



# ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

## Newsletter

August 2022  
Volume LVI Number 4

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### OHA conference overview

Covid oral histories, sports oral history, new digital tools, Armenian genocide, misappropriation of oral histories, media oral histories and the oral history of workwear in the U.S. Postal Service are among disparate the topics of nearly 100 sessions planned for the 2022 Oral History Association annual conference set for Oct. 19-22 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles.

Meeting in person for the first time since 2019, oral historians will have a chance to immerse themselves in widely varying presentations, renew old acquaintances, make new

friends and take advantage of many chances to explore new ideas.

After two years of virtual meetings, OHA members can participate in a wide choice of activities in addition to the jam-packed agenda of conference sessions. Options include two plenary sessions, a keynote speaker, three workshops, three off-site tours, free receptions sponsored by the diversity and international committees, a breakfast for conference newcomers and a presidential reception and awards presentation.

Read on for conference details and more OHA news.

If you haven't registered yet for the conference, you can do so here:

<https://oha.memberclicks.net/oha-2022-registration#!/>.

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## OHA Council adjusts investment plan

By Troy Reeves  
OHA Treasurer

At last year's OHA business meeting, a question arose from longtime member Martha Norkunas. While I cannot recall exactly what she asked, it focused on how OHA invested its money. This question led to a nearly year-long task for OHA's Finance Committee (FC) to review and evaluate our investments, specifically the Vanguard 500 Index Fund Admiral Shares where our endowed funds sit.

After meetings, discussion and research, the FC proposed and Council approved in its August meeting a plan to move our funds into an index fund that more closely aligns with our organization's values. Specifically, we will be moving soon into this fund: Vanguard ESG U.S. Stock ETF.

Along with this move, the FC drafted language to codify our hope to invest in a more socially conscious way. So Council, also in its August meeting, approved this standing resolution: "Regarding our endowed funds, the Oral History Association will invest in ways that align with our principles and values, while always keeping in mind the organization's long-term economic health."

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[President's Letter](#)

[Executive Director's Report](#)

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## OHA leadership election winners announced

Oral History Association members elected Troy Reeves of the University of Wisconsin-Madison to serve as the new first vice president when the current officers' terms expire this fall.

In online voting, members also elected to the OHA Council Shanna Farrell of the University of California, Berkeley Oral History Center and Nishani Frazier of the University of Kansas.

Elected to the Nominating Committee are: independent scholar Fanny Garcia, Brian Greenwald of Gallaudet University and Ana Liberato of the University of Kentucky.

OHA members also chose the first six members to serve on a new Committee on Committees. They are: independent scholar Linda Shopes, Jose Angel Gutierrez of the University of Texas-Arlington, independent scholar Ellen Brooks, Regennia Williams of the Western Reserve Historical Society, Lisa Arrastia of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and Darold Cuba of the Washington National Cathedral.

In addition to choosing new OHA leaders, OHA members also voted to approve adding new guidelines for social justice oral history work to the organization's suite of Principles and Best Practices documents, all of which are available online at [www.oralhistory.org](http://www.oralhistory.org).

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## Award-winning Chicana historian is featured conference keynote speaker

Vicki L. Ruiz, distinguished professor emerita of history and Chicano/Latino studies at the University of California Irvine, will be the Oral History Association's keynote speaker at the conference luncheon set for Friday, Oct. 21.

The oral historian, who credits listening to family stories and devouring contents of the local bookmobile for her passion for history, is the author or editor of more than a dozen books documenting the lives of Mexican women in the United States.

Her publications include *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* and *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in 20th Century America*. She also is co-editor of the three-volume reference work *Latinas in the United States: A Historical Encyclopedia*, which includes entries from more than 230 contributors.

Ruiz also is a past president of the American Studies Association and the Organization of American Historians.

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## Indigenous perseverance and memories of Timuel Black focus of two plenary sessions

Oral historians who attend the 2022 OHA conference in Los Angeles will have the chance to engage in two thought-provoking plenary sessions.

On Thursday, Oct. 20, the focus is on Indigenous experiences in a session titled "Walking Through the Fire: Indigenous Perseverance in an Epoch of Turmoil." The 11:30 a.m. session will feature Indigenous scholars and spotlight Native voices and experiences in relation to the conference theme. The plenary is free to attend but OHA members also may include the lunch buffet for \$30 when registering for the conference.

The following day, Friday, Oct. 21, the plenary focus is "Remembering Griot Timuel D. Black, Jr. and 100 Years of an Engaged Life." Black, a longtime OHA member and revered Chicago teacher, scholar and documenter of African American life, died in 2021 at the age of 102. The 3:30 p.m. plenary will honor his life and legacy.

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## Workshops help oral historians expand skills

Longtime OHA members and newcomers will have a chance to learn something new with a choice of three conference workshops, two on Wednesday, Oct. 19, and one on Saturday, Oct. 22. The workshop registration fee is \$25, of which 100% will be donated to the OHA's new Indigenous Initiative supporting the work of Indigenous oral historians.

Here are the workshop options:

- "What Does Done Look Like? Project Planning for Oral History." With presenters Jennifer Cramer of Louisiana State University and Troy Reeves of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the workshop will focus on the logistics of planning and implementing oral history projects. The pre-conference workshop is scheduled for Oct. 19 from 1:30-4:30 p.m.
- "Amplifying the Voices of Underrepresented Communities." Presenters Juan David Coronado of Central Connecticut State University and Elena Foulis of Texas A&M, San Antonio will focus on the importance of conducting oral histories with underrepresented communities and will offer strategies for working in communities of color. The pre-conference workshop is set for 1:30-4:30 p.m. on Oct. 19.
- "A Pedagogy of Listening: Using Oral Histories in the Classroom." Especially for teachers who want to use and teach oral history, this workshop will offer sample lesson plans, model classroom activities and curricular resources for using oral history in the classroom. The workshop will be held Oct. 22 from 1:30-4:30 p.m. and will be taught by Zaheer Ali of The Lawrenceville School, a private prep school in Lawrenceville, New Jersey.

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### 3 Los Angeles tours on offer for OHA attendees

OHA members who want to stretch their legs and learn more about the historic and cultural history of Los Angeles can choose from three tours on three conference days.

A two-hour walking tour of historic LA will explore the city's growth through visits to some of its landmark buildings in the downtown area. OHA members can sign up for the tour, which will be offered twice, on Wednesday, Oct. 19 at 3 p.m. and again on Friday, Oct. 21 at 1:15 p.m. A trained docent from the LA Conservancy will lead the tour, which costs \$25. The walking tour is not wheelchair accessible.

A second walking tour will take visitors to the historic Los Angeles Central Library for a guided visit of "Something in Common," a community history exhibit exploring the white pioneer myth of El Monte, a San Gabriel Valley city east of Los Angeles. The library, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a mere 0.1 mile from the conference hotel and is accessible to all visitors. The \$10 fee for the tour will be donated to the OHA's new Indigenous Initiative, which will support the work of Indigenous oral historians. The two-hour tour is set for Friday, Oct. 21 at 1:15 p.m.

On Saturday, Oct. 22, a three-hour shuttle tour will take visitors to see well-known and lesser-known Los Angeles murals that reflect the city's cultural vibrancy. Local community arts professionals will provide information about the works of Latinx

and African American public art. The \$40 shuttle tour will include stops for attendees to disembark for short walks to various mural sites. The tour, scheduled for 12:30 p.m., is wheelchair accessible, but please let the OHA Executive Office know when you register so proper arrangements can be made.

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## Networking opportunities abound at OHA conference

The Oral History Association has long prided itself as offering one of the friendliest, most welcoming academic conferences you'll ever attend. One reason is the lineup of events that allow plenty of opportunities to see old friends and meet new ones. Here are some to put on your calendar:

**Welcome/International Reception**, sponsored by the International Committee, this event is open to everyone on Wednesday evening, Oct. 19. It's free!

**Diversity Committee Reception**, also free to attend on Thursday, Oct. 20, is another opportunity for everyone to meet new folks and reconnect with those they already know.

**Newcomer Breakfast**, set for Friday, Oct. 21, is also free for people attending their first OHA meeting and is a chance to learn more about the organization and meet other newcomers.

**Mentorship Program Meet 'n Greet**, sponsored by the OHA Emerging Professionals Committee, allows newcomers to spend time with experienced oral historians on Friday, Oct. 21. Sign up to participate as a mentor or mentee when you register for the conference.

**Presidential Reception and Awards Presentations**, set for Friday evening, Oct. 21, honors OHA President Amy Starecheski and will feature introduction of winners of 2022 OHA awards. It's also free to attend.

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## National Humanities Center invites fellowship applications

Mid-career, senior and emerging scholars in all areas of the humanities with a strong record of peer-reviewed work are eligible to apply to be a residential fellow at the National Humanities Center for the 2023-2024 academic year .

Up to 40 fellows from around the world are selected annually for academic year or one-semester fellowships at the center's location in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Fellows receive a stipend, travel expenses and accommodations that allow them to spend time exploring their research without the interruptions of academic life.

The application deadline is Oct. 6. For more information about the National Humanities Center and its fellowship program, go to <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/>

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## An easier way to puzzle out dialects when you transcribe

By Joan Houston Hall

Chief Editor Emerita, Dictionary of American Regional English

Need help with a narrator's dialect? Easy access to DARE is now available.

The Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE) is a six-volume reference work that documents words and phrases that vary from one place to another across the United States. Challenging the popular notion that our language has been "homogenized" by the media and our mobile population, DARE demonstrates that there are still many thousands of differences that characterize the dialect regions of the U.S.

Many of those differences aren't explained by standard dictionaries. So when readers come across regional, old-fashioned, archaic and just-plain-strange words, they turn to DARE.

The dictionary is a treasure trove:

- Teachers use DARE to help their students understand that everyone speaks a dialect.
- Writers use DARE to verify the accuracy of their dialogue.
- Forensic linguists and detectives use DARE to help apprehend and convict criminals.
- Physicians use DARE to understand the folk medical terms used by their patients.
- Natural scientists use DARE to equate local folk names for plants and animals with the corresponding scientific names.
- Librarians use DARE to answer queries from their patrons.
- Actors and dialect coaches use DARE's audiotape collection to perfect their regional accents.
- Oral historians use DARE to understand the experiences of our ancestors.
- And DARE is used by readers who simply delight in the variety, wit and wisdom found in the quotations that illustrate each entry in the dictionary.

The print volumes (Harvard University Press, 1985-2012) were considered essential reference works, but the digital version (2013) is much handier, fully interactive and doesn't take 15 inches of shelf space.

When it first came out, Martha Barnette, co-host of the radio show "A Way with Words," wrote: "Recently in the language world, something happened that might be described as the Super Bowl, the Olympics, the Fourth of July, New Year's, three scoops of ice cream and a new kitten all rolled into one...I'm talking about the fact that the magnificent six-volume Dictionary of American Regional English is now available online."

Today the good news is that Harvard University Press has just announced a tiered pricing structure for new institutional annual subscriptions and perpetual access purchases of digital DARE. This should make it much easier for smaller colleges and public libraries to add it to their collections. Here are the new prices:

**Academic libraries:** Annual subscription/ Perpetual Subscription

Up to 3,000 FTE: \$310/ \$1,640

3,0001-10,000 FTE: \$720/ \$3,280

10,001-20,000 FTE: \$985/ \$4,935

Above 20,000 FTE: \$1,440/ \$6,575

**Public libraries:** Annual subscription/ Perpetual subscription

Up to 50,000 users: \$310/ \$1,640



50,001—300,000 users: \$720/ \$3,280

300,001-1 million users: \$985/ \$4,935

Above 1 million users: \$1,440/ \$6,575

**Secondary schools:** Annual subscription, \$250

**Individuals:** Annual subscription, \$49

(For perpetual access institutional subscriptions, there is an annual fee of \$150.)

With reference to the early print volumes, one of your colleagues, Rebecca Sharpless of Baylor University wrote: "Here in the Institute for Oral History, we use the Dictionary of [American] Regional English frequently to assist us in transcribing oral history memoirs...When an undergraduate student transcriber gets stumped, ...we exhaust the standard unabridged dictionary, then we turn to the DARE. ...We use it on a regular basis, and we need it."

If your library doesn't already have the digital version of DARE, I hope you'll urge your librarian to strongly consider purchasing it.



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# Co-Executive Directors' report

**By Kristine McCusker and Louis Kyriakoudes**  
**August 2022 Newsletter**

The Executive Office has been busy these past few months gearing up for our first in-person conference since 2019, to be held in Los Angeles at the Biltmore Hotel from Oct. 19-22. We can't wait to reconnect with everyone face-to-face after having to hold conferences online for the past two years. We foresee lots of great conversations, good food and great plenaries and keynote.

We are going to encourage masks at the conference as well as social distancing. We recognize that there is still a risk, but we are taking what precautions we can to make this a safe and meaningful event.

We have also been busy thinking long term about the Executive Office's next iteration and what we can do to make sure the transition is as seamless as possible. We have done a major rewrite, for example, of the OHA Operations Manual that Gayle Knight started and that now reflects the broader responsibilities of the Executive Office in supporting webinar presentations, fundraising, hiring our own employees and building relationships with other scholarly organizations. Faith Bagley, the OHA's intrepid program associate, has also written a guide for the new program associate to ease that person's transition and make sure that person is as successful as possible.

We will leave a longer note of thanks in the final newsletter of the year, but in the meantime, we cannot believe that nearly five years has passed. Thank you again for the opportunity to host the OHA's Executive Office.

# President's letter

**By Amy Starecheski**  
**August 2022 Newsletter**

As we look towards the Annual Meeting in LA, and the end of my presidential term, I would like to share some updates.

Our long-stalled project to create a document to provide guidance in valuing and evaluating oral history work is back underway, and the task force working on that (Mary Larson, Leslie McCartney and Michael Franklin) should have a draft for your feedback this fall. We are always thinking about how OHA can best serve and advocate for our members, and this seems like an important piece of that mission.

The editorial team leading the *Oral History Review* will be coming to the end of their term of service at the end of 2023, and we have convened a search committee to find a new team to lead the journal. Thank you to Crystal Baik, Kimberly Springer, Debra Elfenbein, Simona Tobia and Erin Jessee for taking on that work. They will be circulating a call for proposals in the fall. Stay tuned.

As part of our series of conversations on OHA's Culture of Service, and culture in general, in July we convened a gathering to envision what a truly welcoming OHA would look and feel like. The teams that bring oral historians into our spaces, and especially into leadership roles—our conference planning, Nominating, Diversity and Equity Audit teams—have been given the notes on those conversations. And our brand-new Committee on Committees is making use of the insights members shared as they plan outreach for new committee members in the coming month. Congratulations and many thanks to Linda Shopes, Lisa Arrastia, Ellen Brooks, Jose Angel Guitierrez and Reginnia Williams, who together will be making all of our committee appointments this year.

Through all of these efforts, OHA is becoming more inclusive, transparent and responsive to members. I am honored to serve this organization and look forward to celebrating our shared accomplishments in LA in two months!