

INCORPORATING SOCIAL HISTORY INTO YOUR RESEARCH Family history should be more than names and dates. What motivated our ancestors? Why did they migrate? Who did they interact with? How do social customs of another era affect our research? Social history and its bearing on genealogical research will be covered and a “must-read” bibliography for serious researchers will be discussed.

MEDICAL GENEALOGY: A PRIMER OF DISEASES THAT KILLED OUR ANCESTORS AND THE EPIDEMICS THEY LIVED THROUGH So many researchers hunt for the death certificates of their ancestors but rarely read or understand the cause of death. Disease and death were commonplace occurrences in our ancestors’ lives, and knowing what afflicted them and their communities can help you understand the lives they lived.

DECONSTRUCTING YOUR FAMILY TREE: RE-EVALUATING THE "EVIDENCE" When information passed on from researcher to researcher doesn't "add up," it's time to tear down the walls and rebuild anew. This methodology lecture shows how erroneous conclusions can sneak into our research uncontested. This lecture is pertinent especially today with so many Internet family trees that get cut and pasted into our own research.

“I AM POOR, OBSCURE, PLAIN, AND LITTLE.” RESEARCHING THE INVISIBLE ANCESTORS If your ancestors had little money, they did not buy and sell land, they did not leave wills or probates, they did not purchase stones for graves. How do you find them? This lecture will show you how!

MAGNIFICENT, MAGICAL, MESMERIZING MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS!

These types of records form an enormous part of most archival collections, yet most genealogists grossly underutilize them. This lecture will help you locate them, understand what information they can yield and use them to break down brick walls!

“SHE CAME FROM NOWHERE...” - A CASE STUDY INCORPORATING SOCIAL HISTORY This lecture illustrates the joys and pitfalls of Virginia research as well as a employing a problem-solving approach utilizing social history, female research and family analysis to identify the parents of Elizabeth Stith, the ancestor “from nowhere.” One need not have Virginia ancestors to see the Genealogical Proof Standard at work! This case study accentuates how the knowledge of social history can be the glue that holds your proof argument together.

Dr. Michael Lacopo

Dr. Michael D. Lacopo was born and raised in northern Indiana surrounded by extended family always willing to tell tall tales. Intrigued by his maternal family’s claim to be kinfolk of Abraham Lincoln, and his paternal family’s stories of murder and mayhem, he took to genealogical research in 1980 to substantiate these family stories.

Genealogical research as a hobby was in its infancy in the 1980s. Combing libraries, archives, cemeteries and courthouses as a teenager, Michael gained the skills needed to become a keen researcher. His first major challenge in the world of research was tackled by finding his adopted mother’s birthparents in 1982. You can read about this adventure at his blog at Roots4U.blogspot.com with some engaging story-telling, plot twists and new findings!

Although a budding genealogist in the 1980s, Michael completed his doctorate in veterinary medicine in 1991, while still spending time honing his research skills. As befitting a doctor, Michael treats his genealogical research as he would medicine – carefully, methodically and completely. Several genealogical journal articles and publications appeared along the way. In 2013, Michael retired from his medical career to pursue genealogical research full-time as a profession.

He has contributed to numerous periodicals and has helped numerous people in their quests to locate their relatives – living and dead. He appeared in **USA Today** in 2000 discussing genealogy and the proposed destruction of the federal census tabulated in that year. His national lecturing began in Sacramento, CA, at the National Genealogical Society’s national conference in 2004, and has continued with several local, state, national, and international conference speaking engagements to this present day.