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Berkeley professor and ROHO interviewee Margaret Wilkerson (right) with ROHO editor Linda Norton

From the Director

Oral History and News Interviewing: A Study in Contrast

People who know Barclay Simpson are aware of his many accomplishments. An entrepreneur and innovator, Simpson founded one of the world's most successful engineering firms from his boyhood Oakland home. The company, Simpson Manufacturing, is a maker of structural connectors used in housing and commercial construction that over the past half century have become the industry standard around the world. ([Read more](#))

ROHO in Action

ROHO Celebrates the "Oral History Class of 2013"

On the evening of May 1st, ROHO hosted over 200 guests for a very unique "graduation ceremony." Over the past year, several dozen individual interviews have been completed along with two major, multi-year projects. We invited everyone to participate in this convocation, which was half ceremony and half party. [Videos](#) drawn from our [Rosie the Riveter / WWII Home Front](#) and our [Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream](#) oral history projects were shown to a rapt audience, followed by special words from National Park Service Ranger Tom Leatherman and former Dreyer's owners (and Berkeley alums) Rick Cronk and Gary Rogers. Berkeley Chancellor Robert Birgeneau concluded the program by recognizing many of the distinguished Berkeley staff and faculty interviewed in recent years. We expect that this will be an annual event, so we hope to see everyone again in 2014!



Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front project interviewee John Fong with his family at the "Oral History Class of 2013" reception

[On the Historian's Eye: Yale's Matthew Frye Jacobson interviewed by Sam Redman](#)

The following is an edited selection of a discussion between Matthew Frye Jacobson of Yale University and Samuel James Redman, formerly of ROHO (as of this September an assistant professor of history at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst). The exchange was part of ROHO's 2012 Summer Oral History Institute and centered upon Jacobson's experiences in establishing a unique new project called Historian's Eye. Historian's Eye is a digital initiative intended to archive the current political moment through photography and oral history while also developing pedagogical tools for helping students to think historically about the present. The project has expanded to a number of university campuses beyond Yale, including UC Berkeley, where students and faculty in American Studies have recently conducted dozens of interviews in consultation with ROHO. ([Read more](#))

[Gene Patents Past and Present: A Selection from ROHO's Series on Genentech](#)

In the recent, and unanimous, decision in *Association of Molecular Pathology v. Myriad Genetics* (2013), the US Supreme Court decided that genes which occur naturally cannot be patented. The decision, and the media attention generated by it, reminded us of a similarly important decision by the Supreme Court in 1980 in which the court ruled that "man-made" microorganisms are patentable. The earlier decision, *Diamond vs. Chakrabarty*, was discussed in ROHO's 2002 interview with Thomas Kiley, legal counsel and vice president for Genentech, 1976-1988. In a selection from that interview reprinted below, ROHO historian Sally Smith Hughes asks Kiley about gene patents and the prospects of the company's initial public offering. ([Read more](#))

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From the Archives

A New Feature in this Issue!

Health and Disease in Saudi Arabia: The Aramco experience, 1940s-1990s

In June 1947 American medical entomologist Richard Daggy stepped off a plane in Dhahran onto a tarmac strip melting in the over-100-degree heat. The airport was a quonset hut separated from the runway by a sand dune. It had taken him several days of air travel to get there and he knew almost nothing of the famously private desert kingdom. He was sent there to help eradicate malaria, but there was only sand as far as he could see. "I was puzzled as to why a good, self-respecting malaria mosquito could make it in Saudi Arabia," he recalled. ([Read more](#))

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News About ROHO

Advanced Oral History Summer Institute

ROHO staff are in the process of rethinking and redesigning our always sold-out Summer Institute. Look for an announcement in the fall detailing its return in 2014.

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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 the 14 interviews of the **San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Oral History Project** as well as life history interviews with UC Berkeley emeritus professor **Lloyd Ullman**, late labor activist **Mattie Jackson**, and Professor **Laura Nader**, ROHO's 2013 "Class of '31" interviewee.

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