

# Seasonal Newsletter



South Phoenix  
Oral History Project

Winter 2020-2021

## Happy New Year & Save the Date! Virtual Documentary Premiere & Silent Auction

Originally planned as an in-person event, we rescheduled the premiere of *Origins: Celebrating 40 Years of SMCC* for January 22nd on YouTube.



*Click on the image to watch our save the date video*

[Click HERE to watch our holiday greetings video](#)

[Click HERE to RSVP](#)

[Click HERE to bookmark the premiere link](#)

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# 2020: What a Year!

*By Summer Cherland, PhD, History Faculty*

Dear friends and community partners,

First and foremost, I hope this message finds you in good health as one very difficult year came to a close and another potentially began. Our hearts go out to those of you who've suffered heartbreak in the recent challenging months. Several of you lost family members and loved ones in 2020, and we said goodbye to some of our own, as well. It's been a tough road.

Since March, the students and faculty of the South Phoenix Oral History Project have faced the challenges of remote learning head-on with creativity and inspiration, and I am excited to share some of our projects with you. This seasonal newsletter is full of examples of our students' and faculty collective creativity and ingenuity!

Online learning didn't stop our students from learning about you. They were able to research and write about four of our narrators. Those profiles will be live at [southphoenixoralhistory.com](http://southphoenixoralhistory.com) in early January.

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*“Online learning didn't stop our students from learning about you.”*

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We also didn't stop interviewing. Dr. Travis May and I conducted several oral histories via Zoom. We were thrilled when Dr. Wil Counts—the founding Dean of Students—joined us in our socially distanced theater to share his memories with us.

Ele Anedde, a graduate of Columbia University's Masters in Oral History joined us all the way from Sardinia, Italy as an intern. Ele rehailed our website to make it more researcher-friendly. I hope you'll take a look.

One of the coolest projects to come out of 2020 was our historic walking tour. What was once a little walk of campus that I took with my classes is now a free virtual or guided experience, thanks to the brilliance of two students who saw what could be!

We continue to work on developing our physical archive along with our digital materials and hope to have an official special manuscript collection housed in our library in the coming years. We're so excited that colleagues around the campus are willing to help us envision the space for future students, researchers, and community members.

Meanwhile, work on our special collection, “Learning in the COVID19 Era” continues. Over 100 students and teachers around the world have contributed to our podcast and blog.

We are grateful to our campus administration for their continued support of these programs, and we are so proud of our students for all they've accomplished in 2020!

Working on  
your own  
fact-based or  
historical  
stories?

# Fact-Based and Historical Stories

By Liz Warren, MA, Storytelling Faculty

Shortly after we began the South Phoenix Oral History Project, Dr. Cherland and I wrote a new class, *Creating and Telling Fact-based and Historical Stories*. With the help of our history and storytelling colleagues around the district, we got it cross-listed under both of our disciplines. We offered it for the first time this fall, and we had twelve students, most of whom are experienced storytellers.

It turned out to be an exceptional and unforgettable experience. Participants crafted and told five stories each on the themes of Moments versus Millennia, The Personal is Historical, Telling the Stories of the South Phoenix Oral History Project, Putting the Facts in Fact-Based, and The Historical is Personal.

Tellers researched, crafted, and expertly told over 60 stories this semester. This included stories about the first black female cartoonist, experiencing the great earthquake in San Francisco, the great Halifax disaster, a mother who worked for the FBI when the internment of the Japanese began, a local artist who painted the flower gardens on Baseline, and beloved SMCC colleagues, just to name a few. The stories are being recorded to add to the South Phoenix Oral History Project, to the walking tour, and to the Storytelling Institute's Podcast.

This was a class that none of us wanted to end. Week after week, the tellers produced stories of remarkable depth and quality. It was the right class for our time, as it allowed us to explore this life-changing historical moment, as well as moments in the past that brought us here.

One student wrote of her experience: "This has felt so timely, not only the election season but our whole moment in history. I learned a new level of thoughtfulness and discipline. I am proud of my classmates for the times they pushed themselves, away from comfort zones, or into new experiments in telling, point of view and so on, and I am proud of our group for supporting and lifting each other up."

Another said, "I would like to affirm the power of this community, the willingness each brought to the quality of listening and telling. You each have given me the kind of gift that is the very best--where each insight, image, detail you brought to your stories will unfold in my heart for months to come."

Given the power and success of our initial offering of the class, Dr. Cherland and I plan to offer it at least once a year going forward. I was the teacher of record this year, but she attended every single class. Next year, she will be the teacher, and I will be right there at her side!

Announcing  
Our  
5-Day Stay at  
Home  
Storytelling and  
Oral History  
Retreat!

Coming Spring 2021

Are you:

- In the middle of a chapter/article and stuck?
- Trying to improve a lesson?
- Creating copy for your archive's website or newsletter?
- Working on a family or historical story that you need background for?
- In need of a hook for your chapter/article?
- Drafting a Documentary?

Sign up for our 5-day stay-at-home retreat. Improve your writing, telling, and presentation skills with this five-day intensive retreat. Each day features a getting started lesson and activity, and ends with a community gathering. Learn to combine historical research and storytelling skills to grow your research! Improve your storytelling with history, and your history with storytelling.

Email  
historysouthmountain@gmail.com for more info. Special rates for students available.

## 360° of History

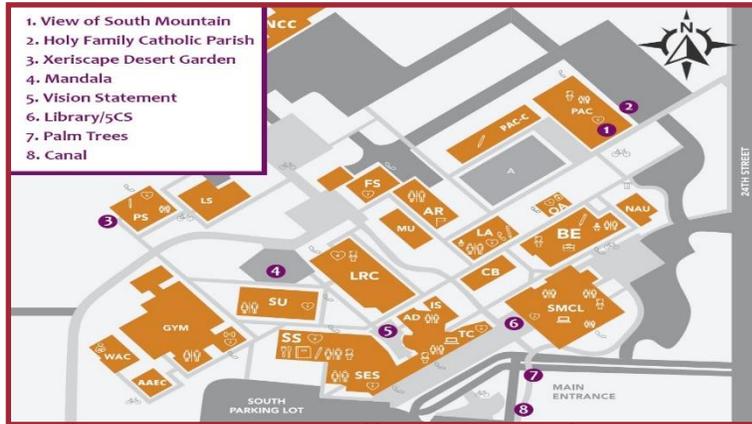
*By Travis May, EdD,  
Storytelling Faculty*

Since online learning and digital content have been increasing over the last several years, having a way to capture and deliver this information is essential.

The South Phoenix Oral History Project and the Storytelling Institute are looking for new ways to bring our history to a broader audience, and to enhance student learning.

One way we plan to do this is by capturing images and videos in a 360-degree format. This creative approach will help us tell the story of our community and campus in a unique and interactive way. We hope this addition to the South Phoenix Oral History Project will immerse you in a specific moment in time capturing your imagination. As we continue to push forward, we are always enhancing the way our story is being told.

Look for new images to our website and walking tour in the spring.



*Walking Tour Stops. Image created by Francisco Miranda*

## Announcing Our Guided and Self-Guided Historic Walking Tour

*By Niall McCarthy,  
MA Computer Information Systems Faculty*

In November we completed a year-long project in partnership with the ASU West STEM Train Scholar Program.

Web Design/Development students; Francisco Miranda and Carlos Cruz designed and built a virtual, self-guided, historically themed, walking tour of the South Mountain Community College campus that can be enjoyed here.

The tour features eight stops on campus, and each stop illustrates the campus information, but also the local, state, and global forces that made South Phoenix such a uniquely historical place. You can take the Walking Tour anytime from the safety of your own home.

In the future, we encourage you to come to campus and visit all of the sites for yourself or sign up for a guided tour!

Internships such as these are an integral part of a "STEM Train" collaboration between SMCC and ASU West which is funded by the National Science Foundation.

Both Francisco and Carlos are graduating SMCC and transferring to ASU West in Spring 2021 as part of this program.

## FALL 2020 Metrics

[19 New Posts about Learning in the COVID19 Era \(99 Total\)](#)

[9 Podcast Episodes Published about Teaching in the COVID19 Era \(50 Total\)](#)

**8 New Student Researchers Contributed to the SPHX/SMCC Memories Collection (96 Total)**

**6 New Oral Histories Conducted (74 Total)**

**6 Faculty Contributors from 5 Different Fields**

**4 Student-Written Narrator Profiles Published**

**4 Student Stories Recorded for Publication**

**2 Graduates bound for ASU West**

See it all at [southphoenixoralhistory.com](http://southphoenixoralhistory.com)

## 74 Oral History Interviews Completed or Planned

*Bold denotes conducted in Fall 2020*

Alfredo de los Santos	Jackie Jaap	Raul Sandoval
Alfredo Gutierrez	Janet Denson	Richard Morales, Sr.
Amalia Villegas	Jerome K. Garrison, Sr.	Rod Ambrose
Anthony Gray	<b>Jim Smith</b>	Rosalinda Cota
Belen Servin	John Cordova	Rose Turman
Brian "Doc" Murphy	Joyce Elsner*	Shalmeka Sweet
Carlie Back	<b>Julie Holston</b>	Shari Olson
Chris Haines	Kathie Hawkins	Sheena Mata
Cordelia "Cori" Washington	Kathy Nakagawa	Shelly Smith*
Cristina Godinez	Ken Atwater	<b>Sian Proctor</b>
Dan Gronseth	Ken Roberts	Sonia Bribiescas
Dolly Aguirre	Landres "Buddy" Cheeks	Stephen Hustedde
Dolores Urbieta	Lara Collins	Steve Cruz
Don Jensen-Bobadilla	Laura Pastor	<b>Steven Fountaine</b>
Doug Ferguson	Lorraine Calbow	Susan Solano Navarro
Elizabeth Warren	Lorrie Shelton	Sylvia Villaverde
Francisco Avalos	Lupe Villicana	Teresa Lebya Ruiz
Fred Stahl	Lydia Burrue Johnson	<b>Terry Fender</b>
Grace Wright*	Marilyn Torres*	Tita Navarro Triphahn
George Brooks, Jr.	Matt Smith	Tony Bracamonte
Guillermo "Bill" Zepeda	Michelle Gutierrez de Sand-oval	Vanessa Logan
Henry Rose	Nick Nakagawa	<b>Wil Counts</b>
Helen Smith	Paul Elsner	Wilma Patterson
Irene Gaither	Raul Cardenas	<b>Yvette Espinoza</b>
Isola Jones		Yvonne Montiel

## 4 New Oral History Profile Stories Published January 2021

*Isola Jones* 🌀 *Shalmeka Sweet* 🌀 *Vanessa Logan* 🌀 *Wil Counts*

See their student-written bios at [southphoenixoralhistory.com](http://southphoenixoralhistory.com) in January!

## SPOH's Student Writers and Researchers

### Fall 2020

Nine online students contributed to our growing digital archive by researching some of you and writing for the website! The following students are now part of our growing list of student-researchers who are documenting the significance of South Phoenix history.

Mohamed Noor  
Ali Hussain  
Jaime Arredondo  
Kimberly Chavez  
Miles Bower  
Makayla Lovelace  
Micah Simpson  
Jordan Cook  
Antoinette Silago

### Coming Spring 2021

We will return to our original model, with students conducting the interviews! Now that we have more familiarity with remote interviewing, students will again be able to participate in the process at every step.

Do you know someone who should be interviewed? Please reach out and let us know. We are looking for more people with active or former ties to the South Phoenix Community.

Email their info to us at [historysouthmountain@gmail.com](mailto:historysouthmountain@gmail.com).

## SPOH Profile: Dr. Douglas Ferguson

Dr. Douglas Ferguson was born a triplet in Chicago, Illinois during World War II. He earned a scholarship to play basketball at Iowa Wesleyan University in Mount Pleasant, Iowa in the late 1960s. From there, he coached and taught at Elgin Community College until moving to the Phoenix area in 1979.

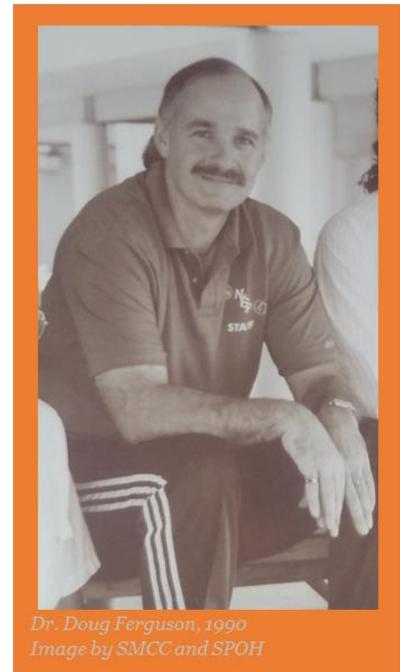
Upon moving to Arizona, Ferguson tried opening a roofing business, but his heart remained in education. In 1981 he was offered coaching jobs at GCC and SMCC. Ferguson, who valued loyalty, worked with campus administration to fulfill his commitment at GCC while also working full-time as a Program Advisor at SMCC.

Later, Ferguson became the third A.D. hired in only three years at South Mountain Community College. He held the position for 22 years. Under Ferguson's guidance, SMCC's athletic programs grew to include fifteen total programs, and several winning regional and national championships.

On Tuesday, June 16th, 2020 Doug passed away. South Mountain Community College lost a great friend, a devoted colleague, and a true founder of our campus. He will be missed very much.

Read more at

<https://southphoenixoralhistory.com/narrators/doug-ferguson>



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*“People would help out all the time. We just got stuff done.”  
~ Doug Ferguson, remembering the community and SMCC*

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### Thank You for Your Support!

Special thanks to those who donated at or above the “Climate” level in Fall 2020:

Scott and Katy Spexarth

Troy and Adrienne Meeker

Jay and Jennifer Syler

### Support SPOH Students and Programs

Want to support the continued efforts to capture and preserve the history of South Phoenix and SMCC? Here's how:

- Donate to support students and programs by visiting our e-store. Any amount is welcome. <https://smcc-maricopa.nbsstore.net/south-phoenix-oral-history-project>
- Suggest us to friends and colleagues—anyone who is interested in the history of our community. We're always looking for more input!
- Join us virtually on January 22nd for the Premiere and Silent Auction.
- Share your memories with us. We'd love to see your photos, hear your stories, and know more about you. Contact us at [historysouthmountain@gmail.com](mailto:historysouthmountain@gmail.com).

# Determining Metadata From Website to Archive: Designing Metadata for the South Phoenix Oral History Project

By Ele Anedde, MA, SPOH Intern

This semester I was asked to have a look at the website to determine, "Is there something we can do to make it more user-friendly?" This prompted a lot of thinking around the best ways to present oral histories online. How do we communicate the depth and complexity of an oral history to the public?

The student and faculty-written stories contextualize the oral histories, making both the interview and significance of the narrator accessible to the broader public.

However, metadata or specific "information about aspects of an oral history," such as the date of the recording, duration, and copyright etc, was not available to researchers. But what kind of metadata did this project need exactly? In-depth details about the narrator were already at the reader's disposal because of the story's summary. Although, we were conscious that researchers might need quick and easy access to data rather than having it "buried" in the paragraphs. Therefore, we wanted to be selective, and customize the metadata so that it would serve the project and meet the needs of the audience for whom this collection was available.

Our hope for the future is that researchers who are interested in our collection might use the metadata in order to learn about our project, South Phoenix, and its inhabitants. Our scope was to provide a tool that would increase the accessibility of SPOH, further contextualize the interviews and easily communicate relevant data about the oral histories.

As we were researching the best practices to curate online oral histories archives we came across a vast literature which helped us forge our question for metadata: what is important for us to communicate? What do we need you to know about our oral histories? We have created a tool which we think makes our website more user-friendly, but we think we can still improve and keep crafting our tool as the audiences' needs change over time. So, we would love your help.

*This piece is part of a larger article. To read it entirely and provide feedback, visit <https://southphoenixoralhistory.com/2020/12/16/determining-metadata/>*



*Image: Nicholas Blechman for Harvard Business Review*

# Student Reflections, Fall 2020

Students who participated in the South Phoenix Oral History Project thought back on their contributions this semester. Here's what some had to say:

*Some people live such fruitful lives; it is hard not to become immersed in their stories.*

**Oral history shows us how other people had to go through so much to give us a better future.**

**It is really important that not only the public, but more specifically SMCC students have access to learn about leaders in our community and school.**

*Oral history has been used to collect the information the South Mountain area in Phoenix Arizona, and to remember people who have made contribution's in the development of this community.*

**Thank you for supporting the students and programs of The South Phoenix Oral History Project! See you at the virtual premiere!**