

Doing Oral History at OSU



A Tale of Three Time Zones





The Raw Material of Historiography

- Yin:
 - “Oral history 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 inquiry; it can break down barriers...[and] give back to the people who made and experienced history, through their own words, a central place.” (Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*)

The Raw Material of Historiography

- Yang:
 - “Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing and what they think they did.”
(Alessandro Portelli, *History Workshop Journal*, 12, Autumn 1981)





JOSH RADNOR

ELIZABETH OLSEN

RICHARD JENKINS

ALLISON JANNEY



★★★★

★★★★★ "FUNNY AND CHARMING" — KATE ARDEN, THE TIMES

LIBERAL ARTS

12A CONTAINS MODERATE SEX INFORMATION

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LIFE'S ALL ABOUT FINDING SOMEBODY ON THE SAME PAGE

Gear

- Digital recorder, lavalier mic, 16 GB memory card, microphone cable, case (\$550 total)



Process

- Arrangements
 - Pick a quiet place
 - Send them the permissions form
 - Try to get a copy of their vita
 - Anticipate at least 60 minutes up to 2 hours

Process

- Preparation
 - Try to create a timeline of their life
 - Advantage: you know how the story “ends”
 - Ask questions relevant to historical era/material & environmental circumstances
 - Remember that they are people and that, in many ways, we are driven by many of the same impulses (projection/empathy)
 - Prepare topics more than questions

Process

- Interviewing
 - Make sure they sign the form
 - Have them formally introduce themselves
 - **The Golden Rule: Ask your question then shut up**
 - Listen carefully; make notes as needed; be prepared to freelance
 - Pay attention to your time
 - At the end, ask if you missed anything important

Process

- Transcription
 - Express Scribe!
 - Do not transcribe every verbal tic
 - Add timestamps every five minutes
 - Edit your transcript
 - Send to subject for finalization

Process

- Description

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CONTAINER LIST

[1. Interviews, 2009](#)

[2. Interviews, 2011](#)

[3. Interviews, 2012](#)

[Entire Container List](#)

HISTORY OF SCIENCE ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION, 2009-2012

OH 17

The History of Science Oral History Collection consists primarily of interviews with scientists, with special emphasis placed on individuals who knew and worked with Linus Pauling. Also included are interviews with members of the Pauling family as well as interviews with family members of other scientists.

[Biographical Notes](#)

[Content Description](#)

Quantity
26 sound files, 2 video files

Arrangement
Interviews are arranged chronologically by date of interview. An alphabetical view of the contents is as follows.

[Information and Credits](#)

- **Hedberg, Kenneth**
 - Five interviews: May 12, 2009; September 9, 2011; September 20, 2011; September 29, 2011; October 20, 2011
- **Kordes, Albert**
 - One interview: December 28, 2011
- **Kordes, Erna**
 - One interview: December 28, 2011
- **Lawson, Stephen**
 - Six interviews: August 26, 2011; September 19, 2011; November 8, 2011; November 14, 2011; December 15, 2011
- **Mathews, Christopher**
 - One interview: September 2, 2011
- **Pauling, Cheryl**
 - Two interviews: March 9, 2012 (parts 1 and 2)
- **Pauling, Kay**
 - One interview: March 13, 2012
- **Pauling, Linus, Jr.**
 - Eight interviews: September 23, 2011; February 28, 2012; June 3, 2012; June 4, 2012; June 5, 2012; June 6, 2012; June 7, 2012; June 8, 2012
- **Pauling, Stephanie**
 - One interview: June 5, 2012

Related Papers
Certain of the interviews held in this collection specifically refer to individuals or topics described in the [Karl and](#)



Process

- Archiving
 - Transcripts and mp3 files live on SCARC file server
 - Archival wav files live on Libraries archival server (zeus)
 - Paper transcripts created in certain cases for inclusion with other physical materials

The Oral History Tradition at OSU



The Oral History Tradition at OSU: University History

- OH 03 – History of Oregon State University, 1956-1980 (22 interviews and 5 other sound recordings)
- OH 07 – A.L. Strand, 1949-1985 (10 interviews)
- OH 09 – Voices of Oregon State University, 1995-2010 (20+ interviews & growing)
- OH 11 – College of Home Economics, 1968-1985 (9 interviews)
- OH 13 - Oregon State University Alumni, 2005-2008 (3 interviews)

The Oral History Tradition at OSU:

Local/Regional History

- OH 01 – Oregon Pioneers, 1975-1976 (33 interviews)
- OH 02 – Robert C. Ingalls, 1977 (1 interview)
- OH 06 – Soap Creek Valley History Project, 1978-1995 (12 interviews)
- OH 10 – Horner Museum Oral History Collection, 1964-1992 (290 interviews!)

The Oral History Tradition at OSU: Natural Resources

- OH 05 – Agriculture, Forestry and Oregon History, 1949-1996 (12 interviews)
- OH 08 – Oregon Emergency Farm Labor Service, 1992 (5 interviews)
- OH 14 – Oregon State University Extension Service, 2007-2009 (16 interviews)

The Oral History Tradition at OSU:

Multicultural Topics

- OH 04 – Basques of Harney County, 1976-2001 (14 interviews)
- OH 12 – Native American Language, [Tolowa & Tutuni] 1962-1964 (57 audiotapes)
- OH 15 – Japanese-American Association of Lane County, 1994-2008 (11 interviews)
- OH 18 – Oregon Multicultural Archives, 2011-2012 (10 interviews)

The Oral History Tradition at OSU:

History of Science

- OH 16 – How OSU Grew Nuclear Science, 2009-2010 (11 interviews)
- OH 17 – History of Science, 2009-2012 (26 interviews)

My Subjects

- Alcena Boozer (x2) and Carl Deiz (x2)
- Ken Hedberg (x4)
- Albert & Erna Kordesch
- Steve Lawson (x6)
- Chris Mathews
- Cheryl Pauling (x2) and Kay Pauling
- Linus Pauling Jr. (x8)
- Stephanie Pauling
- Bill Robbins

Ken Hedberg (1:58)



Steve Lawson (3:01)



Linus Pauling Jr.



Linus Pauling Jr.



Linus Pauling Jr.



Linus Pauling Jr.



Linus Pauling Jr.



Linus Pauling Jr.



Linus Pauling Jr. (2:04)



What Next?

- More interviews
- Improved description
- Online access?

Thanks!

