



John Philip Colletta, Ph.D.



Education

Ph.D., French, The Catholic University of America: 1982.

M.A., Medieval Studies, The Catholic University of America: 1978.

Certificate, Romanesque Civilization, University of Poitiers, France: 1977.

Certificate, German, Goethe-Institut, Passau, Germany: 1977.

M.A., French, Middlebury College Graduate School in Paris, France: 1975.

Diploma in Russian, U.S. Defense Language Institute, Washington, DC, 1972.

B.A., French, State University College of New York, Buffalo: 1971.

Experience

Taught French language and literature at The Catholic University of America and The American University, 1975–1984.

Various positions at the Library of Congress, 1978–1998.

John Philip Colletta is one of America's most popular genealogical lecturers. Knowledgeable, experienced and entertaining, he resides in Washington, D.C. For twenty years, while laying the foundation for his career in genealogy, he worked half-time at the Library of Congress and taught workshops at the National Archives.

Today Dr. Colletta lectures nationally, teaches at local schools, and conducts programs for the Smithsonian Institution's Resident Associate Program. He is a faculty member of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (University of Georgia, Athens) and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy.

He has also taught for Boston University's Certificate in Family History program and three genealogy institutes where he created courses: the National Institute on Genealogical Research (Washington, DC), the Genealogical Institute of Texas (Dallas), and the Genealogical Institute of Mid-America (Springfield, Ill.).

His publications include numerous articles, both scholarly and popular, two manuals — [*They Came in Ships: A Guide to Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Arrival Record*](#) and [*Finding Italian Roots: The Complete Guide for Americans*](#) — and one "murder-mystery-family-history," [*Only a Few Bones: A True Account of the Rolling Fork Tragedy and Its Aftermath*](#). It tells the story of Colletta's great great grandfather, Joe Ring, who moved his family from Buffalo, New York, to Rolling Fork, Mississippi, after the Civil War. When Joe Ring's country store burned to the ground with five unfortunate victims sleeping upstairs, the incident was investigated as mass murder, robbery and arson. The new edition of [*Only a Few Bones*](#) includes 140 pages of instruction on how to write narrative family history.

Dr. Colletta appears frequently on podcasts and local and national radio and television. He is featured in Episode Four of “Ancestors,” the ten-part KBYU-TV series, as well as its sequel. He has received many professional honors, including fellowship in the Utah Genealogical Association and distinguished service awards from the Dallas Genealogical Society and the National Society, Daughters of Colonial Founders and Patriots.

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