***FINAL PAPER***

*20 grade points*

The paper will summarize your class experience: planning an oral history project, preparing for and conducting an oral history interview, and preparing the interview for archiving. Your paper must contain the four distinct sections described below. Except for the instructions here, the structure and content of the paper is open ended.

Oral history lends itself to multimedia presentation. It is fine to do this final assignment as a blog, wiki, Prezi or to embed multimedia into your text document. Photographs, quotes from the interview, and references to other oral history projects, Oral History Association Best Practices, and scholarly articles will strengthen your paper.

This is a formal research paper using APA format. There is no required length but I estimate 4000-5000 words will achieve the depth and breadth I’m looking for.

*SECTIONS*

***I. Narrator.*** Introduce your narrator and explain how this person’s narrative contributes to your project. Let the narrator speak through paraphrases or excerpts from the interview.

Required: Include a short quote from the interview – from one sentence to one paragraph – that you think best sums up the essence of your narrator. Use it as an epigraph if you wish.

Recommended: Include one or more photos of the narrator, either one you take at the time of the interview or earlier photos the narrator gives you permission to scan.

***II. Context essay.*** Provide social, historical, and cultural context for your interview and the project, in the form of an essay, timeline, or preferably both. Describe your narrator within this context (such as demographic, social and historical changes in the narrator’s experience). Include a bibliography of most relevant resources.

***III. Log****.*Create a log of the steps in the project and reflect on each step. Discuss the process in selecting a topic and narrator, in shaping a project design, using recording equipment, the difference between a recorded interview and a conversation, the interview itself, the value of transcription, cataloging, and anything else you wish to include. What worked well and what didn’t? What lessons have you learned that you would like to pass on? How did your relationship with the narrator develop? What would you do differently next time?

***IV. Assessment.*** Use the [Oral History Association Principles and Best Practices](http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/), your readings, and your personal experience to evaluate oral history as a methodology. What are its strengths and weaknesses? Is oral history effective in its primary goal of supplementing the historical record? Does the methodology have untapped potential? If you have a special interest such as genealogy, education, museum work, or public history, how could oral history apply in your own field? If your field is archives, consider the special challenges presented by oral history to archives.

Submit the paper the last day of the semester.