

How to Oral History




Created by LibroMobile 2023 Cohort

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Cultivating Diversity Through Literature & The Arts
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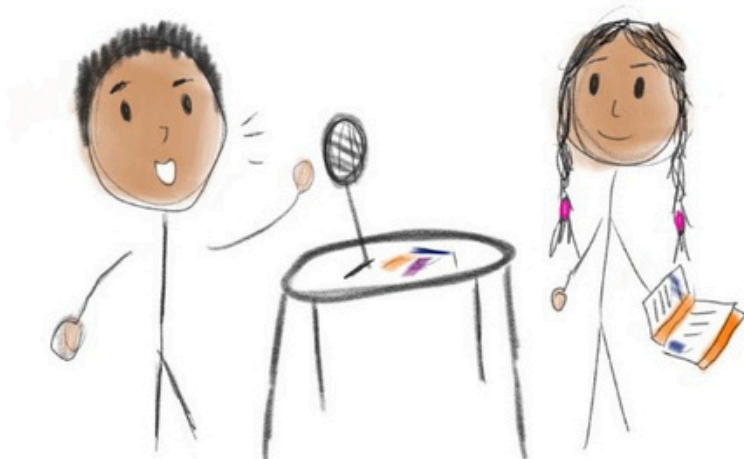
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What Is Oral History?

As stated by the Oral History Association,

“Oral history is a field of study and a method of gathering, preserving and interpreting the voices and memories of people, communities, and participants in past events.”

It is usually done in an audio or video format, and it is much like an interview. The interviewee (person being interviewed for oral histories) shares their story and experiences to the interviewer, thus making them a primary source.



Oral histories become a primary source of information which could be used for research and to expand what we consider historical accounts.

Why LMAC?

Why community-based digital archives?

Why Libromobile/LMAC?

LibroMobile Arts Cooperative (LMAC) intends to empower artists of color and culturally enrich residents in Orange County, California. Through social engagement, diverse arts, equitable practices, and direct action, LMAC aspires to counter the impact of gentrification on the local community by providing culturally relevant arts education and reinvesting profits in the local residents, arts industry, and business economy. As a part of DH, we aspire to cultivate belonging for all who have been here for generations, recent immigrants, and practice placemaking by including the histories of the local residents and the archives they choose to prioritize.

What are the Digital Humanities (DH)?

In short, the digital humanities is the application of computational tools and methods to traditional humanities disciplines, like literature and history. At LMAC, we believe that DH is a community activity and establish digital archives for-and-by the community. It does not require an academic degree, nor does it solely apply to the English language. We will provide technological tools, virtual applications, workspace and one-on-one tutorials as well as collaborative workshops. We hope to assist in archiving family albums, oral history as well as help folks learn new tools, like virtual timelines, storymaps, AR/VR, audio and video recordings, and 3D scans. Our DH program will also include VR educational resources and games!

National Collaboration:

We are starting with our own community first, but we also plan to collaborate with folks across the nation! We are actively looking for partners. Currently, LMAC founder Sarah Rafael Garcia is mentored by Dr. Gabriela Baeza Ventura with the USLDH Center part of Arte Público Press. Send us an email, if you'd like to start a conversation and join our initiative.

MATERIALS

✓ Composition Notebook(s)

✓ Pen(s)

✓ Microphone

✓ Headphones

✓ Laptop



*Materials can be checked out @
LibroMobile*



PREPARING FOR AN ORAL INTERVIEW

STEP #1: Choose an Interviewee

- o Make sure that they are relevant to your project's focus.
- o When contacting them, make sure to explain what your project is about and how it is going to be used.
- o Get to know who they are.



STEP #2: Gather Equipment & Materials

(Can be checked out at LibroMobile)

STEP #3: Where are you going to store the information you gathered?

**May depend on the equipment (either physically or electronically stored) **

STEP #4: Prepare consent and agreement forms to be signed by interviewee.

STEP #5: Schedule a time and day for the interview! Make sure to communicate all information for transparency!



TRANSPARENCY IS KEY!



Provide what questions you will be asking! (It allows them to say if they are uncomfortable with something.)

Explain how the interview is being recorded and where it will be used.

Ask them questions:



“What would you like to get out of this process?”

“What topics are meaningful to you?”

“Are there any questions you would like me to ask?”



Note: Carry yourself with compassion. 

- Make sure to check in with the interviewee as much as you can.
- When you find yourself dealing with someone who becomes uncomfortable, give them the choice to stop the interview.



During the Oral History Interview

To start off an oral history interview: Example: Hello my name is ——. today is (day of the week), (month, day, year). It is (time). I am conducting this interview virtually/in-person in (location). I am here with (interview subject) who is conducting this interview from (subject's location).

During the Interview:

Listen to your interviewee!

Be open, support them,
make them feel
comfortable.

Ask follow-up questions to
get more information
about something.

Take notes to remember
main points.

Brief concluding statement to end the oral history interview: An example is, "This concludes our [date] interview with [narrator's name]. [Narrator's name], thank you for participating in this project."

After the Oral History Interview

As you finish the oral history process, you'll want to think about: who has access to your oral history? Who is it for? Is it private?

This is your story, your family's story, not anyone else's – it is your choice to do what you personally feel comfortable doing with your interview.

3 main options:

- 1) Only for personal use - Keep the oral history contents for your own personal keeping.
- 2) Share it with only specific people/groups, etc.
- Feel free to specify your interests as specifically as needed.
- 3) Public access - anyone can access the contents of your oral history. Sharing your story with the world!

Communicate to LibroMobile with what makes you the most comfortable - it's your story. YOU should always have first and foremost say in what happens to your story.

Enjoy reflecting on your history!

Our Team

In collaboration with UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives, C-CAP Teach, and LibroMobile



Chloe Ford

A current Undergraduate Student, double-majoring in Criminology, law, & Society and Psychological Science. During her time at UCI, Chloe has gotten experience working with archiving in the Pandemic Archive with Dr. Susan Coutin. She went on to become a learning assistant for the archiving class, deepened her skills and knowledge in Lab as a lead research assistant and as a member of WISE PAC. As well as these pursuits, she is a research assistant in Dr. Nicole Itturiaga's Lab and Dr. Brandon Golob's Lab. In her free time, she is the Co-Artistic Director for a competitive hip hop team Common Ground.



Inez Rosales

During her time at UCI, Inez has involved herself with FYRE @ UCI, a foster youth program. She has enjoyed her time with LibroMobile and the CCAP Teach program and hopes to expand her future in archives. She is currently majoring in Political Science with a minor in Urban Studies.



Kaye Regalado

During Kaye Regalado's time at UCI, she's gotten involved with oral history and archival internship work, such as the UCI Stories of the Sea project, the UCI Prison Pandemic project. Currently, she enjoys working with students as a Peer Mentor at the Writing Center and in the UCI Summer Bridge program. All these experiences have fostered her passion for community work, helping others, and helping diversify archival and historical records. She is excited to learn from community organizations and to continue doing meaningful work.

**Additional resources for oral history
can be found here:**



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