

Greetings from the President by Summer Cherland

The State of SOHA

Greetings, scholars in and of the Southwest!

I hope this newsletter finds you well and enjoying a productive spring. Preparations are underway for this year's Southwest Oral History Association conference, in Riverside, CA from May 31-June 3.



Our Vice President and Conference Chair, Daisy Herrera, has built an enterprising programming committee, who have in turn created an ambitious schedule for our conference proceedings. We are looking forward to vibrant panels, intriguing tours, book talks, and award ceremonies.

In addition to the many conference activities you attend, I hope you will join Secretary Angela Moor and me for our discussion, "The State of SOHA." Angela and I invite all members, leaders, and constituents to join us for a frank discussion about SOHA's current status, our institutional home at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and our predictions for the future.

SOHA, as you know, is a nearly 45-year old institution, which was established by a group of friends and colleagues to be a gathering hub for oral historians in the American Southwest. In these four + decades, the organization has evolved to meet the priorities of its leaders and members.

When I assumed the presidency in 2022, I was concerned about SOHA's path forward. I assembled a small team to research and initiate a SOHA strategic plan, and I believe this is still needed for the organization to thrive in the next forty years. I remain, however, concerned, and I am calling on all interested parties to join us for this conversation as we chart SOHA's path into the future.

At our session, we will discuss the current state and a predicted future of SOHA's:

- Membership and engagement
- Leadership
- Finances
- Web presence
- Partnership with UNLV
- Graduate Assistantship

I look forward to seeing you.

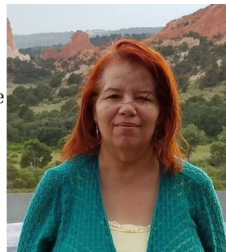
Your friend,

Summer Cherland, PhD
Southwest Oral History Association
President

In Memorial

Alva Moore Stevenson

Alva Moore Stevenson passed away in early February 2024. She had been a long time member of the Southwest Oral History Association and served in many roles within the organization, including as president (2011-2013).



Alva Moore
Stevenson

She worked for many years at the UCLA Center for Oral History Research as a program coordinator and interviewer where she focused on the history of African Americans in Los Angeles.

Alva advocated for the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, a Black battalion of the Women's Army Corp deployed to the European theater during World War II to clear a backlog of mail for American soldiers. Working around the clock, the 6888 was able to clear the backlog in three months. Alva's mother, Lydia Esther Thornton Moore, served with the 6888 and Alva worked tirelessly to share the history of the 6888 and to secure the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal for the group. In 2022, President Biden signed legislation to recognize the 6888 with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Another research interest of Alva was the historical and genealogical connections between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans. She explored the topic in her graduate studies at UCLA and in her book, *Both Black and Mexican: The Thornton Family of Nogales, Arizona*.

Alva leaves behind her family, including her sister Rosenda, and her children and grandchildren, as well as many friends and colleagues in the field of oral history.

2024 Conference Update by Daisy Herrera, SOHA 1st Vice President and Conference Chair

From May 31st through June 3rd, scholars, students and community members will be gathering at Southern California's University of California, Riverside for SOHA's 2024 conference. During these days, attendees will explore a diversity of presentations including themed panels, documentary screenings, and book talks. A specialty will be UCR campus entities opening their doors and offering special presentations, emerging attendees in physical archival presentations and oral history listening sessions. Conference registrants will also be encouraged to explore the downtown area of Riverside to witness historical sites of memory and resistance, engaging in planned local tours that connect our field with public history. Opening ceremonies and keynote presentations are closely tied to the conference theme, exploring the various meanings of memory and resistance and tying them to the rise of radical futures. The Riverside campus is a site of memory and resistance itself, encouraging us to connect with the original peoples and learning of the student activism that created a legacy that would eventually designate the UC campus as the first Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

The conference planning committees are hard at work putting the final touches together. I am incredibly proud of our Local Arrangements Committee and the Programming Committee whom have helped me bring my conference vision and aspirations to life. I am humbled to have so many supportive scholars and centers by my side, excited to help in various ways to make this beautiful conference a reality and assist in showcasing what marvelous activities and food UCR has to offer.

A draft of the program will be released real soon with a copy sent to membership and posted on our website. In the meantime, we encourage you not to delay in registering- the conference does have a max attendance cap and on-site registration is not guaranteed. Special full conference and day pass rates are available to SOHA members and you can register following the link on the flyer below. Thank you, and I will see you in R'side- Riverside!

New Books by SOHA Members

***Alien Soil: Oral Histories of Great Migration Newark* by Katie Singer, PhD, MFA**

My book, *Alien Soil: Oral Histories of Great Migration Newark*, is based upon a collection created in the late 1990s. The interviews were supposed to be a part of a Black Cultural Center in Newark, New Jersey, but that never came to fruition.

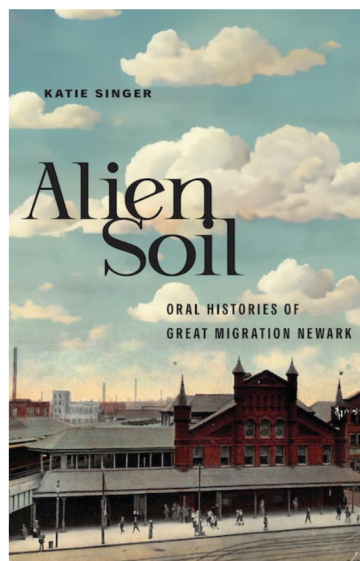
In 2005, as I was starting my doctoral program at Rutgers University-Newark, one member of my cohort found the cassette tapes of these interviews stowed away at the public library. She initiated a digitization project and I volunteered. Spending hours with these stories, listening to the voices over and over again in order to get the annotations just right, I became attached to the people I was listening to. I wanted others to know what they had to say, too.

Seven years later I am excited to know that these important stories that complicate so many tropes of African-American history will be available within a historical context and framework. My book is being published by an academic press, but it is intentionally accessible -- as fitting for a local book club as for the classroom.

I believe that narrative histories that amplify the voices of those who lived that history can encourage more people to care about what has happened in the past, and to see the way it connects to what is happening in the present.

Link to book:

<https://www.rutgersuniversitypress.org/alien-soil/9781978833531/>



***Student-Centered Oral History: An Ethical Guide* by Summer Cherland, PhD**

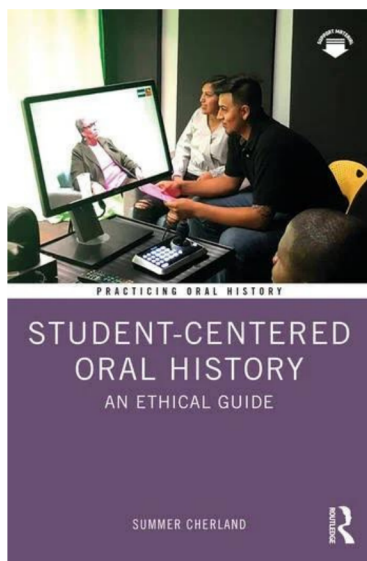
Student-Centered Oral History explores the overlaps of Culturally Relevant Teaching, Student-Centered Teaching, and oral history to demonstrate how this method empowers students, especially those from historically underrepresented communities.

With tangible tools like lesson plans and reflection sheets, each interactive chapter is applicable to classrooms and age groups across the globe. Educators from all levels of experience will benefit from step-by-step guides and lesson plans, all organized around guiding questions. These lessons coach students and educators from start to finish through a Student-Centered Oral History. Background research, historical context, cultivating a Culture of Consent, analysis, promotion, and gratitude are among the many lessons taught beyond writing questions and interviewing. With a specific focus on the ethics influencing a teacher's role as guide and grader of a Student-Centered Oral History, this book also highlights successful approaches across the world of students and teachers discovering oral history. These examples reveal how Student-Centered Oral History empowers academic achievement, radicalizes knowledge, develops relationships, and promotes community engagement.

This book is a useful tool for any students and scholars interested in oral history in an educational setting. It will be available for pre-order on April 2, and will ship after April 23.

Link to book:

<https://www.routledge.com/Student-Centered-Oral-History-An-Ethical-Guide/Cherland/p/book/9781032325187>



Del Mar Historical Society Update on Oral History Projects by Annie Duvall

Suzi Resnik and Annie Duval, lifetime SOHA members, are still going strong as volunteers with the Del Mar Historical Society's Del Mar Voices Oral History Project. Tensia Moriel Trejo, now 96, completes the threesome who together have attended and presented at many SOHA Annual Conferences. Tensia remains an active member of the DMHS and is a valuable source of knowledge about Del Mar's history.

This past year, Del Mar Voices was fortunate to record the oral histories of three of the significant long-time residents of the city who have helped shape Del Mar's history. Joe Harper, CEO of the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club, is one of those treasured oral histories that will soon be available to our community and wider. As the grandson of motion-picture giant Cecil B. DeMille, and whose Uncle Tony was known to everyone else as Anthony Quinn, Joe tells some good stories about his life, the racetrack, and the early days in Del Mar. Barbara Harper has been generous in lending the DMHS many old photos which bring to life Joe's oral history. Suzi, Larry Brooks (DMHS President), and Susie Stevenson (DMHS volunteer) are teaming up on this project.

Another key oral history this year is that of two locals, Ivan Gayler and David Winkler. They completed their first real estate project in Del Mar in 1979. Later in 1989, they bought the Del Mar Plaza and turned it into the gorgeous gathering place that it is today. There is a fascinating history which has much more to offer than their real estate endeavors. Larry Brooks and Lynn Gaylord (DMHS volunteer) worked together on this oral history.

A great new project this past year has been the collaboration between the DMHS Del Mar Voices, Del Mar Community Connections (DMCC), a volunteer organization serving seniors, and San Diego State University Center for Public and Oral History (CPOH). Through a grant from the DMCC, one SDSU student each year for four years will receive a \$1,000 award, to allow the selected student to receive training in oral history interviewing and then conduct an interview with one of Del Mar's seniors. Emma "Scout" Kubow, B.A. Sociology, was our first awardee.

DMHS will soon be applying for their second grant with California Revealed, a California State Library initiative that helps provide online access to archival materials. Many of the Del Mar Voices oral histories are already archived on this website and are available at <https://californiarevealed.org/> They are archived with the San Diego County Library and available for review in the Del Mar Branch Library. We would like to thank Barbara Jardee of Jardee Transcription, who performs excellent transcription service for Del Mar Voices recordings.

THE SOUTHWEST ORAL HISTORY
ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

*Registration
Now
Open!*

ROOTED IN MEMORY
AND RESISTANCE:
CULTIVATING RADICAL
FUTURES

2024 CONFERENCE

FRIDAY, MAY 31-MONDAY, JUNE 3
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

CLICK TO SIGN UP FOR A SOHA MEMBERSHIP
AND ENJOY A SPECIAL CONFERENCE RATE!

COMPLETE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION HERE

