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Whose Civil Rights Stories on the Web? Authorship, Ownership, Access and Content in Digital History

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Whose Civil Rights Stories on the Web?

Authorship, Ownership, Access and Content in Digital History

Organization of American Historians & National Council on Public History ([OAH/NCPH 2012](#))

Document last updated March 23, 2012, with shortlink: <http://bit.ly/WhoseCivilRights>

Roundtable Frontier Airlines Center 203-C, 8:30-10:15am central, Fri April 20, 2012, Milwaukee

Overview of free Omeka digital archive & presentation tool, 10:30am (room TBA)

Follow along here: http://bit.ly/Omeke_NCPH-OAH2012

Co-organizers: [Jasmine Alinder](#) (UW-Milwaukee) and [Jack Dougherty](#) (Trinity College CT)

These two sessions -- a roundtable and digital tool overview -- explore theoretical and practical questions arising from digital history collaborations on issues of civil rights in U.S. history. Designed for a joint OAH/NCPH meeting, both speak to historians engaged in producing individual scholarship and interpretive exhibits.

The **roundtable** brings together leaders from four nationally recognized digital history projects on civil rights:

Moderator: Jack Dougherty, Trinity College (CT)

Digital History Projects & Panelists:

[Bracero History Archive](#), Peter Liebhold, Smithsonian Institution

[Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project](#), Tom Ikeda, founding executive director

[On the Line: schooling, housing, and civil rights web-book](#), Candace Simpson, Trinity College
see essay, [“Who owns oral history? A Creative Commons solution”](#)

[March on Milwaukee Civil Rights History Project](#), Jasmine Alinder, UW-Milwaukee; Clayborn Benson, Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum

Panelists will present their work and discuss conceptual issues relevant to historians at large, but particularly for the field of civil rights, with its focus on voice and power:

- **Authorship:** How are user-contributed sources and commentary reshaping the relationship between writers and readers of digital civil rights history? In conventional print books, authors and editors solely determine the content. But newer Web tools (such as Wikis, WordPress, and Omeka) challenge this authority by enabling audiences to contribute their own sources and interpretations. How should civil rights historians address multi-authored content?
- **Ownership:** Who owns civil rights history on the Web? When recording an oral history interview with a civil rights participant, who holds the right to distribute this source

online -- or remove it? Also, should publicly funded historical scholarship follow the path of biomedical research and be made freely available online (Rosenzweig, Perspectives 2005)? What are the arguments for placing sources or interpretation under private copyright, public domain, or open-source Creative Commons licensing?

- **Access:** Some argue that the "digital divide" is the civil rights issue of the twenty-first century. By publishing civil rights history on the web, are we widening this gap -- or narrowing it? New data (Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2010) show that, while still behind on overall Internet use, Blacks and English-speaking Latinos today are more likely than Whites to access the Internet with mobile devices. How should digital historians respond?
- **Content:** What "counts" as civil rights history? How should digital historians interpret struggles from the recent past? In Milwaukee, some Black activists from the 1960s school integration movement continued to rally for private school choice in the 1990s. How do voices for vouchers (or charter schools, or welfare reform) fit into our contested national memory of a "long civil rights movement" (Hall, JAH 2005)? This question becomes more pressing for digital history, where a chronological endpoint to the narrative is not as finite as the pages of a printed book.

Format: The moderator will begin the two-hour roundtable session with a brief overview of the conceptual questions above, then ask each panelist to respond to one or more questions while presenting a portion of their digital history project (using a computer projector and internet connection provided by the host organizations). Each panelist will be limited to 10 minutes (using a handy timer) to guarantee sufficient time for audience participation and interaction.

Immediately after the roundtable, a session titled **Omeka Overview: Collecting Stories with Local Communities**, will be led by Sheila Brennan from the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media (CHNM). She will demonstrate [Omeka](#), a digital archiving platform for collecting and sharing stories with local communities. Participants are encouraged to bring laptop or tablet computers for hands-on training on exploring the features of this free and open-source application.

To get a head start, you may sign up for a free basic Omeka account through CHNM's hosted service to use during the workshop: <http://omeka.net/signup>

NOTE: The off-site tour and discussion that had previously been scheduled at the Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum on Friday afternoon has been merged into the roundtable session.

More about digital history projects and panelists:

The Bracero History Archive

This presentation on the online Bracero History Archive (<http://braceroarchive.org>) and traveling exhibition (Bittersweet Harvest) explores their contributions to scholarly knowledge, capacity to build campus-community connections, and role in engaging Latinos with public history, genealogy, and questions of civil rights.

Between 1942 and 1964, over four million Mexicans received permission to work in the

United States on short-term labor contracts. Credited by some as saving American agriculture and by others as being exploitative, the bracero program without question affected the business of farming, immigration patterns, organized labor, and even United States' and Mexican culture. The archive and exhibit explore its impact on both sides of the border -- providing a window into the history of work and immigration, transnational relations, agricultural business practices, and the lived experiences of braceros, as well as those of their wives, families, and communities.

The online exhibit was designed to allow web visitors to contribute their own stories, photos, and documents. One question faced by the collaborators was: if we build it, will they come? To date, with over 700 oral histories and hundreds of original photos and documents scanned, the project has surfaced much new information about an important but little known chapter of Mexican and US history. One unexpected benefit of the project has been the opportunity to better connect universities with working class Latino communities through the oral history process. Perhaps its greatest achievement is the honor and respect it has brought to Latinos by restoring their role in the national historical narrative.

About the presenter: Peter Liebhold is the Chair of the Division of Work and Industry at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. Throughout his professional life Peter has been involved with industrial history and the effort to preserve the working history of the nation. In 1981 he helped open the Baltimore Museum of Industry in a renovated cannery building on the city's historic waterfront. At the Smithsonian since 1985 he has curated numerous exhibitions including: *Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program 1942-1964*; *Treasures of American History*; *Barriers to Bridges: Asian American Immigration after Exclusion*; *America on the Move*; *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: A History of American Sweatshops, 1820 - Present*; *Images of Steel, 1860 - 1994*; and *Who's In Charge: Workers and Managers in the United States*. Projects in development include: a 8,000 sq ft permanent exhibition *American Enterprise* and a small food exhibition *Sweet and Sour*. He has published in *Technology and Culture*, *Invention and Technology*, and *The Public Historian* (where his article *Experiences from the Front Line* won the G. Wesley Johnson Prize). His research interests include: culture of work, management practice, manufacturing technology, agricultural history, methods and motivations of technological change, work imagery, immigration and migration.

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project

Densho (<http://www.densho.org>) is a multimedia website devoted to the history of Japanese Americans with a particular focus on their incarceration during World War II. The heart of Densho consists of over 500 video-recorded oral histories, collected over the past 15 years, that reveal personal stories from different perspectives. The impact and reduced cost of digital video encouraged several organizations and individuals to collaborate with Densho to tackle the urgent need of documenting and sharing over the Internet this mass violation of civil liberties. The video-recorded interviews are transcribed, indexed by topic, and viewable from Densho's website. In the presentation, Ikeda will talk about the desire and challenge of using digital technology to have this information seen and used by as many people as possible. He will also discuss how they went about obtaining oral histories. Whose stories are included? Whose are left out? How did the interviewers get subjects to talk about a painful moment in history, one that is notoriously circumscribed by silence?

In addition Densho complements its digital oral histories with topical articles, and other primary sources like historic photos and documents, period newspaper articles, and newsreel footage. Their goal is to provide a rich environment to not only learn about what happened to

Japanese Americans during World War II, but to also critically analyze the same primary source materials that scholars used to write their books and papers, or filmmakers used to create a documentary.

About the presenter: Thomas Kevin Ikeda is the Founding Executive Director (1996-present) of Densho: Japanese American Legacy Project, based in Seattle, WA. Ikeda established Densho to develop educational strategies that foster critical thinking and ethical, compassionate action through the documentation of Japanese American history employing rigorous historical methodology and state-of-the-art computer technology. Ikeda has also collaborated with other communities to help document their own, often silenced histories to help make history more inclusive. Before Densho, Ikeda worked at Microsoft and managed the development of Microsoft Bookshelf, an award-winning, best-selling multimedia reference CD-ROM. He received his BA, BSChE and MBA from the University of Washington. Ikeda has received numerous awards is currently a board member of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

March On Milwaukee Civil Rights History Project:

Launched on September 16, 2010, the MOMCRHP (<http://marchonmilwaukee.uwm.edu>) is a digital archive of primary sources and contextual materials related to 1960s Milwaukee civil rights history. The digital resource features over 800 multi-format, fully searchable items, including 2,000 pages of text documents, 19 oral histories, 20 photographs, and 24 video clips. The project is a result of a collaboration between faculty, students, archivists, librarians and community partners.

The presentation will address questions of conflict that arise when presenting relatively recent, local history. Who owns this story? Can efforts at digital accessibility come across as taking the story out of the community's hands? How does one negotiate the desires of local community members and activists along with students and educators? What does it mean to tell local stories of civil rights activism when the problems of racial inequality that are documented in these primary sources and that were addressed through protests, proposed legislation, and court cases have not disappeared?

About the presenters: Jasmine Alinder is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she co-coordinates their program in Public History. Alinder initiated and has managed the MOMCRHP since the spring of 2009 and brought together a project team of 12 students, librarians, and archivists, with our community partner, the Milwaukee Public Library. The project has been funded by three grants (2009-2011 Community/University Partnership grants and a 2009 Undergraduate Research Experience Grant). The second phase of the project will focus on promotion, outreach, engagement and curriculum development. In 2009 Alinder published *Moving Images: Photography and the Japanese American Incarceration* with the University of Illinois Press. She also received a Ryskamp fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies, and is working on a new project about the censorship of photographs during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Clayborn Benson is the founding director of the [Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum](#), which began in 1987 and has a permanent location at 2620 West Center Street in Milwaukee. The WBHS/M features public history programs and themed exhibits on "Work'n In The Promised Land: The African American Labor Experience in Wisconsin," "African American Firefighters: Our Brothers Under Fire," and "The NAACP Civil Rights Tribute Bus Exhibit."

From 1968 to 2007, Clayborn Benson recorded much of the Milwaukee's recent history as a videographer for WTMJ, the local NBC television news affiliate.

On the Line: a web-book on schooling, housing, and civil rights

This presentation will focus on the question, “who owns oral history?” with examples drawn from the creation of a public history web-book, *On the Line: How Schooling, Housing, and Civil Rights Shaped Hartford and its Suburbs* (<http://OnTheLine.trincoll.edu>), as it is being created by Trinity College professor Jack Dougherty and colleagues. Through interpretive text and interactive maps and oral history interviews, this web-book tells the story of how real estate firms maintained the color line, mortgage lenders engaged in red-lining, families sought homes on the more desirable side of school attendance lines, and activists fought to cross, redraw, or erase these lines. While recording oral histories for this project, we stopped using conventional consent forms (which asked participants to “sign over” all rights to their interviews) and began using Creative Commons licensing (which preserves copyright for the participant, but allows the public to freely access and share the interview and transcript on the web, with restrictions against commercial use if desired). In particular, we recount the story of our oral history interview with Hartford school integration activist Elizabeth Horton Sheff, who took our Creative Commons consent form one step further by renegotiating its terms, just before we began our video recording, to guarantee additional rights for how her story would be shared in total, without editing, on the web.

About the presenters: [Jack Dougherty](#) is an associate Professor in the Educational Studies Program at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, where he works with students and community partners on the Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Project to draw historical and policy connections on the changing relationship between education and housing in metropolitan America. Jack received his undergraduate degree in philosophy from Swarthmore College, taught high school social studies in Newark, New Jersey, then earned his Ph.D. in Educational Policy Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His first book, *More Than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee* (UNC Press, 2004), explores how three generations of civil rights activism changed from the 1930s to the 1990s in the urban North. He is currently working on two books designed for primary distribution on the public web: *On the Line: How Schooling, Housing, and Civil Rights Shaped Hartford and its Suburbs*, and *Writing History in the Digital Age*, co-edited with Kristen Nawrotzki, under contract with the University of Michigan Press.

Candace Simpson will receive her BA in May 2012 from the interdisciplinary Educational Studies Program at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. She received funding from the Trinity Faculty Research Committee to conduct a research project, titled “Interpreting Civil Rights History from Different Sides of the Line,” as part of the On The Line digital history project with Professor Jack Dougherty. Her major concentration, Youth Empowerment and Achievement in Urban Settings, was inspired by her experience with the Children’s Defense Fund Freedom Schools program. Candace’s academic focus on public history and civil rights also draws upon her experiences as a Multicultural Recruitment intern, PRIDE leader, Umoja House cultural coordinator, and Posse Scholar at Trinity College.

Omeka Overview: Collecting Stories with Local Communities

Session's Google Doc: http://bit.ly/Omeka_NCPH-OAH2012

The Center for History and New Media at George Mason University (CHNM) developed Omeka, a next-generation Web publishing tool that enhances the ability of any organization to showcase archival collections online. Featured sites include Bracero History Archive (<http://braceroarchive.org>), Hurricane Digital Memory Bank (<http://hurricanearchive.org>), and History of Making 1989 (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989>).

With Omeka plug-ins, visitors to your website also may contribute their own content (such as photos, documents, and oral interviews) and share their voices as part of the historical record. Both the freely-downloadable Omeka tool and its online service (Omeka.net) are standards-based with regard to object metadata (Dublin Core) and design interface (W3C), and are extensible and interoperable with other web tools and content management systems.

If you wish to work in your own Omeka site during the workshop, you may sign up for a free basic plan using the Omeka.net hosted service: <http://omeka.net/signup> For others, there will be a “playdate” site available for all participants to log into during the workshop.

In this workshop for OAH/NCPH members, we will:

- 1) Introduce Omeka and provide a brief background on developing the software, and show examples of different types of websites created with Omeka
- 2) Demonstrate Omeka's basic functionality, including adding items and building a small online exhibit.
- 3) Discuss possibilities for customizing Omeka to suit institutional needs and collecting stories with local communities

About the presenter: Sheila Brennan is the Associate Director of the Public Projects division at the Center for History and New Media and Assistant Research Professor at George Mason University. She earned her Ph.D. in U.S. history at Mason in 2010, and her dissertation, *Stamping American Memory: Stamp Collecting in the U.S. 1880s-1930s* recently won the Moroney Prize for Scholarship in Postal History. Brennan earned her Master of Arts from the University of Notre Dame and Bachelor of Arts from Bates College, both in American Studies. At CHNM, Brennan manages many digital projects and is the end user coordinator for the Omeka digital publishing platform.

On The Line

how schooling, housing, and civil rights shaped Hartford and its suburbs

a public history web-book by
Jack Dougherty & colleagues
Fall 2011 preview edition

Oral history interviews

– Who Owns Oral History? A Creative Commons Solution

by Jack Dougherty and Candace Simpson (updated April 23, 2012)

Who “owns” oral history? When an oral history participant shares her story in response to questions posed by an interviewer, and the recording and transcript are deposited in an archive, who holds the rights to these historical source materials? Who decides whether or not they may be shared with the public, quoted in a publication, or uploaded to the web? Who decides whether someone has the right to earn money from including an interview in a commercially distributed book, video, or website? Furthermore, does [Creative Commons](#), a licensing tool developed by the open access movement to protect copyright while increasing public distribution, offer better solutions to these questions than existing oral history protocols?

Historians have begun to ask these and related questions raised by the rapid changes brought on over the past two decades, as discussed in a broader volume, [Writing History in the Digital Age](#).¹ Our thinking about copyright and Creative Commons emerged from our work in conducting oral history interviews in the metropolitan Hartford, Connecticut region for the Cities Suburbs and Schools research project at Trinity College, and the public history web-book, [On the Line: How Schooling Housing, and Civil Rights Shaped Hartford and its Suburbs](#).² Through interpretive text blended with interactive maps and oral interviews, this web-book tells the story of how real estate firms maintained the color line, mortgage lenders engaged in red-lining, families sought homes on the more desirable side of school attendance lines, and activists fought to cross, redraw, or erase these lines. Specifically, this essay was initially presented as part of a broader discussion at the [“Whose Civil Rights Stories on the Web?”](#) roundtable at the 2012 joint meeting of the Organization of American Historians/National Council on Public History.³

Jack: In the mid-1990s, I began to conduct oral history interviews for my dissertation research on African-American school reform activists in Milwaukee.⁴ I recorded interviews, followed accepted procedures for consent forms and institutional review, and made good on my promise to transcribe and return a free copy of the tape and transcript to each of the sixty participants who kindly shared their history. But the “best practices” in the field left me feeling unsatisfied. Originally, I had been drawn toward oral history and public history as means of community empowerment on civil rights history, but the standard guidelines required me to ask people who freely offered their stories to sign away some of their rights.

My reference guide for consent forms was the Oral History Association’s pamphlet, John Neuenschwander’s *Oral History and the Law*.⁵ This booklet focused on several legal issues, the most relevant of which was the

question of ownership. In my basic understanding of the law, the oral history narrator owned the copyright to the unpublished interview, and since I desired to freely quote from the transcript for my future book, my consent form had to include a statement to transfer copyright. As Neuenschwander explained, "The vast majority of oral historians and programs at some point secure the transfer of all of the interviewee's copyright interests by means of a legal-release agreement" (p. 18), and offered sample language in the appendix. Even today, the Oral History Association's 2009 statement on "[Principles and Best Practices](#)" fully expects oral history participants to sign over their rights as part of the standard procedure for conducting interviews: "The interviewer should secure a release form, by which the narrator transfers his or her rights to the interview to the repository or designated body, signed after each recording session or at the end of the last interview with the narrator." [6](#)

Here was the ugly irony: as a white scholar of the civil rights movement, my consent form required African Americans to "sign over" rights to their oral history interview. Under the standard of that time, the best arrangement I could negotiate was a two-step process, involving two different repositories. First, I asked oral history participants to transfer their copyrights directly to me, which in turn, I donated with the tapes and transcripts to two institutions: the Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum (a local public history organization that was best positioned to share these stories with the African-American community) and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library archives (a better-funded, predominantly white institution that was better equipped to share this history more widely on the emerging Internet). I intentionally partnered with both repositories, and kept my promise to give tapes and transcripts back to all parties, to counter prior generations of white academics and journalists who had come into Milwaukee's black community to "scoop" up stories, while leaving nothing behind. The 1995 version of my oral history consent form ([download full PDF](#)) included this key language, paraphrased from Neuenschwander's pamphlet:

I agree to be interviewed and tape recorded by Jack Dougherty, as part of his dissertation research on the recent history of African-American education in Milwaukee. At the end of the research project, the original tapes and edited transcripts will be donated to the Milwaukee Urban Archives at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum. These materials will be identified by my name and made available to the public for scholarly and educational purposes, unless exceptions are listed below. . . .

I also grant to Jack Dougherty any title to copyright, property right, or literary rights in the recording(s) and their use in publication, as well as to any reproductions, transcripts, indexes, or finding aids produced from the recording(s).

My participation in this project is entirely voluntary, and I may withdraw at any time prior to its conclusion and the donation of the materials to the Archives.

[Check here to receive a free copy of the tape](#)

[Check here to receive a free copy of any transcriptions \(whole or partial\) for the opportunity to proofread or](#)

clarify your spoken words

Yet I was never pleased with the copyright transfer language in my consent form, which I viewed as a necessary evil to preserve oral histories and complete my dissertation and eventual book. Understandably, many Black Milwaukeeans were skeptical or hesitant when I tried to explain this arrangement. A few refused to be interviewed on these terms, or would not sign the document. Some activists challenged me to think more deeply about who benefitted from this contract: if they freely shared their civil rights stories, would I profit as a professional historian? Eventually, over sixty oral history participants did agree to sign, for which I was grateful. One motivation seemed to be that individuals saw value in the free copy of the interview and transcript each received as a contribution to their family history. Another reason was the public good of sharing civil rights stories with both partner organizations, which required the transfer of all legal rights to be deposited, as we believed at that time. The process expanded my own thinking about oral history and the public good, and upon receiving an academic book contract, I returned my share of royalties (and later, prize money and speaking fees) back to the Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum. Given my understanding of oral history and copyright law at that time, this was the best that I could do. But it still left a bad taste, and a strong desire for a different type of consent form.

Candace: When I began working with the *On The Line* public history web-book project in the summer of 2011, one of my tasks was to conduct oral history interviews with Hartford civil rights activists. At this point, our research team had stopped using conventional consent forms (which asked participants to “sign over” all rights to their interviews) and began using a new form that Jack developed with [Creative Commons](#) language. Basically, Creative Commons is a standardized license that maintains the original copyright for the person who created a work, while allowing it to be shared more widely with the public, with certain restrictions if desired. Initially released in 2002 with support from the Center for the Public Domain, there are now [six types of Creative Commons licenses](#):

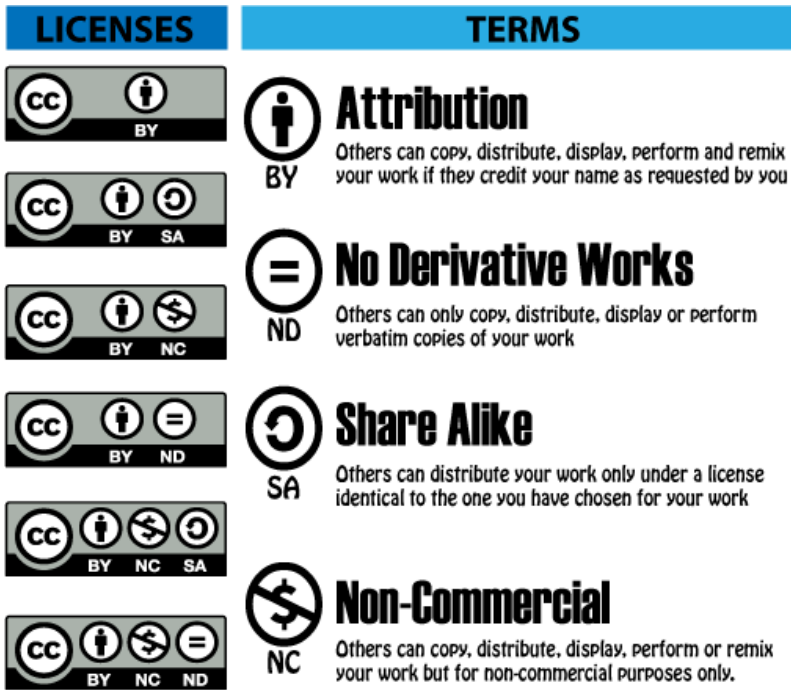


Image source: <http://education-copyright.org/creative-commons/>

Our current oral history consent form ([download full PDF](#)) uses the By Attribution – NonCommercial – Share Alike license, with this key language:

I voluntarily agree to be interviewed for this historical study . . .

I understand that my interview (and other items above) may be distributed to the public for educational purposes, including formats such as print, public programming, and the Internet.

Also, I agree to freely share my interview (and other items above) under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License. This means that I retain the copyright, but that the public may freely copy, modify, and share these items for non-commercial purposes under the same terms, if they include the original source information.

In return, the interviewer promises to send one free copy of the interview recording, transcript, and related items to my address above.

We prefer the Creative Commons (CC) consent form because it clearly keeps the copyright in the hands of the oral history interview participant, but allows us to freely share the recording and transcript on our open-access public history website and library repository, where individuals and organizations may copy and circulate it, with credit to the original source. For our oral history consent form, we added a NonCommercial restriction, to ensure participants that no one can profit by selling their interviews. As the Creative Commons “[Frequently Asked Questions](#)” section clarifies, once a CC license is applied to a work, it cannot be *revoked*, but all CC licenses are *non-exclusive*, meaning that the holder of the copyright (in this case, the interview participant) may

grant additional licenses to other parties (such as a for-profit book or movie, if desired). Furthermore, CC licenses do not interfere with “fair use” provisions of existing copyright law, and are increasingly used by leading knowledge-based institutions such as the the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) OpenCourseWare project and the Public Library of Science (PLOS). Overall, this combination of intellectual property tools — traditional copyright with Creative Commons — fits better with our primary goal of historical preservation and public education than does traditional copyright alone.

In Hartford, a specific oral history interview we conducted with school integration activist Elizabeth Horton Sheff deserves mention, because she took our Creative Commons consent form one step further by renegotiating its terms, just before we began our video recording. Sheff agreed with our goal of preserving her oral history for the public good, but her primary concern was to avoid being quoted out of context, as she had experienced with journalists in the past. She wanted her oral history interview to be made available in its totality on the web, but not to allow others to create a modified or excerpted version. Fortunately, Sheff was familiar with Creative Commons because her son is in the independent music business. She asked for a “no derivatives” restriction, and on the spot, we modified the consent form license to the ByAttribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives CC license. As a result, [her video recorded interview and transcript](#) both appear in the Trinity College library digital repository, but to respect her restriction, we blocked the ability of users to download their own copy of the video (to make it harder to create an edited version).⁷ Still, anyone can move the video time slider on their web browser to watch only a certain portion if desired (such as minutes 28 to 32). Furthermore, anyone may download the transcript of the interview, and quote from the text under “fair use” guidelines.



[Click to view Elizabeth Horton Sheff oral history video interview and transcript in new tab.](#)

We do not contend that Creative Commons has resolved all of our questions about who “owns” oral history, nor do we claim expertise in intellectual property law. But as oral historians seeking alternatives, we believe that this combination — traditional copyright with Creative Commons licensing — fulfills our dual needs to maintain the rights of individual participants while sharing history with the public.

We invite you to write questions, comments, or offer other examples of oral history projects using Creative Commons licensing.

Notes:

1. Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki, eds. *Writing History in the Digital Age*. Under contract with the University of Michigan Press. Trinity College (CT) web-book edition, Spring 2012, <http://WritingHistory.trincoll.edu>. ↵
2. Jack Dougherty and colleagues, *On The Line: How Schooling, Housing, and Civil Rights Shaped Hartford and its Suburbs*. Web-book preview edition. Hartford, CT: Trinity College, Fall 2011, <http://OnTheLine.trincoll.edu>. ↵
3. “Whose Civil Rights Stories on the Web?” roundtable session at Organization of American Historians/National Council on Public History joint meeting, Milwaukee, WI, April 20, 2012, <http://bit.ly/WhoseCivilRights>. ↵
4. Jack Dougherty, *More Than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004). See author’s website links, http://caribou.cc.trincoll.edu/depts_educ/struggle/, and “More Than One Struggle Oral History Project Records,” University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee archives, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/wiarchives.uw-mil-uwmmsso217>. Some interviews have been digitized and included in the March on Milwaukee Civil Rights History Project website, <http://www4.uwm.edu/libraries/digilib/march/index.cfm>. ↵
5. John Neuenschwander, *Oral History and the Law, revised edition*. (Oral History Association Pamphlet series no. 1, originally published 1985, revised 1993). A 3rd edition was published in 2009 and continues to be distributed as an OHA publication. ↵
6. Oral History Association, “Principles and Best Practices”, 2009, <http://www.oralhistory.org/do-oral-history/principles-and-practices/>. ↵
7. Elizabeth Horton Sheff, Oral history interview on Sheff v. O’Neill (with video) by Candace Simpson for the Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Project, July 28, 2011. Available from the Trinity College Digital Repository, Hartford Connecticut, http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cssp_ohistory/16. ↵

2 Responses to *Who Owns Oral History? A Creative Commons Solution*

Pat McNees says:

April 23, 2012 at 2:46 pm

I am so happy to see this article. I have always been bothered by oral history projects that required the people being interviewed to give away the rights to their own words. This allows the oral history collections to do their valuable work (of curating the interviews of many), gives the interviewees a copy of their interview, and lets them also exploit whatever opportunities they have to share their story in other venues. Thanks for the excellent explanation.

- Pat McNees (member, Association of Personal Historians)

[Reply](#)

Dan Kerr says:

May 16, 2012 at 5:25 pm

Jack and Candace,

Thanks for doing this great work. We should work on adjusting the best practice statement for OHA so that CC is recognized as an alternative. I have been using public domain, but I have been gravitating to the CC licenses over the last year. Your form is very helpful and answers a key question I've had about how one would translate CC to an oral history interview setting with a hard copy form.

I have a couple of questions. Would the share alike provision prohibit people from using extended portions of the interviews in copyrighted books published by academic presses? Also, as I understand it, using the non-commercial provision would prevent anyone from sharing the video on a websites that have advertising in the margins, like Facebook or Twitter, even though the person sharing the content may not be the one benefiting from the advertising.

[Reply](#)

On The Line

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