



ORAL HISTORY CENTER of The Bancroft Library UC Berkeley

Newsletter - March 2015

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Shanna Farrell leads our 2015 Intro to Oral History Workshop -- there are still a few seats left for our [March 11 workshop!](#)

From the Director

[From the Director: Martin Meeker, our New Director, on Getting His Start in Oral History](#)

Recently I was asked, "What was the first interview you conducted?" After a moment mentally scanning through college and grad school research projects, I realized that I undertook my first proper interview years earlier, when I was a junior at St. Francis High School in Mountain View, California. Entirely out of step with my Catholic school education, I choose to write my junior year research paper on that recently departed rock n' roll alien David Bowie. Then our teacher insisted that we conduct an interview "with a real expert" as part of the research



New OHC Director Martin Meeker with Margrit Mondavi at a recent interview

process. [[Read more](#)]

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[Oral History in Action](#)

The Search is On! The Oral History Center Launches Phase I of our New Search Tool

We are thrilled to report that for the first time in our history, the full collection of Oral History Center interview transcripts is available online and accessible through a [search tool that gives you meaningful and relevant results](#). For those who tried to search our oral histories previously, you likely found that the results were not always the best. So we encourage you to spend some time with this new and much improved search. You can now locate interviews by the name of the interviewee as well as subject terms and keywords. Even better, we are currently at work on Phase II of our new search, which we expect will allow you to search the full-text of our interviews plus much more!



[Intro to Oral History Workshop & Advanced Oral History Summer Institute: Registration is Open](#)

Registration is open for our two annual oral history training events. Our [Intro to Oral History Workshop](#), designed for those with no or little experience in the field, is just around the corner -- next Friday, March 11th -- and we still have a few seats left. If you'd like to attend, [we recommend registering as soon as possible](#). Our Summer Institute is not until August, but it is quickly filling up. [Check out the website](#) for more on this week-long intensive institute.

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[From the Archives](#)

[From the Archives: Our First Oral History -- Alice B. Toklas](#)

Technically, the Bancroft Library oral history interview with Alice B. Toklas was conducted two years before our office was established. But we like to think that this interview, commissioned by then-Bancroft Library director James D. Hart, established the "proof of concept" for the pursuit of oral history at Berkeley. In this interview, Ms. Toklas discusses her life with Gertrude Stein (albeit in rather oblique language) and her thoughts on art, war, literature, and her beloved poodle, Basket. **[Read the full five-hour interview transcript](#)**, or **[listen to an audio clip from the interview](#)**.



Alice B. Toklas, the first Berkeley oral history interviewee

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[Congratulations Professor Susan Ervin-Tripp, the 2016 "Class of 1931" Honorary Interviewee in University History](#)



This year the Oral History Center received many nominations for the "Class of '31" interviewee in university history. The field of nominees was very distinguished and we wish we could interview every one, but this year the honor goes to Professor Susan Ervin-Tripp. One nomination read:

"Professor Susan Ervin-Tripp is long overdue for an oral history. She is certainly one of the longest serving women faculty members on campus. Much more importantly she has left her decisive mark on every area in which she has been involved. That her scholarship is path breaking and prodigious is a given.... Sue has a long track record of starting the first or one of the first organized groups of faculty women in the US in the 1970s to work for equal pay, job titles, hiring and promotion.... She also was instrumental in getting the Women's Studies Program launched. She saw her role as helping others solve problems as particularly exemplified by her time as student ombudsperson."

Join me in both congratulating Ervin-Tripp for this honor and thanking her in advance for contributing once again to the university by agreeing to sit for this oral history interview.

Previous "Class of '31" honorees include: Professor of Anthropology Laura Nader, Emeritus Director of the Pacific Film Archive Edith Kramer, and Pat Pelfrey, who is a scholar of higher education and served as a speechwriter for UC Presidents.

In recent months...

The Oral History Center has completed several fascinating interviews that you might have missed. So, we'd like to help you catch up on our latest releases: two leading women in the California wine industry, **Margrit Mondavi and Zelma Long**; two leaders in the protection of the California coastline and the San Francisco Bay, **Joe Bodovitz and Will Travis**; famed California artist **Ed Ruscha**; geologist, attorney, and executive **Stan Dempsey**; and **Edith Kramer**, Director Emeritus of Berkeley's Pacific Film Archive.

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[Coming Up](#)

And stay tuned for...

In the coming months, check back to the Oral History Center website for the release of our highly-anticipated interviews, including with:

- Renowned economists trained at the University of Chicago, including **George P. Shultz** and **Arnold Harberger**;
- The first group of interviews from the **Freedom to Marry Oral History Project**;
- Several more interviews with women who worked on the homefront in World War II as part of our long-running **Rosie the Riveter Oral History Project**;
- **The University of California Athletics Oral History Project**, which features interviews with 70 experts on the issues of university sports programs;
- UC Berkeley law professor and educational reformer, **Jack Coons**;
- **West Coast Cocktails** interviews, including **Jorg Rupf, founder of St. George Spirits**;
- **Phyllis Cook**, a leader of San Francisco's Jewish community;
- **George Halvorson**, recently retired as CEO of Kaiser Permanente, one of the largest providers of health care in the United States;
- **Keith Yamamoto**, Professor of Cellular and Molecular Pharmacology, and campus leader, at UC San Francisco
- Former San Francisco mayor, **Willie Brown**

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The Oral History Center (OHC), a research division of The Bancroft Library, documents the history of California, the nation, and the interconnected global arena. OHC produces carefully researched, audio/video-recorded and transcribed oral histories and interpretative historical materials for the widest possible use.

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