

World War II: A Living History

Instructor: Matthew Rozell

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Fall Semester, 2005

Hudson Falls Senior High School

“Good history requires a good story.”

The Final Project: 20% of course grade

- **Interview Survey and Release Form- required.**
- **Biography -5% of project total.**
- **Historical Contextualization Research Paper (4-6 pages)- 40% of project total**
 - **Commentary /Historical Analysis of Interview (2-3 additional pages)**
- **Interview-20% of project total**
- **Transcription-20% of project total**
- **Formatting and Mechanics: 15% of project total**

Final Draft, hard copy and electronic due date:

ENTIRE FINAL PROJECT DUE TUESDAY, 1-17-06 1:00 PM
absence excuse not acceptable that day!

If you email, you must request confirmation of receipt.
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Preparing an Oral History Biography

You are responsible to provide a 1-page biography that will serve as an introduction to your interviewee. As best as possible, your biography should include:

- Where and when your interviewee was born and lived
- Educational background and degrees
- Occupation(s)
- Family information
- Additional information from their background that might have influenced the interview (i.e., religion etc.)
- Any interesting facts that might provide some insight into the nature of your interviewee.

Secure a photograph of your interviewee to include in your final project. Include digital images of any contemporary items of interest, i.e., period photographs, telegrams, a letter home, etc.

Adapted from Glenn Whitman, 1999. Used with permission.

Pre-Interview Worksheet

Student name: _____

The person you intend to interview (Full name): _____

Date, time and location of interview: _____

Have you contacted the interviewee and have they agreed to sign the release form? _____

Did you explain the purpose and use of this project? _____

Background of interviewee (occupation, age or year of birth, education, religion, experiences, national born citizen, country of origin, documents, photographs, artifacts, political and social memberships, places lived and when, married, children).

Historical period or event the interview will focus on and what was going on (Historically--be detailed with dates)

Why did you choose this period of focus?

Preliminary bibliography. List a minimum of three sources (text) you have accessed and that will help in your historical contextualization research.

Preliminary Questions for interviewee (list at least 5):

Student's signature date

Teacher's signature date

approved/date

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The Historical Contextualization Research Paper

'The ability to "think on your feet" during the interview will be enhanced by your thorough understanding of the history.'

The purpose of the 4 to 6 page historical contextualization research paper for this oral history project is threefold: (1) To provide the context in which readers can understand the interview (i.e. what was happening during the time in which the interview covers); (2) Allow the interviewer to become an expert in the period or event their interview will be focusing on; (3) Research provides context from which interview questions can be developed both prior to, and during, the interview.

The success of any oral history interview is dependent on how much the interviewer knows about the person, period or event that the interview will focus upon. A failure to conduct thorough research of your interview period or event will not only result in an ineffectual interview but is also disrespectful to the interviewee. Be mindful that your interview selection is sharing his or her life with you and you have an obligation to come to the interview with a thorough understanding of the history your interview covers.

- From your pre-interview and biography, you should be able to choose one facet of this era to concentrate on. Like any good historian, you must examine all aspects of a historical period or event. When appropriate, insert your interviewee into the contextualization.
- Considering the "professional" nature of this project, your research should draw from "sophisticated" primary and secondary sources that must include the **experts** in the area you are focusing on (i.e., Stephen Ambrose on World War II). It may include sources from Terkel, or those primary sources mentioned in Miller. Use Miller to provide a solid background, if applicable. Make sure that their interpretations are reflected in your contextualization. You may use the internet one or more sources of information, but remember to check them for validity with established sources. I also have an extensive library I can share with you.
- In order to understand the broad context of the history you are researching, you should try to examine "newspapers of the day" (i.e., The New York Times, Washington Post) that highlight what was being covered during the period you are studying. I have many of these.
- As you research, begin to develop possible interview questions.
- Any successful research paper requires revision. Keep in mind that you will be revising this historical contextualization research paper following your interview in order to insure that any new history that emerges out of your interview is reflected in the historical contextualization. You will also include your commentary and analysis of the interview itself. (See next page)

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Historical Analysis

Questions in considering historical value that should be answered in your analysis

- How does the transcription reinforce, as well as challenge, the history researched in the historical contextualization research paper?
- What does the transcription say about the particular period or event that the interview focuses upon (what does the transcript not say as well)?
- What new information does the transcript provide about the period or event that was examined?
- What does the interview contribute to **our larger understanding** of the period or event that was examined?
- How does the individual (your interviewee) fit into the whole of history?
- What is valuable especially for someone who doesn't read the whole interview (see below)?
- What was important to my interviewee and why?
- How much of the interview can be verified by my research? What questions remain and how can they be answered? (**consider calling the interviewee back**)
- What is the value of oral history and ***YOUR*** oral history project ?

At the end of this document, cut and paste 3 segments of text from the transcript that can be taken out of context to provide the reader with a snapshot of your subject. (Perhaps a video clip or audio will be made from them in the near future for our website.)

(See our website for examples of this.)

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Interview Checklist

At this point you have identified your interviewee, made phone contact to explain the project and determined where and when the interview will take place. You have established fifteen preliminary questions, and you may have started a thorough research paper .

1. ____ Check equipment (Batteries, tape recorder, microphone).
2. ____ Test your equipment.
3. ____ List of interview questions.
4. ____ Interview release form.
5. ____ Notebook and pen to take notes during the interview.

When You Are Ready to Begin:

1. ____ Explain what will happen in the interview
(Begin slowly, by getting the background of your interview and to create a comfort between you and your subject).
2. ____ Make introductory statement on tape.
(Include-date, person you are interviewing, who they are, place of interview, and who you are).
3. ____ Conduct interview.
4. ____ Have interviewee sign release form.
5. ____ Send thank you note immediately following interview. Copy the template on the webpage.

Interview Reminders

1. Have a plan of attack beginning with careful and logical organization of your fifteen questions with the toughest and most sensitive questions for last.
2. Ask open-ended questions. Establish where the interviewee was with respect to the historical period or event being examined.
3. Ask one question at a time. Be prepared to think on your feet developing follow-up questions to insure clarity (“can you explain further?”). Do not move too fast into another question and allow for the “silent question” which can lead to further response. When you get “yes” or “no” responses ask why or why not?
4. Give the interviewee enough time to think and finish her or his thought before moving on to the next question. When you get a “yes” or “no” response ask, why or why not?
5. Let the interviewee answer for herself or himself without leading to an answer you expect. Remember your research and perceptions might not parallel those of the interviewee and these differences will be noted in your historical analysis at the project's end. Remember that the purpose of the interview is to find out what that person thinks, not what you think.
6. Listen closely and ask good follow-up questions. In forming new questions remember that individuals reading your interview may not know what you mean by some terms or references to places and people you and your interviewee might know well. Get interviewee to explain.
7. Let the interviewee do most of the talking. Interrupt only when the interviewee appears to be going off tangent, in order to redirect the interview. This said, keep in mind tangents often lead to new opportunities.
8. Save controversial questions for the end of the interview, when the interviewee is more comfortable talking with you.
9. Make sure the release form is signed before leaving.
10. Try to transcribe and write up results and notes of the interview as soon a possible after the interview has been completed. Even in rough form, these notes will help you to capture the "sense" of what was said, as well as the actual information that was presented.
11. Be flexible!
12. Punch-out and label tapes following interview (Name of interviewee and interviewer, date and location, project title, institution and number sequence for each tape).
13. Remember to maintain good eye contact and concentrated listening. Always remember that the interviewee is sharing his/her life with you.

FORMATTING THE FINAL DRAFT

I. Title page

- • Title that reflects the project's subject
- • Interviewer's name
- • Interviewee's name
- • Instructors name

II. Table of contents

III. Statement of Purpose

IV. Biography

V. Historical Contextualization (incorporate parenthetical citations, see Slate below.)

VI. Historical Analysis

VII Works Cited/Bibliography (formally bibliography-make use of Slate citation machine, <http://citationmachine.net/>)

VIII. Interview transcription

IX. Appendices

Appendix I-Survey and signed original release form

Appendix II-Your pre-approved Pre-interview Form

Appendix III (optional) Personal Artifacts-
Photographs, scanned personal items, etc.

Interview tapes and disc must accompany hard copy of your final draft. Please provide your name, the interviewee's name, date of interview and subject on each tape and disc. When submitting a **single file** copy of your project on CD or email, **you must use Microsoft Word**. Release form must accompany final product.

Final Project Layout:

| | | | | | |
|--------------|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Title Page | Table of Contents | Statement of Purpose | Biography | Historical Contextualization | Historical Analysis |
| 1 page | 1 page | 1 page | 1-2 pages | 4-6 pages | 2-4 pages |
| Bibliography | Transcription Double Spaced (Long) ? pages | Appendix I Survey | Appendix II Pre-Interview Form | Appendix III Photographs | Appendix VI Personal Artifacts. |
| 1 page | | | | | |

- Twelve Size - Times New Roman
- Electrical Copy all on one word document
- Hard Copy

- Video Tapes:

- Label Spine of Tape
- Name, Date of Interview
- WWII, LHP
- Repeat on Cartidge
- Lock tape to safe.

Large tape

The Final Project: 20% of course grade

Scoring Rubric

Student Name _____



Biography/Statement of Purpose -5% of project total:

B1) Does the student provide the reader with a strong sense of the interviewee’s background, using extended use of dates, details and anecdotes to provide context? Has interviewee’s past been clearly established in the context of the interview period? Is purpose for the project clear?

5 4 3 2 1 0



Historical Contextualization Research Paper / Historical Analysis- Commentary on Interview -40% of project total (*DOUBLE-SPACED, Times New Roman 12*):

HC1) Overall: Does the student establish a strong historical background for understanding the interview, drawing evidence from a minimum of five primary and secondary sources (including “newspapers of the day”) in approximately 4-6 pages?

5 4 3 2 1 0

HC2) Are dates are used to insure historical context, and does student analysis consider contemporary views of the historical event or period that the interview covers?

5 4 3 2 1 0

HC3) Does the historical contextualization provide a clear context for understanding the interview (the “big picture”)?

5 4 3 2 1 0

Historical Analysis:

HA1) Does the student provide a competent discussion of the effectiveness of oral history that clearly establishes historical value, in approximately 2-3 pages?

5 4 3 2 1 0

HA2) Does the student employ the application of historical contextualization in order to assess where the interview fits into the historiography of the particular period of event (**how the “little picture” fits into the “big picture”**)?

5 4 3 2 1 0

HA3) Is the interview transcript used, through quotations, to support interviewer’s interpretations?

5 4 3 2 1 0

Historical contextualization/analysis: Mechanical notes:

HM1) Does introduction engage the reader in a dramatic fashion? Does conclusion reveal adequate student reflection on this learning activity?

2 1 0

HM2) Is it apparent that Miller, and sources beyond Miller, have been consulted? Have quotes from outside sources (besides interviewee transcript) been effectively incorporated into historical contextualization?

2 1 0

HM3) Is sentence structure varied and engaging, or is it choppy and repetitious? Are new thoughts developed in new paragraphs? Are student's thoughts clear, and consistently conveyed through writing?

2 1 0

HM4) Is grammar (punctuation, spelling, and capitalization) adequate, or do errors distract reader and detract from overall quality of the historical background?

2 1 0

HM5) Are works cited properly, with appropriate parenthetical citations? Does the historical contextualization/analysis include a proper bibliography at the end?

2 1 0

Interview and transcription- 40% of project total (DOUBLE-SPACED, Times New Roman 12):

IT1) Does the transcript reveal a minimum of fifteen open-ended questions that reflect thoroughness of research and an ordered plan for conducting the interview?

5 4 3 2 1 0

IT2) Are follow-up questions utilized to clarify points put forth by the interviewee's responses?

5 4 3 2 1 0

IT3) Does the punctuation and spelling retain and convey the speaker's meaning? Does the punctuation and spelling enhance the style and flow of the discussion?

5 4 3 2 1 0

IT4) Have additional notations in brackets, [e.g., chuckles, laughs, shouts, whispers, or lengthy pauses] been added to clarify the transcription?

5 4 3 2 1 0

IT5) Have spoken contractions/"lazy words" been changed to proper written English or omitted, if it does not detract style and flow of the conversation? (Example: "yeah" to yes, "gonna to "going to", elimination of false starts, "uhhhhh", "ummm", etc.?)

5 4 3 2 1 0

IT6) Does the transcription include informational footnotes, if necessary, that clarify ambiguous/unclear/ obscure statements or references, for the benefit of future researchers?

5 4 3 2 1 0 (NA-default 5)

IT7) Have words or phrases in question been identified **boldly** in the transcription text? Has the transcriber sought instructor clarification on ambiguous/unclear/ obscure statements or references before submitting?

5 4 3 2 1 0 (NA-default 5)

IT8) Is the transcription properly spaced (DOUBLE-SPACED, Times New Roman 12), professional in appearance overall, and ready for publication?

5 4 3 2 1 0



Formatting/Mechanics overall-15% of project total:

FM1) Is final project properly formatted and ordered according to final draft instructions for title page and contents? Does each section (as indicated in T of C) begin on new page with **appropriate heading, bold font**? Does appendix include appropriate archival information to supplement interview? Are pages numbered appropriately, in **one Microsoft Word** document?

5 4 3 2 1 0

FM2) Have all sources been appropriately credited, as outlined by the MLA Handbook?(please use Landmark Citation Machine at <http://citationmachine.net> for consistency)

5 4 3 2 1 0

FM3) Has student submitted all electronic data in appropriate format in **one Microsoft Word** document, as well as hard copy? Is hard copy triple-hole punched, in appropriately labeled manila folder? Are all tapes appropriately labeled, according archival instructions?

5 4 3 2 1 0



Total Score: