

Editorial Note 35/2015

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Welcome to Volume 35 (2015) of the *Oral History Forum d'histoire orale*, the fortieth anniversary issue!

Last year, the journal made its transition to a new editor, reviews editor, and editorial board. Sixteen individuals – seasoned and new scholars, employed inside and outside of academia – have made three-year commitments as [board members](#) to help shape the future of the journal. Two issues were published: our [regular issue](#), plus a [special issue on Human Rights and Oral History](#) (guest edited by Michael Kilburn). Each featured three peer-reviewed articles, in addition to reviews, conference reports, reflections, and – a first for this journal – artwork.

This year, in addition to volume 35, we will publish a special issue on Canada's role in Germany's reunification, guest edited by Alexander von Plato (founder of German oral history journal *BIOS*) and Karen Brglez (University of Manitoba). Forthcoming special issues include one on Oral History and Religion, guest edited by Susie Fisher (University of Manitoba) and Rebecca Plett (McMaster University), one on Generations and Memory, guest edited by Kathy Bischooping (York University) and Yumi Ishii (University of Tokyo), and one on Oral History and Disability, guest edited by Claudia Malacrida (University of Lethbridge). Interested in guest editing a special themed issue? Please contact me.

Volume 35 is a milestone issue. Forty years ago, the Canadian Oral History Association (COHA) and this journal were founded. Several people with significant past involvements in COHA were invited to reflect on the organization's past, present, and future. Caroline Forcier-Holloway was the long-serving COHA secretary-treasurer. Ken Clavette was COHA chair from 1996 to 2001. Richard Lohead was editor of the *Canadian Oral History Association Journal* (later renamed *Oral History Forum d'histoire orale*) from 1979 to 1982. Ronald Labelle edited *Forum* from 1995 to 2002, before handing that responsibility to Patricia Skidmore-Skuce, who edited the journal through 2006. Alexander Freund was *Forum* co-editor from 2005 through 2013. Their thoughtful analyses and personal stories remind us that Canada's oral history organization, journal, and movement has had a long (though not an easy) history.

As always, I encourage you to submit items for possible publication to forum@uwinnipeg.ca or ja.thiessen@uwinnipeg.ca. Scholarly articles, work in progress, personal reflections, conference reports, descriptions of oral history collections, letters to the editor – all are welcomed! Reader-contributors should feel free to imagine and explore the possibilities that exist with an online publication, and submit items that take advantage of the audio, visual, and hyperlink capabilities of *Forum*. ALL readers should see themselves as potential

contributors, since the journal is not (and has never been) the exclusive domain of university-based academics. Independent oral historians, teachers, community members, and activists should see the *Forum* as a place to bring their ideas, notices, and research. In addition, if you are interested in reviewing oral history-related books, websites, performances, movies, please contact Reviews Editor Angela Schippers (a.schippers@uwinnipeg.ca).

For those who are new to *Forum*, each volume is opened on 1 January and closed on 31 December. Contributions are published as soon as they have passed the editorial process, allowing for speedy publication. As well, thematic Special Issues are produced regularly. In addition to peer-reviewed articles, *Forum* aims to publish teaching resources, course outlines and syllabi; short think, discussion, and opinion pieces; works of art emerging from oral history (visual art, play scripts, poetry, fiction); annotated transcripts; audio tours; works in progress; conference reports; and other items. Let me know what you'd like to see!

Finally, I ask that readers consider supporting the journal financially, either by donation or by becoming members of the Canadian Oral History Association. As explained in previous editorial notes, there are many excellent reasons for becoming a member of COHA:

- COHA and *Forum* need members and subscribers for our application to SSHRC for journal funding.
- While funding allows us to make *Forum* open access, a solid base of membership fees allows us to develop both COHA and *Forum*, for example by sponsoring national meetings or the translation of oral history articles.
- If COHA wants to participate in public discussions about the role of oral history in Canadian society, this can only be accomplished with a strong membership behind us.
- Oral history is a social movement to democratize history. Large organizations in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, New Zealand, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States as well as a strong international associations (IOHA) demonstrate this as much as the rapidly growing organizations in the Czech Republic, Italy, Japan, Poland, Russia, and many other countries around the world. Canadians can best be part of this movement if we have a strong association, build networks, and connect more systematically to global oral history networks.

Forty years of publishing *Oral History Forum d'histoire orale* is a milestone worth celebrating. I hope you join us in doing so, and in planning for the next forty years.

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