

Regional
Oral
History
Office

ROHO

Newsletter - Summer 2014

Contents:

From the Director

ROHO in Action

From the Archives

News About ROHO

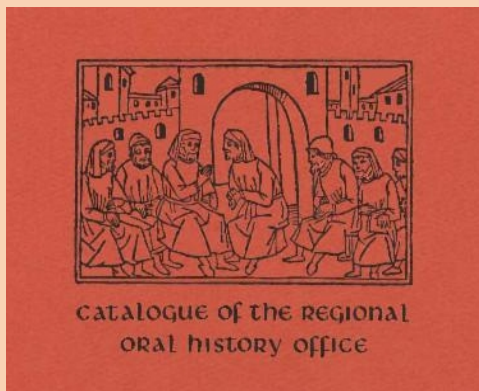
Coming Up



Columbia University law professor Patricia Williams at ROHO's May 16th celebration

From the Director

From ROHO's Director: Sixty Years of Oral History at Berkeley



Cover of the printed catalog of ROHO's interviews, 1980.

Two-Thousand Fourteen is proving to be a milestone year for oral history at Berkeley. Not only does it mark sixty years since the founding of the oral history office in the Bancroft Library, the office also is in the process of retiring our long-held name, the Regional Oral History Office, in favor of the more appropriate "Oral History Center of The Bancroft Library." You can read more about the name change below, but first let's look back.

The Oral History Center celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, and with the name change it gives us a chance to reflect back on its many accomplishments. A field that had its roots in Hubert Howe Bancroft's dictations series of oral history interviews with 19th century early West coast settlers, was solidified under the legendary leadership of Willa Baum starting in 1954. [[Read more](#)]

[Back to Top](#)

ROHO in Action

ROHO to Become the Oral History Center of the Bancroft Library

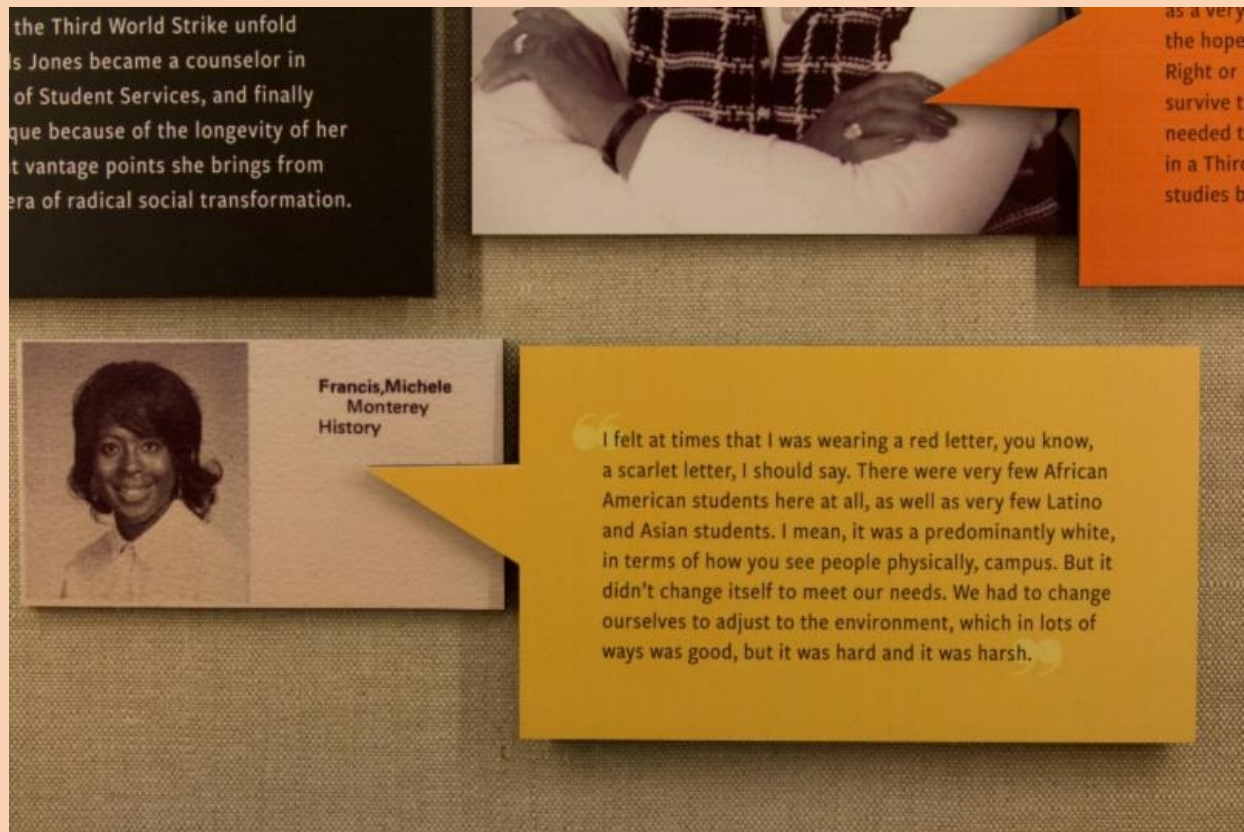
In his quarterly newsletter column, Neil Henry announced that soon the Regional Oral History Office will be changing its name to the Oral History Center of The Bancroft Library.

The name "Regional Oral History Office" carries with it a long and distinguished history

and we are not letting go of it lightly. After all, ROHO is now sixty years old, making it the second-oldest oral history program in the country - and perhaps the world! In order to explain why we are jettisoning the "regional" in our name, we first need to explain why it was used to begin with. [[Read more](#)]

The African-American Faculty & Senior Staff Project Celebrated at Annual Event

On May 16 we celebrated the completion of our interview project with pioneering African American Faculty and Senior Staff at UC Berkeley. After many years of editing these interviews and then co-curating the "Originals" exhibit with Kathryn Neal, Alison Wannamaker, and Neil Henry, I was thrilled to be in the Morrison Room with the interviewees, family and friends, and faculty, staff, and students at Berkeley. Professor Emeritus Russ Ellis spoke about the genesis of the project way back at the beginning of the 21st century... [[Read more](#)]



Detail photograph from the exhibit, "The Originals," now on view in Berkeley's Doe Library.

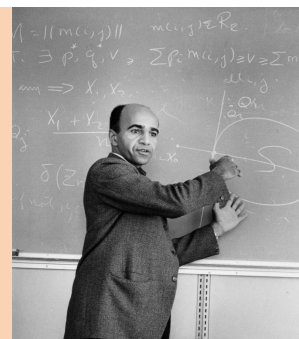
[Back to Top](#)

From the Archives

[From the Archives: Professor David Blackwell, Likely the First African-American to Earn Tenure at Berkeley](#)

David Blackwell was born in 1919 in Centralia, Illinois. He went on to become a great mathematical thinker and made fundamental contributions to the areas of probability theory, mathematical statistics, set theory and logic, and of course, game theory, to

name a few. When Professor Blackwell came to UC Berkeley in 1954 after a decade at Howard University in Washington D.C., he became, we think, the first African American ladder rank faculty person system-wide. I love Blackwell's story lamenting the loss of children organizing their own neighborhood events. [[Read more](#)]



Prof. David Blackwell

[Back to Top](#)

[News About ROHO](#)

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: "spatial composer" [Henry Brant](#); sixteen interviews documenting [anti-apartheid protests](#) at Berkeley in 1985; Pulitzer-prize winning historian of race in America [Leon Litwack](#); seven interviews remembering the contributions of biochemist [Daniel Koshland, Jr.](#); and chemist [Bill Lester](#) and composer [Olly Wilson](#), both interviewed for the [African-American Faculty and Senior Staff Oral History Project](#).

[Back to Top](#)

[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:

- Almost four dozen interviews documenting UC Berkeley's **Free Speech Movement**, which burst onto the scene 50 years ago this fall;
- **Art Gensler**, founder of what is now the largest architecture and design firm in the United States;
- Five interviews from the **West Coast Cocktail** oral history project;
- **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;
- **Randy Schekman**, 2013 Nobel Prize winner in Medicine;
- Renowned metallurgist **Roshan Bhappu**;
- **John Pritzker**, hotel developer and leader of the San Francisco Jewish community;
- And the several interviews of the **Omega Boys Club Oral History Project**.

[Back to Top](#)

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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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