

# 2014 Annual Conference – How Do We Choose? The Stories We Collect, The Ones We Don't

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*START DATE: 04242014*

*END DATE: 04252014*

*LOCATION: Chemical Heritage Foundation, Philadelphia, PA*



**HMA**  
FORUM IN THE MID-ATLANTIC

## **“How Do We Choose? The Stories We collect, The Ones We Don't.”**

The program committee invites participants to submit papers that broadly interpret the conference theme, “How do we choose? The stories we collect, the ones we don't.” This year's conference is focused on exploring the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee, between what we want to learn from our interviewee and what our interviewee allows us to know.

Oral history projects, whether based in communities or institutions, often focus on one particular episode, or a series of episodes, in someone's life. So how do interviewers choose the episodes on which to focus? And in what ways can interviewers best encourage people to share these stories? Also, how do we—historians, journalists, sociologists, anthropologists, and others—tell a particular story based on what the interviewee shared? What do we do when an interviewee makes the episode off limits in the interview even before a question is asked and, consequently, how do we cope with losing historical memory? Topics for presentation and discussion might include the methodology of oral history practice and theory; the challenges of eliciting some stories at the exclusion of others; the process of taking life histories as a methodological approach; or the process of packaging oral history material into different formats for audience consumption.

The conference registration form is available as a [Microsoft Word Document](#) or a [PDF](#). There is [hotel information below](#) the conference program.

[View the PDF of the conference program.](#)

Thursday, April 24, 2014

9:00 am – 12:30 pm      Workshop (additional registration fee)

“An Introduction to Oral History” – Presented by David J. Caruso, OHMAR President

- Oral history is a research method and an innovative tool for recording and promoting the understanding of contemporary history; it provides invaluable access to the knowledge, experiences, and motivations of people, in their own words. Learners in this workshop will discover the fundamental concepts of developing an oral history project and the interview process. By the end of the workshop, participants will know about subject selection, interview preparation, equipment usage, and how to conduct interviews. Additionally, they will be able to explain the principles of oral history processing and preservation.

1:45 pm                      Conference Welcome

- David J. Caruso, OHMAR President

2:00 pm -4:00 pm      Concurrent Sessions 1

1.1                      Stories of OHMAR: Where Past, Present, and Future Meet      (Roundtable)

- Lu Ann Jones (moderator and organizer), National Park Service
- David Caruso, Chemical Heritage Foundation
- Roger Horowitz, Hagley Museum and Library
- Anne Rush, University of Maryland
- Linda Shopes, Development Editor
- Jason Steinhauer, Library of Congress
- David Winkler, Naval Historical Foundation

1.2                      Expanding the Story: Traditional and New Approaches to Oral History

- “Documenting the Stories Unspoken: Oral History Transcripts and the Use of Source Citations”  
Jacqueline Boytim, Chemical Heritage Foundation
- “Embracing New Media to Tell the Story of Volunteer Farm Workers,” Chrissie Reilly, University of Maryland Baltimore County
- “Choreography and Improvisation: Structure vs. Freedom in Dance Oral Histories at the NY Public Library for the Performing Arts,” Susan Kraft, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
- “Securing Unsecured Text: The Nigerian Film Industry Utilizes Video As A Textual Reservoir for West African Oral Tradition,” Sharron Greaves, Nyack College

4:30 pm-6:30 pm      Reception (included with registration)

Friday, April 25, 2014

9:00 am -10:15 am      Concurrent Sessions

## 2.1 Relationships and Oral History

- “Over Twenty Hours of Oral history Interviews with a Parent: Transforming Resistance into Fruitful Interviews,” Bambi Rachel Ward, Central Queensland University, Australia
- “The Patchwork Biography of Ms. X: A Case Study in Negotiated History from CHF’s Center for Oral History,” Benjamin Gross, Chemical Heritage Foundation
- “The Impact of Regret: Collecting Oral Histories on Bronx Community Activism Against Crack Cocaine in the Shadow of the War on Drugs,” Noel Wolf, Fordham University

## 2.2 Choosing Subjects: A Complex Issue

- “‘The manner. . . in which some of these kids act is just appalling to me.’ Oral Histories of Student Veterans at Monmouth University,” Melissa Ziobro, Monmouth University
- “Choosing Who to Talk to: Asbestos and Risk Perception in Ambler, Pennsylvania,” Lee Sullivan Berry, Chemical Heritage Foundation
- “Collective Identity & the Selection Process: Understanding Community Identity through Oral History,” Shannon Geis, Columbia University

10:30 am-12:15 pm Concurrent Sessions 3

## 3.1 Emotional Labor and Oral History in the Built Environment (Roundtable)

- Erin Bernard, Philadelphia Public History Truck
- Laura Deutch, Media Artist
- Patrick Grossi, Temple Contemporary’s Funeral for a Home
- Maria Möller, Artist

## 3.2 Interviewing: Methodologies of Silence

- “Audio/visual components: still color photographs within the enclosure; audio from oral history interviews with the nuns, and video footage by me and the nuns,” Abbie Reese, Independent Scholar
- “Lifer Stories: How do we get oral histories when no technology is allowed?” J. Michael Lyons, Saint Joseph’s University
- “Investigating Debt Peonage: The FBI as Interviewer,” Amy Absher, Case Western Reserve University
- “Silenced Silences: Conducting Oral History Interviews with Members of Historically Marginalized Communities,” Qresent Mali Mason, Temple University

12:30 pm- 1:30 pm Lunch (included with registration)

1:45 pm-3:15 pm 2014 Forest Pogue Award and OHMAR Business Meeting

The Pogue award recognizes lifetime achievement in the field of oral history. It is named after Forest C. Pogue, an oral history pioneer among whose many contributions were conducting interviews with soldiers during the Allied invasion of Normandy in 1944.

- Judith Knudsen (Awardee) – For nineteen years, Judith has been manager of the special collections at the Arlington Public Library, formerly called the Virginia Room and now named the Center for

Local History (CLH). She has overseen an extensive oral history program that now boasts more than 400 interview transcripts available for researchers. Among her many projects, she organized the Arlington Remembers 9/11 project, which includes 35 interviews with firefighters, policemen and other citizens five years after September 11. An especially notable achievement has been securing oral history interviews with business and civic leaders in Arlington's long-standing African American community where there is a dearth of written and documentary history. Knudsen is also served as a past president and executive board member of OHMAR.

- OHMAR Strategic Plan Presentation and Discussion – The new OHMAR strategic plan will be made available for all conference attendees. This five-year plan, which attendees will be asked to discuss and ratify, plots the future directions and initiatives of OHMAR as it moves towards cementing its place in the regional landscape.

3:30pm-5:00pm Concurrent Sessions 4

#### 4.1 Many Questions and Many Answers: The Library of Congress Veterans History Project (VHP) as a Memory Preservation Effort

- “Experiencing War: Interpretation of VHP collections by the Veterans History Project,” Megan Harris, Veteran’s History project, Library of Congress
- “Tools of the Trade: Effecting a National-Community Dialogue through the Veterans History Project,” Owen Rogers, Veteran’s History project, Library of Congress
- “Anyone Can Participate: The Challenges of Volunteer-Driven Collecting at the National Level,” Rachel Telford, Veteran’s History project, Library of Congress

#### 4.2 Publishing and Oral History (Roundtable)

- Chair: Audra J. Wolfe, Independent Historian; Nancy Toff, Oxford University Press; Chris Chappell, Palgrave; Mary Rizzo, The Public Historian

## **Hotel Information**

The following hotels are available for the conference and have special rates. near the Ask for the Chemical Heritage Foundation (CHF) special rates.

#### Omni Hotel

401 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19106

(215) 925-0000

#### Hotel Monaco

433 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19106

(215) 925-2111

#### Sheraton Society Hill Hotel

One Dock Street, (2nd and Walnut Streets), Philadelphia, PA 19106

(215) 238-6000

Penn's View Hotel

14 N Front St, Philadelphia, PA 19106

(215) 922-7600

This hotel is also available for the conference, but does not have a special Chemical Heritage Foundation (CHF) rate.

Best Western Plus Independence Park Hotel

235 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19106

(215) 922-4443

- See more at: <https://ohmar.org/news/2014-conference/#sthash.yWDhqSyP.dpuf>