



ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Special Edition: 2020 Election

Now's your chance to have a stake in OHA governance

Online voting is open for the following candidates whose biographies and personal statements are below.

OHA members have until **Oct 14** to cast their electronic ballots for OHA First Vice President, one Council seat and three Nominating Committee members. Please cast one vote for each position. Here is the link: <https://oha.memberclicks.net/2020-election#/>. You will need to sign in to your membership account to vote. Need help? Contact OHA at oha@oralhistory.org for assistance.



Candidate for First Vice President:

Tomás Summers Sandoval

Biography



Tomás Summers Sandoval is an associate professor of history and Latinx studies at Pomona College, in Claremont, California, where he teaches classes on Latinx history, oral history and postwar social movements. He is a graduate of Claremont McKenna College and earned his M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley.

The author of *Latinos at the Golden Gate: Creating Community and Identity in San Francisco* (UNC Press, 2013), Summers Sandoval is

currently at work on a book based on oral histories with Chicano/Latino Vietnam veterans and their families. His commitment to public humanities resulted in two projects based on those veterans' oral histories: *Voices Veteranos: Mexican America and the Legacy of Vietnam* (2017), a public history exhibit he curated; and *Ring of Red: A Barrio Story* (2018), a stage play he wrote and produced.

Summers Sandoval attended his first Oral History Association meeting in 2002. He has served on the Nominating Committee, the Site Selection Task Force, the Principles and Best Practices Task Force, and as the program co-chair for the 2010 and 2019 annual meetings.

Personal Statement

We live in a time of great possibility but also great peril. In this world, the work of the Oral History Association is as vital as ever. The OHA has been a dynamic and nurturing community for me for almost 20 years, and I'm grateful for this opportunity to give back by ensuring we are as vital a community for

future generations of oral history practitioners.

I look forward to doing what I can to foster our continued growth. Our greatest asset is our diversity. It lives in the character of our membership and the ways we approach our work, but also in where that work is located. We can build on our past success by making certain the OHA remains welcoming and pertinent to all oral historians—whether we're from a museum, cultural organization, community nonprofit, university or an independent scholar. As oral history proliferates in the public sphere, I'm committed to attracting new members from equally diverse positions and perspectives.

I grew up in a culture steeped in stories that straddled physical borders. As a Latinx studies scholar I am acutely aware of the absence of those stories from official archives and public knowledge. My passion for oral history and the OHA lies in making sure all our stories—their words, their meaning-making process and their ways of knowing—are not only preserved for the future but made accessible to the present. I'm eager to contribute to the leadership of the OHA and continue to promote the practice and creative possibility of oral history.

Candidates for OHA Council: Zaheer Ali or Cynthia Tobar

Zaheer Ali Biography

For nearly two decades, Zaheer Ali has worked as an oral historian whose interviews have informed a Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of Malcolm X, spawned a viral video on Muslim bakers and inspired a critically acclaimed art installation. His current work through the Pillars Fund focuses on leveraging the power of American Muslim storytelling for social and cultural change.

Previously, as oral historian at Brooklyn Historical Society, he oversaw development of an online oral history portal and directed several community-based oral history projects. *Muslims in Brooklyn*, the most recent initiative, was a multi-year public history and arts project that included an oral history collection, an arts installation, a series of public programs and performances, community listening sessions and an educational curriculum. He also co-hosted *Flatbush + Main*, an award-winning podcast exploring Brooklyn's past



and present.

Ali has taught for over a decade as an adjunct lecturer at New York University, and in spring 2021, he will teach oral history research methods in Columbia University's Oral History Master of Arts program. He holds a bachelor's degree with a concentration in Afro-American studies from Harvard University and two master's degrees in history from

Columbia University.

Personal Statement

I came to oral history many years ago as a historian in search of primary sources to help tell the story of communities that were marginalized, ignored and silenced in traditional archives. What I found was so much more: beyond sources to cite, I encountered and was drawn to a whole field devoted to not only amplifying voices, but also centering ethical practices that honor and respect the humanness of those voices and the experiences they narrate. I am running for OHA Council because I believe those practices to be critical--to our craft and just as importantly to the broader (and loftier) work of facilitating a more just, equitable, pluralist society.

In recent years, I have heard everyone from journalists to activists to foundations hail "the power of storytelling" and even name their work "oral history," often without the requisite training, methodology or ethical concerns. Rather than respond with expert gatekeeping, I would like to see OHA continue to emphasize oral history as a formal discipline and oral historians as uniquely trained and practiced to tap into the power of storytelling (and story-listening!).

I am particularly interested in working with OHA members to design strategies for increased visibility and audibility of our work so that oral history can be more viable as a profession and our projects more sustainable. The collective wisdom in our ranks is essential to enhancing the work of the next generation of oral historians, and I would like to help facilitate that process--our very own storytelling.

Cynthia Tobar Biography

Cynthia Tobar is an assistant professor and head of archives at Bronx Community College, with a focus on socially-engaged art programming and community-based archiving and oral history projects. She is also a visiting assistant professor at Pratt Institute, where she teaches courses on social justice in Colombia and arts activism.



A first-generation Ecuadorian American born and raised in New York City, Tobar has exhibited and published on several community-based oral history projects that have focused on social justice, student activism and socially engaged art practices. She is the founder of *Cities for People, Not for Profit*, an oral history project documenting the effects of gentrification and displacement in Bushwick.

Recently, she initiated a new [oral history project](#) documenting the student-led movement of Black Lives Matter in Higher Education to examine how its members are increasing equitable spaces for Black graduate students in higher education.

Tobar attended her first Oral History Association annual meeting in 2014 and serves as co-chair of the Diversity Committee.

Personal Statement

I fell in love with oral history because it is a documentation practice that increases awareness, empathy and empowerment through lived memory. Oral history provides a gathering space for us to learn from one another, to thrive, to gather, to listen. I instantly appreciated the supportive community I encountered at OHA as a budding oral historian, where I was able to meet with other practitioners who generously shared their knowledge and resources with me.

If elected, I wish to help OHA expand on these communal values, particularly as they pertain to the work of diversity, equity and inclusive

engagement. Our field prompts us to amplify critical and difference-centered perspectives, challenge dominant views of power and find ways to better serve our communities.

As we are coping with rapid change and struggle in our own ways during these times, our community networks matter more than ever. I am grateful for this nomination and would be honored to work alongside other Council members to continue this important work.

Candidates for Nominating Committee

Position One: Farina King or Winona Wheeler

Farina King Biography



*Bilagáanaa niliigo' dóó
Kinyaa'áanii yásh'chíin.
Bilagáanaa dabicheii dóó
Tsinaajinii dabináí. Ákót'éego
diné asdzáa nilí.*

Farina King is “*Bilagáanaa*” (Euro-American), born for “*Kinyaa'áanii*” (the Towering House Clan) of the *Diné* (Navajo). She is an assistant professor of history and director of the Center for Indigenous Community

Engagement at Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. She is also an affiliate of the Cherokee and Indigenous Studies Department. King earned her Ph.D. in U.S. History at Arizona State University in 2016.

King’s first book, *The Earth Memory Compass: Diné Landscapes and Education in the Twentieth Century*, was published by the University Press of Kansas in October 2018. Her main area of research is colonial and post-

colonial Indigenous Studies, primarily Indigenous oral histories and experiences of colonial and distant education. King has also written and presented about Indigenous Mormon oral histories and experiences in the 20th century, drawing from some interviews she conducted for the Latter-day Saints Native American Oral History Project at the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies.

Personal Statement

I served as the local arrangements co-chair for the 2019 Oral History Association conference in Salt Lake City, which strengthened my resolve to support diversity and inclusivity in oral history. I am currently the first vice president of the Southwest Oral History Association (SOHA), and I have enjoyed working with SOHA and OHA collaborations and two joint conferences over the past several years.

I would be honored to serve on the OHA Nominating Committee, since I have valued being involved and sustaining the OHA family, which has much to offer in bolstering scholarship, learning and community. I continue to promote OHA, build bridges between organizations and people committed to oral history such as SOHA and diverse regional, local and global groups. I support growing OHA as a significant international organization while nurturing the tight-knit and supportive network that makes OHA so special and essential. I also commit to reaching out to and connecting with underrepresented and marginalized communities, as we appreciate and respect all stories, lives and peoples. *Ahéhee'* ("Thank you") for your consideration.

Winona Wheeler Biography

Winona Wheeler is a member of the Ochekwi Sipi (Fisher River) Cree Nation in Treaty No. 5 (Manitoba) territory though her family hails from George Gordon's First Nation in Treaty No. 4 territory (Saskatchewan). Her teaching and research include the histories of Indigenous-Newcomer relations, Indigenous oral histories, traditional knowledge and ways of knowing, and land claims and treaty rights. She has worked on and lead oral history projects for and with Indigenous communities and organizations across Canada.

Wheeler served as president-elect of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, on the Aboriginal Advisory Committee of the

Canadian Museum of History and as a Keeper for the Saskatoon Walking With Our Sisters exhibit. She is an associate professor of Indigenous Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. Her current collaborative works include an oral history of Indigenous agriculture among Saskatchewan First Nations and oral histories of the descendants of Big Bear's Band following their 1885 dispersal by Canadian authorities. Wheeler holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Manitoba, a master's from the University of British Columbia and a doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley.



Personal Statement

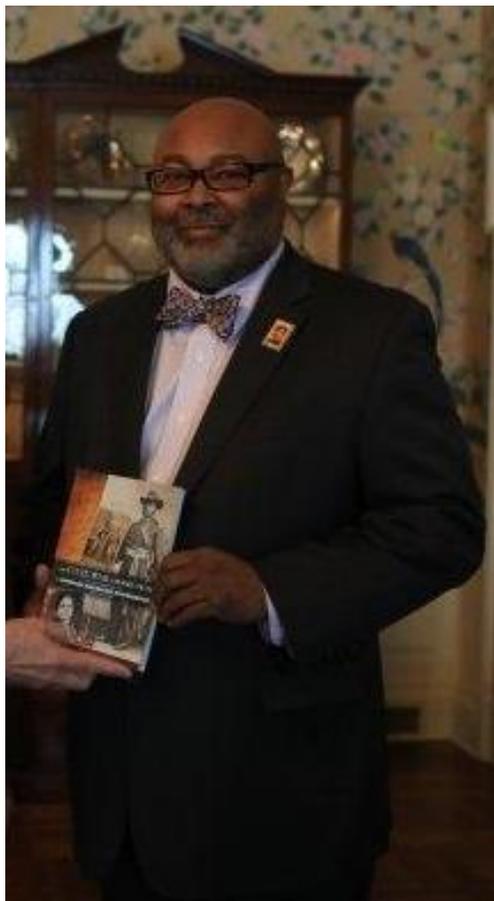
Tansi and hello. I shake hands with each and every one of you and hope this finds you and yours healthy and safe in these challenging times. It is an honor to be considered for the OHA Nominating Committee. Over the years I have witnessed the emergence of the field of Indigenous oral history, from its deprecation as mere hearsay, unworthy of consideration as either source or method, to a robust field ever expanding in students, practitioners, community-university collaborations, university courses and programs in North America and abroad.

It is an exciting time to be part of this incredible movement. As a nominating committee member I will support recruitment from under-represented and diverse communities and strive to help widen space for other ways of knowing and doing oral history within the OHA. Ensuring membership is equitably represented by leadership will not only maintain the association's high standards but ensure its continued growth creatively and meaningfully.

Position Two: Samuel W. Black or Tara Y. White

Samuel W. Black Biography

Samuel W. Black is director of African American Programs at the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He has a BA in African American Studies from the University of Cincinnati and an MA degree in Africana Studies from the SUNY Albany. Black is a past president of the Association of African American Museums and has served on the executive council of the Association for the Study of African American Life & History. He is a member of the Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society of Pittsburgh and the ASALH Dr. Edna B. McKenzie Branch.



Two of Black's exhibitions--"Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era" and "From Slavery to Freedom"--have won numerous awards.

Black edited the anthology *Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era* (2006) that included many oral histories with Pittsburgh-area and other Vietnam veterans. He is co-author of *Through the Lens of Allen E. Cole: A Photographic History of African Americans in Cleveland, Ohio* (2012) and editor of *The Civil War in Pennsylvania: The African American Experience* (2013).

Personal Statement

Since my time as a graduate student at SUNY Albany when I first encountered oral history, I have found it indispensable for contemporary historical studies. Many of the projects during my 28-year career have included oral history in one form or another.

In 2006 I published my first book, an anthology called *Souls Soldiers: African Americans in the Vietnam Era*. It included articles from historians, poets and artists on the Vietnam War era and its impact on African American communities. My editing and narrative contribution used oral histories, including more than 20 Pittsburgh-area Vietnam vets.

I have also used oral history in my genealogy research. Beginning in the late 1990s I held a set of interviews with my grandmother, who was then more than 90 years old, about her family and life in rural North Carolina. She

had spent most of her life as a sharecropper and landowner. I then circled back in 2008 and questioned her about her feelings voting for Barack Obama for president when she was 102 years old, having lived over a century in an oppressive society.

The most important aspect of oral history is preserving the interview. The OHA has led the field in setting standards that help professionals and institutions preserve the story in an ever-changing technical society. These standards help value the oral history much the same as griots of long ago.

My interest professionally and personally in oral history has led me to be interested in the OHA, and election to the Nominating Committee would enable me to be directly involved in the organization.

Tara Y. White Biography



Tara Y. White is a history faculty member and former chair of Arts & Sciences at Wallace Community College Selma in Alabama. Her research areas include public history, Southern history, civil rights and African American women's history. She also has professional experience in museums, historic sites and archives.

Since 1994, White has worked with a number of history museums and historic sites in various capacities. She recently served as the cultural heritage manager for Alabama State University. She has also worked for the American Association for State and Local

History (AASLH) and the Alabama Historical Commission, where she was the site director for the Alabama State Capitol and the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station (now Freedom Rides Museum).

White is active in numerous professional associations. She has served

as a panelist at numerous conferences and as a consultant, lecturer and guest speaker for a variety of local history organizations, museums and universities. She holds a Ph.D. in public history from Middle Tennessee State University, a master of arts degree from the Cooperstown Graduate Program at SUNY-Oneonta and a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Personal Statement

I have long appreciated the work of Oral History Association (OHA) members. I have been acquainted with the OHA and hope to contribute to the growth and strength of the organization. I was introduced to oral history through an independent study with folklorist and scholar Bruce Buckley while a graduate student at the Cooperstown Graduate Program more than 20 years ago. I have used oral history for my entire career as a museum professional and public historian working with civil rights activists in African American communities in Alabama.

I look forward to working with the Nominating Committee to present diverse slates of candidates for the OHA who are committed to furthering the study and practice of oral history. I believe that diverse stories should be gathered and disseminated with sensitivity and respect for shared cultural authority, while maintaining the dignity and humanity of the peoples represented. These values should be central to the overarching goals of all historians working with communities of color and a core value for leaders in our organization.

Position Three: Nicki Pombier or Katrina Srigley

Nicki Pombier Biography

Nicki Pombier is an oral historian, writer, educator and parent. Her work in oral history is largely focused on disability and social change, with a particular interest in how to be a narrative ally, making work with people across ability.

She has co-created and co-curated multimedia exhibits online and in public spaces and has designed and produced educational and experimental multimedia works, independently and in partnership with institutions like Temple University's Institute on Disabilities and Oral History Summer School.

Pombier teaches oral history workshops widely, and is on the faculty at The New School University in the College of Performing Arts and at



Columbia University in the Oral History Master of Arts program, of which she is an alum. More about her work can be found at www.nickipombier.com

Personal Statement

I am interested in joining the Nominating Committee to work with others to build on existing work and devise new approaches to recruiting leadership to the OHA. I would urge us to think through how our committee might work beyond a diversity model and toward equity and justice. How can we cultivate a culture of member service

that reflects the needs and desires of communities we want to engage and a culture of leadership that centers equity and justice?

As co-chair of the Diversity Committee for several years, I've worked to try and build ways of listening to and learning from OHA members about what we mean by, and need from, diversity in our field and in our professional association.

I will bring to my work with the Nominating Committee what I have learned along the way, in the hopes of contributing to a process that imagines new ways of outreach and recruitment for leadership in our organization.

Katrina Srigley Biography

Katrina Srigley lives and works on Nbisiing Nishnaabeg territory. She is a professor in the Department of History at Nipissing University, co-editor of the award-winning collection *Beyond Women's Words: Feminisms and the Practices of Oral History in the Twenty-First century* (Routledge 2018), and author of the award-winning monograph *Breadwinning Daughters: Young Working Women in a Depression-era City* (U of T 2010).

Srigley's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

(SSHRC)-funded projects, developed in partnership with Nipissing First Nation, examine the history of Nipissing Nishinaabeg territory through Nishinaabeg ways of knowing, recording and sharing the past. She is currently co-authoring a book with Glenna Beaucage, the cultural and heritage manager for Nipissing First Nation, titled *Gaa Bi Kidwaad Maa Nipissing/ The Stories of Nipissing*.



Personal Statement

I am pleased to let my name stand for consideration for a position on the Oral History Association Nominating Committee. I look forward to the opportunity to become more involved in the association and, in this position, contribute to conversations about and act to fulfill the OHA's commitment to "diversity, inclusivity, and respect" and scholarly practice that is anti-racist in theory and practice.



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Mary Kay Quinlan, Editor

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