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UC Regent Richard Blum with UC Berkeley Chancellor Nicholas Dirks (background) at the presentation of Blum's oral history.

From the Director

From the Director: Spring Teaching, and Learning

They came from across California, nearly all of them with an oral history project in mind, each brimming with questions and seeking tips and pointers. Some participants wanted to know the most effective ways of questioning interview subjects. Others wanted to know about the history and role of oral history as a discipline in American society and culture. Still others wanted to know the latest technology available to capture their projects for posterity and to make them digitally available to the public. Judging by the oohs and ahs and extended applause rendered at its conclusion, the first annual spring Oral History Workshop, given by Oral History Center staffers over a two-day period on campus in March, was a rousing success. [[read more](#)]



David Dunham on audio recording techniques

David Dunham on audio recording techniques
on campus in March, was a rousing success.

Alice Paul: Claiming Power and the Suffragist Oral History Project

Guest column by Jill Zahniser



Alice Paul,
the subject of a new biography

ROHO's Suffragists Oral History Project (SOHP) has long been a boon to those of us working to reconstruct American women's campaign to win the vote. In particular, the interviews, completed in the 1970s, showcase significant figures in the National Woman's Party (NWP), among them leader Alice Paul. The online searchable format happily makes the content of these precious oral histories easily accessible to all. The late Amelia R. Fry and I co-authored the recent biography of Alice Paul's early life and suffrage years, *Alice Paul: Claiming Power* (Oxford, 2014). Fry was a key member of the SOHP staff. She became dogged in her pursuit of surviving NWP members. [[read more](#)]

2015 Advanced Oral History Summer Institute Planning Underway

Fresh off a successful and sold-out Introduction to Oral History Workshop -- or Oral History 101 -- in March, we are preparing for our annual Advanced Oral History Institute, to be held from August 10-14. [Registration](#) is now open. Along with our regular [institute faculty](#), we are thrilled to announce [Amy Evans](#) as our keynote speaker and guest faculty member. Evans is an artist, writer, teacher, and documentarian. She built the documentary program at the Southern Foodways Alliance, where she served as their lead oral historian for more than ten years. The Mississippi Historical Society has twice recognized Amy's work, and *Food & Wine* magazine named her one of the "most fearsome talents" in the culinary world. Her writing has appeared in *Saveur*, *The Bitter Southerner*, and *Cornbread Nation 5: The Best of Southern Food Writing*. Amy holds an MA in Southern Studies from the University of Mississippi and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art. She appreciates a good meringue and can never eat too many oysters. Along with Amy, several other scholars and public historians will join us as guest speakers and panelists at the institute.



Summer Institute keynote speaker,
Amy Evans

What some participants in the 2014 Advanced Summer Institute said:

"It was great to have so many opportunities to connect with fellow participants and hear about the Institute faculty's projects. The schedule was effective, and humane!"

"I was impressed by the training provided by the Summer Institute. The curriculum was well designed and comprehensive, from an overview of the field, crafting of a project, to its analysis and dissemination in the digital age."

"I feel empowered, now, to do my project correctly. I had fundamental project ideas that stuck with me throughout the week, but my understanding of the oral history process grew richer. I arrived timid and uncertain about how to begin, but I feel ready to do oral history work now."

"It was great to see the Institute faculty working in great partnership and with passion for their work, which is very diverse but focused. I learned a lot and was greatly inspired."

"The opportunity to talk about oral history and hear about other people's research was invaluable. I don't think I've ever had such an intensive amount of dialogue about my work or chosen research methods. It was so helpful to engage in these conversations with both faculty and other participants."

"I found it extremely beneficial to have such a wide array of projects and project stages represented by the participants. Also, the Institute faculty was exceptional. What professionals, wonderful presenters, and teachers! It was truly inspiring."

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From the Archives

From the Archives: Sylvia McLaughlin and the Fight to Save San Francisco Bay



Sylvia McLaughlin,
founder of Save the Bay

This year marks half a century since the establishment of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). This regional commission was created in 1965 by the state legislature with the mission to slow the filling of the San Francisco Bay, which was becoming rampant -- including one plan to double the size of Berkeley through bay fill. The legislation also mandated improved public access to the shoreline. The BCDC came to be established in large part thanks to the efforts of **Sylvia McLaughlin** and a group of local activists that formed the group **Save the Bay**. Also this year, we are conducting lengthy interviews with two former directors of the BCDC, Joe Bodovitz and Will Travis. Check back here in the coming months for the release of those transcripts.

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News About ROHO

The 2015 "Class of 1931" Interview in University History

We are thrilled to announce the 2015 "Class of 1931" interviewee in university history: Patricia Pelfry. Dr. Pelfry is currently a Senior Research Associate with the Center for Studies in Higher Education at Berkeley. Before joining the Center in 2002, Pelfrey served for more than thirty years as a member of the immediate staff of five University of California presidents: Charles J. Hitch, David S. Saxon, David P. Gardner, J. W. Peltason, and Richard C. Atkinson. On her retirement from the Office of the President she was granted the title Assistant to the President Emerita in recognition of her service to the University. She is co-author (with Margaret Cheney) of *A Brief History of the University of California* (University of California Press, 2004) and editor of *The Pursuit of Knowledge: Speeches and Papers of Richard C. Atkinson* (University of California Press, 2007). Her most recent book is *Entrepreneurial President: Richard Atkinson and the University of California, 1995-2003* (University of California Press, 2012), a study of the Atkinson presidency and the principal issues facing the University of California during this seminal period. She has also authored or co-authored papers on affirmative action, undergraduate admissions, industry-university relationships, and other higher-education topics. Pelfrey holds a Ph.D. in English literature from UC Berkeley.



Recent ROHO Interviews...

In recent months ROHO has completed and released several interviews, which you might have missed if you don't follow us on social media. These interviews include: Financier, philanthropist, and President Emeritus of the UC Board of Regents [Richard Blum](#); leading researcher of bio-pharmaceuticals [Leslie Benet](#); renowned metallurgist [Roshan Bhappu](#) and engineer and steel company executive [Dick Teets](#), both from the new [Global Mining and Materials Research Project](#); three new interviews for the [Portuguese in California](#) oral history project; former UC Berkeley [Chancellor Robert Birgeneau](#) on university athletics; National Park Service Superintendent [Judy Hart](#); and the several dozen interviews on Berkeley's [Free Speech Movement](#).

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Coming Up

And stay tuned for...

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

- Over 40 interviews with the **Law Clerks of Chief Justice Earl Warren**;
- **The University of California Athletics Oral History Project**, which features interviews with 70 experts on the issues of university sports programs;
- The first five interviews documenting the history of **West Coast Cocktails**, including **Jorg Rupf, founder of St. George Spirits**;
- Famed James Beard Award-winning winemaker **Zelma Long**;
- **Art Gensler**, founder of what is now the largest architecture and design firm in

the United States;

- Former Berkeley assistant vice chancellor, **Dorothy Walker**;
- **Joe Bodovitz** and **Will Travis**, both former leaders with the California Coastal Commission and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission
- Famed mezzo-soprano **Frederica von Stade**;
- **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;
- **Randy Schekman**, 2013 Nobel Prize winner in Medicine;
- And the several interviews of the **Omega Boys Club Oral History Project**.

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

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