

Oral Histories on the Fast Track:

Rethinking archival description for oral
history, from accessioning to access

Presented By Jennifer Gathings and Catherine Dayrit Mayfield

MARAC Fall 2024 Virtual Conference

November 14, 2024

Overview

About us

About today's session

Oral history and its life cycle

*Theoretical framework
and key considerations*

Accessioning

Finding aid description

Metadata

Wrap up

Metadata/description -
it's all around!
(in project planning
too)

Q&A

About us

Jen has been the Collection Strategies Archivist at University of Maryland since 2023, following 10 years as the Labor Archivist. Much of her 22 years in archives has centered around accessioning and processing. A focus on oral history developed from her 5 years at the Veterans Oral History Project at the Library of Congress which overlapped with 6 years of service on SAA's Oral History Section.



Jen Gathings

(she/her/hers)

About us

Cate has been Associate Director of Special Collections and University Archives at the University of Maryland since 2022, with earlier work in nonprofit/museum and government archives and the public library. Her work has centered around growing access to collections, including oral history. Cate is a former chair of the Oral History Association Membership Committee, a board member of Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region and member of the collaborative Baltimore Speaks.



Cate Mayfield

(she/her/hers)

About today's session

- “Oral Histories on the Fast Track: Rethinking archival description for oral history”
 - Oral history and “fast” in the same title - what?!
 - Disclaimer: There’s not much “fast” about oral history BUT there are efficiencies that can be made
- Session provides a mix of theory/framework and practice

About today's session

What you might take away:

- Ideas for reflecting on and assessing your repository's oral history practices
- Tools and approaches to metadata creation and description across the oral history lifecycle

Note: Our approach isn't intended to be prescriptive

Not of focus but resources exist on all parts of the oral history life cycle, including but not limited to *:

- Interviewing
- Digitization
- Preservation
- Transcription

*See our "Resources" slide

*Oral History
Lifecycle*



*What is oral history?**

- Both the interview process and the products that result from a recorded spoken interview
- It captures recollections about the past filtered through the lens of a changing personal and social context

*Bullets from OHA's Core Principles

*Project
Planning &
Interviewing*

*Processing &
Access*

Lifecycle

Research plan/project
creation/stakeholder connection

Accessioning/review of release
form and rights/preservation

Pre-interview: Identify
narrators/Prepare
questions or outline/Set
up interview date/release
forms

Stop

Catalog or create
finding aid

Interview

Donation to
archive

Public Use in Archive

Online access to
interview recording

Transcription & Edits


Description & Metadata

Theoretical frameworks

- “...building of a reparative archive via acquisition, advocacy and utilization can assist in decolonizing traditional archives and bringing historically oppressed voices in from the margins,” Lae’l Hughes-Watkins, 2018
 - “... oral history certainly can be a means for transforming both the content and purpose of history. It can be used to change the focus of history itself, and open up new areas of enquiry; it can break down barriers between teachers and students, between generations...” Paul Thompson, 1998
-



Key considerations

- Oral history and its role in the archives
 - Accessioning as a foundational step in oral history's transfer into the archives
 - The unique role of the narrator
 - Individual records vs. groupings
 - Oral history processing can be resource intensive
- 
-

Key considerations

Accessioning as a foundational step in oral history's transfer into the archives

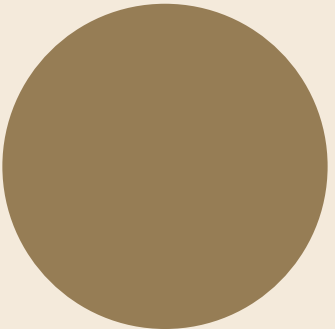
- Traditional definition: To take “intellectual and physical custody of materials, often under legal or policy authority”*
- A simple definition but one that belies more complicated underpinnings and processes

*From SAA's Dictionary of Archives Terminology



Key considerations

Individual record creation vs. traditional archival approach

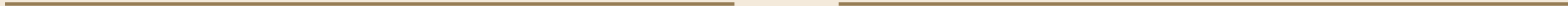
- Archival principle of *respect des fonds*
 - Archivists accession groupings of materials based upon provenance
 - Reasons why we might take a different approach for oral history
- 
-



Key considerations

The unique role of the narrator


- Narrator as co-creator and donor
- Individual release forms and agreements





Key considerations

Oral history processing takes time and can be resource intensive

- Processing time: Digitization (for analog materials), preservation, transcription, auditing/editing, accessioning, processing, metadata creation, documentation of context, etc.
 - Backlog issues: lack of release forms, lack of “metadata” or description
 - “New” oral history: born-digital workflows
- 
-

From theory to practice

Key considerations:

- Oral history plays a significant role in the archives
- Accessioning as foundational
- The narrator is at times both a co-creator of the interview and a donor
- Oral history processing can be time and resource intensive
- The archival and oral history fields offer different models for description

An approach:

- Accounting for and applying description across the oral history life cycle, starting from project planning
- Individually accessioning oral history interviews and applying accessioning information to finding aid creation and digital collections metadata

We're here - Oral history
and archival practice

Check point



About us

About today's session

Oral history and its life cycle

*Key considerations/
theoretical framework*

Accessioning oral histories


Finding aid description

Metadata

Wrap up



Accessioning oral history: Background

- Full processing = backlog
 - Minimal processing or accessioning as processing = reduced backlog
 - Guidelines for audiovisual materials & oral history collections
- 
-



Accessioning oral history:

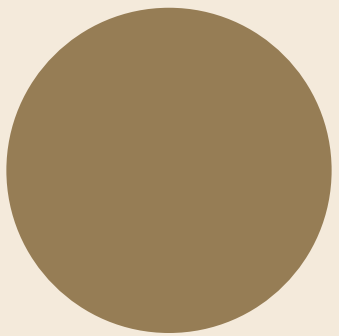
Background

- 1,077 finding aids
 - Only 10 oral history collections including:
 - Leonard Rapport oral histories
 - Oral History Project Tapes
 - Oral Histories (processed series)
 - Search for “oral histor” in ArchivesSpace accession export:
 - 20 results in Title field
 - 60 results in Content Description field
 - 154 results in Content Description field after new case study records are included
- 
-




Accessioning oral history: Background

- Levels of description
- Access to collections





Accessioning oral history: New Guidelines

- Group accession number vs. individual accession numbers
 - Consistent use of Release Forms
 - Better understanding of permissions for access
 - Formalize accessioning and processing before digitization or uploading online
 - Creation of metadata during early steps with donor/community participation
 - Fuller description elevates importance of individuals
- 
-

Accessioning oral history: Inventory Template



The screenshot shows the Oral History Association website. The header includes the OHA logo and navigation links: ABOUT, OUR WORK, RESOURCES, EVENTS, NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES, and a JOIN / RENEW button. The breadcrumb trail reads HOME / RESOURCES / METADATA TOOL. The main content area features the title "Metadata Assessment and Planning Tool" and a welcome message: "Welcome to the Oral History Association Metadata Assessment and Planning Tool, a resource for managing both new oral history projects and existing collections. Recognizing that oral history interviews and collections are unique resources requiring specific information for understanding both context and content – information that might not be easily communicated in existing cataloging and metadata rules – the OHA's Metadata Task Force developed this tool to help practitioners identify the most appropriate metadata to capture and preserve for a collection according to its oral history-specific needs and conditions." A sidebar on the left contains "IN THIS SECTION:" with a link to "Metadata Assessment and Planning Tool" and "OHA MTF Practitioner Profiles", and "SHARE THIS PAGE:" with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Email.

Oral History Metadata and Description: A Survey of Practices

Survey Report

December 2020

Prepared by the Oral History Association Metadata Task Force:

Lauren Kata
Natalie Milbrodt
Steven Sielaff
Jaycie Vos

Accessioning oral history: Inventory Template

- Locally created, inspired by OHA's Metadata Assessment and Planning Tool
- Work on legacy collections has encouraged us to use this from the very beginning of project planning
- Mix of fixed fields and flexible, adaptable tabs and elements

Basic Metadata ▾ Narrator Metadata ▾ Interviewer Metadata ▾ Interview Context ▾ Project Background ▾ Avalon | <





Accessioning oral history: Inventory Template

Basic metadata


- Narrator's name
 - Interviewer's name
 - Project title (if applicable)
 - Interview title
 - Interview date
 - Transcript length
 - Recording length
 - Interview file format(s)
 - Interview language
 - Release form
 - Date release form signed
 - Date of transcription
 - Access restrictions
 - Abstract
-
-





Accessioning oral history: Inventory Template

Narrator and Interviewer Metadata Tabs

- Narrator/interviewer names
 - Transcript review notes
 - Narrator selection background
- *Additional fields as relevant for project and repository, i.e., race, ethnicity, native language, geographic representation, etc.
- 
-



Accessioning oral history: Inventory Template

Interview Context and Project Background tabs

- Interview context:
 - Interview location
 - Interview context notes
- Project background:
 - Project summary
 - Project funding

*Flexible, customizable per project



Accessioning oral history: Inventory Template

Avalon AV Template tab

- Local, repository-specific tab used for bulk ingest into UMD's audiovisual digital collections repository
- Metadata entry governed by specific guidelines

Title	Creator	Creator	Contributo	Genre	Publisher	Date	Date	Abstract	Language	Physical	Related	Related	Topical	Geographic
oral	Hill, Walter	Francena		histories			2022-08-25	A graduate	eng	Recording: 00:37:28 (mp3); Transcript: 12 pages (PDF)				
Hooper	Catherine	Francena		histories			2021-08-13	Catherine H	eng	Recording: 00:34:02 (mp3); Transcript: 10 pages (PDF)				
McDaniels	McDaniels	Francena		histories			2022-08-23	A graduate	eng	Recording: 00:31:11 (mp3); Transcript: 11 pages (PDF)				



Accessioning oral history: New Guidelines

- New accessioning workflow
- Examples of new accessioning workflow



Reparative Histories: The Black Experience

- Initiated in 2021 by Dr. Francena Turner and Lae'l Hughes-Watkins
- Documents the stories and experiences of Black faculty and staff, students, alumni, and community members in and around UMD
- 60 interviews conducted to date, 21 “processed”

Reparative Oral Histories Project

Oral histories are the stories of people. They provide us a glimpse of diverse perspectives on a moment in time, and with each a better understanding of how a community moves toward monumental change. Oral histories help us reconcile with our past, understand our present, and provide critical insights into our future.

This project was established to address the relative absence of histories of traditionally marginalized communities within our University Archives collections. These oral histories capture social movements and the evolution of spaces, communities, and individuals.



Unidentified student, Terrapin, 1981. University Publications collection, Student Publications.

“The collection of records, papers, and memoirs, as well as oral history is biased towards the important and powerful people of the society, tending to ignore the impotent and obscure: we learn most about the rich, not the poor; the successful, not the failures; the old, not the young; the politically active not the politically alienated; men not women; white not black; free people rather than prisoners; civilians rather than soldiers; officers rather than enlisted men.”

—Howard Zinn



Oral history accession record

Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings: Walter Hill

Accession

Basic Information

Title	Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings: Walter Hill
Identifier	2022 0008 UA
Accession Date	2022-05-02
Publish?	False
Content Description	This oral history of Walter Hill, conducted by Dr. Francena Turner, is part of the University of Maryland's Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project, an initiative begun in 2020 to address the under-documented existence of Black students at the University of Maryland. This accession consists of the interview's original Zoom recording video file, exported WAV audio file, and a completed transcript.
Disposition	Files were downloaded from Google Drive in a virtual machine running BitCurator 2.2.24, scanned for viruses with ClamTk 5.2.5, copied to local storage with grsync 1.2.6, and bagged and uploaded to Academic Preservation Trust with DART 2.0.21. A copy of the bag is retained in offline local storage.
Provenance	This interview was co-created by interviewer Dr. Francena Turner and narrator Walter Hill on August 25, 2022. Dr. Turner exported video and audio recordings from the Zoom platform through which the interview was created. A release form was signed by Walter Hill on May 5, 2022 and by Dr. Francena Turner on April 26, 2022 to the University of Maryland Libraries.
Acquisition Type	Gift
Resource Type	Collection
Language of Description	English
Script of Description	Latin
Restrictions Apply?	False
Access Restrictions?	False

Accession record

Access Restrictions Note



This collection is open to the public and must be used in the Special Collections reading room. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection.

Use Restrictions?

False

Use Restrictions Note



Photocopies or digital surrogates may be provided in accordance with Special Collections and University Archives duplication policy. To the extent that they own copyright, the creator(s)/donor(s) have retained copyright and licensed their materials to be freely used for noncommercial purposes, so long as attribution is provided. This agreement is governed by a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 Deed (Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported license). Researchers do not need further permission to move forward with noncommercial use. In cases not covered by the Creative Commons license, it is the researcher's responsibility to secure permission to publish materials from the appropriate copyright holder. Archival materials may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal and/or state right to privacy laws or other regulations. While we make a good faith effort to identify and remove such materials, some may be missed during our processing. If a researcher finds sensitive personal information in a collection, please bring it to the attention of the reading room staff.

- Example restrictions:
 - Oral history interview closed by narrator request until 2025.
 - Narrator requests anonymity for their interview, including no public access to their oral history recording and indicating their speaking parts within the transcripts as “Anonymous” versus by their name.



Dates

Accession record



Creation

August 25, 2022

Expression August 25, 2022

Begin 2022-08-25

Type Single

Label Creation

Extents



3 Items



Number 3

Physical Details MP4 video recording, WAV audio recording, PDF transcript

Portion Whole


Type Items

Agent Links

Primary	Role	Relator	Agent
	Creator	Donor	Turner, Francena
	Creator	Donor	Hill, Walter
	Source		Please review agents and subjects



Describing oral history

- New processing workflow
 - Examples of new processing workflow
 - Processing Manual revisions
 - Example of use for Reparative Histories: The Black Experience
- 
-

Oral history finding aid

Special Collections and University Archives | Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings

Collection Overview

Finding Aid View

Box List

This is a collection of ongoing oral histories documenting the existence and experience of Black students, faculty, and staff at the University of Maryland (UMD), as well as community members from the surrounding areas, through the voices and words of the narrators themselves. The Black Experience Oral History Project is part of the larger Reparative Histories initiative, which seeks to address the relative absence of the histories of traditionally...

[See more >](#)

Dates

Creation: July 23, 2021 to February 24, 2024

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open to the public and must be used in the Special Collections reading room. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection.

Conditions Governing Use

Photocopies or digital surrogates may be provided in accordance with Special Collections and University Archives duplication policy.

Copyright resides with the creators of the documents or their heirs unless otherwise specified. It is the researcher's responsibility to secure permission to publish materials from the appropriate copyright holder.

Archival materials may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under...

[See more >](#)

Extent

21 audio materials : WAV audio recording

21 Folders : 21 Word transcripts

Navigate the Collection

Reparative Histories: The Black Exp...

Agbawuru, Kelechi, November 2...

Blandford, Robert, August 6, 2021

Conway, Natalie Hall, August 22,...

Culver, Rahman, August 4, 2021

Evans, Dallas, April 14, 2023

Ford, Anissa (Raiford), May 1, 2...

Frierson, Jacqueline, September...

Goldstein, Myron, May 9, 2022

Greene, Terra, February 24, 2024

Hill, Walter, August 25, 2022

Hooper, Catherine, August 13, 2...

Keith, Jill, July 23, 2021

Alphabetical

Frierson, Jacqueline, September 6, 2022

File

Goldstein, Myron, May 9, 2022

File

Greene, Terra, February 24, 2024

File

Hill, Walter, August 25, 2022

File

Hooper, Catherine, August 13, 2021

File

Keith, Jill, July 23, 2021

File

McDaniels, Sr., O'Neill, August 23, 2022

File

McLeod, Bobby, August 3, 2021

File

Collection level

Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings

Resource

Basic Information

Title	Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings
Identifier	0596 UA <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Level of Description	Collection
Resource Type	Collection
Publish?	True
Restrictions Apply?	False
Repository Processing Note	Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project is an ongoing initiative. As recordings and transcripts are completed SCUA staff will accession and add them to the finding aid. All interviews added to the resource record have signed release forms. Interviews without completed and signed release forms and/or which are not yet transcribed will not be added to the resource record until their release form issues are resolved and/or processing is complete.

Collection level

Notes

Abstract

Persistent ID b702d4d30f7b3ecb01df71624f2c72d6

Type Abstract

Publish? True

Content

This is a collection of ongoing oral histories documenting the existence and experience of Black students, faculty, and staff at the University of Maryland (UMD), as well as community members from the surrounding areas, through the voices and words of the narrators themselves. The Black Experience Oral History Project is part of the larger Reparative Histories initiative, which seeks to address the relative absence of the histories of traditionally marginalized communities within UMD's University Archives collections. Recordings for the Black Experience Oral History Project begin in 2021. Individual interview materials include audio recordings and transcripts.

Raw

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Collection level

Scope and Contents

Persistent ID 3f168d3c39669fcdf46e8fa397291c06

Label Content Description

Type Scope and Contents

Publish? True

Sub Notes

Text

The Black Experience is an oral history initiative of the University of Maryland's (UMD) Reparative Histories project. Established in 2020, Reparative Histories seeks to address the relative absence of the histories of traditionally marginalized communities within UMD's University Archives collections. The Black Experience Project focuses on documenting the existence and experience of Black students, faculty, and staff at the University of Maryland, as well as community members from the surrounding areas, through the voices and words of the narrators themselves.

The experiences documented within the project are bookended between 1951 when Hiram Whittle--the first Black undergraduate student on campus--enrolled at UMD, and the organizing around the murder of Lieutenant Richard Collins III in 2019. This period encompasses major global and local social events and movements such as the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, the Antiwar Movement, the modern Black Studies Movement, and more recent movements against all forms of state-sanctioned violence. The stories within document struggle, adversity, and perseverance, as well as Black creativity and joy.

The Black Experience Project is comprised of oral history recordings and transcripts. Transcripts and audio recordings are available as digital files. The Black Experience Project is an actively growing collection, with interviews added on an ongoing basis as project interviewing and processing continues.

Raw
















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Collection level

Related Accessions

Identifier	Title
2022-0042-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0070-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2021-0025-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0069-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0071-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0072-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0073-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0027-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2023-0018-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0033-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0025-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0030-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0024-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project: Dr. Simara
2023-0019-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings:
2022-0031-UA	 Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project recordings: Rahman Culver

Agent Links

Primary	Role	Relator	Agent
	Creator	Donor	 Turner, Francena
	Source		 Please review agents and subjects
	Creator		 Agbawuru, Kelechi
	Creator		 Blandford, Robert
	Creator		 Conway, Natalie
	Creator		 Culver, Rahman
	Creator		 Evans, Dallas
	Creator		 Ford, Anissa Raiford
	Creator		 Frierson, Jacqueline
	Creator		 Goldstein, Myron
	Creator		 Greene, Terra
	Creator		 Hill, Walter
	Creator		 Hooper, Catherine
	Creator		 Keith, Jill
	Creator		 McDaniels, O'Neill, Sr.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection level

Persistent ID 2c853be3d21cdd4ec89dd720d68c6b77
Type Immediate Source of Acquisition
Publish? True

Sub Notes

Text

Interviews were co-created and shared under a Creative Commons license by interviewer Dr. Francena Turner and individual narrators with the University of Maryland Libraries. Please check the folder listings for additional information.

Raw

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Arrangement

Persistent ID 3d259e5593f6a3f5ebbd22aba6a7afa5
Type Arrangement
Publish? True

Sub Notes

Text

The collection is organized alphabetically by the last name of the individual. Interview materials are described together at the File Level. When digital content is available, there is a link to Digital Collections.

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Collection level

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Persistent ID 365d1e35c137504dc57b3f535a3400bb
Type Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Publish? True

Sub Notes

Text

This collection contains born-digital materials. If you would like to access these materials, please contact us prior to your visit as items may require specialized software for access.

Raw

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Processing Information

Persistent ID 70c7a7dcef30c74e8cc724166de4b939
Type Processing Information
Publish? True

Sub Notes

Text

Project interviews were transcribed using the transcription software otter.ai and were audited by Dr. Francena Turner and University Archives staff.

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Basic Information

Title	Hill, Walter
Ref ID	5e5e3f8c630120d26da7fb7509ed3f95
Level of Description	File
Publish?	True
Has Unpublished Ancestor?	False
Restrictions Apply?	False

Created by cdm 2024-10-29 14:51:09 +0000 | Last Modified by cdm 2

Languages

> English (Latin script)

Dates

> Other August 25, 2022

Extents

> 2 Items oral history transcript and audio recording

Extents

Series level



2 Items

oral history transcript and audio recording

Number 2

Container Summary oral history transcript and audio recording

Physical Details Recording length: 00:27:38; transcript: 12 pages

Portion Whole

Type Items

Notes

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Persistent ID 4cd975163b3bc00a82f9e229a30b40c7

Type Immediate Source of Acquisition

Publish? True

Sub Notes

Text

This interview was co-created by interviewer Dr. Francena Turner and narrator Walter Hill on August 25, 2022. A release form was signed by Walter Hill on May 5, 2022 and by Dr. Francena Turner on April 26, 2022 to the University of Maryland Libraries.

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Scope and Contents

Series level

Persistent ID	5a3614bfb673b7b2312d1197642546de
Type	Scope and Contents
Publish?	True

Sub Notes

Text

Each person interviewed for the "Reparative Histories: The Black Experience Oral History Project" was asked about how they came to be students at the University of Maryland (UMD), how they experienced UMD, and their professional trajectory and relationship to the UMD since graduation. A graduate of Baltimore's City College High School, Walter Hill came to UMD from Baltimore City, Maryland in 1968. He graduated in 1973 with a degree in Elementary Education, and later earned his MBA from Morgan State University in 1976. Hill worked as a student teacher in Baltimore before moving into sales after graduating. He eventually started his own company in audiovisual systems sales, and re-established his relationship with the University of Maryland, now as a vendor. In this interview, Hill discussed being a first-generation college student, the ways pre-existing friendships and the small number of Black students led to Black students' tight knit sense of community on campus and how this sense of community helped students navigate some overt and covert instances of racial microaggressions and racism on campus. Hill also briefly discussed interracial dating. Hill recalled a, perhaps unspoken, rule that Black people could not be seen in groups of more than 10 without being harassed, so he and other students kept their public groupings small. Hill also discussed living in the residence halls and how getting married changed his living arrangements and campus engagement. Because of the lack of Black sororities and fraternities, he and other Black students often went off campus for events and entertainment. Hill discussed the differences in experiences and reactions to those experiences faced and displayed by Black students who attended integrated high schools or lived in integrated communities and those who attended segregated schools and lived in homogenous communities. Hill also discussed how Black students responded to the Kent State shootings in 1970. The Black Student Union and Black history courses were sites of refuge for Black students. Hill also discussed why so many Black students were in education due to the career constraints of the time. That is, Black college graduates had a better chance of being employed as a teacher than any other field. After graduating from UMD, Hill immediately enrolled in the MBA program at Morgan State University and graduated top of his class. It is Morgan that holds most of Hill's fond college memories. Finally, Hill discussed his career at Westinghouse and how that led to his career, at the time of this interview, as an entrepreneur and UMD vendor.

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Describing oral history: Metadata

2. Jordan Brown oral history interview (30:11)



Date: 2022-06-17

Main contributors: Brown, Jordan (interviewee), Annabelle Smith (interviewer)

Summary: Jordan Brown was interviewed for the Joseph "Tex" Gathings oral history recordings in 2022. In this oral history, radio disc jockey and producer Jordan Brown discusses his memories of Joseph "Tex" Gathings. Mr. Brown listened to Mr. Gathings on WOOK Radio and watched the television show "Teenarama" produced by Mr. Gathings. Mr. Brown shares some details about the history of radio and television, station owners, and Black programming. Around 1970, Mr. Brown worked as a DJ at WOOK TV while Mr. Gathings split his time as station manager and professor at local colleges. In the 1960s, Gathings began teaching technical skills of television to Black students who could then apply for camera, audio, and lighting jobs at major TV stations at a time when most workers in the field were white, and before most communications majors were established in college curricula in the 1970s. Mr. Brown feels that Mr. Gathings had a great impact on the community through his time as a radio disc jockey and teaching Black youth the skills needed for the radio and television industry.

3. James Featherstone oral history interview (15:30)



Date: 2022-06-17

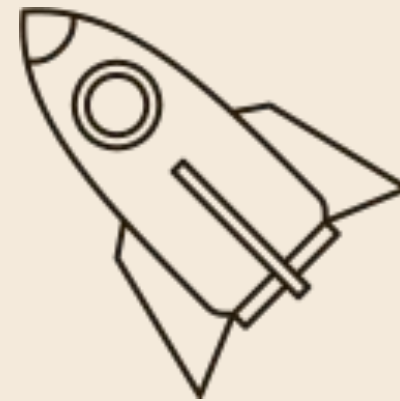
Main contributors: Featherstone, James (interviewee), Annabelle Smith (interviewer)

Summary: James Featherstone was interviewed for the Joseph "Tex" Gathings oral history recordings in 2022. In this oral history, James Featherstone talks about how he knew Joseph "Tex" Gathings. Mr. Featherstone was a student in Gathings' class at University of District of Columbia in 1977 where he attended school after serving in the Navy. This led Mr. Featherstone to Los Angeles, California where he first worked in the film and television industry as a lighting technician. He then went on to be a firefighter and emergency manager in Los Angeles. Regarding the DC television show "Teenarama," Mr. Featherstone said it was easier for him to identify with as a Black person rather than "American Bandstand". He talked to Mr. Gathings before starting the program at UDC, and was impressed by his advice that there is a need to dream and conceptualize in the field or radio and television. He feels that Mr. Gathings gave him a sense of purpose and work ethic that he called on throughout his career in the film industry and beyond.

Title	Creator	Creator	Contributor	Genre	Publisher	Date	Date	Abstract	Language	Physical	Related	Related	Topical	Geographic
oral	Hill, Walter	Francena		histories			2022-08-25	A graduate	eng	Recording: 00:37:28 (mp3); Transcript: 12 pages (PDF)				
Hooper	Catherine	Francena		histories			2021-08-13	Catherine H	eng	Recording: 00:34:02 (mp3); Transcript: 10 pages (PDF)				
McDaniels	McDaniels	Francena		histories			2022-08-23	A graduate	eng	Recording: 00:31:11 (mp3); Transcript: 11 pages (PDF)				

Resources

A Sampling



Preservation

Academic Preservation Trust: Oral Histories and Digital Preservation webinar (recording)

Metadata

OHA's Metadata Assessment and Planning Tool; "Oral History Metadata and Description: A Survey"

Getting Started

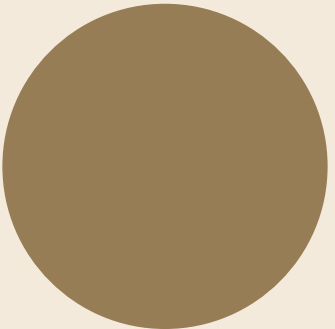
OHA Principles and Best Practices, including "Archival Oral History" manual

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8. “Narrator,” Principles and Best Practices Glossary, Oral History Association, <https://oralhistory.org/narrator/>. “Narrator” has become a preferred term in the oral history field over “interviewee” in recent years. As described in the Oral History Association (OHA)’s “Principles and Best Practices Glossary,” the use of the term “narrator” is “an acknowledgment that the people we interview have agency and are not merely “living human subjects.”
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Wrap Up

- Accessioning as a building block
 - Metadata and description incorporated from the very beginning of project planning; collaboration between archivists and oral historians when possible at early stages of project planning
 - Too much information is lost when oral histories are treated at the collection level for minimal processing
 - The individual approach requires resources
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