

Doing
Oral
History

A Practical Guide

SECOND EDITION

Donald A. Ritchie

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To Anne Ritchie

Setting Up an Oral History Project

How do you begin an oral history project?

Start by determining your objectives. Not all goals need to be attempted at once, but they can be reached incrementally. For instance, having identified the likely pool of interviewees, oral historians will usually interview the oldest and most significant individuals first, while planning to move to younger or secondary figures later, depending on financial resources, available interviewers, and processing capabilities after the interviews are conducted.

After organizing a project, plan to start with a few well-conducted, in-depth interviews and then process them fully. The result will be something tangible to show when seeking additional funding. By concentrating on a few interviews, project organizers can establish a pattern of management and paperwork—from preparing and conducting the interviews to processing and transcribing them—that can expand along with the project. Similarly, projects may begin with only a few interviewers, paid or volunteer, who later can help train new recruits.

Always balance your objectives with your resources. Limited resources can frustrate ambitious objectives, and too many projects have ended with little to show for their efforts except boxes of tapes, unidentified, unprocessed, and unusable. Other well-intentioned projects have been stretched too thin; trying to interview too many people can produce superficial interviews that will not satisfy research needs.

What kind of goals should an oral history project set?

Decide what kind of a record you want to create, and for what purpose. Oral history should be collecting not what is already known but information, observations, and opinions unavailable elsewhere. Oral history projects are often designed to supplement existing archival material, filling in gaps in paper sources with the contributions of people who did their business instead in person or on

the phone. An oral history project may record a piece of community history that the local newspaper ignored or inadequately covered. Oral history projects have been designed to determine the contributions that individuals made to a movement such as the civil rights movement or to trace the impact of a movement on individuals and communities. Projects have been focused on various professions, ranging from journalism to architecture, medicine, and the law, recording recollections of pioneers and other practitioners and tracing professional trends. Above all, oral history projects, by recording history in the words of those who lived it, can tell future researchers how people lived and how they perceived the events of their time.

A project may aim to record the history of a church, a school, a business or a philanthropic foundation, interviewing a cross-section of people associated with that institution. Project interviewers might follow members of a state legislature from session to session, capturing their versions of how legislation was enacted or defeated. An oral history project might be concentrated on a neighborhood or a particular ethnic group within the community. Oral history is appropriate not only for looking at the broad sweep of a community's history but for examining it at a specific time, say during the Second World War or during the 1960s. An event (an election, a strike, the construction of a monumental building) or catastrophe (a hurricane, a flood, a major accident) can be its organizing theme. Or the subject can be the history of a group, such as women, African Americans, or Hispanic Americans, or a sub-group such as immigrant women, African American teachers, or Hispanic American entrepreneurs. Some oral history archives focus their collections on the city, state, or region where they are located; others have built broad national and even international collections.

During the course of conducting interviews, it may be desirable to change or reevaluate the project's goals. Interviewers may find that some of the original objectives are impractical or that new avenues open up as additional interviewees are identified. Goals are often time-determined. Some oral history projects are ongoing, but others may work on a year-to-year, grant-to-grant basis and must regularly do a certain amount of interviewing to ensure continued funding.

An oral history project will be judged on the significance of the goals its organizers set and the substance of the information they collected. Researchers will measure projects according to whom they interviewed, what questions they asked, and how they processed the recordings and transcripts. Users will also scrutinize oral history projects for new and different or at least colorfully quotable information on the subjects they are studying.

Should a project set a goal of how many people it intends to interview?

Trying to calculate in advance an exact number of individuals to interview puts unnecessary pressure on an oral history project. Rushing to meet numerical objectives causes both the depth of interviewing and a reasonable pace of processing to be sacrificed. Once interviewing begins, it will be discovered that some interviewees have much more to say than others, are more perceptive and cooperative, and have sharper memories. These are the interviewees to whom it is worth devoting more time. For reasons of age, health, or general disposition, other interviewees will have little to say of enduring value. Often not until an interview begins can the interviewer determine whether the interviewee is able to make much of a contribution. Sometimes a very old interviewee has a surprisingly sharp recall, and even more stamina than the interviewer; sometimes not. Preliminary contact can help the interviewer to get a better sense of the abilities of the interviewee to gauge how much time to budget for a session or a series of interviews. One oral historian went to considerable effort and expense to bring a crew to film an interview only to discover too late that the interviewee was distressingly senile.

Oral history projects invariably receive recommendations to interview the local raconteur, whom everyone says has a story about everything. Although more than willing to talk, this person may be unable to move beyond a store of set stories. Correspondingly, the most famous individual identified with an event may offer only a garbled, self-centered account. The most forthcoming interviewee may turn out to be a lesser-known, secondary figure who keenly observed what was going on and remembers it vividly. To do interviews of equal length with these varying individuals makes little sense. Remain flexible enough so that you can spend less time with those who have little to say and more time with those whose contributions are substantial.

In designing a project and in seeking funding, set the number of hours of interviews or sessions you intend to conduct rather than the number of individuals to be interviewed. A project that budgets for one hundred hours may spend one hour with one interviewee and ten hours with the next, giving each of them sufficient time to exhaust the subject to the best of their abilities.

Is there an optimal number of hours for interviewing each person?

An interview session is usually best limited to an hour and a half to two hours to avoid exhausting both the interviewee and interviewer but there is no ideal length for an entire interview. Each interview depends on how much of value

conducting a life history or concentrating on a smaller segment of a person's experiences. Whenever interviewers have to travel any great distance they will have to estimate the number of hours of interviews in advance without knowing if that time will be sufficient. A second trip may be necessary, budget permitting.¹

Be careful not to overschedule interviewing trips, forcing the interviewer to rush from one appointment to the next, and cutting interviewees short regardless of what they have to say. Interviewees still actively engaged in their careers may set rigid limits on the amount of time for an interview, while retired people tend to be more tolerant about giving longer, open-ended interviews that may or may not include lunch or other time diversions. Interviewers need to use their judgment in deciding when an interviewee has become fatigued and is no longer thinking clearly. Good interviewers frequently find the interview situation more stressful for themselves than for their interviewees, and their own ability to pay attention and interact diminishes the longer an interview lasts.

FUNDING AND STAFFING

How much does it cost to do an oral history?

How much can you afford to spend? Oral history can be expensive, but its costs are containable. The price tag may include research preparation and interview time, equipment, travel to and from the interview, lodging and meals if the interview is conducted out of town, transcription, indexing, cataloging, photocopying, postage for correspondence, and other overhead costs.

Some projects pay their interviewers, others rely on unpaid volunteers. Some purchase or rent their equipment, others make use of equipment, services, and personnel of their parent organization, whether a church, library, corporation, university, or government agency. A project can include the work of transcribing, or recordings can be sent out to professional transcribers, who are paid by the page, by the number of hours of recording, or by the number of hours worked. Some choose to abstract and index rather than transcribe. Using volunteer typists with access to word processors can reduce costs, but volunteers have to be trained and their work needs to be reviewed and edited. Rates for rental equipment, transcribing services, salaries, and overhead will also vary according to the geographic location of the project and the available labor pool.

If experienced oral historians are used, the budget will have to include pay for their services as interviewers and cover their research, travel, and processing expenses. Patricia Pilling, who does family interviews, has had clients question

why her oral histories cost what they can turn on a tape recorder and ask questions. She asks whether they can cook; if they say yes, she replies, "But can you make a gourmet meal?" Her analogy makes most clients see the value of professional expertise.²

How do oral history projects get funded?

Funding comes from an array of sources. More fortunate projects are based within institutions that provide them with office space, equipment, salaries, and travel expenses. Some institutions will meet part of those needs, such as office space and equipment, but expect the oral history project to raise the rest of its funds for salaries and expenses. Private granting agencies and many state humanities councils have long supported oral history projects. These often cover the conducting and processing of all or part of the planned oral histories, including interviewing, processing, and overhead. Some projects have done their interviewing and then turned to state humanities councils or other agencies for grants to transcribe the best of the interviews. Local governments, municipal libraries, and state legislatures have funded various components of oral history as a public service. The Mississippi legislature, for instance, funded the University of Southern Mississippi's effort to post its civil rights interviews on the Internet.

Seeking funds for an oral history project needs to be a creative effort. Volunteer groups have successfully sponsored receptions and other exhibits of their material as fund-raising events. If direct funds are unavailable, projects also seek such "in-kind" support as the loan of equipment and secretarial, printing, photocopying, and transcription-binding services.

Projects focused on a specific issue, such as women's rights or environmental policies, have often received support from individuals and organizations that support or promote the issue. The Washington Press Club Foundation's oral history project on women journalists, for instance, received funding from an array of media sources that included the Gannett Foundation, the Sulzberger Foundation, and Time Warner, Inc. For a project centered on the career of a specific individual, such as a prominent politician retired from office, approach contributors to the politician's campaigns. A dinner in that person's honor could well serve as a fund-raiser for the oral history project. In addition, businesses, trade associations, and labor unions have funded oral history projects related to their field. Families have underwritten interviews and whole oral history projects about an illustrious member.

Funding may determine who is interviewed. Corporate funding and support by wealthy individuals has accounted for much of the "elite" interviewing done

by oral history projects in the past. Public and private funding agencies have supported community-based oral history projects, but these funds have fluctuated widely, depending on the financial or political climate. Although interviewee selection should be conducted separately from fund-raising, some project organizers have identified interviewees based on the likelihood of their financial contribution to the project or to the parent institution, slighting others whose interviews would have made a more significant contribution. Economic realities may be inescapable, but oral history projects should include as wide a range of interviews as possible and not be limited to those who can pay for it. Care must be taken not to allow funding sources to inhibit the choice of topics or interviewees.

How does an oral history project apply for a grant?

Granting agencies range from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations and the Pew Charitable Trust, and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), to a plethora of less-known, family-based and issue-oriented foundations. The NEH through its research, education, and preservation and access divisions, has frequently funded oral history, although an enormous investment in time and effort is required to prepare NEH proposals, the competition is intense, and only about 20 percent of all proposals receive funding. The larger foundations require more information (a sixty-page application to the NEH is not unusual), whereas the grant process is less onerous at smaller foundations, whose smaller staff may limit grant proposals to a few pages. If a foundation asks for only four pages, submit four pages, since it may not read larger proposals. Some smaller foundations do not accept unsolicited applications, in which case a project might tap one of its advisory board members or seek an introduction from a well-regarded member of the community to help arrange for an invitation to submit a proposal.

Before approaching a foundation, a project should have a clear notion of what it wants to accomplish and what public benefit will result from its work. Granting agencies will want to know about the capacity of the project's organization and staff, and about the public accessibility of the finished product. What is the value of the project? Who will care about it? Will there be public outreach in the form of a publication, a web site, or performances in schools, nursing homes, and other public places? Will students working on the project acquire skills and return something to the community? A good method of determining what a foundation wants is to review the lists of projects it funded in the past. Funding agencies will also be interested in any additional institutional support a project has gotten, including in-kind contributions, loans of equipment, and volunteers who will donate time and effort.

It is important to know the specific requirements of the foundation to which you are applying. Consult the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, and check the granting agencies' web sites for their guidelines. Carefully note their time lines and deadlines, and always allow some extra time to cope with unexpected delays. If a foundation rejects your proposal, ask to see the readers' comments, and consider resubmitting a revised version. It may take several proposals to narrow in on what a particular foundation wants. If possible, visit the foundation and make contact with its project officers. Although grants are usually made by an agency's board, the project officers prepare the paperwork and have good ideas about what boards will accept. Seek the project officer's opinion and then try to follow it. Grant organizations often appreciate collaborative projects, in which several organizations pool their efforts, and where others will match the funds they are giving. Some institutions will provide in-kind support, such as teaching reductions and office space. The first grant application usually takes a great deal of time and effort, but once a project has received one grant, it usually becomes easier to convince other foundations. Even a small grant from a prestigious foundation serves as a form of accreditation for a project that gives increased confidence to other potential funders.

How large a staff does an oral history project need?

There is no set number. Many projects are one-person operations, and others rely on a crew of volunteers or paid staff. Each project needs a manager or coordinator, who may also double as an interviewer or transcriber. The project managers prepare grant proposals, set up an advisory committee, recruit interviewers, identify likely interviewees, acquire equipment, handle correspondence, create the necessary filing system and other documentation (including legal release forms), arrange for transcriptions or abstracts to be made, organize workshops or training sessions for interviewers, and ensure that the interviews are deposited in a library or other institution where researchers can use them. The project manager may also handle publicity for the project or supervise the use of the interviews in publications, exhibits, and other forms of public presentation.

The pool of interviewers available to a project will influence the number of interviews that can be conducted. More interviewers can do more interviews but require more equipment and more processing time. Volunteers especially enjoy interviewing but are not as eager to do the less glamorous job of processing the interviews. Avoid doing more interviews than can reasonably be processed, to prevent large backlogs and delays in producing transcripts. Once processing begins to fall behind, it becomes increasingly arduous to catch up. If promises

have been made to give copies of the recording or transcript to interviewees, long backlogs create embarrassing delays.

In most projects, the interviewer is responsible for researching, conducting, and editing the interview. Sometimes a project will offer assistance with research, but the interviewer has to be thoroughly versed in the subject matter and cannot rely solely on prepared questions. An interviewer must be prepared to deviate from the outline at any moment and follow up on unexpected information from the interviewee. In some larger projects, interviews are contracted out for a set fee, which includes the interviewer's preparation of a finished transcript.

Depending on funding, trained interviewers are paid a salary or a fee per interview. Fees may be set for the entire interview or by the hour, with reimbursement for any costs incurred in traveling to the interview. If using inexperienced volunteers, project organizers should ensure that interviews are properly conducted and processed by arranging for an oral history consultant to run workshop training sessions for interviewers and transcribers and to review their work periodically. The project manager may double as the oral history consultant. Consultants usually charge fees, but university oral history archivists will sometimes provide advice to smaller projects in their vicinity as a pro bono service.

Should a project appoint an advisory committee?

An advisory committee can help a project determine its goals, review proposals, suggest potential interviewees, assist in fund-raising, and offer general support to the interviewers. If the project is part of a larger institution, such as a library, archives, or university, whose administrators may not fully recognize all of the project's requirements, a wisely selected advisory committee can offer a strong network of support.

Select advisory committee members who are likely to be respected by the host institution or by the chief funding agency and who have the time and the interest to attend occasional committee meetings. Keep the committee small enough to facilitate communication and meetings, but diverse enough to provide different areas of assistance. Potential members are scholars in the particular subject area (who can advise on the interviewing process), prominent members of the community being studied (who can help make contact with potential interviewees), and perhaps fund-raising experts (who can help keep the project going).

Many funding agencies prefer some form of advisory committee, and grant proposals usually include funds to pay honoraria and sometimes travel expenses for advisory committee meetings. Some projects have blue-ribbon advisory panels

that were created as showcases to appease funding agencies and whose members rarely convene meetings or are kept informed. This is a self-defeating practice. Any project can benefit from the experienced advice of advisory committee members, especially during the initial stages of design and development.

How should potential interviewees be identified?

The project advisory committee can often suggest the most likely interviewees. If a project is part of a larger organization, its leaders and members may have their own recommendations. Research into the subject will also identify those who were involved in the events at the time, and *Who's Who*, professional directories, phone books, pension lists, and other references can help locate those potential interviewees who are still living.

Interviewees from particular groups or communities can be found through advertising in local newspapers, on radio or television stations, in the newsletters of companies, unions, churches, and civic organizations, in alumni magazines, and on the Internet. But mass appeals run the risk of stimulating massive responses, overwhelming the project with volunteer interviewees. Rather than disappoint people by not interviewing them, projects can limit their initial appeals to informal networks before going public through the media.

How should a project select interviewers?

Look first for those with previous interviewing experience, those who have already done interviews or taken an oral history course or workshop. Ideally, interviewers should have some competence or experience in the project's subject matter. Occasionally, interviewers who fit both categories can be found, but usually the project organizers settle for one or the other qualification. Experienced interviewers coming into a new field need to do extensive research in the subject matter. Those already familiar with the subject material but who have not yet done any interviewing need training in interview techniques.

Inexperienced interviewers should attend training sessions conducted by an experienced oral historian, who can be located through the state, regional, and national oral history associations or through nearby universities and historical societies. It is essential that all interviewers be fully informed of the project's objectives, as well as of the ethical and legal considerations, before they begin interviewing.

Volunteers often come from the community or group being interviewed. Being part of the community gives them an advantage in researching the subject matter and in establishing rapport with interviewees. The disadvantage of using "intimates" lies in their reluctance to probe unpleasant topics and in interviewees'

...ation to disclose candid information to another member of the community. The "clinical" interviewer from outside the community may be seen as more neutral and discreet. Outside interviewers will take less for granted and encourage interviewees to talk over subjects that may be well known within the community but less recognized and understood beyond its boundaries. Be aware also that interviewers who share similar experiences will usually have their own stories to tell and may not be able to stop themselves from interrupting and injecting themselves ("Oh, yeah? Let me tell you what happened to me") into the interviews. To forestall these temptations, it may be advisable to interview the interviewers. Let them tell their stories on tape first. Being interviewed will also serve to further familiarize volunteer interviewers with the process.

Regardless of whether they are paid or volunteer, all interviewers should prepare written records of their preparation and methods, and the circumstances of the interview. Interviewers should write a brief biographical statement about themselves to include with the recordings and transcripts. Future researchers will find this information valuable in understanding the dynamics of the interview and will want to consider how the background of the interviewer might have affected the interview. Biographers will consider how the oral history itself became an incident in the interviewee's life, a time when he or she had the opportunity to reflect on past successes and defeats. They will want to know where and under what conditions the interview took place. Interviewers as well as interviewees deserve appropriate acknowledgment for their work in the recording and transcript and in all subsequent forms of citation or usage.³

How can the work of a variety of different interviewers be coordinated?

Maintaining consistency in the quality and standards of the oral history project is an issue when a number of interviewers, whether volunteers or paid, are used. Once again, a workshop for interviewers can be helpful, particularly at the beginning of a project to help them not only get some training but to appreciate the scope of the project and have a chance to compare experiences and concerns. A core of common questions may emerge from these workshops or group meetings. Interviewers should be encouraged to read each other's transcripts, to measure their own work against the group's, and to offer some peer review. When many interviewers are employed over a protracted period of time, it is advisable to prepare a project handbook, with both general oral history procedures and information specific to the project. Model handbooks include *Working Womenroots: An Oral History Primer* (1980), designed for interviewing women trade union activists, *Oral History Techniques and Procedures* (1992) for army

historians; and *Oral History in the National Park Service* (1984) for National Park Service interviewers. Numerous oral history web sites on the Internet also provide guides aimed at both general and specific projects.⁴

Better-funded, institutional projects have sponsored "memory-jogging" conferences to bring together a field's key people to discuss the topic and to fill in the gaps that scholars have found in the record. At these conferences, interviewers conduct preliminary interviews with both individuals and groups to determine how the attendees participated in the events being studied and to plan priorities for full-scale interviews. Memory-jogging conferences have been held, for example, to examine NATO's nuclear strategies during the cold war and the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁵

What credit should interviewers get for the work they have done?

Interviewers deserve full credit for their work. Display the name of the interviewer on the recording and the transcript. Whenever possible, cite the interviewer in any references to the interview in publications, exhibits, and other public presentations. Although the point of doing the interview is to collect the interviewee's story, it would not exist without the interviewer and might have emerged very differently if conducted by someone else. Increasingly, books heavily drawn from oral history interviews have cited the interviewer on the title page through phrases such as "with the assistance of . . .," "as told to . . ." and "based on an oral history with . . ."⁶

EQUIPMENT

What basic equipment is needed for an oral history project?

Necessarily dependent on technology, oral historians have adjusted constantly to introductions of new equipment. Fortunately, technological progress has resulted in lighter, easier-to-operate, and more affordable recorders. Dean Albertson, Allan Nevins's assistant at the Columbia Oral History Research Office, recalled purchasing Columbia's first wire recorders: "Instead of a reel of tape, they had a magnetic recording head through which passed a spool of fine wire. A more devilish machine was never invented. Quite apart from the fact that they weighed about forty pounds was their propensity for jamming and spewing immense coils of wire all over the floor."⁷

Subsequently, oral historians moved to belt, reel-to-reel, and cassette tape recorders, digital audio tape, compact discs and mini-disk recorders, as well as videocassette and digital cameras. Transcribing equipment has also advanced,

from typewriters to word processors. Oral historians need to keep current with the latest and best equipment, being careful to adopt only those devices that adequately record and preserve high-quality sound. Pocket dictating machines, for instance, serve their own purposes but make poor recordings for oral history.

Purchase or rent the best that your project can afford. You need reliable equipment that will record clearly. Professional sound-quality reel-to-reel recorders were long the best, but also the most expensive and least practical for interviewing. Most projects use good-quality, reasonably priced, portable cassette tape recorders and mini-disks. Some interviewers use earphones to monitor what is being recorded. Other useful accessories on the recorder are a signal to indicate when the tape is about to run out (enabling the interviewer to change the tape with minimal interruption to the interview) and a register to indicate the strength of the sound recording (to alert the interviewer that batteries may be wearing down).

Electrical power is more reliable than batteries for recording, even though it may require some extra time or furniture rearranging to position the recorder near an outlet. Bear in mind, however, that the physical setting of the interview cannot always be determined in advance, and that you occasionally may need some mobility, say, to follow a craft worker through various stages of production in different locations. Always bring a supply of batteries to meet such contingencies.

Use only high-quality tapes. For cassette tapes, the recommended length is sixty minutes, although many prefer ninety-minute tapes because they entail fewer interruptions to the narrative. Anything longer than ninety-minute tape will be much too thin and likely to tangle and break. With digital recorders, look for larger memory storage capabilities. Unlike tape recorders in which an interview is interrupted momentarily to change tapes, digital recorders with limited memory must be downloaded to a computer or compact disc before they can begin recording again.⁸

Charles Hardy, whose work on radio documentaries has made him keenly attuned to sound quality, finds that DAT (digital audio tape) recorders provide the best sound quality for the money, but that basic, inexpensive consumer model mini-disks will work just as well for most oral history projects, and sound much better than most analog-tape recordings. The money saved by using less expensive mini-disks can be applied to purchasing better microphones and headphones.⁹

Whatever the type of recording, good microphones are critical. Never use a recorder's built-in microphone; it will pick up all of the machine's operating noises. Many interviewers prefer to use lavalier mikes, which attach to a lapel or other item of clothing and assure clear recording, especially if both the interviewer

and interviewee have mikes. Lavalieres are a great advantage when interviewing soft-spoken people, the type who swallow their words, mumble, or unconsciously cover their mouths when they talk. If only one lavalier mike is available, it should be used by the interviewee.

Table microphones should be placed close to the interviewee. Always test microphones in advance to make sure that the interviewee and interviewer can be heard clearly. Remember that most microphones have their own batteries that need testing and replacement periodically.

For transcribing, a separate transcribing machine is advisable. A foot pedal on the transcriber allows the operator to stop, reverse, and play back portions of the recording automatically while typing, since it may be necessary to listen to a phrase several times to ascertain the exact wording. Transcribing machines also permit the recording to be slowed down or speeded up to match the operator's typing speed and to help decipher muffled or slurred words. When outside transcribing services are used, transcription equipment is an option for a project, although a foot-pedal-equipped transcriber can assist in audit-editing the transcripts.

Word processors have immensely advanced oral history transcriptions. Before the advent of the word processor, typists prepared a rough draft of the interview, on which the interviewee would make editorial changes, and then typed a clean copy. In fact, the principal transcript in some projects was the rough copy with handwritten corrections; this practice had the advantage of showing researchers where changes had been made, but the disadvantage of sometimes difficult-to-read handwriting that tended to reproduce poorly on microfilm and photocopies. Word processors speed typing time and allow editorial changes to be made more efficiently. Copies can be preserved on disk for instant retrieval and reprinting. Word-processing programs also check spelling and make the job of indexing faster and more comprehensive. Text-searching software is providing greater control and access for extensive oral history collections.

For any equipment, bargains can often be found by ordering equipment via catalog. But the economy can be a false one if the equipment cannot be repaired nearby and must be shipped away at additional expense and for protracted periods of time. Work with reputable dealers and keep files on all warranties and guarantees.

What type of recording lasts the longest?

No-sound or video recording will last forever. The National Archives has long recommended one-quarter-inch open-reel audiotape as the best medium for preservation, but once most oral historians used cassette rather than reel-to-reel

recorders, archives began accepting good-quality cassette tape for preservation. As consumers' music-buying shifted overwhelmingly to compact discs (CDs), it was essentially the commercial market for books on tape that kept manufacturers producing standard cassettes. With even talking books going digital, analog tape may soon become a relic of the past.

Archivists remain uncertain about the long-term preservation of digital data, oral history projects using compact discs, digital audio tape, and mini-disk recordings sometimes copy digital recordings onto analog tape for archival purposes. Regardless of what technology is used, a master copy of every interview should be made for preservation. Transcriptions and research use should be limited to copies, never the master.

Preservation of tapes requires that they be kept under relatively constant temperature and humidity conditions, avoiding extreme heat and cold, excessive moisture, and dust and atmospheric pollutants. Tapes should be rerun every year or two to prevent blurring of their sound. Unfortunately, many projects do not have the facilities or the budget to maintain these conditions for their tapes or to go through the time-consuming process of regularly rewinding thousands of tapes.

Anyone who doubts that sound preservation is a problem should listen to tapes made a decade or two ago. These tapes often sound so muddy that both the questions and the answers have become indistinct. Although some tapes can be restored and digitally enhanced, documentary makers, after discovering that the sound quality of many oral history tapes has made them unusable, have been forced to use actors to re-create the interviewees' voices. These problems of long-term preservation highlight the need for oral history projects to transcribe their tapes and deposit master tapes in archives experienced in handling sound and video recordings, where they can be preserved for future use. The project can still retain copies of its tapes for its own ongoing uses.¹⁰

What sort of documentation should be kept on each interview?

The more interviews there are, the more control will be needed over the paperwork. The processing of each interview should move forward at a reasonable pace, and a "history" of each should be retained. The project manager should keep a log, or master project list, for each interview, including who was interviewed, by whom, for how many hours, on what dates, using how many reels of tape, whether the interview has been transcribed, whether it is open for research, what restrictions may have been placed upon its use, and whether a microfilm or microform copy is available.

A file for each interview should include whatever biographical information has been collected, letters arranging the interviews, and an abstract of the interview that briefly summarizes (a single paragraph may suffice) the subjects covered and the names of the people most frequently discussed. This file should contain a copy of the deed of gift (the legal release form from the interviewee) and explanations of any restrictions on the interview. For ease of referral, it should note the libraries or other repositories where interested researchers can see copies of the interview.

Files should also be maintained on each interviewer, with such basic information as home and work addresses, phone numbers, areas of expertise, interviews completed, and interviews scheduled. Keeping lists of potential interviewees and interviewees for later stages of the project is also helpful.

Where should interviews take place?

The location usually depends on the interviewee. Some people are so busy they will grant interviews only at their own office. This locale presents the problem of shutting out distractions and interruptions: a ringing phone, a secretary at the door, and all the reminders of the next item on the day's agenda will divert the interviewee's attention. Similarly, at an interviewee's home the phone, a spouse, children, the family dog, even noisy appliances, can interrupt the flow of the interview and create unacceptable levels of background noise. Too much commotion makes transcribing difficult and limits the eventual use of the recording for media or exhibits.

Try to conduct the interview in a quiet place away from everyday distractions. If not at the project office or the interviewer's office, then choose a room, or even a portion of a room, that the interviewee does not normally use. Get the interviewee away from behind a desk and sit in chairs at the other side of the office or in a conference room down the hall. Or conduct the interview at the dining room table. Politely request others in the home or office not to interrupt while you are recording. Shut the door if there is one.

Having the interviewee come to the interviewer allows for better control of the equipment and placement of the tape recorder or cameras and microphones. When going to the interviewee, allow enough time to set up the equipment. Not knowing where electrical outlets may be located, the interviewer should carry batteries or an extension cord. Always bring more tapes than you can expect to use in case the interview goes longer than scheduled. Test the equipment just before the interview. The farther interviewers must travel to an interview, the less they can afford a malfunctioning piece of equipment. Murphy's Law applies to oral history: if it can break down, it will—precisely when needed.

What happens if the equipment fails?

Without any backup equipment, the interviewer will have to apologize and schedule another interview. Even worse is to conduct the interview and only later realize that the equipment failed. In addition to testing equipment before the interview, an interviewer must keep watch on it throughout the interview. I once had to call an interviewee to report that nothing could be heard on the tape but static. "Maybe that's all I gave you," the interviewee responded. That interviewee graciously agreed to do another interview, but repeat sessions are rarely as spontaneous and detailed as the original interview.

Failed equipment is the bane of the interviewer. The Oral History Association once invited veteran interviewers to testify to their "worst moments" in doing oral history. Tales of disaster included the absence of electrical outlets, tape recorders that picked up radio transmissions from passing police cars, tape that unraveled to fill an interviewer's car, and a long list of calamities. It is reassuring to know that one is not alone, but such horror stories from experienced interviewers should encourage every project manager to test equipment regularly and be prepared to help interviewers meet any eventuality.

Is it ever appropriate to interview a group of people together?

The best oral history interview is generally done one-on-one. That way, the interviewer can focus exclusively on one person, whose stories will not be interrupted. Yet sometimes it is impossible to avoid having another person in the room, perhaps the interviewee's spouse or grown child, who may interrupt to contradict, correct, or supplement the testimony. Such interruptions can derail the interview, but they can also help by providing forgotten information and otherwise supporting an uncertain interviewee.¹¹

Group interviews increase the potential for trouble. Facing a group, the interviewer becomes a moderator, trying to give everyone a chance to respond and ensuring that no one monopolizes the discussion. Transcribers have great difficulty identifying who is speaking in group situations, since all voices begin to sound alike. This problem is alleviated only if during the interview someone other than the interviewer (who has enough to do) keeps a sequential list of each speaker. Videotaping the group session can also facilitate identification.

Although more difficult, group interviews can gather fruitful information. Interviewees remember common incidents when sitting in a group that they might not have thought of by themselves. Self-exaggeration may also be tempered in a peer group situation. The John F. Kennedy Library conducted several successful group interviews with journalists who covered the president and with the chairmen that Kennedy appointed to head the independent regulatory com-

missions. Nevertheless, group interviews should be considered chiefly as supplements to individual interviews, not as replacements.

Can a team of interviewers conduct an interview together?

Using more than one interviewer distorts the one-on-one relationship that tends to work best for oral history. The anthropologist Michael Kenny warned that a group of interviewers, though it can sometimes work, holds a potential for disaster: "Illuminating as this technique can be, it can also turn into the worst type of press conference, wherein the informant is either thoroughly cowed or offended, and rightly so."¹²

But there can be advantages to using more than one interviewer. Younger students, nervous about the experience, often interview in pairs or are accompanied by a parent or teacher. Novice interviewers may similarly take along a partner for moral support. Some research projects have been done entirely by teams. For one project on racial violence in the South, a black interviewer conducted most of the interviews with white southerners but took the precaution of going as part of a team with a white interviewer. One team member may be better versed in a particular subject and can take the lead in questioning about that area. But in team situations, one interviewer usually serves as the principal interviewer, asking most of the questions and gaining the interviewee's primary attention. Accompanying interviewers should try not to interrupt, except perhaps to interject a follow-up question that the primary interviewer might have missed.

What are the differences between recording events that are still taking place and recording those that are long past?

Most oral history projects look back, but some have conducted "history while it's hot," in the words of Forrest Pogue, the World War II combat interviewer. Military historians since then have carried tape recorders to question troops from Vietnam to the Persian Gulf. During Eugene McCarthy's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1968, an oral history project recorded interviews with the candidate and many of his staff. Oral historians at corporations and university archives have conducted ongoing interviews with their presidents and other high-level administrators, to review the past year's events and debrief the players in recent major events.

Scheduling is perhaps the biggest problem with interviewing as the events are occurring. The key players are often too busy or too likely to feel interrupted. They make and break appointments at a frustrating pace. Interviewers have to be patient and ready to take advantage of whatever

opportunity matter is along. Finally, when the subject matter is a current event, take it for granted that almost everything will be closed for some period. For the interview to be anything more revealing than a radio talk show, the interviewer must guarantee absolute confidentiality and allow the interviewee to seal the recordings and transcript for a safe period, until the events have passed into history.

PROCESSING

Must all our interviews be transcribed?

The deteriorating sound quality of audio and visual recordings over time is just one of the many incentives for transcribing oral history interviews. Even with the best recording devices, listeners will find it hard at times to understand interviewees, especially older people whose voices have grown faint, or those who speak with a pronounced accent or in a regional dialect. Others mutter and stumble over words. Background noises may obliterate the speaker's words. If the interviewer, who was present, finds it difficult to understand and transcribe all that was said, imagine the problem future researchers will have interpreting the recording. Transcribing enables both the interviewer and interviewee to review the interview and ensure that the transcript reflects what each intended to say.

Given a choice, researchers invariably prefer transcripts over recordings. Eyes can read easier than ears can hear. Transcripts can be scanned and photocopied. Information can be retrieved even more easily if the transcripts are indexed or if text-searching computer software is used. The recording will provide sound for television documentaries, radio programs, and exhibits, or for biographers, folklorists, and others curious about the speaking voice, dialect, hesitations, and other verbal mannerisms. But archivists note that very few researchers ask to listen to the recordings if transcripts are available.

The Internet has provided opportunities to reunite spoken words with their transcription and helped preserve the "orality" of oral history. Believing it vital for researchers to hear as well as to read interviews, some archives have posted sound recordings along with transcripts, photographs, and other documentation, on their web sites. In the case of non-English-speaking interviewees, such as Native Americans using tribal languages, the transcripts can also provide translations. Since sound files are very big, and consume much time and space for downloading, many projects will provide only excerpts from the sound recordings online. They also seek to keep the transcript verbatim to

match the sound recordings if their interviewees agree to refrain from editing their remarks.

If a project cannot afford transcripts, what are the alternatives?

If transcribing is not possible, a project's work should at least include abstracting and indexing the recordings. A summary of the main individuals and subjects discussed, with notations of where they can be found chronologically on the tape, will enable researchers to find the portions they seek. The TAPE (Time Access to Pertinent Excerpts) system has been designed to prepare such abstracts. Oral history project managers must maintain control over their collections as they grow if they want to access portions easily in the future. Whether you transcribe or abstract, it is also essential to process as you go, to avoid creating overwhelming backlogs, which can paralyze a project.¹³

Voice recognition software offers the promise that someday computers will transcribe recordings automatically. While some advances have been made, the technology is not yet adequate for oral history transcription. Existing voice recognition programs are generally geared to understand a single voice, and even that takes much time and effort to establish. The systems make numerous errors, which are compounded by multiple voices, accents, mumbling, and all the other obstacles that even human transcribers must surmount.

Should you transcribe your own recordings or contract them out?

Transcription is by far the most expensive and time-consuming part of an oral history project, requiring an estimated six to eight hours to transcribe each hour of interview as well as more time to audit-edit the transcripts (a form of audio proofreading in which you play back the recording while reviewing the transcript, making sure the two are consistent). Some projects' staffs transcribe their own recordings; in other projects, professional transcribing services are hired. In selecting transcribers, look for someone with previous oral history experience. Typing speed is far less critical for transcription than typing for comprehension. The estimated cost of transcribing should also include making corrections on the first draft of the interview. Request the transcript on computer disk as well as in a hard-copy version. It is advisable to continue with the same transcription service for all of your interviews to ensure consistent stylistic treatment of idiosyncratic vocabulary, acronyms, geographic names, regional dialects, and any number of other factors that might hinder speedy and accurate transcriptions if the interviews pass through too many hands.

In some projects, interviews are transcribed after additional funds have been raised. Funding agencies, such as state humanities councils, have occasionally underwritten the transcription of already completed interviews, since the exact cost can be calculated and a finished collection guaranteed. The longer a project waits, the more difficult the transcription process becomes, owing to the deterioration of tapes and to the possibility that interviewees will die before having a chance to correct the transcript.

What issues need to be worked out in advance with a transcribing service?

Transcribers want recordings that are clear and distinct, with little background noise. Provide a list of any proper and place names and technical terms that are mentioned in the interview, to reduce the chance of error and the time necessary for proofreading and editing. Label recordings with the name of the interviewee, date of the interview, and sequence of the tapes (Interview no. 1, Tape no. 1, Tape no. 2, and so on). As an added precaution, and for ready identification later, at the beginning of the recording, interviewers should introduce themselves, their interviewees, and the date of the interview. This formal preamble can be done before the meeting with the interviewee to avoid jeopardizing rapport. Always retain the master recording and send only a copy to the transcriber.

Agreements should be made in advance with transcribers on the desired format of the transcripts, including spacing, type size, margins, and speaker identification. Make sure that the transcriber uses compatible computer equipment and software so that you can edit the disks and use them to produce copies as needed. Determine whether the transcriber will prepare the index, and what index terms are most important. Caution the transcriber about possibly confidential material on the recordings. (Some transcribers provide notarized assurances that the transcripts will remain confidential.) Make the transcriber aware of whatever deadlines the project is operating under. Report any problems with the transcripts to the transcriber, especially at the beginning of the process before patterns have been established, to keep the final product consistent.¹⁴

Which is the oral history, the recording or the transcript?

Tape and transcript are two types of records of the same interview. Archivists generally consider the tape, being the original and verbatim record, the primary document. Looked at another way, the tape records what was said, and the transcript represents the intended meaning of what was said. Even the most slavishly verbatim transcript is just an interpretation of the tape. Different

transcribers might handle the same material in different ways, including punctuation, capitalization, false starts, broken sentences, and verbal obstacles to presenting spoken words in print. Interviewers and interviewees should edit the transcripts, correcting errors, whether misspoken or mistranscribed. During the editing, interviewees may add material that was forgotten during their interviews, or may remove comments that they have had second thoughts about.

Those disciplines particularly the behavioral sciences more interested in the study of actual speech warn against taking transcripts "too seriously as *the* reality." Viewing transcripts as only a partial rendering of the recordings, they note the importance of such additional features as pitch, stress, volume, and rate of speech, as well as facial gestures and body movements, which are not captured on audio tape. These disciplines often design particular modes of transcription to illustrate some aspect of speech they consider important, such as measuring the pauses in an interviewee's responses. Some have devised symbols to express significant nonverbal responses. When folklorist Henry Glassie interviewed the Irish at Ballymenone, he used a diamond-shaped symbol to signify a "smile in the voice, a chuckle in the throat, a laugh in the tale," suggesting humor visually but not verbally.¹⁵

In the United States, the transcript rather than the recording has generally served as the primary research tool. Created and directed by historical researchers, the pioneering Columbia Oral History Research Office during its early years produced transcripts and then, because of its limited budget, recorded over its tapes. As often happens, practical policies become elevated to the status of principle. Columbia noted that most researchers asked to use only transcripts and that only folklorists, linguists, and ethnomusicologists wanted to hear the sound recordings. Columbia thus felt justified in its de-emphasis of the tape and spoke authoritatively on this matter. Many oral history projects followed its model.

Canadian oral historians, by contrast, adopted "aural history" and created impressive sound archives, often with no transcripts at all. Similarly converting a practice to a principle, some oral historians rejected transcripts as a distortion or corruption of the interview. To be accurate, they argued, every word, sound or false start should be put down on paper. When the Oral History Association met in Canada in 1976, heated arguments erupted as to whether the tape or the transcript was the "real" oral history. In later years, oral historians generally accepted both tape and transcript as different but equally legitimate records of the same event. Computers have also made transcribing easier and more cost-effective, and transcribing services have blossomed for those who do not want to do it themselves. The advent of the Internet has encouraged advocates of "aurality" to stream their audio tapes online so that more researchers can hear

the actual voices of the interviewees, but such procedures need not preclude posting the transcripts as well.

Too great an emphasis on transcribing has caused too many oral historians to ignore the quality of their sound recordings, so that many tapes are of such poor quality that they cannot be used for broadcasting or museum exhibition. Transcripts and high-quality sound recordings (and video recordings) involve considerable expense, and oral history projects have often been forced to take one path or the other. Still, tape and transcript should not be seen as an either-or choice but as mutual goals.

Does editing of transcripts change and distort their meaning?

Editing is usually necessary to make sense of the spoken word when it is put down in writing. As David Crystal has written in his encyclopedia of the English language: "Extracts of informal spoken conversation look weird in print because it is not possible to show all the melody, stress, and tone of voice which made the speaker sound perfectly natural in context." Moreover, the transcriber may have made errors, garbled names, or been unable to distinguish exactly what an interviewee said. The interviewee may have given the wrong name or date or some other unintentionally misleading information. Speakers often do not complete sentences. The listener can get the gist of their meaning, but in written form these fragmented sentences can be unclear and a source of frustration.¹⁶

Some historians and linguists regret the practice of editing out speakers' hesitations, repetitions, and unfinished thoughts, and encourage transcribing practices that will "convey the cadences of speech as well as its content." They question why we should expect interviewees to speak in complete sentences, when sentence fragments and exclamations are common and readily understandable in everyday conversation. Linguists especially strive to create transcripts that faithfully reproduce human speech, employing systems that range from phonetics to meticulously defined notations, sometimes even counting the seconds that elapse when the speaker pauses. While such exercises honor the oral nature of interviewing and serve particular scholarly purposes, they can never fully replicate the tones and rhythms of the recorded voice and run the risk of obscuring the substance of the interview by leaving unfinished thoughts that could have been clarified through judicious editing.¹⁷

Oral historians are not the only people who edit transcripts. Members of Congress edit their remarks in the daily *Congressional Record*, and administration witnesses revise the testimony they have given before congressional committees. In his oral history, Carl Marcy recalled how during the 1940s he edited Secretary of State George C. Marshall's congressional testimony:

He looked at me with a transcript in front of him that I had corrected. He said, "Marcy, you in charge of this?" I said, "Yes sir, I did that." He said, "Well, I don't know what it is, but I feel when I'm talking to the senators that I'm making sense and they understand me. But when I look at the uncorrected transcript it doesn't make much sense." But, he said, "After you fix it up, it looks all right. You keep on doing it."¹⁸

There are advantages in having interviewees edit their own transcripts. Interviewees know what they said, or meant to say, better than anyone else. They can often spot misspelled names and mistranscribed sentences. Whether a word should appear at the end of one sentence or at the beginning of the next can affect the meaning of both sentences. Dropping a *not* can dramatically reverse the meaning. Words that sound alike, and may make sense in context may not be the words the interviewee used. Transcribers have heard *assumed* instead of *as soon*, *block aid* for *blockade*, and the *Duke of Wellington* instead of *Duke Ellington*. One transcript contained an astonishing comment about two Supreme Court justices: "Brandeis was concerned about marrying Frankfurter." The speaker had actually said that Louis Brandeis was worried about the health of Felix Frankfurter's wife Marion. Another transcript contained a mysterious reference to "I.C. Sping, head of the transition team." Replaying of the tape revealed that the interviewee had actually said: "I ceased being head of the transition team."

Some interviewees will defer to the interviewer to make whatever corrections seem necessary. Others, especially professional people, feel chagrined at seeing their syntax set down in print. They will correct tenses, change "yeah" to "yes," and otherwise make themselves appear as literate as possible. Interviewers need to remind their interviewees that an oral history is a spoken record, and that it is best to keep the verbal rhythms and flows rather than convert the history into a more formal text. Writers of fiction are always trying to re-create believable human dialogue; oral history is human dialogue. The vernacular is accessible and attractive to wide audiences. Too much tampering with the transcript compromises the qualities that make oral history so compelling. Some oral historians insist that any changes in the verbatim transcripts be put in brackets. Others, seeking to avoid even the temptation of making alterations, prefer not to give the transcript to the interviewee for editing. Unless interviewees have already signed releases, however, their dissatisfaction or embarrassment may keep their interviews from being opened for research. Although such issues can be negotiated, the ethics of oral history and the laws of copyright dictate that an interviewee's wishes be honored.

Some changes add to a transcript, as when interviewees realize that they did not finish a story on tape and left out related material, which can be inserted in the final transcript. More problematic are relations of stories or commentary because interviewees have had second thoughts after completing the recorded interview. Rather than eliminate this material, interviewees should be advised to restrict its use for a safe period of time.

Transcripts may be edited, but the original recording should be left exactly as spoken. Interviewers should inform interviewees that no changes or deletions can be made to the master copy. Interviewees may choose to set a longer restriction on use of the unedited recording than they do on the edited transcript, or to require listeners to quote solely from transcripts. Edited copies of the master recording may be released for research pending the lifting of any restrictions on portions of the original.

If a project intends to post both sound recordings and transcripts on its web sites, there should be more incentive to keep the transcript as close to the spoken word as possible, so that listeners can more easily follow the written text. At the same time, there will be less need for transcribers to attempt to reproduce non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions, laughter, sobs, and protracted silences that will be evident on the recording.

What is the interviewer's responsibility for reviewing and editing the transcript?

Oral historians should audit-edit the transcripts of their interviews. Having sat through the interview, the interviewer knows the material better than anyone except the interviewee. Sometimes interviewers transcribe their own recordings, but more often the interviewer serves as editor of the transcript. Listening to the recording, the interviewer reads the transcript to correct spelling errors, fill in words the transcriber could not discern, and generally make sense of what the interviewee said.

During the interview, the interviewer should note any unusual proper names and place names and afterwards ask the interviewee for the correct spellings. Some interviewers do this in the course of the interview, but others strongly prefer not to interrupt the interview and wait instead until the session is over. These interview notes will facilitate the transcriber's job.

Listening to the recording while editing the transcript can also be an important and excruciating learning experience for interviewers, who thus get to listen to their own mistakes. Note the sound quality. Did you take into account the air conditioner or grandfather's clock or the open window when you set up the recorder and microphone, and can you hear how these noises obscure the

spoken word and make transcribing difficult? Did you interrupt before the interviewee was finished answering? Did you fail to follow up your initial question or leave an important question unaddressed? Did you pursue new leads in the interview or unwisely force it back to your prepared questions? Every editing session teaches interviewers more about their techniques and better prepares them for future interviews.

Should transcribers also edit?

The responsibility of transcribers is to reproduce as closely as possible what they hear on recordings. Transcribers should never rearrange words or delete phrases for stylistic purposes. Some projects permit a transcriber to remove "false starts," which are sentences that begin one way and then end abruptly as the interviewee changes gears. ("First we went. . . we started . . . well, actually, even before we went," might be tightened to, "Actually, even before we went.") But some false starts reveal something about mental processes, Freudian slips, and attempts to suppress information. Nor should transcribers try to correct ungrammatical constructions. A transcriber should leave the editing to the interviewer and the interviewee and only note those places in the transcript that were difficult to understand and any questions about spelling or syntax.

Working on a particular interview, a transcriber will soon become familiar with the speaker's verbal punctuation. Frequently, interviewees will use a word like *and* to start a new sentence, or a phrase like *and so* to begin a new paragraph. If transcribed literally, the interview will read like one long run-on sentence. Instead, transcribers are justified in replacing such constantly repeated cues with punctuation and paragraph breaks.

How should a transcript indicate sounds and gestures other than words?

Both the transcriber and the interviewer can add in brackets any additional descriptions such as "[laughs]," "[snaps fingers]," "[uses hands to suggest height]" that will help the reader understand what was happening, and what the interviewer intended to express. Humor and sarcasm sometimes do not translate well and may be taken too seriously unless the laughter of the interviewer or interviewee is also recorded. The transcript should also elucidate otherwise unexplainable shifts in the dialogue by noting any break in the tape, mechanical failing, or prolonged lapse in the interview. In all of these cues, however, reasonable discretion and good sense should be employed. Their purpose is to assist the researcher, not to embarrass the interviewee.

Similarly, transcripts should be edited to provide in brackets the full name and any relevant title of individuals when first mentioned, such as “[Senator Hillary Rodham] Clinton,” or “President [George W.] Bush.” When a city or town is mentioned, the state should also be added in brackets such as Springfield [Missouri] or Springfield [Illinois] unless a series of communities in a single state are under discussion. For stylistic questions about numbers, abbreviations, and so on, transcribers should consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* or whatever style manual the project chooses to employ.¹⁹

Transcribing is more of an art than a science. The Regional Oral History Office (ROHO) at the University of California at Berkeley once experimented by having four experienced individuals transcribe the same ten-minute segment of a recording. The result was four strikingly different transcripts that ranged from slavishly verbatim to highly polished, with a wide variety of editorial interventions indicating sounds and actions other than words. Each of the versions was a legitimate interpretation, but their extreme variations serve as a reminder that interviewers and project managers need to work with transcribers to set the desired style of the final product. As more projects put their sound recordings on the Internet, they will likely want less-edited transcripts that will resemble the spoken word most closely, including all of the flaws of unrehearsed speech.²⁰

Should transcripts reproduce accents and dialects?

If the interview is intended for folklore studies or other purposes for which regional speech patterns are important, then rendering regional dialect in a transcript might be desirable. But dialects are tricky business that should be handled carefully.

Educated interviewees who say “yeah” will insist on altering the transcript word to “yes.” They are sorely displeased when transcripts show them saying “gonna” or “talkin’” and would prefer to see their spoken words reproduced as they would write them. If oral historians allow these interviewees to correct their transcripts, they owe the same courtesy to those who are not used to seeing their words set down in print. As the Appalachian Oral History Project concluded, transcribing phonetically gives a pejorative cast to the speech and can “unintentionally demean the speaker.” The Appalachian project discovered that its transcribers—student workers from the same area—were unaware of their own dialect’s peculiarities (such as pronouncing “our” as “air”) and therefore spelled the words correctly. Only transcribers from outside the mountain culture tried to capture on paper what they imagined to be authentic-looking dialect. The Appalachian project trained its transcribers not to correct grammar, but also not

to respell what was said to the approximate dialect. That way they kept the flavor of the speaker’s style without indicating pronunciation.²¹

The historian Nell Irvin Painter came to the same conclusions about her oral history of Hosea Hudson, a southern black labor organizer and Communist Party member. “Adapting Hudson’s spoken language to the printed page meant abandoning its sound, for Hudson does not speak as I have rendered his words,” Painter explained. A phonetically reproduced transcript would have been “condescending and difficult to read.” She chose to use standard English spellings and to avoid apostrophes in words that showed variations from standard style, “because apostrophes and dialect in literature have long singled out characters that readers need not take seriously, ignorant folk who cannot speak correctly. With black people, the usage is centuries old.” Yet as much as possible she preserved Hudson’s vocabulary and such unique phrases as “howbeitsoever,” to retain the spirit of the words without belittling the man.²²

What should the transcript look like?

The word processor has revolutionized oral history transcripts and made obsolete many of the previously recommended styles of transcripts. At one time, corrections were either handwritten directly on the transcript or the entire transcript had to be retyped. Using typewriters, oral historians used triple-spaced lines and elaborately wide margins for making correction. All of these techniques became unnecessary with the computer’s easy means of correction and reproduction.

Use common sense in setting margins. The practices of early oral historians led to so few words to the page that researchers complained about the inflated photocopying costs. On the other hand, too small a margin causes problems if the transcript is bound. Small type face and single-spacing will also make the transcript difficult to read when it is microfilmed.

Earlier, the anonymous Q and A were used to indicate questions and answers, but the word processor makes it easy to insert the interviewer and interviewee’s last names each time that they speak. If the interview extended over several sessions, the transcript should indicate at the beginning: “Interview no. 1 with Jane Jones, Wednesday, October 18, 2002,” and at the end: “End of Interview no. 1.” Begin the next with “Interview no. 2. . .” The title page should list the interviewee’s name, the name of the oral history project, the interviewer’s name, and the dates of the interviews, and their location.

Introduce the transcripts with a brief explanation of the oral history project and an outline of the interviewee’s life and career. Some projects will use a data sheet on each interviewee instead. A brief biographical statement for the inter-

viewer will also be useful for future researchers, since different interviewers (historians, political scientists, folklorists, community members) will ask different questions. Put the deed of gift up front to establish the copyright and research use of the interview. Interview transcripts may also contain relevant documents as appendix material. Some projects include one or more photographs of the interviewee and of people and events described in the interview. An index will also greatly enhance an interview's research use.

Why is an index necessary?

It does not take long before even the interviewer has trouble remembering who said what in which interview. Collecting information is only the first step; retrieving it comes next. Word-processing programs now make indexing so much easier that there is less excuse for not creating them. At minimum, indexes should include all names cited. Subject indexes are trickier but no less important. The program manager and interviewers should work out a general list of important terms for indexing purposes. Indexes help both interviewers and researchers. As interviewers prepare for future interviews, they will want to review pertinent portions of past interviews to prepare their questions. Researchers often do not want to read an entire transcript, but only those portions dealing with their particular subject. Text-searching software has also become a boon to users of oral histories, but since the transcript will often stand alone, particularly if it has been microfilmed, a separate index will still be useful.

Cross-referenced indexes add immeasurably to the research use of a collection. Since 1948 Columbia University has maintained a name index of all of its interviews. Researchers have found this massive index to be a rich resource, since it identifies not only the major players in their subject but also the minor figures whose interviews they might not otherwise have consulted but who often offer the most perceptive observations and analysis.

Should the project director review all transcripts?

Someone other than the interviewer ought to review the transcript before releasing it for research. Depending on the size of a project, a project director or editor may read all interviews or may delegate some to members of the advisory board as reviewer/evaluators. The decision depends on whether the interviews are ready to be opened and therefore can be reviewed by an advisory board member, or whether confidentiality needs to be maintained and revising should be limited to the project director. The project director should review the materials to determine whether the interviewer is following the project's guidelines,

asking appropriate questions and follow-up questions, not interrupting, and collecting worthwhile material. Directors can use the review process to advise interviewers on recommended changes in style, or they may decide not to continue to use interviewers whose work is unsatisfactory. Project directors will also want to be sure that a consistent style is followed in the processing of the different interviews in a project.

LEGAL CONCERNS

Journalists do not use legal release forms for their interviews; why should oral historians?

People who respond to journalists' questions assume that their words will appear in print unless they stipulate that something is "off the record" or otherwise not for attribution. Many journalists take notes rather than record their interviews and generally use only brief excerpts from interviews in their stories. Few journalists retain their notes for posterity. Oral historians face different considerations.

Federal copyright laws grant copyright automatically to anyone whose words and ideas are recorded in any tangible form, for a period lasting until fifty years after that person's death. That is, even without registering the copyright with the Copyright Office, interviewees retain the copyright on anything that they have said in an interview. If the oral history project or any researcher publishes excerpts from their interviews beyond "fair use," a relatively small number of words without a deed of gift or contact that permits such use, then the interviewee could sue for copyright infringement.

For this reason, archives require a deed of gift or contact before opening an oral history for research. Similarly, publishers want to be sure that the copyright concerns have been addressed before they publish interviews in a book. To avoid headaches later, interviewers should collect deeds of gift when the interview is conducted, or at least by the time the transcript has been prepared and edited.

The deed of gift establishes who owns the copyright in the interview and what may be done with it. Interviewees may retain the copyright and require that they or their heirs be consulted before anyone uses or publishes excerpts from the interview. This requirement makes the process complex and should be avoided if possible. Other interviewees will assign the copyright over to the interviewer, the oral history project, or the repository but will stipulate that all or parts of the interview must remain closed for a period of time, sometimes until the interviewee's death. Too stringent a time restriction should also

be avoided, as archives do not want to store materials for protracted periods if they cannot be used.

A simple deed of gift can turn the copyright over to the interviewer, or the oral history project, to use as they see fit, and to deposit in an institution of his or her choosing. Some deeds jointly assign the copyright to the public domain, that is, both the interviewer and the interviewee waive the right to copyright the material. Assigning copyright to the public domain vastly simplifies administration but offers little control over uses of the material. With the increasing likelihood that projects will post at least some of their interviews on the Internet, deeds of gift should be drawn broadly enough to cover electronic and other forms of reproduction.

Projects should develop a standard deed of gift or contract that offers enough flexibility to meet the requirements of different interviewees. Interviewers should explain to interviewees ahead of time the potential uses and planned deposit of the interviews so that the interviewee knows fully what to expect. Usually, these explanations are outlined in the initial correspondence or conversation between oral historians and interviewees. Should the interviewee die before signing a deed of gift, the verbal agreement on the recording may serve as an oral contract. Otherwise, the oral history project will have to seek out the next of kin to sign the deed. (Sample deeds of gift are reprinted in appendix 2.)²³

Must the interviewer also sign a deed of gift?

Because the interview is a joint product, the interviewer as well as the interviewee should sign a legal release. Projects that use volunteer or paid interviewers should require them to sign *before* they do any interviewing, to avoid any misunderstandings later on. By signing such releases, interviewers agree to assign whatever copyright they might have to the project, to the interview repository, or to the public domain (see the appendices).²⁴

When hiring contract interviewers, the basic agreement should include the names of the project and the interviewer, the interviewer's specific responsibilities, a payment schedule, the assignment of rights for the interviews, the assignment of responsibility for obtaining deeds of gift from interviewees, the procedures for terminating the contract, and dated signatures of both parties.²⁵

Do interviewees have the right to close their interviews for a long time?

Before beginning an interview, when interviewees often feel nervous, interviewers will explain their right to close portions or all of an interview for as long as necessary. At the outset, more than one interviewee has announced, "Well, this

is going to be hot, and will have to be kept closed for a long time. I don't want to embarrass anyone." By the conclusion of the interview, however, the interviewee usually feels more relaxed, the information elicited rarely turns out to have been salacious, and it has become evident that the people discussed are usually long since retired or deceased and that the "hot" information has cooled down considerably. At this point, the interviewer should point out what a valuable research tool the interview will become, and what a shame it would be to keep it away from researchers for long. Quite often the interviewee may decide to open the interview within a short time, if not immediately. A little flattery and reassurance generally goes a long way to encourage early release.

What rights do interviewees have to publish their own interviews?

Interviewees may want the right of first use. That is, they may want to close the interview while they write their own book. The oral history may provide the outline and the core of what they are writing. Unless the project has its own deadlines for a publication, exhibit, or other public presentation of the material and thus needs to negotiate a mutually beneficial release date, there is no reason why the interview should not be kept closed for a reasonable period that will give the interviewee the chance to publish a book, or abandon the attempt. The book will most likely depart from the interview in many respects, or it may not use all of the interview material. In either case, researchers will benefit from the additional first-person material. Nevertheless, given your oral history project's investment of time and funds in the interviews, and recognizing that some interviewees will never be able to turn a transcript into a publishable book no matter how long they work on it, do not permit open-ended restrictions on interviews that give the interviewees exclusive use and fail to set a definite time when other researchers can gain access.

The *New York Times* noted that when the pilot Chuck Yeager first read the manuscript of his autobiography prepared by his collaborator, he exclaimed, "Hell, it's just like me talking." As it happened, the collaborator had drawn much of the book from forty hours of taped interviews that Yeager had done with the Air Force Oral History Program. The Senate Historical Office interviewed George Tames, who had photographed Washington people and events for forty years for the *New York Times*. Although never a member of the Senate staff, Tames had spent nearly every working day of his career on Capitol Hill, getting into the backrooms to snap his photographs. In his interviews, Tames gave vivid descriptions of the senators he captured on film and seemingly had a story for every photograph he took. When his interviews were complete, Tames dictated his own fur-

ther reminiscences, which he published as *A View of Washington: Six Presidents Who Have Known Me*.²⁶

Future researchers may also find it useful to compare the original spoken interview with the polished publication. For example, the University of Kentucky Library contains the uncorrected transcript of the long series of interviews that Sidney Shalett conducted with the former senator and vice president Alben Barkley and used to produce Barkley's memoir, *That Reminds Me* (1954). The transcripts reveal a more hot-tempered, opinionated Barkley than appears in his genial autobiography, and the differences between the two versions offer useful insights for researchers.²⁷

What if someone demands the recordings and transcripts be returned?

Very rarely, an interviewee has second thoughts about an oral history and may refuse to sign a deed of gift or even ask to withdraw the interview from a collection. This unfortunate situation has also occurred when an interviewee dies without signing a deed of gift and the next of kin demands to have the interview back. It is necessary to impress upon these individuals the time and cost that it took to do the interview, and the breach that its removal would cause to the collection. Try negotiating a longer restriction on the interview rather than its removal. Sometimes the interviewee just needs a little reassurance that the interview is a valuable document and does not sound foolish. But if the interviewee is adamant, the recordings and transcripts must be returned. After a reasonable interval, a project can contact those who have removed their interviews, or their next of kin, provide some information on the continued progress of the collection, and encourage them to resubmit the interviews so that the story will not be lost.

Can something said in an oral history ever be considered libelous or defamatory?

Unfortunately, yes. Individuals whom interviewees may libel or defame can sue not only the interviewee but the interviewer and the repository that holds the interview. Such instances are exceedingly rare, but even the threat of a libel suit can be unpleasant. Use common sense. If an interviewee states something extremely negative about the character of a living individual, something that is not widely known or previously published about that individual, and especially if the individual is not a public figure, then simply restrict that material for a period of time until the possibly defamed individual is no longer around to sue. The dead cannot be defamed.

Rather than close the whole interview because of one potentially libelous story, restrict that portion for a period of time until the closure can be safely lifted. It may be disappointing not to be able to open a juicy story immediately. But as a lawyer once advised an oral history project: "You could probably win a libel suit in court, but you wouldn't want to see the legal bills that would be the result."²⁸

ARCHIVING AND THE INTERNET

What should be done with the finished interviews?

If the oral history project is not part of a library, archive, historical society, or other institution that deals with researchers, then its recordings and transcripts should be deposited somewhere that is capable of preserving the interviews and of making them available for general use. Public libraries are usually eager to gather materials about a community, its longtime families, churches, and schools for their local history sections. Archives will be pleased to receive copies of interviews relating to any person for whom they hold manuscript collections. University libraries often collect interviews done by students and faculty members. Larger oral history offices are willing to take in donated collections on a wide array of topics.

Each interview's deed of gift should indicate that the interviewee knows, and approves, the interview repository. Supply the repository with basic information about the interviews, project goals, sponsorship, and funding and make sure that all interviewers have documented their preparation, methods, and interview circumstances.

As oral history recordings and transcripts are easily copied, it is not necessary to limit the deposit to a single institution. Put copies of your oral histories wherever researchers are more likely to use them: in different libraries in a community, in archives that have the papers of the interviewee, or with institutions closely associated with the interviewee. In addition, plan to give at least one if not several copies to the interviewee. Even in inexpensive loose-leaf or spiral binding, transcripts make treasured gifts for family members. Retain at least one copy, or disk, for the oral history project's own future reference.

How do you let people know where to find your project's oral histories?

Having gone through all the steps of conducting, processing, and preserving oral history interviews, it can be a source of immense frustration when researchers fail to use them. Your oral history project is really not over until

you have made an effort to publicize the existence of the collection. Send announcements to professional organization newsletters or H-Oralhist and other Internet listservs for historians and other disciplines whose researchers are likely to be interested in the subject. Consider writing a brief article, drawing from the interviews, for publication in a newsletter or local newspaper. Oral histories can be included in library catalogs. Archival projects also report their collections on the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) or the Online Catalog Library Center (OCLC). Some microfilm publishers also reproduce and distribute oral histories, with the permission of the oral history projects.

In addition to scholarly researchers, you should also make the interviews available to the community from which they came. The library or archive where the interviews are deposited may be willing to mount an exhibit based on them. Local newspapers and broadcasters may draw from the collected materials for articles, programs, and documentaries. Pamphlets and other publications can be planned to give the material a wider distribution. Documentaries, slide-tape productions, and radio and theatrical performance have all tapped into the abundant resources of oral history.

Should oral histories be posted on the Internet?

Given the democratic impulses of the oral history movement, it would be contradictory for oral historians not to avail themselves of the most universal and cost-effective means of mass communication and dissemination ever devised. As the Internet became widely available in the 1990s, scores of oral history projects from high schools to presidential libraries began posting excerpts and entire transcripts of interviews. Some sites included portions of the audio and videotape, along with photographs and other illustrations. Collections of interviews grouped around a similar subject can be linked for easier reference, and can be "hot linked" to related web sites. The Internet helps return oral histories to the community, and expands the boundaries of our definition of community. It is especially attractive for reaching students who prefer to browse the Net than to explore libraries, or who cannot afford to travel much distance to visit an archives. Interviews will usually record more "visitors" in a single month on the Internet than in all the years they sat on archive shelves combined.

Some oral historians have expressed reservations about putting interviews online, ranging from the need to protect interviewees' privacy to the danger of misuse and manipulation of sound recordings and transcripts, and the "unmonitored access" of the Internet, which would result in a loss of archival control

over the interviews. They question whether deeds of gift that had not anticipated electronic reproduction and distribution would permit the posting of interviews on the Internet without the express permission of the interviewees or their next of kin. It is imperative that oral historians grapple with the ethical issue of the Internet and avoid exploitation of their interviewees. But the solution is not to avoid the Web, for fear of stepping into a minefield. On the contrary, those projects that do not avail themselves of the Internet run the risk of being ignored by the next generation of researchers.

Downloading an oral history is not the equivalent of publishing it. The Internet is a distributor rather than a publisher (Congress specifically defined it that way to protect it from libel suits), and oral history transcripts are raw data rather than books. In practice, the Internet has not proved conducive for reading book-length manuscripts but does best with screen-sized chunks of information. Online magazines generally feature short essays with eye-catching graphics. The ideal text for easy reading on a computer screen runs about the length of a newspaper column. Longer texts are available on line, including books from the Bible to *Moby Dick*. They are easy to scan by word and key phrase for ready reference, but awkward to read at length. The probability is that most interviews will attract researchers seeking to locate specific information rather than casual readers who will peruse the entire document.

Researchers who consult interview transcripts online will want the product to resemble as much as possible the original document, including the pagination. Although researchers can scan the text by word on the screen, they will need page numbers for their citations as well as to make use of the prepared indexes if they print out a copy of the entire interview. Oral historians themselves will use the Internet when doing research needed to prepare for their interviews, from genealogical data to newspaper articles, alumni news, and background material on organizations and communities with which interviewees were associated, and even maps and driving directions to their homes.

The World Wide Web will not replace oral history archives, which will continue to house the original records and preservation copies of tapes and transcripts. Instead, it can extend archives' user services from their immediate locations to the furthest reaches of the globe. It can make the next generation of researchers more aware of the panoramic scope of oral history already conducted, and more likely to use those interviews. Wider scrutiny could also lead to increased peer review of interviews, with greater attention to issues of evidence and content, and even more rigorous methodological standards.²⁹

What needs to be taken into consideration before putting interviews on the Internet?

Projects should build the Internet into their operating plans, informing participants in advance and letting them know their options, drafting deeds of gift that specifically permit digital electronic reproduction of the interviews, and preparing transcripts in formats convenient for downloading. For established oral history archives the task of digitizing a large collection might appear so daunting as to paralyze. A reasonable strategy would be to start by making finding aids available on the Internet. That will alert researchers as to what exists where. As many interview transcripts are already available on microfilm or through inter-library loan, researchers can obtain copies without traveling to distant collections. Projects can next turn to interviews already transcribed on disk, or scan older transcripts, and post a sample of their interviews to display the richness of their collection. Researchers will pay virtual visits to the collections, searching the finding aids, reading transcripts, listening to some of the recordings, and consulting with the archivists electronically.

Making oral history interviews available on the Internet can be labor-intensive and time-consuming, particularly when audio and visual materials are included in the presentation. They can often tap student help, but the turnover in staff requires regular training and close monitoring for quality control. Web sites may be planned as a group project, but experience strongly suggests that one person should have the final say over content and style. As web sites expand with content over time, to keep them manageable, it is advisable to stick to clear and consistent formats. Unlike a book, where users will generally start at the beginning and flip through to the desired section, web browsers may approach a site at any point, and therefore need to be informed where they are, and be provided with ready links to the project's home page. "Users want ease of access and use," notes Tamara Kennelly, university archivist at Virginia Tech. "They want to navigate easily around a site." Remember that flashy presentations may slow the downloading time for home users.³⁰

Projects planning to use audio and video clips from interviews on their web sites should make clear to browsers their copyright status to prevent illicit reproduction and rebroadcast. Some have redesigned their deeds of gift to stipulate whether the interviewee wishes to be consulted before any commercial broadcast or electronic publication of the interview. By the same token, projects should take care in reproducing film or sound clips for which they do not hold copyright or permission from the holder. Even a nonprofit educational organization can be sued for copyright infringement. Libel and defamation are areas of concern on the Internet, just as in archives and publication. Interviewees, inter-

viewers, and projects remain liable for spreading malicious untruths. Internet servers, by contrast, cannot be held responsible for the content of an interview. Congress has defined the Internet not as a publisher but as a distributor, the functional equivalent of a newsstand.³¹

It is imperative that oral historians grapple with the ethical issue of the Internet and avoid exploitation of their interviewees. Beyond revising their deeds of gift for current interviewing, projects should notify living interviewees before placing their interviews online (although it seems excessive to track down next of kin for permission, as their intentions may conflict with those of the interviewee). Give demonstrations to older interviewees who have never used the Internet or provide them with a printout of selections from their interview as it will appear. Oral historians need to honor the wishes of those who find the possibility of worldwide access to their interviews during their lifetimes either threatening or invasive of their privacy. But as most interviewees hope to leave something of themselves for posterity, where their memories might be published, exhibited, and otherwise not forgotten, they will generally be pleased to have their interviews widely accessible.

Sample Legal Release Forms

SAMPLE DEED OF GIFT

[From John Neuenschwander, *Oral History and the Law* (2003)]

I, [name of interviewee] of [address], herein permanently give, convey, and assign to [name of archive, program or individual], which is currently in possession of my interview (or oral memoir) consisting of [description]. In so doing I understand that my interview (or oral memoir) will be made available to researchers and may be quoted from, published or broadcast in any medium that the [archive, program or individual] shall deem appropriate.

In making this gift I fully understand that I am conveying all legal title and literary property rights which I have or may be deemed to have in my interview (or oral memoir) as well as my rights, title and interest in any copyright which may be secured under the laws now or later in force and effect in the United States of America. My conveyance of copyright encompasses the exclusive rights of: reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performance, public display as well as all renewals and extensions.

I, [agent for the duly appointed representative of] accept the interview (or oral memoir) of [name of interviewee] for inclusion into the [archive or program].

[signature of donor]

[signature of agent/representative]

[date]

Provisions for Control of Access and/or Sealing of Interview

No researcher shall be allowed access to my oral history without my written permission.

No researcher will be permitted to quote from my interview unless he or she has submitted the quotes to me and received my written approval.

My oral history interview will remain closed to all researchers until [date] or my death, whichever occurs first.

My oral history interview cannot be made available to researchers unless all references from which my identity could be known are edited out and a pseudonym is assigned. After my death, all portions of my oral history interview which were held back, as well as my true identity, shall be made available.

DEED OF GIFT FOR HEIR OR HEIRS OF INTERVIEWEE

[From John Neuenschwander, *Oral History and the Law* (2003)]

In accordance with the willing participation of [name of interviewee] in the [name of oral history project or program] on [date], in which he/she voluntarily gave to the [name of receiving group or individual] an interview (or oral memoir) in the form of [number of tapes or transcripts], I/we, [names] as legal heir or heirs, herein do permanently give, convey and assign same to [name of archive, program, or interviewer]. In doing so, I/we understand that [name of interviewee]'s interview (or oral memoir) will be made available to researchers and may be quoted from, published and broadcast in any medium that [the archive, program or individual] shall deem appropriate.

I/we further acknowledge in making this gift that I/we are conveying all legal title and literary property rights which I/we as heir/heirs to [name of interviewee]'s interview (or oral memoir) as well as all rights, title, and interest in any copyright which may be secured now or under the laws later in force and effect in the United States of America. My/our conveyance of copyright encompasses the exclusive rights of reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performances, public display as well as all renewals and extensions.

I, [name], agent for or duly appointed representative of [the archive, program or individual], accept the interview (or oral memoir) with [name of interviewee] for inclusion into the [archive or program].

[signature of agent/representative]

[signature of heir/heirs]

[date]

DEED OF GIFT RELEASE FOR INTERVIEWER

[From John Neuenschwander, *Oral History and the Law* (2003)]

I, [name of interviewer], who served as an interviewer for the [name of project or sponsoring program or archive] and who conducted an interview or interviews with [name of interviewee] on or about [date] for which no legal releases were executed, do herein permanently give, convey and assign to [name of program or archive]. In doing so I understand that the interview (or oral memoir) with [name of interviewee] will be made available to researchers and may be quoted from, published or broadcast in any medium that the [name of program or archive] shall deem appropriate.

In making this gift I fully understand that I am conveying all legal title and literary property rights which I have or may be deemed to have in this interview or interviews (or oral memoir) as well as all my right, title and interest as joint author in any copyright which may be secured under the laws now or later in force and effect in the United States of America. My conveyance of copyright encompasses the exclusive rights of reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performance, public display as well as all renewals and extensions.

I, [name], agent for or duly appointed representative of [the archive or program], accept the interview (or oral memoir) with [name of interviewee] for inclusion into [the archive or program].

[signature of interviewer]

[signature of agent/representative]

[date]

DEED OF GIFT TO THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

[Senate Historical Office]

I, [name of interviewee], do hereby give to the [archives or organization] the recordings and transcripts of my interviews conducted on [dates].

I authorize the [archives or organization] to use the recordings and transcripts in such a manner as may best serve the educational and historical objectives of their oral history program.

In making this gift, I voluntarily convey ownership of the recordings and transcripts to the public domain.

Agent of Receiving Organization

Donor

Date

INTERVIEWEE RELEASE FORM

[St. Andrew's Episcopal School, Potomac, Maryland]

I, [name of interviewee], do hereby give to the Saint Andrew's Episcopal School all right, title or interest in the tape-recorded interviews conducted by [name of interviewer] on [dates]. I understand that these interviews will be protected by copyright and deposited in Saint Andrew's Library and Archives for the use of future scholars. I also understand that the tapes and transcripts may be used in public presentations including but not limited to audio and visual documentaries, slide-tape presentations, exhibits or articles. This gift does not preclude any use that I myself want to make of the information in these recordings.

CHECK ONE:

Tapes and transcripts may be used without restriction

Tapes and transcripts are subject to the attached restriction

Signature of Interviewee

Date

Address

Telephone Number