

RECEIVED MAR 05 2013

KOHC Project Grant Application FY 13-02

Please fill out the following information and submit a signed copy as the coversheet for your entire application

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|---|---|
| Project Title: | Migrant Networks Across Space and Time: Collective Identity, Cosmogony, and Citizenship |
| Short Project Abstract (50 – 100 words) | The proposed oral history project seeks to collect the lived experiences of the African Americans who migrated out of Harlan County, KY throughout the 1940s, 50s, and 60's and resettled in cities across the United States. Although they left Kentucky over four decades ago, these migrants have maintained an immense attachment to "home" in Kentucky and each other. I plan to interview migrants in their current cities in order to uncover the rich history of this mass migration. |
| Project Director / Title: | [REDACTED] |
| Address: | [REDACTED] |
| City/State/Zip: | [REDACTED] |
| Telephone: | [REDACTED] |
| Email: | [REDACTED] |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Grantee (fiscal agent) | [REDACTED] |
| Address: | [REDACTED] |
| City/State/Zip: | [REDACTED] |
| Telephone: | [REDACTED] |
| Federal ID# (for nonprofit institutions) or Soc Sec # | [REDACTED] |

| | |
|--|--|
| Other Sponsoring Organization (if applicable): | |
| Address: | |
| City/State/Zip: | |
| Telephone: | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Total Amount of Grant Request: | \$4,716.90 |
| Anticipated Number of Interviews: | 60 |

Signatures:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Project Director [REDACTED] | Date: 2/27/2013 |
| Institutional Official (if applicable): | Title: |

KOHC Grant Application Budget

| Item of Expense | Request | Matching (Cash) ¹ | Matching (In-Kind) |
|--|----------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE | | | |
| May 2013 Harlan County (20 days) | | | |
| Providence, RI to Lynch, KY | | | |
| Mileage (836 miles @\$0.45/mi.) | \$376.20 | | |
| Meals (20 days @ \$30/day) | | \$600.00 | |
| Lodging (20 nights @ \$85/night) | | | \$1,700.00 |
| June 2013 Southern Region (30 days) | | | |
| Lynch, KY to Atlanta, GA | | | |
| Mileage (336 miles @\$0.45/mi.) | \$151.20 | | |
| Atlanta, GA to Knoxville, TN | | | |
| Mileage (430 miles r/t @\$0.45/mi.) | \$193.50 | | |
| Knoxville Hotel (1 night @ \$100/night) | | \$100.00 | |
| Atlanta, GA to Charlotte, NC | | | |
| Mileage (500 miles r/t \$0.45/mi.) | \$225.00 | | |
| Charlotte Hotel (1 night @ \$100/night) | | \$100.00 | |
| Atlanta, GA to Bessemer, AL | | | |
| Mileage (300 miles r/t \$0.45/mi.) | \$135.00 | | |
| Bessemer Hotel (1 night @ \$100/night) | | | |
| Meals (30 days @ \$30/day) | | \$900.00 | |
| July 2013 Western Region (14 days) | | | |
| Meals (14 days @ \$36/day) | | \$504.00 | |
| Atlanta, GA to Los Angeles, CA | | | |
| Airfare | \$700.00 | | |
| Lodging (7 nights @ \$100/night) | \$210.00 | | |
| Car Rental (7 days @ \$30/day) | \$243.00 | | |
| Gas (3 tanks [12 gallons] @ 15 mi./gallon @ \$0.45/mi) | | | |
| Los Angeles, CA to Oakland, CA | | | |
| Airfare | \$700.00 | | |
| Lodging (7 nights @\$100/night) | \$210.00 | | |
| Car Rental (7 days @\$30/day) | \$243.00 | | |
| Gas (3 tanks [12 gallons] @ 15 mi./gallon @ \$0.45/mi) | | | |
| August 2013 Midwestern Region (15 days) | | | |
| | | \$450.00 | |

KOHC Grant Application Budget

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|--|---|------------|------------------------------------|
| Meals (15 days @ \$30/day) Car Rental (15 days @ \$25/day) Atlanta, GA to Columbus, OH Airfare Travel through Columbus, Dayton, and Cleveland: Lodging (10 nights @ \$100/night) Gas (3 tanks [12 gallons] @ 15 mi./gallon @ \$0.45/mi) Eastern Kentucky Social Club Reunion: Cleveland, OH Lodging (5 nights @ \$100/night) Gas (1 tank [12 gallons] @ 15 mi./gallon @ \$0.45/mi) | \$375.00 \$40.00 \$1000.00 \$243.00 \$81.00 | \$500.00 | |
| Stipends: Donated Consultation Time @ \$50/hour 8 hrs Professor [REDACTED] 8 hrs Professor [REDACTED] *60hrs PI ([REDACTED]) | | | \$800.00 \$800.00 \$3,000.00 |
| Supplies: Marantz 670 Audio Recorder w. external microphone | Borrowed from KOHC | | |
| Telephone & Postage: Postage for Thank You Notes and other Correspondence (100 stamps @ \$0.44) Printing (in various locations/hotels) | \$44.00 | \$100.00 | |
| Total Amount Requested: \$4,716.90 | \$4,716.90 | \$3,684.00 | \$5,500 |
| | | | |

¹ I am awaiting funding decisions on the following grants fund this project:

1. Brown University Population Studies & Training Center- Requested Amount: **1,781.00**
2. Brown University Graduate School- **\$2,000.00**
3. Marcus Garvey Foundation- Requested Amount: **\$500.00**

Summary of Proposed Research

The purpose of this project is to document the lived experiences of the African Americans who participated in the intergenerational migration into and out of Harlan County, KY; one of the most prodigious bituminous coal mining communities in the State of Kentucky. Due to industrial technological innovations beginning in the mid 1950s, the coal mining industry rapidly transitioned from an industry that was labor-intensive to one that was machine-intensive. One of the major results of this historical transformation was a mass retrenchment in labor demand, which devastated the labor economy in this single-industry community and led to mass migration from the area. Although the entire population of Harlan County was deeply affected by this, the impact on African American population was especially pronounced. For example, between 1940 and 1970 the White population in Harlan County declined by 48 percent, whereas the Black population declined by 69 percent¹. As African Americans have never represented more than 10 percent of Harlan County's overall population, Black out-migration during this period is particularly significant and unique, as during the same time period the Black population experienced a 12 percent net *increase* across the State of Kentucky as a whole¹. This study focuses on the concentrated migrant streams of African Americans generated by the unique economic conditions of Harlan County, Kentucky.

Throughout the second half of the 20th century, Blacks from Harlan County have migrated and resettled in cities across the United States of America. Notably, they have stayed socially connected through the Eastern Kentucky Social Club, an organization that hosts an annual reunion in various cities across the country for the purpose of reuniting the African Americans who share Harlan County roots. At its height, these reunions drew over 3,000 African American migrant families to this event. However, after 43 years of consecutive gatherings, attendance has dwindled due to mortality and various health-related issues prevalent in the population². I plan on collecting oral histories from a sample of African Americans who were born and raised in Harlan County and subsequently resettled in cities in the Midwest, West, and Southern regions of the United States, as well as those who either chose not to leave or eventually returned home to settle in Harlan County. By collecting the oral histories of these Kentucky-born African Americans in their current destinations, I seek to uncover the rich experiences that individuals in this population have had in their destination cities as well as their unwavering attachment to their Harlan County roots. The interviews will focus on four broad themes: (1) life growing up in Harlan County; (2) the decision to migrate/stay; (3) life in their destination city; and (4) sense of belonging and attachment to Harlan County, KY. Throughout the Summer of 2013, I plan to trace the migration stream from Harlan County and into key cities across the United States to capture the contours of their decades-long journey.

Historical Value and Cultural Significance

"Harlan County—that is where I grew up—most of the parents wanted their kids to leave 'cause they didn't want us to have to work in the coal mines. A better life was an opportunity to work for Ford, Chrysler, Chevrolet, in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago. And that was the desires and wishes of our parents: that you finish high school, and then that you move on" [Porter G. Peoples] (Portelli 2011).

To date, much has been written about the causes and consequences of the mass migration into and out of Kentucky's coal camps. Most of the existing research on the socioeconomic phenomena of this region of the country is geographically bounded within the focal site—in this case Harlan County. For example, much of the literature focuses on the living conditions of the company-owned coal mining towns, the notorious labor relations between the companies and the unions, or Appalachian culture (Portelli 1990; Portelli 2011; Turner and Cabbell 1985). In addition, the KHS has archived groundbreaking oral history research capturing the contours of the Civil Rights Movement in Kentucky. This contribution has produced a plethora of scholarly and public work and continues to be a resource to those interested in inscribing the role of African American

¹ Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 2.0. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2011

² The age range of the population is currently between 60 and 90 years old.

issues in the history of Kentucky. The Nunn Center for Oral History has extensive collections of oral history research on various social, economic and religious aspects of Black life in Kentucky. The proposed project extends the scope of existing scholarship by examining the ways in which the shared experience of growing up in such a unique community³, facing the decision to migrate with little to no prospect of returning, and staying connected as a community over several decades impacted the lives of members of this community over space and time.

The foci of this project are the children of the African American coal miners who were born and raised in Harlan County, Kentucky and, upon high school graduation, journeyed on to urban cities throughout the United States between 1950 to 1970. This generation of African Americans created a diaspora; resettling in cities such as Chicago, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Columbus, New York City and all along the Eastern Seaboard.

Over the past four decades, the African Americans from Harlan County have maintained formal and informal ways to stay connected with each other. For example, the Eastern Kentucky Social Club was formed in 1970 to host an annual reunion for the migrants from Harlan County, KY; an event that draws hundreds of African American migrant families from across the country each year⁴. This social organization has 15 chapters in cities across the country that are responsible for hosting the reunion in various cities throughout the country each year. This migrant population has also made a tradition out of returning “home” to Harlan County every Memorial Day weekend to pay homage to their roots. These are just two examples of the many ways in which this diasporic population has created and reinforced their sense of belonging to Harlan County over time.

Planning and Implementation

The goals for this project are as follows: to collect 60 interviews that will illustrate the lived experiences of the African American migration out of Harlan County. If granted, I will collect these interviews using a Marantz PMD 670/1 digital audio recorder borrowed from the KHS. Admittedly, 60 interview is an ambitious goal to accomplish in this timeframe. However I have based my estimate on the following factors; (1) I have been working with this population on previous survey research since Fall 2012. With each round of interviews, the population’s level of receptivity and familiarity with my research has gained momentum (2) to date, I have completed 41 interviews on my trips to Chicago and Cleveland and I am scheduled to travel to Detroit and New York by the end of the semester (3) My mother and father are from Harlan County, KY, which grants me a higher level of trust and rapport with most potential interviewees and (4) this will be my full-time job over the summer.

Project Diversity

My goal is to capture oral histories of a diverse group of participants within my population of interest, primarily by selecting respondents who vary by geographic location, age, and gender. Interviewees will include a sample of migrants across 4 geographic dimensions: (1) those who settled in the Midwest (2) those who settled in the West (3) those who settled in the South and (4) those who remained/returned to Harlan County, KY. I plan to focus on one geographic region per month in order to generate a cluster of at least 10 interviewees within each region. To capture any important gender elements that may emerge, my goal is to achieve a sample with a relatively equal percentage of men and women. Lastly, I plan to recruit respondents who represent various age cohorts in order to capture a variety of perspectives of historical events based on where the respondent was situated at the time. For example, those who graduated from high school prior to 1964 did not experience integration, while those who graduated after had a range of experiences with integration based on their age. Achieving diversity across these three dimensions will produce an account that is balanced, yet multifaceted.

³ Unique in that they grew up in a company-owned town and because they lived in a Jim Crow condition.

⁴ I am often asked why only the African Americans participate in the reunion. It is important to note that the individuals in this population grew up under the Jim Crow codes, and were therefore socially separated for the majority of their upbringing. Until 1964, they attended “colored” schools, were segregated in public spaces, and were socially excluded in many ways. This shared experience of segregation created a community within the community amongst the African Americans from Harlan County, KY.

Recruitment Methods

I plan to identify potential participants who represent the population from diverse perspectives, including those who do not participate in the nostalgic events and practices mentioned above⁵. I will identify potential interviewees through the following methods:

1. Referrals from key informants who maintain substantial ties to the community. [See appendix A.]
2. Snowball sampling from interviewees. I will ask each interviewee to recommend at least three other migrants as warm referrals of people who I can reach out to.
3. Referrals from some of the 41 interviewees from previous research.

Timeline

I have geocoded the Eastern Kentucky Social Club directory using GIS software, which allowed me to identify key cities where Harlan County African Americans have settled. I plan to carry out this research project over the four months of my Summer 2013 break:

May 2013- Harlan County

- I plan to spend 2 weeks in Harlan County leading up to the “coming home” event over Memorial Day weekend. Prior to Memorial Day, I will interview a sample of African Americans who currently live in Harlan County. *Target number of interviews: 10*
- Over Memorial Day Weekend, I will also interview a sample of migrants who are participating in the “coming home” festivities. These interviews will include people who currently reside in a variety of cities across the US and are now returning to Harlan County to visit family and friends. *Target number of interviews: 5* [Notes to the budget]: I will leave Brown University at the end of the spring semester and drive to Lynch, KY. I will arrange to lodge with family and friends over the course of my stay. The in-kind lodging rate of \$85/night is based off of the average rate at the nearest hotel, the Benham Inn.]

June 2013- The South

- I will spend the month of June based in Atlanta, GA interviewing African Americans from Harlan County who currently reside in the South. There is a large constituency of migrants who currently live in the Atlanta metro region as well as border cities in Alabama, North Carolina, and Tennessee. *Target number of interviews: 15* [Notes to the budget: My home is in Atlanta, therefore I will be able to line up interviews throughout the month and take day trips via automobile to visit border cities.]

July 2013- The West

- I will spend two weeks between the cities of Los Angeles and Oakland, California; the two West Coast cities with the highest percentage of Harlan County blacks. *Target number of interviews: 10*

August 2013- The Midwest

- I will spend the 10 days leading up to the Eastern Kentucky Social Club Reunion conducting interviews in the rust belt cities of Ohio; namely Columbus, Dayton, and Cleveland. Collecting these interviews in advance will allow me to focus on this geographical region specifically. *Target number of interviews: 10*
- I will attend the 43rd Eastern Kentucky Social Club reunion over Labor Day weekend in Cleveland, OH. Each year, this event draws hundreds of Harlan County blacks from across the nation.

⁵ I will identify these “hard to reach” interviewees by asking interviewees about classmates who they have not seen since they left Harlan County as this method has been successful in my previous research.

Throughout this event, I will conduct interviews on migrants who settled in a diverse array of cities in the United States. *Target number of interviews: 10*

Experience, Monitoring & Evaluation

I have been working with this population since Fall 2012, conducting survey research to systematically collect social, economic, and demographic data on the population. To date, I have travelled to Chicago and Cleveland to conduct the surveys in-person. I plan to travel to Detroit and New York by the end of this semester. On average, I conduct 20 interviews per trip. I will be taking copious notes throughout the entire project; assessing the quality of the interviews, my reflexivity as a researcher, and the themes that emerge as the project progresses. I will consult with Professor Hamlin, my faculty advisor, on a bi-monthly basis throughout the summer to assess development of the project. If I identify any potential threats to the success of the project, I will work with her to make the necessary changes to get back on track. As a supplement, I will also consult with Professor Turner to get feedback on my progress from an insider perspective [CVs attached].

Data Management and Accessibility

This project will be conducted with the utmost concern for transparency. Prior to beginning the interview, I will explain the purpose of the project as well as the rights and expectations to the interviewee. The main points of this discussion will be as follows:

- This is a research project on the African American migration out of Harlan County. I will be using this interview for research purposes and parts or excerpts of this interview may be used in publications.
- Participation is completely voluntary. The interview has the right to decline answering any question or can stop the interview at any time.
- The interview will be audio recorded. The raw data from interviews will be archived in the University of Kentucky Nunn Center for Oral History and will be made publicly available no sooner than May 2017. No further restrictions will be placed on the availability of the data. I anticipate that the data will be available for public use in their online oral history archive.

Further, I will secure verbal and written consent from each participant prior to beginning the interview. The raw data will be archived with the UK Nunn Center for Oral History within 90 days of data collection. However, I am requesting that a multi-year restriction be placed on the data, which would allow the collection to be available to the public no sooner than 6 months after I complete my Ph.D⁶.

Anticipated Future Research

Leading up to my I plan on producing original research in scholarly journals such as *The Journal of Historical Sociology*, *The Oral History Review*, *The American Journal of Sociology*, and *Theory and Society*. My research interests intersect the fields of migration, race, the life course, and inequality. I believe that the oral histories that I collect for this project will provide enough data for me to generate several manuscripts that will reach a broad audience. I will also use data from this project for my dissertation, which will include a mixture of quantitative and qualitative analysis on this population.

Many of my interviewees follow up with original documents and photographs from their past in Harlan County in hopes to support my research. Beyond my dissertation, it would be an honor to ultimately capture the beautiful history of the untold story of these migrants in book form. I also hope that the scholars and laypersons interested in other aspects of this project will find the archive that I donate to the Nunn Center for Oral History to be a rich resource to explore their interests.

⁶ My anticipated completion date is May 2017

Appendix I. List of Key Informants

Dr. William H. Turner- Dr. Turner, a Harlan County migrant, holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and Anthropology, and is one of the foremost scholars in Appalachian Studies. He authored the seminal book on the African American experience in the Appalachian region, titled *Blacks in Appalachia*. Dr. Turner has been intimately involved in supporting my research and has pledged his support in providing referrals and introductions to Harlan County migrants.

Richard Brown- Richard Brown is Harlan County migrant and former President of the Atlanta Chapter of the Eastern Kentucky Social Club. Richard has been attended every EKSC reunion since its inception in 1970. Richard is deeply embedded in the Harlan County network and has committed to providing referrals across geographic regions.

Carolyn Sundy, VP of Diversity, Inclusion and Special Programs at Southeast Kentucky Community College—Through her organizational affiliation, Ms. Sundy will be a community resource. She was also born and raised in Harlan County, KY and maintains strong ties to the community.

Jim Houston— Jim Houston is a Harlan County migrant and currently serves as the business manager for the Detroit Chapter of the EKSC. He currently resides in Detroit, MI and maintains ties with the migrant network.

Beverly Morris – Ms. Morris is an officer of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Eastern Kentucky Social Club and currently resides in Los, Angeles, CA.

Andrea Massey – Ms. Massey is currently the President of the Tennessee Chapter of the Eastern Kentucky Social club and currently resides in Lynch, KY.

References

- Portelli, A. 1990. "Patterns of Paternalism in Harlan County." *Appalachian Journal* 17:140-155.
- Portelli, Alessandro. 2011. *They say in Harlan County : an oral history*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Turner, William Hobart and Edward J. Cabbell. 1985. *Blacks in Appalachia*. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky.