** invite applications for fellowships focused on humanities scholarship.

Oct. 10 is the application deadline for the 2020-21 residential fellowship program at the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Mid-career, senior and emerging scholars with a strong record of peer-reviewed work in any area of humanities can apply for one of 40 residential fellowships. The fellowships generally are for an academic year or one semester. Applicants must have a Ph.D. or equivalent scholarly credentials. More information is available here:

<https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/become-a-fellow/>

The American Council of Learned Societies, of which the OHA is a member, offers more than two dozen fellowships in a wide variety of humanities fields for which many OHA members might be eligible. Fellowship competitions for 2019-20 and application information can be found here:

<https://www.acls.org/Fellowship-and-Grant-Programs/Competitions-and-Deadlines>

Application deadlines vary through the fall, but the earliest deadline is Sept. 25, so take a look soon to see if you might qualify.

Oral histories inform new book on Romani people

Romanies in Michigan by Martha Bloomfield, published by the Michigan State University Press, is the latest addition to the series “Discovering the Peoples of Michigan.”

Bloomfield’s book documents the Hungarian-Slovak Romani musical community in the Delray, Michigan, area. Often known pejoratively as Gypsies, the Romani people originated in India, migrating hundreds of years ago to Europe, Latin America and the United States.

The oral histories and secondary research in Bloomfield’s book paint a far different picture of the Romani experience in Michigan than one would perceive from newspaper accounts of the late 19th century and police profiling of today. Instead, *Romanies in Michigan* depicts a rich, resilient history of a minority group that takes pride in its culture and work.

Bloomfield is the author of several other books that deal with

immigrant and minority groups, including formerly homeless people and
Hmong refugees in Michigan.



Visit the OHA Member Site



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Co-Executive Director's Report

By Kristine McCusker

The Executive Office is gearing up for an exciting fall season with our annual conference in October being the key event. We're looking forward to seeing everyone in Salt Lake City the week of Oct. 14th. This conference will be terrific, with Isabel Wilkerson, author of *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, as our keynote speaker and tons of great workshops and tours to accompany a dynamic program of papers and panels.

But that's not all on our fall calendar.

The OHA is also going to Cuba in December, traveling with Cuba expert Charles Bittner, who continues to guide us through the vagaries of international travel. We're also holding our second webinar this December; stay tuned to e-blasts, social media and the OHA website for more information for this additional chance to meet, albeit virtually.

President's Column

By Natalie Fousekis

I hope this message finds everyone enjoying the slightly slower pace of summer and with that time to engage in oral history work, attend one of the many workshops offered across the country, or turn your interviews into an exhibition, a monograph, a podcast, digital project, article, performance or one of the other creative ways our members use oral history in their work.

Since my May newsletter report, I traveled to the Whiting Foundation's convening held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City where oral and public historians from the academy – incoming fellows and outgoing fellows – met to share their work. It was a mini-OHA reunion as Troy Reeves and I both served as oral history experts commenting on and providing feedback to fellows. OHA member Christian Lopez also attended and discussed the Whiting-funded African American community oral history project he's launching in Athens, Georgia. Among the 20 projects or so featured at the convening, close to half incorporated oral history work. We learned about a walking tour of the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago that will tell the stories of its murals and incorporate interviews with the muralists; a traveling exhibition of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee's Snowbird Day School developed with images, documents and oral histories; the Gay Rodeo Oral History Project and its curated digital exhibit, *The Voices of Gay Rodeo*; a crowd-sourced digital project on the Baltimore Uprising that includes oral testimony; an oral and public history project on race in Tacoma, Washington; and a Wisconsin traveling exhibition on land, farming and food that emerged from oral history work (you can ask Troy more about this one).

Most of those engaged in oral history work at the Whiting Foundation convening had never attended an Oral History Association conference nor were they members of the organization. Thankfully, with Troy, Christian and myself serving as unofficial OHA ambassadors, we invited them to attend our upcoming conferences in Salt Lake or Baltimore and share their work, suggested they explore our website, and encouraged them think about preservation as they carried out and wrapped up their projects. It reminded me that we still have work to do to expand our membership and draw in emerging practitioners and scholars. We would all benefit from exposure to this innovative work, and they would be introduced to this supportive, creative and engaged group of oral historians.

The OHA strategic plan remains our top priority this summer. We have entered the information gathering stage. Council members are completing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis and are working with our strategic planning consultant to develop a member survey, which should go live in the next week or so. We hope many of you will take time to respond to the survey. The more members who respond, the better data we'll have to guide us as we brainstorm, meet with our consultant in October and begin to develop a framework for the strategic plan. We value and depend on your feedback as we undergo this critical process.

Finally, I again want to thank members who have stepped up to assist the organization with our work, most recently, those who said yes to my requests to serve on awards committees and accepted nomination to an elected office.