

Texas Communities Oral History Project

HIST 30813 / HNRS 20503-670 – Fall 2015 - MW, 2:00-3:20pm, BEA 322 – CSV, SSC

Course Description

This service-learning field research course introduces students to community-based research and oral history theory and methodology, including interviewing techniques and debates within the discipline. Students will conduct extensive independent research outside the comfortable confines of the university. In cooperation with community partners, students will hit the pavement to design and complete a collaborative research project in the Fort Worth area on a subject of their own choosing (with the professor's approval and guidance). Specific topics may address issues related to race and ethnicity, civil rights, immigration, labor and the working class, women and gender studies, sexuality, urban space, environmental justice, community activism, electoral politics, community art, or other pressing social issues. Working in small groups, students will investigate their subjects in the library and online, spend six weeks in the field conducting oral history interviews and ethnographic research, return to campus to compile and interpret the results, and then synthesize their findings by creating a multimedia website. Finally, they will present their websites and summarize their conclusions at a community dinner at which the interviewees will be our honored guests. For more information, see the video and details at <http://professormax.org/oh/tx-cohp/>.

The course websites (or documentaries) that students create will become part of the larger *Texas Communities Oral History Project*, and the interviews will be donated and preserved in the TCU Library Special Collections and UNT's *Portal to Texas History*. Some interviews may also be included on the *Civil Rights in Black and Brown* website (<http://crbb.tcu.edu/>). Students must follow all professional guidelines for oral history research, especially following the approved Institutional Review Board including oral consent and written interview agreements. The course fulfills upper-division credit for History and may also apply to the Urban Studies, Latina/o Studies, or Women and Gender Studies minors. Students may also take it as an Honors cultural visions seminar on Cultural Contact Zones (GA & HUM core).

Instructor Information

Dr. Max Krochmal, Department of History

Office Location & Hours: Reed Hall 104 – M, 3:30-4:30pm; T-W, 10:00-11:00am

Office Phone: 817-257-7315

Cell Phone / Texts: 919-564-9129

E-mail: m.krochmal@tcu.edu

Website / Blog: professormax.org/

Twitter: [@professormaxtcu](https://twitter.com/professormaxtcu) (follow me!) / class hashtag: #TCUOralHistory

Learning Objectives & Student Action Steps:

Students will demonstrate a capacity for informed participation in civic discourse and decision-making by examining and articulating the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups in various political/social contexts. (CSV)

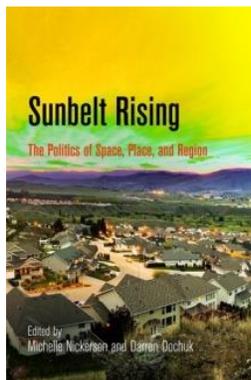
Students will demonstrate knowledge of and an ability to analyze and evaluate the fundamental social processes that characterize human experience, using social science methodology to present appropriate evidence-based conclusions about social processes and human interaction. (SSC)

Students will master the practice of oral history research, including its basic methods, theoretical and ethical considerations, and guidelines of professional conduct—with an emphasis on navigating issues of cultural differences and ethics.

Students will successfully conduct, analyze, interpret, and archive original interviews and ethnographic fieldwork & use the findings to create their own narrative histories and social scientific findings.

Required Books

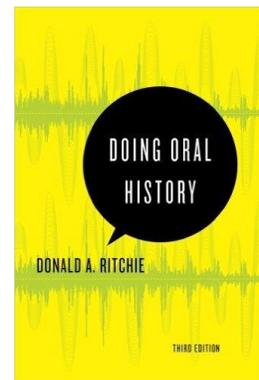
All of the texts may be purchased at the TCU Bookstore and copies of each are available on reserve at the library. Each of the following texts is required:



Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuk, *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Space, Place, and Region* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011). ISBN 978-0812223002.

Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide, Third Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). ISBN 978-0199329335.

Students will also need to buy or borrow books related to their group research projects.



Assignments & Grading

My general philosophy is that everyone can and should get an “A.” Grades should reflect exertion of constant effort and evidence of learning, not capacity for sliding by and mastery of rote memorization. Field research and new media writing entail particularly long, frustrating processes, so grades will be based on the evolution of your project, not simply the final product.

Attendance (pass-penalty-fail)

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. The university attendance policy states (Faculty / Staff Handbook, p. 51, my emphasis):

1. *“Regular and punctual class attendance is essential, and no assigned work is summarily excused because of absence, no matter what the cause. Records of class attendance are the responsibility of the faculty, and every course’s syllabus should clearly state the instructor’s policy on class attendance and how attendance affects a student’s final evaluation in the course. Students who miss an instructional experience are expected to meet with faculty to discuss their absence as soon as possible.”*
2. *“When a student is absent to represent the University (as in athletics, chorus, band, national or state meetings of organizations represented at TCU), then an Official University Absence may be granted...”*
3. *“When a student misses class for any reason other than an Official University Absence, the student is expected to follow the instructor’s policy as stated in the course syllabus. The student should contact”*

*his/her instructor as soon as possible after he/she knows the absence will occur or has occurred. If the cause of the absence is a **serious illness, catastrophic accident, or family emergency**, each instructor should assist the student to make up any missed work. Time lost through such absences should not prejudice class standing...*

4. *"If the cause of the absence is less compelling (choosing to miss class, oversleeping), instructors may or may not permit the student to make up missed work, and may or may not assess a penalty for class absence."*

Based on these university rules, the attendance policy for this class is as follows:

You are required to document through the Campus Life Office any cases that you consider "serious" under paragraph 3 above, and it is expected that absences that fall into this category will be limited. A routine urgent care trip to the health center does not qualify as "serious."

All other absences will be considered "less compelling" under paragraph 4 above.

Arriving late to class habitually or missing a substantial portion of a single class will be counted as up to one-half (1/2) of an absence.

You may miss three classes without penalty. Save this for less serious cases like a routine illness, broken down car, etc. Except for those covered by paragraphs 2 or 3 above, each absence beyond three (3.00) will result in a 5% reduction of your final grade. This is in addition to your lost participation points.

In all cases, it is my expectation that you let me know ASAP if you know you are going to be absent and that you communicate with me immediately upon your return if you wish to catch up on missed work. YOU must take the initiative to avoid penalty.

Reading Journal & Quizzes (15%, including Journal and Quizzes below)

The written word is the main currency of historical knowledge. Expect to read two articles or book chapters every night during the first six weeks of class. Readings must be completed prior to the date that they appear on the syllabus.

Journal

Before each class, you are required to write a one paragraph response to each of the daily readings. You must post your paragraph on the Journal on eCollege by 11:59PM the evening before each class. Each response should run one to two paragraphs (per reading) and must include at least one sentence on each of the following elements:

In your own words, paraphrase the main point of each reading

Write down something that surprised you or was especially interesting

Explain why you chose this as your surprising/interesting point

*React to the text and points you've mentioned – how did the readings make you feel?
How does it change what you thought you knew about this part of U.S. history?*

Quizzes

There will be periodic short pop quizzes on the reading at the beginning of selected classes. These will take place randomly based on my whim. You get a 0 if you are late or absent, and quizzes cannot be made up (you may complete an extra journal assignment).

Oral History Research Project (85% - broken down below)

Working in groups of three, you will work throughout the semester on an original oral history project on a topic of your own choosing (related to urban community activism). The project includes the following assignments, due to eCollege at midnight before the listed class date unless otherwise specified:

Practice Interview (1% of final course grade), due Sept. 9

Conducted individually with an elderly friend or family member

Possible Projects (0.5%), due Sept. 14

Mini-Prospectus (2%), due Sept. 21

NIH Protecting Human Subjects Training (0.5%), due Sept. 21, 2:00pm (turn in hard copy)

Full Prospectus & Bibliography (4%), due Sept. 28

¡Viva Mi Historia! Participation & Reflection (5%), Sept. 26 or Oct. 17, due at 2:00pm on Monday after event

Primary Source Analysis (4%), due Oct. 5 on OneDrive

Individual Reflection on Initial Fieldwork (2.5%), due Oct. 7

Secondary Source Annotations #1 (5%), due Oct. 14 on OneDrive

Plan for Remaining Fieldwork and Interviews (0.5%), due Oct. 14 (at end of class) on OneDrive

Six Interviews (minimum; 20%), all due on or before Nov. 16 on OneDrive

Complete, videotaped oral history interviews for your group project. They must include appropriate supporting documentation and meet the following conditions:

- At least one gatekeeper interview, log/transcript, and consent agreement (due Oct. 5)
- At least five non-gatekeeper interviews, with logs/transcripts and consent agreements
- At least two sets of original photographs, with consent agreements and captions

Key Quotations (2.5%), due Nov. 16 on OneDrive

Secondary Source Annotations #2 (5%), due Nov. 23 on OneDrive

Transcript Excerpts (2.5%), due Nov. 23 on OneDrive

Final Presentation (20%), broken down as follows:

- The project website or documentary, including draft sitemap or script, and other component pieces (10%)
- Organizing of, and turn-out for, the final presentation (5%)
- Delivery and execution of the final presentation (5%)

Participation (10%)

You are expected to be an active and engaged participant in all class discussions and to complete informal in-class writing and oral assignments to the best of your ability, every time.

Participation grades often seem arbitrary; to minimize this, I use numerous in-class activities and small, informal writing assignments (including little homework assignments that do not appear elsewhere on the syllabus). I also require you to turn in your notes on selected lectures,

film screenings, small group discussions, and other activities. I will endeavor to give you timely feedback on your standing in this arena. The bulk of this grade will be based on your work on the small group research project throughout the semester, specifically your:

- Weekly updates to the class on your group's progress doing oral history interviews and other research to date
- Small assignments not listed above
- Ability to play well with others in your group
- Effort and dedication to the cause
- Endlessly chasing new leads, asking good questions, and figuring out how to answer them (and not taking shortcuts when the going gets rough)

I will request individual meetings with students who are not meeting these expectations.

Post-Final Reflection (PASS-FAIL / Required to receive a grade in the course!), due on Sunday evening, December 13 by 11:59pm

Grading Scale

I will use the Gradebook feature on Learning Studio (eCollege) to track and share your individual assignment grades. The following scale will be used to compute final grades:

A	>95.00
A-	90.00-94.99
B+	89.00-89.99
B	83.00-88.99
B-	80.00-82.99
C+	79.00-79.99
C	73.00-78.99
C-	70.00-72.99
D+	69.00-69.99
D	63.00-68.99
D-	60.00-63.99
F	<60.00

Recording Equipment

We will record digital video and audio for all interviews using equipment provided by the [Civil Rights in Black and Brown](#) oral history project. Items will be available for check-out and return immediately after class only. You are responsible for maintaining and returning the equipment in working fashion and will not receive a grade for the class if you fail to do this.

Other Rules & Regulations

Electronic Devices

No cell phones, computers, or any other gadgets allowed in class except when I explicitly instruct you to use such devices. If you take out your phone in class, I will take it and hold onto it like your favorite high school teacher. Students with disabilities that require accommodation, please see the statement below. Kindles and other e-book readers in airplane mode may be used with permission of the instructor. Cell phones may be used at appropriate times during in-class work sessions (to set up interviews, etc.).

Disabilities Statement

Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Academic Misconduct

Any act that violates the spirit of the academic conduct policy is considered academic misconduct. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

Cheating: Includes, but is not limited to:

A. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings.

B. Using in any academic exercise or academic setting, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test.

C. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during an academic exercise without the permission of the person in charge of the exercise.

D. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release.

E. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in a manner that leads to misrepresentation of either or both students' work.

Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore.

Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

Abuse of resource materials: Mutilating, destroying, concealing or stealing such materials.

Computer misuse: Unauthorized or illegal use of computer software or hardware through the TCU Computer Center or through any programs; terminals; or freestanding computers owned, leased or operated by TCU or any of its academic units for the purpose of affecting the academic standing of a student.

Fabrication and falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.

Multiple submission: The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.

Complicity in academic misconduct: Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Bearing false witness: Knowingly and falsely accusing another student of academic misconduct.

Course Schedule

NOTE: All readings and assignments are due on the day listed below. Reading journals are due by 11:59pm (midnight) the evening before we will discuss them in class. Please note the appropriate place to upload each assignment. Readings marked “eC” are posted on eCollege. Oral history assignments are underlined.

Weeks 1 & 2 / Welcome & Introductions – Why Oral History

- August 24 / Welcome
 - In-Class Tour of Websites
 - Listen (in-class): *Remembering Jim Crow* audio documentary
 - Practice interview with a partner in-class
- August 26 / What and Why Oral History?
 - *First Reading Journal Due at 11:59pm on **Tuesday** night! Answer all questions for each of the two readings. Use the eCollege **Journal** tool*
 - Linda Shopes, “What is Oral History?” and “How Do Historians Use It?” in *Making Sense of Oral History*, part of *History Matters: the U.S. Survey Course on the Web* <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/oral/>
 - Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, Chapter 1, “An Oral History of our Time”
- August 31 / Oral v. Written Sources
 - *Complete short special assignment in lieu of Reading Journal. Submit it to the eCollege **Dropbox***
 - Robert A. Goldberg, “Racial Change on the Southern Periphery: The Case of San Antonio, Texas, 1960-1965,” *The Journal of Southern History* 49, no. 3 (August 1983): 349-374. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2208100> - skim his footnotes too
 - Rev. Claude W. Black, Jr., interviewed by Max Krochmal, San Antonio, Texas, October 27, 2008 (1hr, 59mins – download at <http://sites.google.com/site/maxkrochmal/filecabinet>)
- September 2 / The Setting
 - Nickerson and Dochuk, eds., *Sunbelt Rising*, Introduction (all read)
 - *Sunbelt Rising*, read one additional chapter in part I, “Constructing Region” (we will divide the chapters in class on 8/31)
 - Reading Journal due on eCollege **Journal**

Week 3 / Getting Out of the Kitchen: A Dry Run

- September 7 – Labor Day – No Class
- September 9
 - *Sunbelt Rising*, part II, “Civil Rights in the Sunbelt” (read one chapter as assigned on 9/2). RJ due
 - Practice Interview / Interview an elderly friend or family member (age 50 or older); Thirty minutes, recorded (use phone and Google Voice or an online conferencing service). Following Portelli’s example, choose three particularly important or revealing quotations from the interview. Transcribe the excerpts and write down why you chose them and what they mean. Each quotation should be at least two sentences long, as should each of your comments. Upload your log and comments to the eCollege **Dropbox**.

Weeks 4 & 5 / Picking a Project and Preparing for Fieldwork

- September 14
 - *Sunbelt Rising*, part III, “Contingent Places” (read one chapter assigned on 9/9)
 - Ritchie, Chapter 2: “Setting Up an Oral History Project” **and** Appendix 1

- [Possible Projects](#) / Write 2-3 sentences on each of two possible but concrete ideas for research projects (include names of possible initial contacts or key organizations working in the field). Post these under Possible Projects on eCollege. Add a new response for each possible project.
- September 16
 - *Sunbelt Rising*, part IV, “The Global Sunbelt” (read one chapter assigned on 9/9)
 - Ritchie, Chapter 3, “Conducting Interviews”
- September 21
 - [Mini-Prospectus](#) / Browse the Possible Projects posts from last week and find a partner. In pairs (of 2 only), do more internet and “phone book” research on one possible projects and write a 2-page [Mini-Prospectus](#) for a small-group oral history project. Include as much detail as possible. *Due on eCollege at 11:59pm on Sunday, September 20 (attach your Word files)*
 - [NIH Protecting Human Research Participants Training Due](#) / print out certificate and bring in hard copy to class
 - [Final Project Groups and Topics will be assigned in class!](#)
 - Discussion of Full Prospectus & Bibliography assignment
- September 23
 - Diane L. Wolf, “Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork” in Wolf, ed., *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 1-19 **eC** (19 dense pages).
 - Ritchie, Chapter 5, “Video Oral History”
- September 26 (Saturday) / [iViva Mi Historia!](#) Day 1, 10:00am to 2:00pm, Hazel Harvey Peace Center for Neighborhoods, 818 Missouri Ave

Week 6 / Leaving Your House (Research Week 1)

- September 28
 - [Full Prospectus & Bibliography](#) / Due online on **eCollege** at 11:59pm on Sunday, Sept. 27
 - [Reflection on Viva Mi Historia due for Day 1 participants by 2:00pm on Dropbox](#)
 - [Audio/Video Recording Training](#) (in-class)
- September 30 / [Presentation by Mary Saffell, Senior Archivist, and Robyn Reid, Social Sciences Research Librarian, TCU Library](#)
 - Alessandro Portelli, “Harlan County, 1964-2009: A Love Story,” “People I Owe,” and “Narrators” in *They Say In Harlan County eC*
 - Ritchie, Chapter 6, “Preserving Oral History in Archives and Libraries”
 - Equipment checkout after class until 4:00pm, SCHAR 2001C

Weeks 7 & 8 / Sh@!#t, Meet Fan (Research Weeks 2-3)

- October 5
 - Read “IRB Protocol & Forms” under Course Home on eCollege and download and print the necessary forms before your interview.
 - **First (Gatekeeper) Interview Due** with signed consent and release forms. Upload the digital interview files to **OneDrive** and bring the forms in hard copy to class.
 - Create a folder in OneDrive for your group and invite me to view it (max.krochmal@gmail.com). Do not make me an owner.
 - Return your equipment after class, SCHAR 2001C
 - Prepare the first of your [Weekly Small Group Presentations](#)
 - In-class group meetings to make plan to complete assignments due 10/14

- OH Assignment: Aggressively pursue the rest of your interviews!
- October 7
 - OH Assignment: Aggressively pursue the rest of your interviews!
 - In-class work on assignments due 10/14
- October 12 / FALL BREAK / No class
- October 14
 - Secondary Source Annotations #1 Due on OneDrive
 - Individual Reflection on Initial Fieldwork due on Dropbox
 - Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 1, 17-26, 39-55 **eC**
 - (no reading journal required; see reflection assignment)
 - Tape Log for First (Gatekeeper) Interview due on OneDrive. NOTE: This takes at least real-time to complete (1-2 hours). You do NOT need to transcribe any full excerpts at this stage.
- October 17 (Saturday) / *Viva Mi Historia!* Day 2, 10:00am to 2:00pm, Location TBA (Fort Worth Northside)

Week 9 / Breathe Deep (Research Week 4)

- October 19
 - Second and Third Interviews Due with release forms.
 - Primary Source Analysis Due on OneDrive
 - Plan for Remaining Fieldwork and Interviews Due by end of class (1-2 pages)
- October 21
 - Reflection on Viva Mi Historia due for Day 2 participants by 2:00pm on Dropbox
 - Revise and resubmit any unsatisfactory or incomplete assignments from Weeks 7-8

Week 10 / Keep On Truckin' (Research Week 5)

- October 26
 - Fourth Interview Due with release forms and Fieldnotes.
 - Weekly Small Group Presentations
- October 28
 - Tape Log for Second and Third Interviews Due

Week 11 / Wrapping Up Fieldwork (Research Week 6)

- November 2
 - Fifth Interview Due with release forms
 - Tape Log for Second and Third Interviews Due. Again, you do NOT need to transcribe any full excerpts at this stage.
- November 4
 - Tape Log for Fourth Interview Due
 - Weekly Small Group Presentations

Week 12 / Final Final Week of Fieldwork

- November 9
 - Sixth Interview Due with release forms
 - Weekly Small Group Presentations – assess your progress. Are the six interviews you have conducted the *right* six interviews? If not, keep interviewing!
- November 11
 - Tape Log for Fifth **and** Sixth Interviews Due

Weeks 13 & 14 / Analysis & Writing

- November 16
- November 18
 - All interview recordings, logs/transcripts, fieldnotes, release forms, video recordings, and photos due on OneDrive (including #6, 7, and beyond)!
 - Re-read and be prepared to discuss: Alessandro Portelli, “Harlan County, 1964-2009: A Love Story,” “People I Owe,” and “Narrators” in *They Say In Harlan County eC*
 - **Read and complete reading journal:** Wolf, “Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork,” pp. 32-38 (7 dense pages) **eC**
 - Weekly Small Group Presentations / be ready to discuss your research in depth!
- November 23 (complete all of the following before class on Monday)
 - Secondary Source Annotations #2 Due
 - Key Quotations: As a group, go back through your logs and identify roughly 20-25 key quotations / excerpts that you may wish to include on the website.
 - OH Assignment: Call all of your narrators and invite them to the Final Presentation & Dinner
 - OH Assignment: Locate photographs and other archival documents that you will scan to include on the website. *Write down a specific plan that outlines which archival collections or websites you will use and how/when you plan to retrieve and scan the images/documents.*
- November 25 / Thanksgiving Break / No Class

Week 15 / Analysis & Writing, part III

- November 30
 - Draft Sitemap or Script due for your group’s section of final project. Start building the website (or write the opening segments) accordingly. On an intro page, list your (draft) main arguments and findings, and outline the narrative you will tell throughout the site.
 - Ritchie, Chapter 8
 - Katharine Borland, “‘That’s Not What I Said’: Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research,” from *Women’s Words, eC*
- December 2
 - Transcript Excerpts Due!
 - OH Assignment: Call any remaining narrators again and again until they commit to attending the final presentation (or until they definitively say no!). Start distributing flyers, emails, etc. around campus
 - OH Assignment: Prepare at least a dozen video clips for inclusion on the website or documentary. Continue to revise all your web pages or segments. **Due by Friday, December 4.**

Week 16 / Final Presentation Prep

- December 7, 2:00pm until???
 - Final Website or Documentary Due!
 - OH Assignment: Prepare a draft of your presentation of your website or documentary. No PowerPoint allowed! Consider inviting one or more of your narrators to speak too!
 - In-class work session and pizza party into the night, location TBA

- December 9 / Last Day of Class
 - In-Class prep session for presentation and dinner

Final Presentation & Community Dinner – Wednesday, December 9, 6:00pm, Palko 130

Post-Final Reflection / due on Sunday evening, December 13 by 11:59pm (midnight)