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Open-Source Based Solutions for Processing, Preserving, and Presenting Oral Histories

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USF

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA

libraries



Open-Source Based Solutions for Processing, Preserving, and Presenting Oral Histories

Nature of USF Oral History Collections

A. Collecting Scope

- Urban development and sustainability
- Culture and identity (ethnicity and race)
- Holocaust, genocide, and crimes against humanity
- USF history

B. Quantity

- 22 oral history projects
- 813 accessible interviews

C. Accessibility

- WorldCat
- Local OPAC (Aleph)
- Library digital asset management system (CORAL)
- Google

USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA libraries Special & Digital Collections

Books | Articles | E-Journals | Digital Collections | USF WorldCat | ILL | Site Map | Help

USF Library > Campus Guides > Special & Digital Collections > Oral History Program (OHP) Admin Sign In

Oral History Program (OHP)

Welcome | Oral History Projects | Events | In the News | Resources for the Oral Historian | Support the Collection | Contact Us

Welcome

The University of South Florida Libraries Oral History Program Vision Statement

The University of South Florida Libraries seek to become a world leader in the use of video, audio, and textual technologies to record, preserve, and present oral history interviews on topics that support library collections and advance knowledge for the research community.

About the Oral History Program

As an urban metropolitan university, USF is committed to documenting the surrounding community in a meaningful way. Florida has been described as a Bellwether State and its unprecedented growth in the 20th century offers scholars an unparalleled opportunity to investigate pressing political, economic, social, and cultural issues. The Program's areas of emphasis explore complex international issues in a local context. The Oral History Program also supports the research of scholars, students, and the community through programming, workshops, and outreach.

The USF Libraries Oral History Program creates and disseminates original interviews using state of the art digital technologies via the Internet. Few libraries in the world produce and showcase their oral history materials with comparable access. These primary sources complement library collections, providing one-of-a-kind materials for scholars exploring a variety of local, national, and international issues. Through streaming audio and printable transcripts provided via the Internet, patrons around the world can mine this rich resource to research the Program's areas of emphasis: Urban Development and Sustainability; Holocaust, Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity; and Culture and Identity.

Urban Development and Sustainability - The allocation of non-renewable natural resources is a vital issue in the 21st century. These oral histories explore global urban and environmental issues within a Florida context.

Holocaust, Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity- In coordination with the USF Libraries Holocaust and Genocide Studies Center, these oral histories look to the past in order to understand the causes of mass violence, treat its effects on victims, and to help prevent future atrocities.

Culture and Identity - Unprecedented global migration over the last century compels scholars to understand the roles of culture and identity within American society. This collection provides scholars with rich primary source material relating to race, ethnicity and gender.

Visit <http://ohp.lib.usf.edu>



Resourcing the USF Libraries Oral History Program

A. Staffing

- 4.0 equiv. permanent FTE: approx. \$150,000/annum
- 1.5 part-time student FTE: approx. \$36,000/annum

B. Infrastructure

Central IT

- 3 virtual servers
- Server maintenance
- Nightly back up to tape and remote HD

Library IT (averages \$15,000/year)

- 1 Physical server
- 4 Audio/video production workstations
- 5 transcription workstations



A Brief History of Oral History at USF

A. In the Beginning (1997-2002)

- Founded in the Tampa Library (part of Florida Studies Center)
- First oral history projects targeted Tampa Bay area political leaders
- Video interviews recorded on Super VHS
- Edited in Adobe Premier for PC
- Streamed audio/video from USF Tampa Library server in Real Media™
- Interviews cataloged in online public access catalog

B. Transformation to Born-Digital Technology (2002-2009)

- Purchased mini-DV video cameras
- Transitioned to Apple shop using Final Cut Pro
- Expanded collecting scope to include non-elites
- Began systematic transcription of new interviews (used Baylor University style guide)
- Presented audio only and transcript via the Internet
- Transitioned from Real Media™ to MPEG4
- Experimented with several digital asset management systems (DAMS) and presentation tools (Site Search, Luna Insight, CONTENTdm, DigiTool)

A Brief History of Oral History at USF

C. Improving Workflow Management

- Created secure, open-source application Bull-OH-Base (Rich Internet Application)
- Utilizes LAMP Stack Software (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP) and Ajax (asynchronous JavaScript and XML)
- Offers complete production lifecycle
 - Administrative and descriptive metadata
 - Forms and releases
 - Digital audio & video master files
 - Transcription, edits, time codes
 - Abstracting and cataloging
 - Bull-OH-Base interfaces with DAMS
 - DAMS interfaces with long-term archive at Florida Center for Library Automation

The screenshot shows the Bull-OH-Base web application interface. At the top, there is a green header with the University of South Florida logo and the text "libraries Bull-OH-Base". Below the header, there are navigation tabs: "SEARCH", "BROWSE ALL", "ADD", and "REPORTS". The main content area contains three search criteria: "Interviewee Name:" with a dropdown menu labeled "Choose Interviewee Name" and "(AND)", "Interviewer Name:" with a dropdown menu labeled "Choose Interviewer Name" and "(AND)", and "Collection/Project Name:" with a dropdown menu labeled "Choose Collection/Project Name". Below these fields is a "Search Records" button. At the bottom of the interface, there is a footer with the text "Bull-OH-Base web application programmed by Richard R. Bernardy Jr. - rbernard@usf.edu with Dr. Mark I. Greenberg - migreenberg@usf.edu" and "Fostering the Advancement of Knowledge". On the right side of the footer, there are links for "SITE MAP", "RSS", and "LOG OUT", along with the University of South Florida Libraries logo and the text "University of South Florida Libraries: Fostering the Advancement of Knowledge For technical assistance, suggestions, or comments, please contact us. © Copyright 2010".

A Brief History of Oral History at USF

D. Improved Presentation (2009)

- Simple Player
 - PDF searchable transcript
 - MPEG4 streaming audio
- Advanced Player (Beta)
 - Transcript in Adobe Flash
 - Time coded
 - Synchronized with audio
 - MP3 audio in Adobe Flash

CORAL - Advanced OHP Player

LL: At first they put me in the infantry, and I did a basic training in the infantry. And then, later, they were making up this new unit; it had been one of the mule pack artillery units, Camp Hale, Colorado. And we were told that after one of the two existing mule pack-the mules packed the artillery in segments, pieces, for mountain fighting, small artillery pieces; 75mm. They lost an entire battalion; I think is what they called it, in somewhere in the Orient-Burma or somewhere-and they decided that mule pack units weren't called for anymore and they were dismantling the unit. They dispersed the population of that unit-all of this is by hearsay, what's told to me. They dispersed the population of that unit among various other units elsewhere.

rewind play stop

Version 20100330-2340

What makes an oral history player effective?

A. Management Perspective

- Uses open source solutions
- Minimizes operating cost and maintenance requirements
- Selects solutions with dynamic user communities with whom to share and learn
- Takes an IT leadership position in the oral history community
- Manages oral histories within existing Library FTE and expertise
- Leverages centralization of USF IT
- Reuses existing hardware and software where feasible
- Is Unicode compliant
- Utilizes robust test server for ongoing project development
- Includes archival and preservation capabilities

B. User Perspective

- Creates a uniform user experience regardless of web browser
- Minimizes browser plug-ins and/or add-ons
- Maximizes interface portability
- Provides descriptive and technical metadata
- Offers transcript and audio/video (synchronous and asynchronous)
- Presents intuitive user controls and accessibility
- Offers full-text searchability
- Displays foreign language scripts
- Promotes user self-sufficiency

USF's Answer: OHPi

Technology Used

i. Management: IT Experience

- OHPi integrated with all USF Libraries Digital Collections (CORAL)
- Data repository – Fedora Commons (open source)
- User interface development tool – Adobe Flex Builder 3 plug-in
- MP3 Encoder (audio)
- Adobe Media Encoder™ (video)
- OpenOffice™ JAVA API (XML transcript)
- Metadata cataloging – OCLC Connexion
- Express Scribe™ for transcribing
- Keyboard Maestro™ for time coding
- Custom management modules to integrate open-source solutions
- Deposits to Florida Digital Archive (dark archive)

ii. User Experience

- Embeddable Web interface – Adobe Flash™ (.swf files)
- Works on all browsers supported by Flash
- No additional audio/video plug-ins required
- Intuitive user controls
- Transcript synchronized with audio/video
- Full-text searchability
- Transcripts available for immediate download as PDF
- Resizable transcript text for visually impaired
- Interview discoverable in WorldCat and Google

OHPi for Audio

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "QuickTime Player" with the address bar displaying "Home - Oral History Player Interface - OHPi - Campus Guides at University of South Florida Libraries". The page header includes the "USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA libraries" logo and navigation buttons for "Search", "Previous", "Next", and "text size" (AA, AA). The main content area is titled "Leonard Lubin interviewed by Michael Hirsh. (Interview conducted May 21, 2008 and May 27, 2008.)" and contains a transcript of the interview. The transcript is as follows:

Transcript

Michael Hirsh: Okay. First of all, let me just get your name and your spelling, and your address and phone number.

Leonard Lubin: My name is Leonard, L-e-o-n-a-r-d, Lubin, L-u-b-i-n.

MH: And your date of birth, sir?

LL: July 7, 1925. So, on this occasion I was what, nineteen or twenty.

MH: Where were you growing up? Where did you go into the Army from?

LL: I went—Miami. Miami, Florida.

MH: And when you went into the Army, you were drafted, or volunteered?

LL: No, I enlisted.

MH: And they put you in what?

LL: At first they put me in the infantry, and I did a basic training in the infantry. And then, later, they were making up this new unit; it had been one of the mule pack artillery units, Camp Hale, Colorado. And we were told that after one of the two existing mule pack—the mules packed the artillery in segments, pieces, for mountain fighting, small artillery pieces; 75mm. They lost an entire battalion; I think is what they called it, in somewhere in the Orient—Burma or somewhere—and they decided that mule pack units weren't called for anymore and they were dismantling the unit. They dispersed the population of that unit—all of this is by hearsay, what's told to me. They dispersed the population of that unit among various other units elsewhere.

We were told—I don't know if this is true—the reason for it was that these were all very big men, because of the fact that they had no motors, no engines, that they were transporting this stuff by mule and on their own backs, lifting [it] up very tall mountains, which is what it was for: mountain fighting. These had to be big men. They had to load the barrel of a 75mm Hauser onto the back of a mule, counterbalance and weight on the other side, then separately the ammunition, water,

At the bottom of the transcript area, there is a media player interface with a "Start Over" button, a progress bar showing "00:00:00 / 02:10:15", and a "0 Hits" indicator. A copyright notice "©20101130-1135" is visible in the bottom right corner of the player area.

OHPi for Video

The screenshot shows a QuickTime Player window titled "OHPiV.html". The browser address bar shows "OHPiV.html". The page content includes the University of South Florida Libraries logo and navigation buttons (Search, Previous, Next, text size, AA, AA). The main content area is titled "(Lecture presented Oct. 29, 2010 during the Rediscovering Armenia: History, Memory, and the Future)".

Transcript

This is a difficult topic to speak about. I always have to do a preface, not always, but sometimes, that I'm not a genocide scholar. I've never studied genocide per se. My first years of my academic career were related to another topic. I was sort of pushed into this field by denial. I grew up with genocide survivors. We didn't think that was anything special; everyone around us was a survivor so, you know, it was just a way of life. I grew up sort of in denial. Most of my generation, born in the United States, we knew that our parents were survivors. We heard their stories sort of in the background, as background music when they spoke to each other—the women, in particular, when they would get together and have their demitasse coffee; they would tell their stories and sometimes they would laugh and sometimes they would cry. And so we knew that these—what had occurred; but for us, born in the United States, we were Americans and we didn't want to get involved in this.

It was only really with the passage of that generation or the passing of that generation that we thought would never disappear—but, in fact, did disappear—and the increased denial, state denial—not only state but primarily state denial of the Armenian genocide pushed me into this field of beginning to explore it. I've now edited and contributed to five volumes on the subject, and I still don't find it an easy and pleasant subject to deal with, but one that is probably necessary to deal with.

As recently as two years ago, a Turkish Armenian journalist by the name of Hrant Dink, who edited a Turkish/Armenian newspaper, was assassinated on the streets of Istanbul. And that sort of brought the Armenian genocide back to the fore. But this time it was not only Armenians who were talking about it, it was

Digital ID:

- U31-00008

Creator:

- Hovannisian, Richard G.

Title:

- The Armenian Genocide as Prototype.

Published:

- [Tampa, Fla. : University of South Florida Tampa Library, Special & Digital Collections Dept.,

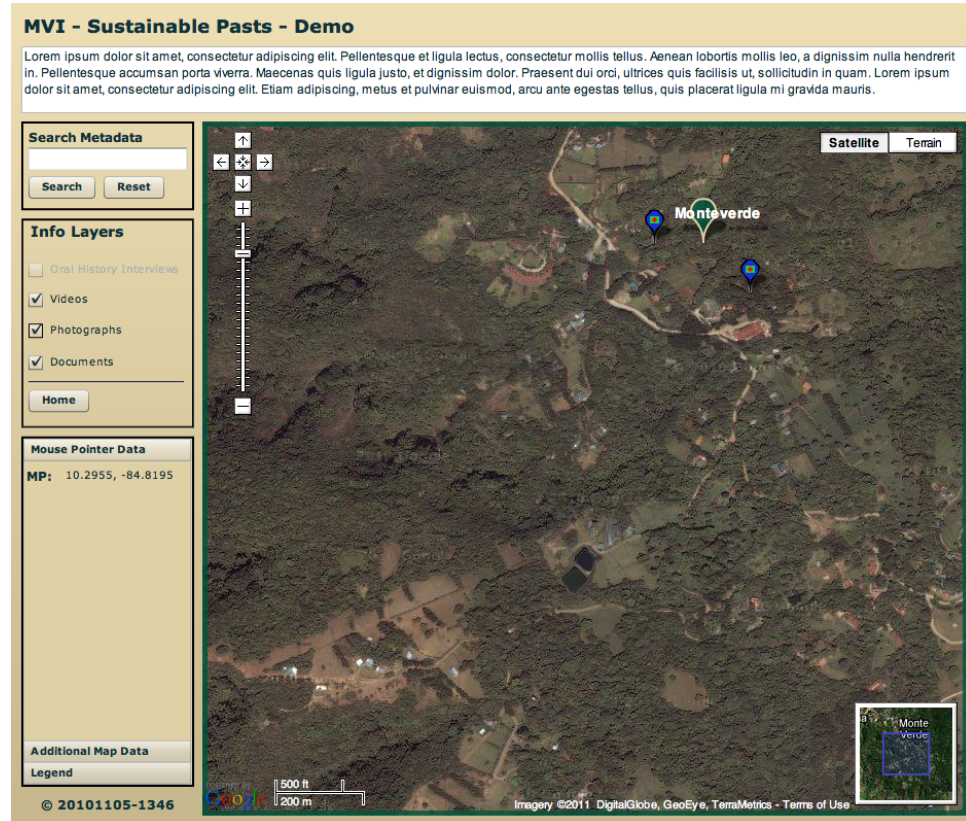
The video player shows a man in a suit speaking at a podium. The playback controls at the bottom indicate the video is at 00:01:15 of a 00:02:30 duration. The status bar shows "0 Hits" and a copyright notice "©20110325-1531".

OHPi Strengths

- Developed using cost-effective open source, commercial, and custom software
- No third-party software licensing or support fees
- Resides on USF IT virtual servers, thereby reducing Library cost and staff responsibilities for operating system administration
- Content free and available 24/7 via the Internet
- Flash nearly ubiquitous (installed on 98% of all desktop browsers)
- 4 of 5 major browsers (Firefox, Opera, Safari, Chrome) assist users in obtaining and updating the Flash plug-in by way of notification, guidance, or automation
- Unicode compliant
- MD5 checksum validation of master files quarterly
- MD5 checksum validation of online data streams weekly
- Redundant back up (optical disks, local servers, taped back ups, remote archives)
- Post interview (audio) processing costs under \$1,000/interview hour

Planned Enhancements

- Complete retrospective time coding of all transcripts
- Complete testing and implement video OHPi
- Further investigate Transana™ or equivalent for keyword coding and searching
- Integrate GIS functionality into interview transcripts via Google Maps or ArcGIS™
- Create mobile app
- Explore HTML5 as substitute for Flash



Questions?

For more information, please visit <http://ohp.lib.usf.edu>

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