HEAR THEM ROAR: CHALLENGE AND COLLABORATION IN PUTTING THE GEORGIA WOMEN'S MOVEMENT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT ON THE WEB

BY MORNA GERRARD

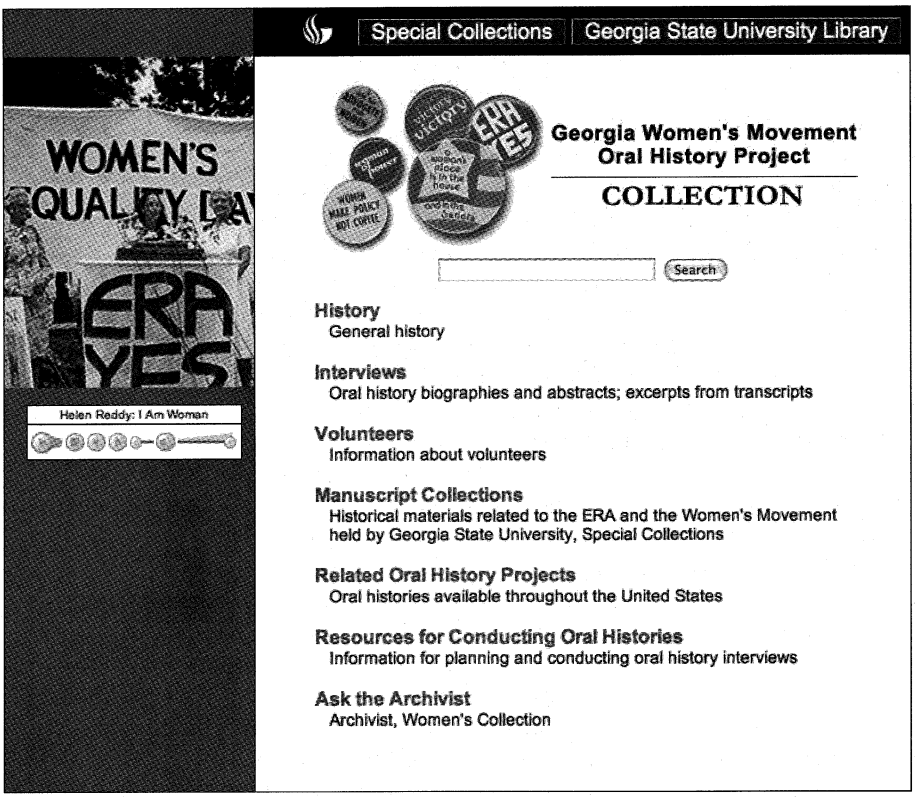

Figure 1. The home page of the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project Web site.

ABSTRACT: Managing a traditional oral history project is a demanding undertaking. Arranging interviews and keeping track of work flow, paperwork, preservation, description, and access require organizational skills and patience. Making oral histories available on the Internet presents additional challenges, since the archivist is forced

to consider previously unexplored technologies and make decisions about content, design, work flow, and site navigation.

The purpose of this case study of the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project on the Web (GWMOHP) is to provide insight into the decision-making process and creation of a Web-based presentation designed to showcase oral histories, and to illustrate the importance of collaboration with systems specialists in that process. It also considers the impact of developments in technology on the future of this and similar projects. Finally, it highlights a number of lessons learned throughout the process about the traditional management of the oral history project itself.

Literature Review

Articles about oral history in the archival literature do not tend to highlight collections of women's oral histories or Internet accessibility, but rather discuss the management of oral history projects and collections or the documentary value of the interviews. As early as 1973, archivists were discussing their role in managing oral history programs. An excellent and still-relevant article by the Society of American Archivists' Committee on Oral History, "Oral History and Archivists: Some Questions to Ask," considers "to what extent is under-utilization of interviews caused by the inability of researchers to locate oral history collections pertinent to their subject," and to what extent should oral histories be made available to the general public? Ronald L. Filippelli's 1976 article, "Oral History and the Archives," more fully considers some of the points raised in the 1973 report, including whether the archivist or a subject specialist should be conducting interviews, and, considering the cost in time and money of maintaining oral history programs, whether oral history interviews should actually be housed and managed within an archives, or be managed by an outside entity, with the archivist acting as the conduit for delivering access to interviews. Among the literature that considers the documentary value of oral histories, one example is Ellen D. Swain's article, "Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-first Century."[1]

Where archival literature focuses on such administrative questions, the literature produced by historians, and in particular those who specialize in women's history, tends to focus on the use of oral history to document previously under-documented lives: Joan Sangster writes, "The feminist embrace of oral history emerged from a recognition that traditional sources have often neglected the lives of women, and that oral history offered a means of integrating women into historical scholarship." From time to time, women's history journals have highlighted the importance of oral history.[2]

Within the literature of the oral history community, much has been written about women, mostly in the form of case studies based on interviews with women. One example is Marian Mollin's "Communities of Resistance: Women and the Catholic Left of the Late 1960s." Oral historians have not produced a great deal of literature about accessibility of interviews, particularly via the Internet. Donald A. Ritchie's classic

oral history text, *Doing Oral History*, includes a very small section about presenting oral history via computers and interactive video, but fails to provide any guidelines for doing so. In a 1999 edition of *Oral History Review*, Ritchie does address future possibilities for presenting oral histories on-line, and in particular talks about the philosophical challenges of making oral histories available on the Web in a format that is not only physically different from the original, but is also more widely accessible than interviewees ever expected. In that same edition of *Oral History Review* Bret Eynon highlights the benefits of enabling researchers to listen to oral histories as well as view transcripts.[3]

Some journals include articles about new oral history Web sites, though mostly they provide general descriptions or are simply reviews.[4] While preparing to create the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project Web site, the archivist found no literature that offered practical advice for her future endeavors. Although the current literature discusses the issues of practice, use, and general administration, it is lacking in its discussion of access, and in particular, access via the Internet. The purpose of this discussion is to begin to fill this gap in the professional literature.

Background

Georgia State University's Special Collections Department was established in 1971, as the Southern Labor Archives. Through the years, the department has expanded to include University Archives and Rare Books, the Popular Music and Photographic Collections, and the Georgia Government Documentation Project (GGDP). Oral histories have routinely been collected as part of the Labor, Music, GGDP, and University collections. In 1995, after many years of faculty lobbying, Georgia State University (GSU) established the Women's Studies Institute. That same year, the Women's Collection was established in Special Collections. The primary purpose of the collection was to document the history of the second wave of the women's movement (1960s to late 1970s/early 1980s), and in particular, Georgia's failure to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

While the first women's archivist (who worked part time) began contacting the primary activists in the Georgia women's movement regarding their personal papers, the staff of the GSU Women's Studies Institute and a few volunteers, using Marantz tape recorders, began to collect oral histories from movement leaders and participants. Although the majority of interviewees were women, the group did include men. The plan at that time was to have the Women's Studies Institute conduct the interviews, and the women's archivist receive the audiocassettes and arrange dubbing, housing, transcription, and access to the finished product. After the founding director of the Women's Studies Institute retired from Georgia State in 1998, responsibility for the entire project gradually shifted to Special Collections. From late 2003 through 2004, the part-time women's archivist, the director of the Women's Studies Institute and the head of Special Collections worked together to negotiate the project's official transfer to Special Collections.

The current work flow for the project is a cooperative effort between many different individuals. Interviews for the histories included in the project are conducted by a group of volunteers, including two Special Collections staff members and the women's archivist. The group meets quarterly to provide progress updates, and to plan for upcoming interviews. The department's office administrator creates transcripts, or, when her services are unavailable, endowment funds are used to outsource transcription, at a cost of between $200 and $300 per interview. Each transcript receives a preliminary edit (which involves marking up the text while listening to the audio) by the archivist, a staff member, or a student, after which the archivist completes a second edit and final read-through. Then a copy of the transcript and an audio CD-ROM containing the interview are sent to the interviewee. The interviewee is asked to examine the transcript and make corrections to names of places and people. Of course, if the interviewee wants to add information that clarifies or further illuminates part of her story, she is encouraged to do so; in those cases, the additions are highlighted with square brackets. If an interviewee wished to remove text because it contained sensitive or confidential information, she and the archivist would negotiate the scope of the redactions and a possible timeline for returning them to the transcript. To date, this has not been an issue.

Information about the oral history is added to the GWMOHP finding aid,[5] and a catalog record is created, submitted to one of the professionals in the Library's Catalog Department for corrections, and uploaded to OCLC. A "parent" catalog record is created for the collection, and "child" records are made for individual interviews. A link is created from each catalog record to the appropriate spot on the oral history Web page.[6] Copies of the interviews (in audiocassette and CD-ROM format) and transcripts are made available to researchers in the Special Collections and Archives Search Room, and copies are made upon request.

Planning

Before planning the GWMOHP Web site, there were a number of overarching questions to consider. Most importantly, why create a Web site focused on these oral histories in the first place, and who would be involved in its creation? Also, what were the perceived outcomes for the site? and tied to that, who would be using it?

For a number of years before the GWMOHP Web site was conceived of, the Southern Labor Archives' Voices of Labor oral history project and the Georgia Government Documentation Project had maintained a Web presence that had proven popular and useful for researchers and Special Collections staff members. The sites were limited in their scope, providing information about the extent of the oral histories, biographical sketches, and abstracts. In January 2005, discussion turned to the possibility of creating a Web site for the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project, focusing on what the archivist and department head wanted the site to achieve. A Web site's potential benefit in assisting with reference requests had already been proven with the Voices of Labor and GGDP sites. At the time, the Women's Collection was underused and the department head was particularly focused on bringing more researchers into

Special Collections. It was decided that the site would serve as a teaser, to draw users. Another important issue being addressed at that time was donor relations. The department had been without a women's archivist for some time, and as a result there had been a dip in donor interest and support. To exemplify the University's commitment to the Women's Collection and make the community aware of the presence of the new women's archivist, the women's archivist wrote an extensive report, *Honoring the Fight for Equal Rights: A Progress Report of the Georgia Women's Movement Project.* This report was mailed to all of the Collection's previous donors. The new on-line presence would enhance the work of this report, and enable the archivist to reach out to existing donors, and to make an impression on future donors.

Before work began, some very important practical questions had to be addressed. First, who would be involved in creating the Web site and be responsible for its long-term maintenance? Though there was strong administrative support for the Web site, resources to create it were limited. While the Special Collections Department at Georgia State University is relatively well staffed, each person who works in the department is responsible for his or her own collecting area or special projects. In addition, the Women's Collection has very limited endowment funds available, so temporarily hiring a technician to assist with the project was not an option. As a result, the project had a core staff of two: the archivist was responsible for content and specialized knowledge of current practices, ethics, and the law; and the library's Web development librarian, as manager of the University Library's Web site, provided his knowledge of what was deliverable within the parameters of GSU policies and available technology. At the outset this appeared to be a lot of work for both members of the project team, but as the project moved along, it became clear that such a small working group resulted in a focused and efficient process to develop strategy and create processes.

The design process was heavily affected by the perceived makeup of the Web site's audience. As an instrument of the special collections department within a university library, one of the site's primary audiences is the student body and faculty, as well as researchers from other institutions. Current donors also had to be taken into consideration, as the site would represent an important part of their lives. Moreover, the archivist also hoped that the GWMOHP Web site could be used to attract future donors of both interviews and manuscript collections, as well as garner financial support. The site was an opportunity to show these constituencies that Georgia State University would manage their interviews and records professionally and with sensitivity.

Another important consideration that shaped decisions for the "look" of the GWMOHP Web site was the fact that it would not exist in a vacuum. The Web pages would be part of the Special Collections Web site, which in turn is part of the University Library Web site. While Special Collections has been given some freedom in its Web presence, it must reflect the library's branding.

The archivist conducted an extensive search of the Internet for model Web sites to help the team plan a site that would accomplish all of its goals. She identified qualities that were appealing and that would be worth replicating, such as ease of navigation and "flatness"—that is, avoidance of elaborate hierarchies that require numerous mouse clicks to get to a destination. She also identified sites with characteristics to avoid—in particular, sites whose purpose was unclear, and those that were so complex that they

were difficult to navigate. Many of the interviewees, who would certainly want to look at their own entries on the site, are in their 70s and 80s, and presumably novice Web users. The archivist planned to use the oral history Web site as a show-and-tell tool for existing and potential donors, and was very aware that the more sophisticated and technologically complex a site is, the greater the risk of parts failing to work during a presentation.

Finally, the archivist wanted to offer what seemed to be a characteristic lacking in other oral history Web sites—the opportunity to read the oral history transcripts and listen to excerpts simultaneously. Bret Eynon writes: "Transcription, no matter how skillful, inevitably flattens the spoken quality of oral memoirs. Reading the transcript and listening to the interview are vastly different experiences. While not the same as witnessing the original interview, listening to a recording connects us to the speaker both affectively and cognitively, facilitating empathy and deepening our understanding."[7] The experience of editing oral histories had convinced the archivist that while transcripts are invaluable tools, the original aural interviews provide researchers with a much richer, more nuanced experience. Bringing the two together promised to create a rewarding and dynamic opportunity for visitors to the site.

Legal and Ethical Issues

Before the oral histories could be prepared for the Web, it was important to make sure that GSU had legal ownership of each interview. Holdings files were checked for release forms signed by both interviewee and interviewer. For those that had not been completed, participants were contacted, or, when necessary, their families or heirs. Previous archivists, in line with common practice, had required that interviewees and interviewers sign different release forms. Interviewer's forms were delivered to the women's archivist with completed oral history tapes. Interviewee release forms were completed months later, after the interviewees read the edited transcripts, made corrections and changes, read the revised transcripts, and finally were satisfied with the contents of the oral histories. This process was not always successful: During the time that archivists were waiting for releases to be signed, some of the interviewees died, some moved, and some simply forgot to sign and return their forms. This resulted in several missing releases.

After a detailed discussion with the GSU Office of Legal Affairs, the process for obtaining releases was changed. Though it was agreed that the best-case scenario was for the interviewee to sign off on the completed transcript, experience had shown that this was problematic. The revised process now requires that both the interviewer and interviewee sign a single form immediately after the oral history interview has been completed (see Appendix 1 for the current release form). This means that interviewees know what is in their oral histories, and subsequently should not feel blind-sided when they see the transcripts. The timing of signing the release also sends a clear message that the interview is, at that point, GSU property, and a more subtle message that GSU controls the content of the finished product.

A significant question, with legal and ethical implications, was whether the Web site would host full transcripts or excerpts. For assistance in this matter, the archivist consulted the GSU lawyers and Dr. Clifford M. Kuhn, an oral history expert and faculty member in GSU's Department of History. At that time, the issue of third-party rights was a hot topic in the oral history community, since oral histories conducted by the University of California, Berkeley, had been cited in a defamation suit.[8] The archivist was aware that a few reminiscences within the oral history collection might cause friction, though probably not enough to bring about a similar lawsuit. She was also reassured by the knowledge that interviews are considered hearsay rather than fact, and that state institutions are, to some degree protected from litigation.[9] Nevertheless, the archivist accepted advice to be conservative with the materials made openly accessible via the Web, and decided to use excerpts only. This was not considered censorship, but rather responsible stewardship, as none of the sensitive sections were edited out of the final product, and the complete oral histories are still available to researchers as part of normal business. Moreover, because the Web site was created as a "teaser," designed to encourage researchers to visit Special Collections, presenting excerpts rather than full transcripts served the site's original purpose.

There are, of course philosophical arguments for presenting full transcripts on the Web, and there is a question of whether failing to do so is doing a disservice to one's users. For the majority of the Women's Collection interviews, there would be no legal or ethical barrier to releasing full transcripts on the Web. However, some interviewees have been more willing to be forthcoming on tape because they discussed the issue fully with the archivist before being interviewed. While interviewees were completely comfortable with having full transcripts available to researchers in the reading room, they felt very differently about the level of exposure possible with full transcripts offered via the Web. They trusted the archivist not to make sensitive passages available on the Web. If the archivist were to insist upon the placement of full histories on the Web site, the interviewees might have been overly careful and provided a selective or sanitized version of a story. Some might have felt that if they did talk frankly, they would regret it, and then be inclined to request that the interview be closed or edited.

Content

Having developed a rough plan for the development, navigation and extent of the GWMOHP Web site, the archivist considered its actual content. At the time work began on the site, approximately 50 oral histories had been conducted. For each oral history, the archivist wanted the site to contain a biographical sketch and abstract, a photograph, and Web-appropriate excerpts that reflected the particular experiences of the interviewee. Some of the interviewees had previously donated manuscript collections, so biographies had been prepared during processing. In a few instances, it was possible to locate photographs within manuscript collections, though for most interviewees, the archivist had to request pictures. In all instances abstracts had to be created, and excerpts selected.

Kurtz, Linda Hallenborg

Transcript Information

Interviewed By: Diane Fowlkes, April 3, 1998
Transcript info: 67 pages (three audio cassettes)
Files: Read Excerpts From Transcript

Kurtz talks about the Georgia Women's Political Caucus

Kurtz talks about the National Women's Political Caucus and the experience of working with other women

Kurtz talks about the day of the vote (for the ERA)

Biography

Linda Hallenborg Kurtz, known as Linda Hallenborg during her years in Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington, D.C., is admired as a political and feminist activist through her work as a lobbyist, administrator, consultant and educator. She was the founder and chair of the Georgia Women's Political Caucus (GWPC), an officer of ERA GA, Inc., vice chair and member of the board of directors of the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) and director of governmental affairs for Planned Parenthood of the Atlanta Area. She has also been a lecturer at the University of Pittsburgh, Georgia State University and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change, as well as the president of her own consulting firm, a political strategist and a campaign consultant.

Abstract

Kurtz describes her childhood in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as being heavily influenced by her parents' commitment to their Jewish community. She recounts her experiences at Brandeis University where she became involved in campus politics: A participant in the ant-war movement, she was photographed in *Life Magazine* protesting the Vietnam War. After graduating from Brandeis in 1969, Kurtz went on to pursue her MA at the University of Pittsburgh in women's studies and literature. It was there, she says, that she worked at the Moratorium against the War in Vietnam and also at the student health center, where she often helped to connect women who needed abortions with doctors. According to Kurtz, the events that led her to become involved in the women's movement were threefold -- consciousness raising groups that linked the community with intellectual interest, reproductive freedom for women, and equal pay.

Figure 2. Example of intervewee page.

A shared folder was established in the Special Collections network that the archivist and the Web development librarian could access. It contained subfolders for abstracts, photographs, biographies, and excerpts. Also housed in the shared folder was a check-off table that allowed the team to track its work. As development of the Web site moved forward, this check-off table was invaluable for providing a clear view of the big picture, guiding upcoming tasks, and keeping the team on track.

Student assistants worked to create biographies and abstracts, a process that yielded inconsistent results and ultimately required further research. This was done by the archivist and the department's Library Technical Assistant (LTA), who was helping to develop the 2005 annual Women's Collection exhibit, "Hear Me Roar: The Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project." While reading each interview, the archivist and the LTA looked for two things: excerpts for the exhibit that were short and conveyed a great deal in a few words, and for the Web site, longer, more involved passages. The archivist and LTA decided that each interviewee should have at least one excerpt for the exhibit and one for the Web site. Some had as many as three or four. The transcript excerpts chosen for the exhibit were printed and mounted, and the ones chosen for the Web site were placed in the appropriate shared network subfolder.

Once the excerpts were selected, the corresponding audio had to be located, a job undertaken by a graduate assistant. Unforeseen snags developed during this process. Issues with hardware took more time than expected. The graduate student assistant used clearly marked transcripts to find the beginning and end times for each excerpt on user CDs containing MP3 files, using a CD player in the department's reading room. Once the times had been noted, the student extracted the sound excerpts on a media workstation and then saved them as WAV files, using Sony's Sound Forge software, a program chosen largely because it was already being used for digital e-reserves. Quality control on the recording process showed that many of the sound files did not match the corresponding excerpts. The timing was slightly skewed because the CD player in the reading room and the CD player on the media workstation were calibrated differently, so the work had to be redone.

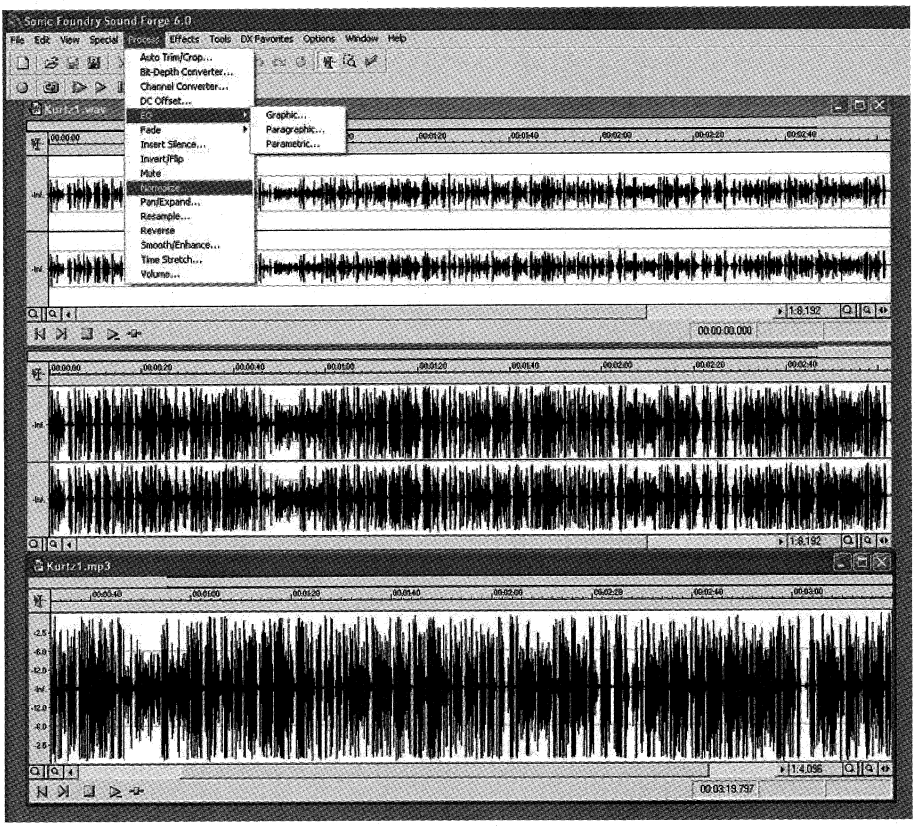

Figure 3. The Sound Forge workspace, showing, from top to bottom: the original WAV audio clip; the normalized WAV audio clip (with equalization to reduce hiss on selected clips); and the final MP3 audio clip.

To facilitate this process, the Web development librarian used Sound Forge software and its appropriate default settings (bit rate: 1411 KB per second; sample size: 16-bit

audio; sample rate: 44 kHz; 2-channel stereo; audio format: PCM [Pulse-Code Modulation]), to run a normalization tool on all of the excerpts, ensuring that all of the files had similar sound levels. Staff then carried out quality control by listening to all of the normalized files. They isolated problem files and applied hiss removal and equalizing tools. They then saved the normalized, corrected excerpts as updated WAV files. Then they burned DVDs to create "archival" copies of the original and updated WAV files. Though uncompressed WAV files tend to be large, they are extremely useful, as they can be used as a base for future migration into many different formats, even formats that may not yet exist.

The staff made user copies of the sound files, using Discreet's Cleaner software to batch-process the updated WAV excerpts into RealAudio files, a format that was being used to support on-line audio projects. Though the use of RealAudio was appropriate at the time, when the University stopped supporting the format, the team decided to transfer the RealAudio files to MP3 files, since this format is currently accessible on any computer. One downside to using MP3 files is that they can easily be downloaded and potentially used out of context by anyone with access to the Web. This was considered to be a reasonable risk, as GSU owns the copyright to all of the oral histories, and only excerpts were being made available. With the uncompressed WAV files already available for batch processing, changing from RealAudio to MP3 files was very easy.

Since the goal was to make the audio and the transcript available on the Web simultaneously, as a final step in quality control, the archivist compared the transcript excerpts to their matching sound files. She discovered that many of the text excerpts did not match the audio, and often the differences were quite significant, specifically because previous archivists had allowed interviewees a certain amount of freedom in editing and embellishing their own transcripts. All transcripts were rechecked against their appropriate sound files, and all required some degree of editing. This necessity for such scrupulous editing to insure fidelity to the original may well be the reason that so few Web sites were providing simultaneous sound and text. New oral histories for the Women's Collection are no longer edited by interviewees, and with the knowledge that the transcripts will be used on the oral history Web site, editing is thorough and clean. As a result, similar discrepancies should no longer be a problem.

The Web site was not created simply to house links to excerpts and sound files. It was also designed to be a resource tool for anyone interested in oral history, women's oral histories, and GSU's women's collections. To that end, the Web development librarian created links to the Georgia Women's Movement manuscript collections (many of which were donated by interviewees), and the archivist searched the Web for other women's oral history Web sites. Links to those sites were listed under "Related Oral History Projects." Guides to conducting oral histories were posted under "Resources for Conducting Oral Histories," and, along with a short history of the project and an "Ask the Archivist" link, the project's volunteers were recognized.

To complete the aesthetic of the Web site, a link was added to a short burst of the classic feminist anthem, Helen Reddy's "I Am Woman." After researching other sites with music excerpts, and keeping in mind that researchers move back and forth between Web pages during research sessions, the team felt that those pages that automatically played music when opened had the potential to annoy users. The team believed that

the most user-friendly option would be to have the music play automatically when the site was first opened, and thereafter allow the user to choose to play the music again during his or her session. To achieve this was impractical without substantial effort, so ultimately, the team opted to make a link to the music available for the user to select when desired.

In October 2005, when the Web site went live, the URL was sent to a number of potential users, and they were asked for input regarding the site's appearance and usability. Testers included everyone who cared to look at it within the University Library, the GSU teaching faculty, colleagues at the Digital Library of Georgia (DLG), and donors and volunteers. The response from those who tested the site was overwhelmingly positive, and the DLG quickly added a link on its Web site and began cataloging the digital files.[10] DLG also highlighted the Web site throughout Women's History Month in 2006.

At the time the GWMOHP site was being developed, the library had begun migrating its site to a Web content management system (CMS). Though the Web development librarian would have preferred that the Oral History site be built using the CMS, the team would have had to delay the project because the Special Collections Web pages were not scheduled to be migrated until a future phase of the CMS migration. In order to stay on schedule, the GWMOHP site was built outside of the CMS, using HTML, but the files and folders were organized to ensure that migration into the CMS would be easy when the time came. The Special Collections site migrated into the CMS in 2006, and the GWMOHP site was moved by copying the contents of the Web pages into the database used by the CMS and re-linking files for the audio excerpts.

Benefits

Although creating an oral history Web page was a labor-intensive and time-consuming undertaking, the benefits of having done so are manifold. On a day-to-day basis, the Web site is extremely useful for conducting reference work, because information about interviewees and the subjects they discussed in their interviews is readily available. It is also useful for staff members in Special Collections who may be providing reference assistance on days the women's archivist is unavailable. Narrowing searches for subjects and interviews by exploring the Web site is more efficient and convenient for researchers than reading through transcripts in the reading room. The fact that users can do a great deal of their preparation from home makes the collection more appealing to researchers from farther afield. Since the Web site went live, the majority of reference requests have come from out-of-state researchers.

Simply having the Web site indexed and available via Google or other search engines not only increases its availability, but also makes its use easier to track. The Web development librarian ran reports on the use of the Women's Collection and GWMOHP Web pages from 2003 to 2007. Throughout those years, use of the general women's collection pages remained relatively static. However, the oral history pages paint a dramatic and extremely positive picture. In 2005, though oral histories were accessible throughout the second half of the year, that fact was not widely publicized until October. Yet by the end of 2005, the oral histories pages had been viewed 5,627

times. By the end of 2006 that number had almost doubled. It is difficult to gauge the number of times the pages were actually viewed in 2007 because the library Web server was moved and reinstalled late in the year. As a result there are no statistics available for October, November, or December of 2007, but the production team anticipates a continued upward trend.

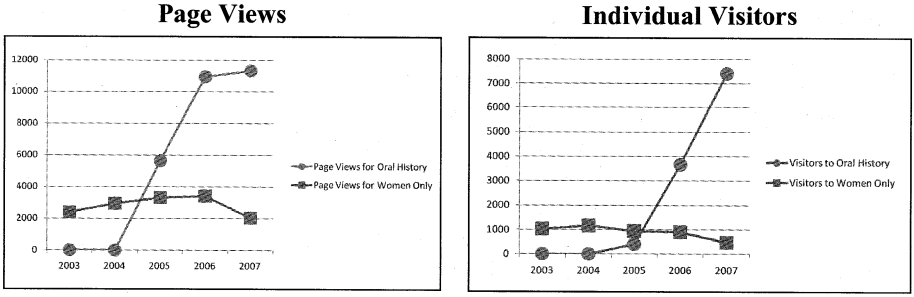

Figure 4. Graphs compare page views and individual visitors to the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project Web pages with Women's Collection Web pages, excluding oral histories.

The reports also provided some interesting information that will prove useful for future projects. In particular, it was clear that researchers using search engines were finding the oral history pages using their own search terms rather than established Library of Congress search terms. The most popular search terms included the names of particular individuals as well as phrases such as "women's movement," "Weeks vs. Southern Bell," "Georgia women," "accomplishments of women's movement," "conducting oral histories," and "opposition to the ERA." With this information in hand, the department's archivists are now using and will continue to use a combination of both Library of Congress and social tagging terms for current and future Web-based projects.

The reports also showed how researchers were accessing the GWMOHP Web site. It was not surprising to find that many individuals reached the site through search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Microsoft Network, and AOL NetFind. It was, however, surprising to find that a small number of individuals were using international Google sites, including Google Canada, UK, Turkey, Germany, France, and Australia. A substantial number of visitors were described as having "no referrer." From this it may be deduced that the user came by way of a bookmarked URL, a link in an E-mail, or by typing the URL directly into the address bar. The archivist and the Web development librarian were relieved to find that many of the researchers were accessing the GWMOHP Web site through the GSU library site, and were pleasantly surprised at the number who were accessing the site via the Digital Library of Georgia. These observations confirmed that sharing Web sites with collaborative entities is useful and important. To encourage future collaboration, the department will continue to use DLG guidelines for developing current and future Web resources.

As a donor relations tool, the Web site has proven to be extremely valuable. Interviewees have expressed satisfaction and excitement when they first see their presence

on the Web, and they encourage friends and relatives to visit their section on the site. Potential interviewees and donors are equally enamored of the site. During presentations to groups and individuals, guests are shown how collections are processed and made available electronically via EAD finding aids. Donors appreciate the care and attention given to collections, as well as the level of detail provided in on-line finding aids and catalog records. However, donors experience an emotional response when viewing the GWMOHP Web site. Seeing the faces and words, and hearing the voices of people they know and trust is very powerful. Suddenly potential interviewees want to be part of the project, and be a member of this special group.

The Web site and exhibit also have been useful as an outreach tool. For instance, in October of 2006, the archivist was invited to a League of Women Voters anniversary celebration. She highlighted the oral history project by presenting exhibit panels and mounted text excerpts that had previously been used in the annual women's exhibit, alongside a laptop computer with speakers attached. Celebrants were able to see photographs of friends, as well as hear their voices and read their stories. It was extremely successful as a friend-raising tool. In the spring of 2008, the panels and laptop were once again displayed at the Atlanta Women's Foundation Summit on Women and Girls, and again received a positive response.

The Future

Just as the Women's Collection evolved from its focus on second-wave feminism to include collections of activist women, so too did its oral histories. In 2006, preparations began for establishing a new Activist Women Oral History Project. This new project was designed to highlight all areas and all perspectives of feminist or women-centered activism around Georgia, the South, and beyond. The project's first oral history (Amanda Brown interviewing Paula Bevington) took place on October 20, 2006, and the interview process is ongoing. Using the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project's Web site as a template, Web pages for a new Activist Women Oral History Project are currently under construction. These should be available by mid-2009. This new project also includes interviews conducted using video, a format that will certainly create a number of new technological challenges related to digitization, storage, delivery options, and ADA accessibility.

Subject guides are extremely useful tools, and plans exist to create them for both the Georgia Women's Movement and the Activist Women's Oral History projects. Another small but important improvement to the Web site is the future inclusion of very brief biographical notes as part of the interviewee list. This should enable users to make more informed decisions about which oral histories to access. The issue of excerpts versus full transcripts may also be revisited in the future, though the work involved in re-editing the older Georgia Women's Movement oral histories is daunting, and would certainly require extra staff.

As previously stated, Georgia State University's Special Collections and Archives is also the home of a number of oral history projects in the department's other collecting areas: The Southern Labor Archives hosts the Voices of Labor[11] and Atlanta Working

Women projects, and the Popular Music Collection contains a number of oral histories.[12] In the future, GSU Special Collections hopes to create Web sites for each, using the Georgia Women's Movement Oral History Project site as a template.

Although the current GWMOHP Web site functions well using a CMS to manage page content and links, another goal is to continue to enhance the searchability and usability of that content. In the future, the Web development librarian would like to explore the implementation of a true digital library system (DLS) or repository to manage and maintain the collection. Implementing a DLS for the Oral History site would allow the site to continue to offer its current level of functionality while also providing a way for it to be indexed and used by other services, such as search engines and other archives. By storing each oral history in a DLS or repository, the content could be enriched with metadata and access points such as keywords, subject headings, and abstracts, and items such as photographic images and audio files could be linked. Some of these features can be accomplished with the on-line catalog, but a key goal is to use a system that allows researchers and site visitors the ability to search and browse the oral history collection and expand or refine their scope to include the entire collection of resources provided by Special Collections. In addition, a system that allows researchers and educators the ability to select specific content and remix or recombine it is desirable. The ability to create a page with a new context by combining oral histories and photographs from the various curatorial areas will increase the usefulness of the entire collection.[13]

Finally, it would be desirable to use the Women's Collection oral histories in other Web-based projects. For example, a number of the interviews are currently being identified for use as objects in a new Web resource, "Birth Rhetoric: Issues in Reproductive Health and Justice." And in the future, the archivist would also like to work with GSU's School of Education to create a Women's History education packet, incorporating manuscript records and a Web-based oral history component.

Conclusion

Managing an oral history project is a satisfying and exciting endeavor; however, creating a Web-based research tool for oral histories is challenging and time consuming, particularly when unexpected problems arise because of previous practices and technological challenges. When considering the possibility of creating a Web product in any institution, it is important to consider some very basic questions: What time, staff, technology support, and financial resources are available, not just for creating the site, but for its long-term management? Who is the audience? Are constituents the general public, academic researchers, or donors? How old are the users, and what is their technological comfort level? What is the end goal of the Web site? Is it an end in itself, or do you want to use it as a teaser to bring people to your institution? Is this a donor-relations tool? Are there any legal or ethical issues? The answer to these questions may depend heavily on the content of the oral histories and the environment in which they are used. Do you want to have excerpts and sound files together? If the answer is yes, then editing needs to be of a consistently high standard.

This project could not have been attempted without the full and long-term support of the University Library's Web development librarian. At every stage in the process, the librarian and the archivist worked as a team, combining the content the archivist was responsible for with the technology that the librarian researched and implemented. The archivist continues to rely on the librarian to be aware of emerging technologies, as well as changes in the use of existing technologies within the GSU community. The team acknowledges that the GWMOHP Web site is not static, but rather it will continue to change and grow as more interviews are gathered and new opportunities for presentation of material on the Internet become available.

Appendix 1

Oral History Interview Agreement

Women's Collection – Special Collections and Archives
Georgia State University Library

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW AGREEMENT

The purpose of the project is to gather and preserve historical documentation by means of the audio and/or visual-recorded interview.

I, _____, understand that the recording will become the property of the Special Collections Department of the Library of Georgia State University (a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia) and that it will be made available for educational, scholarly and research use. I understand that such uses traditionally include term papers, theses, dissertations, articles, and books, and that additional uses may include exhibits, radio and television programs, films, and other forms of public display and dissemination. In addition, I understand that researchers may request and receive reproductions of the recording and/or transcript(s), and that as advanced electronic technologies continue to evolve the recording may be made available to researchers via computers, optical disc technology, and other electronic and remote access technologies. In all events, I understand that the Special Collections Department of the Georgia State University Library will care for the recording in a manner that will best provide for its preservation and at the same time make it most readily accessible to researchers.

Having received and understood the above information, I hereby give the recording and transcript of this interview, and the literary and copyrights inherent in the recording, to the Special Collections Department of the Library of Georgia State University so that the recording may be used for educational, scholarly and research purposes as outlined above without restriction (except as may be set out in any Addendum hereto). This agreement does not preclude any use which I myself may want to make of the recording.

_____ _____
Interviewer (signature) Interviewee (signature)

Date:_____ Date:_____

_____ _____
Name of Interviewer Name of Interviewee

Accepted for Georgia State University_____

Date:_____ Accession No:_____

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Morna Gerrard is the Archivist for the Women's Collection at Georgia State University Library's Special Collections and Archives. She previously worked as curator and assistant plans officer at the National Archives of Scotland. She earned her master's degree in history at Edinburgh University, and her M.L.I.S. at Clark Atlanta University. The author would like to thank the following people for their encouragement and feedback: Amy Cooper Cary, Tammy Sugarman, Bill Hardesty, Doug Goans, and David Klump.

NOTES

1. Committee on Oral History of the Society of American Archivists, "Oral History and Archivists: Some Questions to Ask," *American Archivist* 36:3 (1973): 361–365; ibid., 363; Ronald L. Filippelli, "Oral History and the Archives," *American Archivist* 39:4 (1976): 479–483; and Ellen D. Swain, "Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-first Century," *American Archivist* 66:1 (2003): 139–158. Other articles include Charles T. Morrissey, "Beyond Oral Evidence: Speaking (Con)strictly about Oral History," *Archival Issues* 17:2 (1992): 89, and David S. Miller, "Oral History: Provenance and Intellectual Access," *Provenance* XII (1994) 131–150.
2. Joan Sangster, "Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (New York: Routledge, 1998): 87. Also in this volume is Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, "Telling Tales: Oral History and the Construction of Pre-Stonewall Lesbian History," 344. For examples from women's history journals, see Margaret Strobel's "Getting to the Source: Becoming a Historian, Being an Activist, and Thinking Archivally: Documents and Memory as Sources," *Journal of Women's History* 1 (spring 1989): 191–192; and Joanna Bornat and Hanna Diamond, "Women's History and Oral History: Developments and Debates," *Women's History Review*, 16:1 (2007):19–39.
3. Marian Mollin, "Communities of Resistance: Women and the Catholic Left of the Late 1960s," *Oral History Review* 31:2 (2004): 29–51; other case studies include Jennifer Scuro, "Exploring Personal History: A Case Study of an Italian Woman," *Oral History Review* 31:1 (2004): 43–69, and Belinda Bezzoli, "Interviewing the Women of Phokeng," in *The Oral History Reader*; Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History* (New York, NY: Twayne, 1995); Sherna Berger Gluck, Donald A. Ritchie, and Bret Eynon, "Reflections on Oral History in the New Millennium," *Oral History Review* 26:2 (1999): 9–16; and Gluck, Ritchie, and Eynon, "Oral History and the New Century," part of "Reflections on Oral History in the New Millennium," *Oral History Review* 26:2 (1999): 16–26.
4. For an example of the descriptive articles, see Mary A. Larson, "Potential, Potential, Potential: The Marriage of Oral History and the World Wide Web," *The Journal of American History*, 88:2 (2001): 596–603; for an example of reviews, see Irene Reti, "Oral History on the Web," *Oral History Review* 26:2 (1999): 147–158.
5. At http://www.library.gsu.edu/spcoll/xml/W008.xml.
6. At http://www.library.gsu.edu/spcoll/pages/area.asp?ldID=105&guideID=534.
7. Eynon, "Oral History and the New Century," 21.
8. In 2002, Rabbi Pinchas Lipner filed a $10 million lawsuit against the Jewish Community Federation, the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, and Richard Goldman for defamation. This stemmed from an oral history, conducted in 1992 between interviewer Eleanor Glaser and interviewee Richard Goldman, which was part of a project carried out by the Regional Oral History Office of UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library, and funded by the Jewish Community Federation. Lipner eventually lost his case.
9. Simply stated, a state organization, as part of a sovereign state, is protected from a suit by the doctrine of sovereign immunity. This doctrine has its roots in England, where the sovereign "could do no wrong," and after the American Revolution came to mean that the "sovereign is exempt from suit [on the] practical ground that there can be no legal right against the authority that makes the law on which the right depends." (205 U.S. 349, 353). Many states have waived sovereign immunity, especially on

issues of employment law. See 'Lectric Law Library, "The 'Lectric Law Library Lexicon on Sovereign Immunity," http://www.lectlaw.com/def2/s103.htm (26 March 2008).

10. See http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/Topics/PeoplesCultures.html.
11. See http://www.library.gsu.edu/spcoll/pages/area.asp?ldID=105&guideID=512.
12. See http://www.library.gsu.edu/spcoll/pages/pages.asp?ldID=105&guideID=505&ID=3286.
13. As of fall 2008, CONTENTdm had been purchased by the GSU Library, and plans were being developed to create metadata for a number of projects in Special Collections, including the GWMOHP.