ORAL HISTORY AND THE (DIGITAL) ARCHIVE: THE BRONX ITALIAN AMERICAN HISTORY INITIATIVE

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• **Wordpress:** [Wordpress](#) for the project home page. The home page will direct users to the interviews, the database, and other derivate products created in Nvivo, OHMS, and Knightlab

• **Omeka**

• **CONTENTdm**

• **NVivo**

• **Oral History Metadata Synthesizer (OHMS):** Developed by the Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky, [OHMS](#) allows for the indexing and synchronizing of audio and video files based on both the videos and their transcripts. It is the only platform designed specifically for Oral History projects. The use of OHMS would be in addition to either Omeka or Contentdm and would allow us to create links on interview webpages that produce a more in-depth ADA compliant exploration of their content.

• **Knight Lab:** Similarly, the [Northwestern University Knight Lab](#) has developed a series of digital storytelling tools to design derivative products from video, audio and still images. These include Juxtapose (images), Soundcite (audio), Storymap (creating interactive maps with video and audio), and Timeline (the creation of an interactive timeline with video and audio).
CRITICAL CRITICISMS FROM NEH REVIEWERS

• How can we create a wider audience with the project beyond the Bronx, NYC, Italian American community?

• That we should apply for grants that are focused on addressing gaps in digital collections or oral history

• how can these oral histories be integrated into a more innovative format of technical design? How will the project offer new approaches to content delivery within a digital format beyond the mention of "no mediation"?
Bronx African American History Project

Capturing the History of African Americans in the Bronx

The Bronx African American History Project (BAAHP) is dedicated to uncovering the cultural, political, economic, and religious histories of the more than 360,000 people of African descent in the Bronx.

Oral Histories Digital Archive Open to the Public

We have captured the stories of hundreds of Bronx African Americans who have transformed the borough's character since the 1930s. Consisting of downloadable audio files and verbatim transcripts of interviews conducted from 2002 to 2013, they are available to the public in a new digital archive.

Scholarship and Community

We hope our work will be of use to scholars, students, teachers, public historians, and museum curators who are doing research on people of African descent in New York City or general scholarship on the social development of 20th century American cities. We continue to identify, preserve, catalog, and make accessible archive record collections relating to the history of people of African descent in The Bronx.

We also produce scholarly publications and teaching tools that contribute to the fields of African American studies, African diaspora studies, Urban History, and Sociology.

By building partnerships between Fordham University, the Bronx County Historical Society, and African American and Latino community leaders, ministers, citizens, and elected officials from around the city and especially in the Bronx, we strive to bring to life the rich history of our borough.

https://www.fordham.edu/info/25190/bronx_african_american_history_project
Bronx Italian American History Initiative

Capturing the History of Italian Americans in the Bronx

Founded in 2005, the Bronx Italian American History Initiative (BIAHI) is a collaborative oral history research project that studies the history of Italians and Italian Americans in the Bronx in the 20th century.

The BIAHI recovers the personal narratives of Italian and Italian American residents of the Bronx, both past and present, through an archive of catalogued video and audio interviews. Our goal is to document and map the cultural centers in which they settled, lived and worked, and how they interacted with other ethnic and racial groups as their own racial privilege shifted.

With our partner project, the Bronx African American History Project (BAAHP), we situate our work within a fabric of multi-ethnicity and to thus develop a more in-depth knowledge of the relations between neighborhoods in the Bronx that were home to Jews, Irish, Italian, Latinos, and African Americans.

https://www.fordham.edu/info/27122/bronx_italian_american_history_initiative
A BRONX TALE

THE SADDEST THING IN LIFE IS WASTED TALENT
BELMONT BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
HTTPS://WWW.BRONXLITTLEITALY.COM

The Belmont Business Improvement District proudly presents

FERRAGOSTO
Sunday, September 9th from 12noon - 6pm
Great Food · Great Music · Great Fun
Entertainment By:
Elio Scaccio & JulieAnna, Natalie Pinto,
Steven Maglio, Rock Steady, and Nick Vero
For over 20 years, the merchants of Bronx Little Italy have banded together to keep the Italian tradition alive by engaging visitors in Italian culture, music, and of course, delicious food.
Ferragosto is a chance for people to experience first-hand the neighborhood's old-world charm and tradition of good taste!
For more information: www.Ferragosto.com / (718)BX-ITALY
Parking available at Fordham University 685 E Fordham Rd with Free Shuttle

Bronx Little Italy 2018 Events
Health Fair
June 3 · Crescent Ave · 11-3pm
Summer Concert Series
Fridays in July · Saturdays in August
East 186th St · 12-3pm
Blue Knights Motorcycle Run
August 11 · Hughes Ave · 4-7pm
Ferragosto
September 9 · Arthur Ave · 12-6pm
Columbus Day Festivities
October 8 · East 86th St · 12-3pm
Christmas Tree Lighting
December 2 · Coccamore Park · 4-6pm

For more information: www.BronxLittleItaly.com / (718)BX-ITALY
Connect with us @BronxLittleItaly

112th Annual Feast
in Honor of St. Anthony
The Real Little Italy
Belmont, The Bronx, New York

Free Concerts
Exciting New Rides - Amusements - Mega Raffle
Outdoor Procession in Honor of St. Anthony on Sunday, June 17 at 6:00pm
Zeppole, Sausage & Peppers, Homemade Ice Cream, Espresso, Cappuccino, Pastries

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13–SUNDAY, JUNE 17
VISIT OURLADYMTCARMBX.ORG or CALL 718-295-3770 FOR DETAILS, UPDATES & DIRECTIONS

Ferragosto
The Real Little Italy
Belmont, The Bronx, New York
DIGITAL CONTACT ZONES IN ORAL HISTORIES OF THE BRONX

**Description:** Drawing upon oral history narratives from the Bronx African American History Project (BAAHP) and the Bronx Italian American History Initiative (BIAHI), this poster maps stories of encounters as told from racialized and ethnic vantage points by African, Haitian and Italian American residents of the Bronx. **Research Question:** How does a mapping of oral histories contribute to knowledge about personal experiences and memories of race and ethnicity in the 20th century?

**Legend:** The space shown is located in the north central Bronx, borders of Belmont, a historically Italian Am. neighborhood. The colors on the map correspond to these encounters and their narrators based on shade.

**Encounter 1: Washington Ave/Belmont**
- (b. mid-1950’s, African Am., Haitian): told not to cross 3rd avenue to the “white” neighborhood.
- Attended church at Our Savior (shown left), a mostly Irish and Italian parish.
- (b. 1942, Italian Am.): on Washington Avenue/189th (shown center, right) the periphery of the Italian neighborhood but orientated towards church and school on E. 187th Street. Only remembers Italians in the neighborhood.

**Encounter 2: Belmont South/East Tremont**
- (b. ~1928, African Am.): ran a laundromat in Italian and Jewish neighborhood. Only black people; children came home with bruises, “Italians weren’t used to black people in the neighborhood” (c. 1950); house at 2121 Belmont (shown right) obtained through lawyer.
- (b. 1939, Italian Am/White Anglo Saxon Protestant): mixed Jewish, Irish, Italian neighborhood. Went to St. Thomas Aquinas School on Daly Ave. Picture of Marmion Ave before Cross Bronx built (left); and of school c. 1952 (center).

**Directions:** Putting oral histories in contact with one another helps us to visualize how racialized individuals experienced and remember in the multi-ethnic and common spaces of their past. Plotting the instances of verbal and physical violence – manifest here in naming, assault and absence– gives these events a presence in the geo-spatial and physical settings of the present day and represents a first step in coming to terms with the loss and recovery of these stories.
STUDENT OUTPUTS

• STORYMAPS (Alison Rini): https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/4dbf7bf77f1d5921a1b13cf336915bc0/research/index.html

• VIDEO (Justine Engel): https://vimeo.com/243312485

**Bronx Italian American History Initiative**

Capturing the History of Italian Americans in the Bronx

Founded in 2018, the Bronx Italian American History Initiative (BAHI) is a collaborative and history research project that studies the history of Italian and Italian Americans in the Bronx in the 20th century.

The BAHI recovers the personal narratives of Italian and Italian American residents of the Bronx, both past and present, through an archive of catalogued video and audio interviews. Our goal is to document and map the history of the Italian community in the Bronx.

**Bronx African American History Project**

Capturing the History of African Americans in the Bronx

The Bronx African American History Project (BAHARP) is dedicated to uncovering the cultural, political, economic, and religious histories of the more than 500,000 people of African descent in the Bronx.

Oral Histories Digital Archive Open to the Public

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Oral Histories Digital Archive

Start Exploring
**PATTERSON HOUSES**

BAAHPS N.D. described the Patterson projects in the late 1950s and early 1960s as the perfect place to grow up. “everyone looks out for each other, if another adult saw you go the wrong way, they’d tell your parents and you’d get a whooping.” He also explained the pride the Patterson community took in its women, saying “the women were the finest women in the world. They were well protected; they knew that you know, if you meddled with a Patterson woman, I don’t care anything nasty; if a Patterson woman, you were in trouble. If you designated a Patterson woman don’t care from what projects you were coming from, or wherever you lived, if you designated a Patterson woman, you were in trouble. Believe me, when I tell you. However, he described the summer of 1965 as the point when the “family atmosphere” began to disintegrate and you couldn’t trust your neighbors anymore.” That was when people were basically starting to leave and move out, you know... And you began to see people talking, “I gotta get out of here.”
PATTERSON HOUSES

The BAAHP’s R.H.’s family, from St. Croix, were one of the first families to move into the Patterson Houses in the mid-1950s. He recalls all families “looking out for each other, no matter what ethnicity.” He even refers to the projects “a bubble,” with gangs like the Fox-Hill baddies on the outskirts.
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EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT PLATFORMS

OHMS:

ITALIAN CINEMA AUDIENCES:
http://italiancinemaaudiences.org/

GUIDELINES:
http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/2012/06/designing-an-oral-history-project/
ITALIAN CINEMA AUDIENCES

A Collaborative Research Project on Cinema-going in 1950s Italy
1939 Subway System Map:
https://www.nycsubway.org/perl/caption.pl?/img/maps/system_1939.jpg