



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

NWFSC
Human Dimensions
Team
Seattle, WA

VOICES from the WEST COAST

A dark green silhouette of a coastal landscape. On the left, a fish is swimming in the water. In the center, a crab is on the shore. On the right, a bird is flying in the sky. The background shows a coastline with hills and a bay.

Preserving our Fishing & Coastal History

Suzanne M. Russell

Overview

- What is an oral history?
- Background of Voices from the Fisheries
- Voices from the West Coast
- Utility of Oral Histories
- Results and Contributions
- Future Goals.....



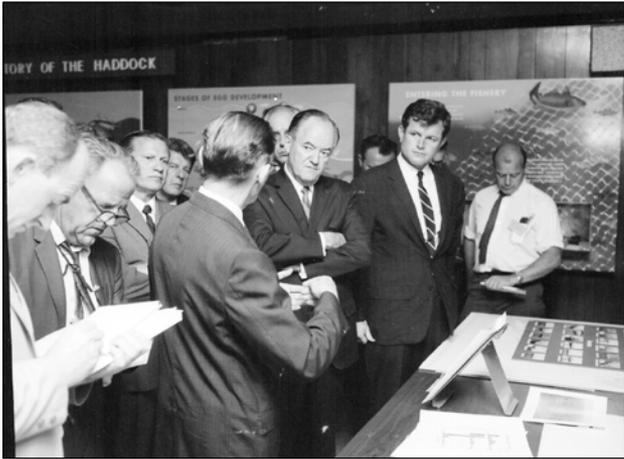
Oral Histories

- ***Working definition:*** oral history is the recording of personal testimony delivered in oral form
 - *it is the **recorded memoir***
 - *it is the **typewritten manuscript***
 - *it is the **research method that uses in-depth unstructured interviewing***



(Yow 2005, p. 3)

VOICES from the FISHERIES



Lab Director
Herbert
Graham
briefs
Humbert
Humphrey
and Ted
Kennedy at
the Woods
Hole
Aquarium



1952, F/V
Conqueror.
Herring
operations.

- 2003 Local Fisheries Knowledge Pilot Project
 - Student participation
 - Database creation
- VFF
 - Sharing platform for oral histories
 - Central Repository
 - Archive/consolidate/distribute
- Collaborators
 - Working Waterfront Festival – New Bedford, MA
 - Rutgers University,
 - MIT Sea Grant

VOICES from the FISHERIES



Dumping
cod end
into
checker,
Albatross
IV



Dr. Roland
Wigley, head
of benthic
Investigation,
Woods Hole,
1962

- Collection Update
 - 2016/17 – 191 new interviews
 - 76 collections
 - 1039 interviews
 - 17 multi-media exhibits
 - 102 interviews
- External Collection Links
 - 1300 interviews

VOICES from the WEST COAST

Preserving our Fishing & Coastal History





Goals

- To increase participation of West Coast community members in the Voices from the Fisheries database
- Represent diverse community members through unique collections
- Preserve Knowledge
- New data source

Utility of Oral Histories

Why Oral Histories

- Preserve History
 - Fishermen's Knowledge
 - Scientific Knowledge
- Use existing oral histories as a data source
 - Means to collect data
 - Does not require PRA
 - Fills gaps in other data collection efforts
- Builds Trust
 - Maintains connections



Results and Contributions



- Oregon's Fishing Communities Adapt in an Evolving Industry: 5/18=23
- The Lives of Fishermen's Wives, Mothers, and Daughters: 16/3=19
- Voices from POORT (Port Orford Resource Team): 7/15=22
- Behind the Scenes – Voices of Industry Suppliers: 4/2=6
- Voices from the Science Centers: 17
- Total = 87

Results and Contributions

- Acknowledging the Voice of Women: Implications for Management and Policy¹
 - Use of oral histories
 - Changing gender roles
 - Increasing complexity in management
 - Community advocacy
 - Scientific collaborations



¹Calhoun, S, F. Conway, S. Russell 2016

Results and Contributions

- Bi-Coastal Examination of ‘Graying of the Fleet’
 - Use existing oral history interviews
 - Compare Northeast & West Coast perceptions
- Results
 - Recognized as a trend on both coasts
 - Why
 - Increases in entry costs
 - Fewer opportunities for mobility
 - Changing regulations



Results and Contributions

- Significance of Findings
 - Provided an increased understanding of the link between ‘graying of the fleet’ and fishery management
 - Confirms ability to identify strong trends in existing oral histories
 - Provides further evidence for the utility of oral history interviews for informing research and policy decisions

Results and Contributions

- Fishermen have contributed information between data collection efforts of the PCGFSS through oral histories
 - Why they participate in different fisheries
 - Their knowledge of shifting ocean conditions and how that may affect their access to fisheries
 - The same species may be bait fish in some communities, but ocean conditions support a more robust growth in other communities which support an international market
 - And much, much more.....

Management Context

- Oral histories contribute to...
 - Additional information to ongoing research
 - Provide a means to collect additional data requests from management
 - Provide a means to collect new data for management
 - Clarify issues community members care about
 - Highlight new issues community members are concerned about
 - Provide information for NMFS succession planning, material for education and outreach.

Future Goals

- Continue expanding existing collections
 - Industry service and supply providers
- Develop new collections:
 - Young fishermen's perspectives
 - New collaboration with processors
 - Northern California perspectives
- Website update
 - Audio snippets, pictures, maps, links to VFF
- Museum displays



Why are oral histories important...

- Not only do they preserve history
- Provides a mechanism to build trust with community members
- Provides an identity to fishing community members
- Changes relationships positively



Questions.....



VOICES FROM THE FISHERIES

Collecting and sharing oral histories from our nation's fisheries.

Marine resources are important to our nation, contributing to our health and our economy, our communities and our culture.

Fisheries are complex enterprises that involve fishermen, processors, distributors, managers, scientists, and consumers.

Listen to the voices of fishermen and others as they talk about their work, families, communities and the marine environment.

Visit www.voices.nmfs.noaa.gov to explore, listen and learn.



voices@noaa.gov



VOICES FROM THE FISHERIES

www.voices.nmfs.noaa.gov

"We got stuck in George's Bank with winds over 120 miles per hour and we did nothing but hold on to the boat for four days..."
S. Stippa, New Bedford, MA

"...some of us began to realize that something serious was happening in the bay because we no longer saw the porpoises, the kingfish..."
J. Kelly, Southold, NY

"...I was told nobody would take you serious on the water...so to see them taking that title...I'm very proud of that..."
S. Davis, Chatham, MA

"That was when Sam Cahoon was known as the 'Yellowtail King'"
A. Nelson, Woods Hole, MA



"It's the way that you present the bait to the fish, it's the area of the bottom that you're choosing to fish, it's the water temperature...it's the barometric changes in the air, it's the wind and the tidal conditions..."
F. Rizzo, Freeport, NY



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