Middletown: An Oral History Project for the Digital Age

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Oral History Association
Annual Meeting
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Middletown Digital Oral History Collection

- Library Services and Technology Act Grant funded project
- Part of the Ball State University Libraries Digital Media Repository
In the 1920s, Robert and Helen Lynd conducted a sociological study of Muncie, Indiana, that was published in 1929 as *Middletown: A Study in American Culture.*

The Lynds wrote that "the aim of the field of investigation recorded in the following pages was to study the interwoven trends that are the life of a small American city." They examined the following aspects:

- **Education**
- **Work**
- **Family**
- **Religion**
- **Politics**
- **Recreation**
- **Civic Duties**

This study provided valuable insights into the social dynamics of Muncie during the early 20th century.
Black Muncie Oral History Collection, 1971-1978
Black Middletown Collection, 1981
Other Side of Middletown Collection, 2003
Middletown Jewish Oral History Project I Collection, 1978-1979
Middletown Jewish Oral History Project II Collection, 2002-2003
Muncie Catholic Churches Oral History Collection, 2006
Muncie Labor Oral History Project Collection, 2007
Muncie Economic Development Oral History Collection, coming in 2008
Lucille Williams
Black Muncie Oral History Collection
http://libx.bsu.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/MidOrHis&CISOPT=58
Oral Histories

Scope

This project is LSTA grant funded and aimed at digitizing and transcribing the Middletown Digital Oral History Collection. It is presented online through the Digital Media Repository here: http://libx.bsu.edu/MDHist/mdhist.php. It consists of the following subcollections:

- Black Muncie History Project - 23 interviews
- Black Middletown - 35 interviews
- Other Side of Middletown - 66 interviews
- Middletown Jewish Oral History Project I - 21 interviews
- Middletown Jewish Oral History Project II - 24 interviews
- Muncie Catholic Churches Oral History Project - 30 interviews
  1. St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Oral History Project
  2. St. Lawrence Catholic Church Oral History Project
  3. St. Mary Catholic Church Oral History Project

Transcription

We are following the Baylor University Institute for Oral History Style Guide for guidance in transcribing our oral histories.

Supplemental Transcription Information

For most situations the Baylor Style Guide will suffice as our authoritative guide; however, we have decided to make a few minor changes and additions to facilitate our project and to clarify some unaddressed finer points.

Please alert the rest of the project’s staff to any major changes.

Abbreviating Titles: If written in conjunction with any part of the person’s name (e.g. first name, initials, or surname) use an abbreviated title.
Middletown Digital Oral History Collections

The Middletown Digital Oral History Collection consists of audio and accompanying transcriptions for oral history interviews conducted with African American, Jewish and Catholic communities of Muncie, Indiana and local labor union leaders. This original project was funded by a Library Services and Technology Act grant for 2006-2007. The grant project included collaboration between Ball State University Libraries, the Center for Middletown Studies, St. Francis of Assissi Catholic Church, St. Lawrence Catholic Church, and St. Mary Catholic Church.

In addition to the value of these “personal narratives” illuminating lives of Indiana citizens, the oral history collections selected for this digital collection provide research material on populations that were neglected in the seminal studies published by sociologists Robert and Helen Lynd in the 1920s using Muncie as Middletown, a representative American community.

Added: 02/26/2007

204 objects total
Transcripts and metadata make oral histories searchable

Empower your audience to do more than just browse

Opening resources to wider audience

- OAI
- Google
Searchability: Transcripts

Goodall, Hurley and Fredline 02-11-2003 (Audio Interview and Transcript)

Are you having a problem playing the media above? Click here to play it in an external player

Open PDF in new window | Go to PDF description

Archives and Special Collections
University Libraries

Other Side of Middletown
M03L09-L02/11
Project Identification Number: Getting a Living - M03L09-L02/11
Interviewers: Anne Kramer, Ashley Moore, with Michelle Anderson
Interviewers: Hurley Goodall and Fredline Goodall
Date of Interview: 2/11/2003

Kramer: We are the business group and so we want to talk to you about \"Making a Living\". So after that, do you have any comments to start with?

H. Goodall: Well, I guess after you said something to me, you know? I really hadn't thought about it that much, but how much the business community has changed, as far as the African American community here in Memphis. I really didn't give that much thought to it, but you see, traditionally for years, there was a tavern in this area of the city and one of the other large black areas in industry. There are also restaurants and things like that, you know. McDonald's and stuff, same thing with them—franchisees! — a lot of good restaurants and things, you know the
Searchability: Metadata

- Works in conjunction with transcripts
- Provides structured description
- Helps users find, identify, select, and obtain digital assets
Interoperability of Technologies

Archives and Special Collections
University Libraries

Other Side of Middletown
MSS 254 / R 254
Project Identification Number: Getting a Living - M05GL09-102/11
Interviewers: Annet Kremser, Ashley Moore, with Michelle Anderson
Interviewer: Hurley Goodall and Fredine Goodall
Date of Interview: 2/11/2003

Kremser: We are the business group and so we want to tell you about "Making a Living." So after that, do you have any comments to start with?

H. Goodall: Well, I guess after you said something to me, you know? I really hadn't thought about it that much, but it seems to me the business community has changed. As far as the African American community here is concerned, it's not the same as it was 10 years ago. There was a tavern in this area of the city and one of the other large black owned businesses, there are also restaurants and things like that, you know McDonald's and stuff, same thing with them—intelligently—a lot of good restaurants and things, you know the
Interoperability of Technologies: OCR and PDFS

Wrights: about Gene Kittelman.

Goodall: Is that who you're trying to think of?

Wrights: It was.

Goodall: Oh, uh-huh.

Wrights: Oh, I'm awful forgetful.

White: Do you remember how you got the job working for them?

Wrights: Well, I was working on Jackson Street for an old lady, school teacher, and this woman came past there--rich people, but I can't call her--she came past there and asked who I am and she says, says, "Oh, Ida Wright. She's a wonderful worker." I can't recall her name. And she says, "Why don't you work for me?"

So she come down by our house, we were living over on 8th Street. She come down there one day and asked if I would work for her and I worked for her for fourteen years. Worked for twenty-two years. And the last place I worked was for Mrs., her husband just died.

Goodall: How did you get back and forth out there? Just ride the streetcar or walk--

Wrights: the streetcar over there went way on. See, that's when I cross my feet standing along waiting on the streetcar.

Goodall: How many hours did you usually have to work at that time?

Wrights: I'd go to work at five, about 4:30.

Goodall: In the morning?

Muncie Catholic Churches Oral History Project
St. Mary Catholic Church Oral History Project
R.S.
Interviewer: Barbara Mixell
Interviewee: Anne May
Date: November 7, 2006

Mixell: Today is November 7, 2006. I'm interviewing Anne May in the archives room at St. Mary Parish, Muncie, Indiana.

May: Okay. The first question. If you were not born in Muncie, what are your impressions of the community, then and now? No, I was not born in Muncie. My husband and I moved to Muncie in October of 1997. So, we've been here nine years. My impression of Muncie, when we first moved here was, it's a college town that when the students are here and school is in session, there seems to be a lot going on. But when the students are gone for the summer, it seems to be a little more quiet around Muncie. You definitely notice the difference in the restaurants and the shopping centers and different things.

[1:00]

So, that was kind of our impression of the community. We very much liked it, liked the community, we still do. It's about the same size as the community that I grew up in, and so it was a familiar size for us. Our life as a Catholic before we came to Muncie. I was born and raised Catholic. I've been Catholic my whole life. I went to Catholic elementary school, Catholic high school, Catholic college. So, my life as a Catholic—it was very strong when I was in college. My husband and I met in college and we always went to church together at a very wonderful experience when we were in college. So, when we came to Muncie we were blessed to continue that. We had our child at the time. And so we were looking
Interoperability of Technologies: Simultaneous Access

Archives and Special Collections
University Libraries

Other Side of Middletown
MS 254 / R 254
Project Interview Identification Number: Training the Young - MINTY10-02/19
Interviewer: Carla Burks and Carrie Kessel
Interviewee: Julius Anderson
Date of Interview: 2/19/2003

Anderson: A very slippery day out there. I kind of feel like we’re going some places now. Did you sand yesterday?
Kessel: Um-fm.
Anderson: Who sanded me?
Burks: I sanded you.
Anderson: Did I sand you back?
Burks: Yes.
Anderson: Okay. I don’t know this is what that is—okay, all right, all right. You look like you’re blazing today. (laughs)
Burks: I didn’t feel like doing my hair.
Anderson: Okay. Bad hair day today, huh?
Customization: Splash Pages

Middletown Digital Oral History Collections

Digital Media Repository

John B. Straw
Project Coordinator
Office: 765-283-3078
(M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm)
After Hours: 765-285-5143

Middletown Digital Oral History Collections

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Added: 02/26/2007

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Integration with Digital Libraries: Indiana Memory

Indiana Memory, the Indiana digital library, is a collaboration of Indiana libraries, museums, archives, and related cultural organizations to enable access to Indiana's unique cultural and historical heritage through a variety of digital formats and free distribution over the Internet. Indiana Memory seeks to support and enhance education and scholarship for all Hoosier for increased understanding of Indiana's past and its role in preparing for Indiana's future.

Indiana's Road to Statehood
The Indiana Supreme Court and the Indiana Historical Bureau are collaborating on a major project to gather in one place copies of original documents and research materials relating to Indiana's constitutional history.

A Program of the Indiana State Library
More Information

Digital Media Repository
  - http://libx.bsu.edu

This presentation is available online in BSU Cardinal Scholar
  - http://cardinalscholar.bsu.edu/

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