Doing Oral History: Helping Christians Tell their Own Stories

Jean Paul Wiest

Workshop held at Trinity Theological College, Singapore
14-18 March 2005
A Word of Welcome
from the Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia
Trinity Theological College

Michael Poon

Welcome to all on behalf of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia, Trinity Theological College.

Over the past year, the Centre was exploring ways that it can help churches in this region to collect and organize their records, and start to reflect on their own histories. We benefited from the stimulating discussion last August in Port Dickson during the Project for Archives, Documentation and Oral History Study Group discussion in the International Association of Mission Studies Conference. For the past few months, we were able to embark on a joint venture with the four governing churches of the College on a Singapore-Malaysia Church History Research Centre Initiative. One of the first projects that we identify is to encourage churches to collect their local stories.

We are very grateful that Dr Jean-Paul Wiest is able to come to lead this Workshop on oral history. Dr Wiest is the founder of the Center for Mission Research & Study at Maryknoll, U.S.A. He is at present on research assignments in China. We are grateful to the United Board for Higher Education and to Overseas Ministries Study Center in Yale for their financial assistance to this Workshop.

We are very happy that thirty-eight representatives from the churches in Singapore and Malaysia and from the research students in the College are able to participate in the Workshop this week. We warmly welcome especially colleagues from the Methodist Church in Malaysia. We hope that the skills we learn, the vision we share, and the friendship we foster, over the next five days would help us to venture together to write down and declare the great things that the Almighty has done in the lives of many individuals in our localities.
Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia
Trinity Theological College
Doing Oral History: Helping Christians Tell Their Own Story
March 14-18, 2005

Venue: Trinity Theological College, Singapore

Course Outline

Course Description: This hands-on workshop on oral history provides participants with the skills and techniques needed to collect individuals' living memories in order to document church/mission/community history.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

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<td>Mon, Mar 14</td>
<td>1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Final Registration</td>
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<td>2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Getting to Know Each Other</td>
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<td>3:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Characteristics of a Christian History Relevant to Our Times</td>
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<td>Tues, Mar 15</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Planning an Oral History Project: Presentation</td>
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<td>Planning an Oral History Project: Group Practice</td>
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<td>Planning an Oral History Project: Plenary Discussion</td>
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<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
<td>Outline Your Own Oral History Project (Optional)</td>
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<td>Wed, Mar 16</td>
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<td>Pre-Interviewing &amp; Interviewing: Presentation</td>
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<td>Preparation of Questionnaire: Small Group Practice</td>
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<td>Interview Practice</td>
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<td>Thurs, Mar 17</td>
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<td>Transcription: Presentation</td>
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<td>Pointers for Writing Oral History/Evaluations</td>
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Resource Person: Dr. Jean-Paul Wiest, former director of the Center for Mission Research & Study at Maryknoll, is presently on research assignment in China. He has been using and teaching Oral History Techniques for over twenty years.

"Doing Oral History: Helping Christians Tell Their Own Story"

Doing Oral History is a practical workshop directed toward the needs of persons wishing to use oral history to document mission and church history. The flesh and blood stories of key participants and observers of significant events and transitions in the story of missions make historical writing interesting and meaningful.

Through the workshop's structured approach to interviewing, recording, and analyzing data, participants learn how to tap into the living memories of the people most directly involved—and to keep the memories of those people alive.

Workshop participants are taken step-by-step through the process of developing an oral history project in a Christian context. From interviewing techniques to logistics, both simple and more complex types of projects are presented.

This is a hands-on seminar. Each presentation is followed by a practice session. Working together in small groups enables participants to gain confidence and a real sense of how to develop an oral history project.

Selected Bibliography


Dr. Jean-Paul Wiest, former director of the Center for Mission Research and Study at Maryknoll twenty years, now serves as Research Director of the Jesuit Beijing Center and visiting professor of Christianity at Tsinghua University in Beijing. Born in France, Wiest holds the Sacred Theology Licentiate from the Gregorian University in Rome and a doctorate in Chinese history from the University of Washington in Seattle. With research focused on the Christian missionary endeavor, Wiest has field experience in Europe and in Asia.
Lecture 1

Toward a Christian History
Relevant to Our Times
Traditional Types of History

Chronicles
Are detailed accounts of events arranged in order of time with little or no analysis.

In-House Histories
Are written primarily to keep a community aware of its roots and development.

Official Histories
Have the endorsement of whoever may have commissioned them and usually refer to works for public use.

Inspirational Histories
Are meant to edify the faithful and to arouse vocations

Secular Histories
Consider the Christian phenomenon mostly as a religious manifestation of the broader socio-economic and political impact of the West on Third World countries.
Characteristics of a History of Christian Witness Relevant to Our Times

More Than a Secular History
To leave out theological concerns such as the establishment of the Kingdom of God or the church’s vocation to evangelize would deprive a history of Christian witness from its most important dimensions.

A Tool for Evaluation
Unless we tap the living memory of leaders and ordinary Christians, crucial information about the beginning and the development of a local church could disappear with their passing away.

A Service and a Step Toward Partnership
A history of Christian witness should be as much the story of missionaries as the story of the beginning and development of a local Christian movement perceived in indigenous and motivated by indigenous considerations.

Building a Legacy of Understanding
If the historian is a successful storyteller and a keen analyst, his/her images of the past and allotment of praise and blame will be appreciated by both missionaries and indigenous churches as a true measure of their common history and relationship.
Lecture 2

Planning an Oral History Project
DESIGNING AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

For a sound, feasible plan we need:

- To know what we want to achieve
- To be personally well prepared
- To take these elements into consideration:
  - Location
  - List of persons to interview
  - Other sources of information
  - Time Line
  - Finances
  - Categories/Themes/Ideas
  - Questionnaire
SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES
& TOPICS FOR
BROADLY-FOCUSED PROJECTS
SOCIETY HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

I. Portrait of the Missioner

1. Who were/are these Maryknoll men and women missioners?

2. Why were/are they there in your village/city?

3. What did/do they try to do?

4. How successful were/are they in doing what they tried/try to do?

5. How long were they in your area? What kind of influence or change did they bring about in your personal life as an individual and in the life of the village/region?

6. What was/is their lifestyle like?

7. How much have they become a part of the life of your village/city?

8. What were/are some of the difficulties in their adjustments to you way of life?

9. How much did they come to understand your people and your way of life? Do you recall any situation showing their understanding or misunderstanding?

10. Did the Maryknoll men influence the local men? The Maryknoll Sisters the local women? Did these men and women become better citizens, better parents, better husbands and wives because of that contact?

11. How much were/are the missioners, Maryknollers in particular, part of political upheavals?

12. What did/do the officials, Christians, and other people think of Maryknollers? What do you think of them?

II. The missioners’ relationship with the local people

13. What brought you into your first contact with the Maryknollers?

14. What has been the nature of this relationship? [Was it similar to the relationship between employers and employees? Teachers and students? Benefactors and recipients? Co-workers or colleagues? Friend? Or …?] Did you feel that this relationship could be reciprocated?

Did that relationship change or evolve throughout the years?

15. In what way did the work of the Maryknollers contribute to or affect your work or your role in your village/city?

* Questions in brackets should only be used as prompters if the interviewee is puzzled by the general question.
16. For what did you feel you could depend on the missioners? [Deepening of your faith? Financial or material support? Counselling on village or family affairs? Advice about work or business? Companionship? Others?]

17. Did you feel they had more material means, more power, more status or more knowledge than you did? In what ways?

18. Did you feel your relationship with these missioners enhanced or hindered your relationship with your non-Christian friends and neighbors? Did your relationship with them bring about any changes in your life?


20. Would you recommend or bring your friends or relatives into such relationships with these missioners?

III. Establishing local churches

21. How did these missioners go about establishing local churches? What worked? What did not work?

22. Who became Christians? From what social and economic background in your village/city did they come? Did you become a Christian? Why? How were you contacted and trained?

23. What did you learn from the missioners about God? About Jesus? About the Church (The Pope, the universality of the Church, Rome etc.)? About prayer? What differences did their ideas make in your life? In your relationships with others?

24. How has your view about these ideas evolved over the years? What is your thinking on them today?

25. What were some of the ideas you found most attractive in the Christian religions?

26. Did you convert from a non-Christian religion? Did this result in any conflict in your family/community?

27. Was your relationship with other Christians in your family/village a determining factor in your conversion?

28. Did you become a priest? A sister? Why? How were you recruited and trained? What was your role in the local church with the Christians? With the non-Christians? With the foreign missioners?

29. What was the Christian life of your parish, or “base community,” like?

30. Describe your participation in the parish or “base community” life.

31. Do you recall some of the more prominent lay church leaders in your area? Who were they? How did they become such leaders? How did their roles evolve?

32. Describe the role of the catechist. How were they selected and trained?
33. Describe the catechists’ and other lay leaders’ relationship with the ministers and with the local people. Did they help to explain the missioners to the local people or the local people to the missioners?

34. Did you aspire to be a lay-church leader? Was it a role people in your community would want to cultivate?

IV. Mission Works

35. Describe the various types of work the missioners established in the area where you lived: orphanage, dispensary, school, old folk’s home, refugee camps, etc.

36. What contribution did these make to the life of the local people in the village/city?

37. Are you part of a “base community?” What is the missioner’s role in relation to your “base community?”

V. General Evaluation

38. What are some of the lessons you learned from you association with the missioners?

39. In your opinion, if the missioners want to bring Christianity to your country, are small villages the right place to begin, or should the cities and their educated leaders be the primary targets? Is there any difference?


41. What is your understanding of the Maryknoll missionary activities today?

42. Do you think that Maryknoll missioners have a place in the future of the church in you country? If so, what method do you think they should use? What advice will you offer?

43. What do you think of the role of foreign missioners in other countries today? Do you think they have a role in the future of the local church?

44. Do you think the institution of the Christian religion (i.e. the Roman Catholic Church) has a place in the future of you country”. In other countries and cultures?

45. Do you think that the Christian message and the values it presents has a place in the future of your country? In other countries and cultures? If so, what can be done so that it ceases to be a ‘foreign’ religion?

46. Did you ever put any of your reflections in writing or any kind of publication? If so, where can they be found?
SOCIETY HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONERS

I. The Missioner’s enlistment, motivation and training

1. What was your reason for going into the Society and into mission work? Why did you go to your Region/Unit?

2. What was your education and formation prior to going overseas? What education and formation did you receive in your Region/Unit? How much study of language and culture? Were you able to read and write the local language? Fluently? Which dialect?

3. What (in your view) was the major motivation for the Maryknollers? [To save souls? To help people in need? To share American superior culture and religion? Other]*

4. What were your initial visions and goals of Maryknoll work in your Region/Unit before you arrived there? Did those visions and goals change?

5. Describe your personal experience with Maryknoll founders. What do you consider the founders’ lasting influence on the Society? On you?

6. Who are the people that had a major influence on you during your training in the U.S.? Why?

II. Fathers’and Brothers’ life and experience in their Region/Unit

7. What do you believe are Maryknoll’s major goals for its work in your Region/Unit? What do you believe are the major issues, struggles, problems and decisions that Maryknoll has to make in your Region/Unit?

8. What were/are the most successful programs and work of Maryknoll in your Region/Unit? The least successful?

9. What were/are the specific tasks of Maryknoll Fathers? What were/are the specific task of Maryknoll Brothers? How did/does the work of the Fathers and Brothers correlate with the work of the Sisters?

10. Describe the daily life and work, the daily schedule of a) the Fathers, and b) the Brothers.

11. How did the life and work of the Fathers and Brothers change and develop through the years?

12. A basic task of Maryknoll was evangelism and establishing churches. What were the methods used? What worked? What did not work? What changes have taken place since Vatican II? Is Maryknoll’s task different today*. If so, how and why?

13. What lesson did Maryknoll learn from its experience in your Region/Unit?

14. What were the most satisfying and rewarding work experiences for you? What were the most difficult?

15. What were your relations with other religious societies (Both Catholic and Protestant)? With native religions?

III. The Local Church

* Questions in brackets should only be used as prompters if the interviewee is puzzled by the general question.
16. Describe the recruiting, training and assignment of local priests and sisters under Maryknoll administration. Describe your local colleagues. What was/is your relationship to them; what did/do they do? Did/do they have positions of authority and responsibility?

17. If you work in a parish setting, describe the Christian life of your parish (liturgy, catechetical training, etc.) Describe the special work of your mission station.

18. Describe the role of the catechists (men and women). How were they/are they selected and trained? How are they paid? What type of catechetical training did/do they give? Discuss the role of women catechists. Were/are there other local people employed by Maryknoll? What did/do they do?

19. Describe the selection, training and work of other Christian lay leaders.

20. Describe other work of your mission station, such as orphanages, schools, medical work, social work. How did this serve the primary goals of Maryknoll in your Region/Unit?

21. If you work in a non-parish setting, describe your work, your responsibilities and your relation to the local people. How do you characterize the involvement of the local people?

22. Are you in touch with basic Christian communities or similar emerging new forms of ecclesial life in your Region/Unit? If so, describe.

23. Who is the Maryknoll missioner that you admire most? Why? Who according to you is the greatest missioner in your Region/Unit? (He/she does not have to be a Maryknoller.)

IV. **Relations with local people, politics and society.**

24. Do you feel you have/had close relationships with the local people? Did you understand their society and culture quite well?

25. Did you (or others) experience anti-foreignism: Anti-U.S. sentiments? Describe incidents. Do you remember anything that could be viewed as “cultural imperialism?”

26. Did/do you receive some orientation about the socio-economic and political struggles that were/are taking place in your Region/Unit? Prior to Departure? In the field? What were/are your views of those struggles? What is your understanding of the political and social situation? What newspapers and magazines did/do you read? What are your other sources of news?

27. Did/do you have any personal experience with civil unrest, bandits, etc.?

28. What were/are you relations with friends and colleagues native to your Region/Unit? Did/do you visit in their homes, have meals there and vice versa? Did/do you have close friends among them?

V. **Influence of Maryknoll on American views of local Region/Unit**

29. Did you write about your experiences? Are these writing available?

30. How did/do you and other Maryknollers influence American views of your local Region/Unit? Give examples
**SOCIETY HISTORY PROGRAM DESCRiptor LIST**

(NOTE: Capital letters = Main topics
Other entries = Sub topics)

**ACCOMMODATION:** Will include missionaries effort
to adapt to another culture, climate, etc.
(Interviewee’s sensitivity and lack of sensitivity to a
culture and the people of that culture.)
- Culture
- Custom
- Difficulties
- Language
- Sacraments
- Sensitivity Toward

**AGRICULTURE:**
- Cooperative
- Crops
- Dairy
- Failure
- Grain
- Irrigation
- Livestock
- Success

**APPRAISAL:**
- Agenda
- Catholic Church
- Maryknoll
- Mission Methods
- Mission Work
- Personal

**ARCHITECTURE:**
- Chapel
- Church
- Construction
- Convent
- Mission Compound
- Outstations
- Seminary
- School

**ASSIGNMENT:** (Use only when substantial
information is given. See also RESPONSIBILITIES)
- Development (includes Vocation office)
- Education/Formation
- Mission Region (name of)
- Parish, etc
- Social Communications
- SSU (Special Society Unit)
- Unit

**BACKGROUND:**
- Personal
- Family

**COMMUNICATION:**
- Daily
- Grape vine
- Letter
- Newspaper
- Periodical
- Publication
- Radio
- Television
- Dialogue

**CUSTOM:** (Give name of local custom being discussed. See also ACCOMMODATION)
- Marriage
- Polygamy

**DESCRIPTION:** (OF ABOUT WHOM listing, or of a place)
- Portrait
- Home
- Life

**EDUCATION:** (for Maryknollers, local clergy –
religious, laity, etc)
- Religious Training
  - Beyond catechism; for the purpose of teaching or
  training other people. List special courses as Subtopic 2,
eg. Liberation Theology
    - Primary (Elementary)
    - Secondary
    - University
    - Seminary
    - Novitiate
    - Self-study
    - Mission Studies
    - Mission Training
    - Language
    - Technical
    - Fine Arts
    - Orphanage
    - Degree
    - Illiteracy
    - Leadership training
    - School (kindergarten through university)
    - Continuing Ed. (CPE, etc)
    - Teaching

**EVALUATION:** (See PLANNING)

**EVANGELIZATION:** Spreading of faith. Refers only
to Catholicism. For other religions, see RELIGION.
Also see PARISH WORK
- Vision (Rationale or theology)
- Method (Visiting or one-on-one instruction, etc)
- Program
- Conversion
  - Catechumenate (includes instruction, baptism, etc)
- Leadership training (catechists, etc)
- Rural setting
- Urban setting
- Statistics

**FINANCE:**
- Poverty
- Prosperity
- Parish
- Salary
- Problems (with cooperatives, etc)
- Inflation
- Income
- Debt
- Expenses
- Donation
- Fundraising
- Credit Unions

**GEOGRAPHY:**
- Climate
- Earthquake
- Landscape
- Floods
- Drought
- Typhoon
- Hurricane
- Map

**GOVERNMENT:** (see POLITICS)

**HEALTH:** (see also MEDICINE)
- Abortion
- Alcoholism
Birth control
Birth defect
Blind
Burn Out
Clinic (Subtopic 2 would be Safari, Suitcase, etc)
Deaf
Disease
Drug abuse
Epidemic
Euthanasia
Hospital
Hygiene
Leper colony
Living conditions
Mental Health
Nutrition
Nursing Home (for the elderly)
Sickness
Surgery
Training
Work

HISTORY:
Maryknoll
Regional
Diocesan
Family
Local (tribal)
Personal
National
Folklore
Mission
Of (second descriptor names, place or specific person)

IMPACT ON US: (see also COMMUNICATION)
Movies
Writings
Attitudes
Politics
Development Dept
Local (tribal)
National

INCULTURATION: Will include all efforts – even basic efforts of simple acculturation – of the Church and its message into the cultural milieu of every nation and age) (see also COMMUNICATION)
Acculturation
Ritual
Christianity
Liturgy
Of
Sacraments
Translation

INDIGENIZATION: Refers to the missionaries’ work toward establishing a native clergy and sisterhood, well-trained catechists and apostolic laity. (see also Leadership Training under EVANGELIZATION and PARISH WORK)

LAW and ORDER:
Banditry
Crime
Detention
Lawsuit
Clan rivalry
Injustice
Piracy
Riot
Rebellion
Repressive Measures
Surveillance

LIFE STYLE: (see also DESCRIPTION)
Daily
City

Community (people brought together by a special bond, such as a religious community)
Town
Village
Leisure
Modernization
Option for poor
Support Group

MEDICINE: As a profession or a practice (see also HEALTH) Practice

OBJECTIVES: (see PLANNING)

PARISH WORK: (mainly nurture of Christians)
Vision (rationale or theology)
Rural setting
Urban setting
Program (enter as Subtopic 2:
Catholic action
Youth club(s)
Legion of Mary
Marriage encounter, etc)

Home visits
Retreat
Evangelization (catechumenate outreach for non-Christians)
Instruction (for people already baptized)
Liturgy (sacraments, processions, Mass, etc)
Christian Life
Local support
Land purchase
Lay leadership
Leadership training (parish leaders, catechists, etc)
Basic Communities
Outstations
Schools
Statistics
Sacraments
Success
Reliance on
Starting parish

PERSECUTION: Refers only to religious persecutions. For other types, see LAW AND ORDER
Demonstration
Detention
Assassination

PLANNING
Environment
Vision (rationale, theology or mission vision,)
Impact of Vat. II
Research
Objectives (long range (personal, Maryknoll, world, etc)
Goals (short range)
Directors
Implementation
Evaluation (statistics)

POLITICS: (see also GOVERNMENT)
Treaty
Communism
Marxism
Capitalism
Socialism
Anti-foreignism
Nationalism
Problems
Demonstration
Involvement
Arrest
Detention
Assassination
RELATIONSHIP: to be used in conjunction with the ABOUT WHOM listing. Between (implied “and”) With

RELIANCE WORK: Food Clothing Housing Organization

RELIGION: Catholicism Protestantism Islam Pentecostalism Buddhism Ecumenism Hinduism Christianity Folk Veneration Local Belief

RESPONSIBILITIES: Assignment Administration Teaching Regional Office Parish Work Evangelization Special society unit Chaplaincy (prison, hospital or youth)

SOCIAL QUESTION: Moral issues Justice and peace Oppression Illiteracy Exploitation Community project Family problems Suppression Civil Rights Movement Migration Poverty

SPIRITUALITY: (see also EDUCATION) Retreat Missionary Religious Experience Oath Personal Veneration

TRANSPORTATION: means of locomotion Boat Train Bicycle Plane Foot Bus Motorcycle Truck Public Automobile Horse Male

TRAVEL: Domestic (in country discussed) Foreign (outside country discussed) Accident Difficulties Abroad Modernization

VISION: (see also PLANNING) Personal (for personal vision/ideas about the future)

VOCATION: Discernment (includes laity) Missionary Priesthood Religious (Sisters and Brothers) Recruitment

WAR WWII WWII Korea Vietnam Local fighting (name of War, if any)

Society History Program Descriptor List

FOR ABOUT WHOM LISTING

Aborigines Aspirants Babies Buddhists/Monks Buddhists/Nuns Businessmen Catechists Catechists/Female Catechists/Male Catechumens Catechumens/Female Catechumens/Male Children Catholics Communists Deacons Doctors/foreign Doctors/local Employees/Mk1 Emigrants Foreigners Landowners Government officials Hakka Immigrants Infants/dying Land owners Lawsuit Christians Lay leaders Lay Missionaries Lepers Local people Maryknollers (Frs &/or Broth Merchants Migrants Military Missionaries /Catholic Missionaries/Protestant Non-Christians Novices Nurses Officials

NOTE: This list is just an example. Any linguistic group or nationality can be entered. For instance, if the interviewee is talking about the Mexican people in general, “Mexicans” would be an appropriate entry. If he/she were talking about the Maya Indians in Mexico, “Maya” would be a better entry.
Lecture 3

Pre-Interview & Interview
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CHECKLIST FOR INTERVIEWING

1. Contact narrator, making certain that he or she fully understands the project.

2. Acquaint yourself with the general background of narrator.

3. Of possible, arrange a pre-interview visit so that you and the narrator may become personally acquainted.

4. Prepare a list of topics for discussion.

5. Thoroughly check out equipment prior to the interview. An interview should not be an on-the-job training session.

6. Make certain you have all the materials you need before departing for the interview: recorder, external microphone, adapters for two-pronged outlets, fresh batteries, tapes, pencils, pads, and release forms.

7. Make certain you are interviewing in a room which will minimize external noise.

8. Make certain the recorder is recording. Identify yourself, the narrator, the date and place, the purpose of the project, and ask the narrator to agree to the project.

9. Interview. During the interview, jot down proper nouns and other words whose spelling is questionable.

10. Be sure to ask narrator about spelling and other questions which you may have concerning the interview.

11. Have narrator sign release form.

12. When you arrive at home or office, write down aspects of the interview that you think may be useful to future indexers and transcribers.

13. Send “bread and butter” thank you note to the narrator.

Adapted from Talking about Connecticut: Oral History in the Nutmeg State.
INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

TOOLS

♦ Tape Recorder
♦ Tapes
♦ Batteries
♦ Recorder Accessories
♦ Several Pens
♦ Notebook

LABELING

♦ Make sure the tapes are labelled properly as you use them

ACTUAL INTERVIEW

♦ Begin with “small talk”
♦ Don’t argue with the interviewee
♦ Use your questions as guide
♦ Use your listening skills
♦ More difficult questions should come at the end

INTERVIEW TIME

♦ No more than 90 minutes per session
♦ Interviews (ideally) should be conducted in at least two sessions

LEAVE GRACEFULLY
GUIDELINES: CONDUCTING A GOOD INTERVIEW

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Force your beliefs or opinions on the Interviewee
- Force Responses to Sensitive Questions
- Ask Leading Questions
- Draw Attention to the Recorder
- Make a lot of Noise
- Argue with the Interviewee
- Make the Interview very long so you and the Interviewee get very tired
### Open-Ended and Closed Questions

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<td>Where were you born?</td>
<td>What do you remember about the place you were born?</td>
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<td>Where were your parents born?</td>
<td>What did your parents tell you about their lives?</td>
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<td>Did your family have gatherings?</td>
<td>Describe your family gatherings.</td>
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<td>What holidays did your family celebrate?</td>
<td>How were holidays celebrated in your family?</td>
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<td>Was religion important to your family?</td>
<td>Tell me about the religious observances in your family.</td>
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<td>When did you finish school?</td>
<td>How did your formal education end?</td>
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<td>Did you and your friends play games as children?</td>
<td>Describe some of the games you played as a child.</td>
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<td>Were you in the service during World War II?</td>
<td>Tell me about your life during World War II.</td>
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<td>Did you get a job after the war?</td>
<td>Tell me what you did after you got out of the service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did you like your job?</td>
<td>Describe how you felt about your job.</td>
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### Examples of Leading Questions

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<th>Neutral</th>
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<tr>
<td>You must have been happy on election night</td>
<td>How did you feel on election night?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You didn’t like Mr. X. Did you?</td>
<td>Tell me about Mr. X?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think of Mr. Jones’ outrageous behaviour?</td>
<td>What did Mr. Jones do then?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Don’t Do This!

*This is an excerpt from an interview of a former Maryknoll associate priest who did much of his mission work in Peru. He now heads his own parish in the U.S., and has given his permission to us for use as a classroom example.*

**Interviewee:** I was thinking wouldn’t it be wonderful to sign a contract again (laughing), as they were doing it today. I am thrilled to see that there are 8 of them from 8 different diocese of the country, including Anchorage, Alaska! Obviously, it is getting the support of the Bishops of the country. I believe Maryknoll had only 5 ordinations of their own this Year, but they’ve got 8 associates. So I see that as a very positive contribution, and I was telling them this afternoon. That’s one of the reasons I’m down here now was to share my own experience. It was one of the most enriching phases of my life as a priest, to have come in to Maryknoll, to have had this world vision, to have learned a new language and a new culture, to go to another country. That has given a whole new dimension to my own priesthood, and I’m sure it will to these 8 men that are coming in now. And so I certainly see the program as an important ingredient to the Maryknoll apostolate in the world, and I think it enriches the life of the diocese. Of course Maryknoll was founded, well, by two diocesan priests.

**Interviewer:** To represent the Church in America, diocesan clergy especially

**Interviewee:** So I think it’s wonderful., It certainly was wonderful in my own life (laughing), and having served 6 years the first time in Peru, and then 5 tears here at Maryknoll, NY in a number of capacities for the Justice and Peace and the Center. I asked the Bishop, when my 6 years were up in the parish that I was in, for permission to return. And he didn’t feel free to let my go, but I think that it’s a marvelous program, and I certainly would like to see it grow and develop. And the fact that there are 8, is a

**Interviewer:** I know James Anthony Walsh, yes, he used to visit Maryknoll at Los Altos on his trips to the Orient. He went frequently to the Orient and would stop over, going over and coming back, and give a report to us. He always would report on his observations in the Orient, and of course he would speak, and was very, very inspiring. But the early Maryknollers too had the spirit, and we knew those people even better.
So now I’m anxious to try to get these things down just as the founders. James Anthony Walsh was great on history, and did a lot of wring and communications, and was tremendously interested in that field. And I’m enthusiastic about this work.

**Interviewee:** So you’re putting together the history of the whole Bolivian region?

**Interviewer:** Yes, yes, the whole Bolivian region. We went there in ’42, and we started a lot of things that have grown. Like the little dispensaries went on to big hospitals, two room school has gone into a complex, a grammar school and high school. And we started the cooperatives, we started this movement actually. We helped the priests from many diocese to get started. St, Louis, Lacrosse, Dubuque, well, I don’t know how many others, but they showed interest at least, and many of them made a very positive contribution. St James Society was really inspired by the Maryknollers in Bolivia, and the Nuncio wanted to try to get priests, Maryknollers a bit hesitant, because they thought the Bishops would complain, but obviously (laughing) they didn’t! Actually, they were against the idea for fear that it would work against Maryknoll, but then they soon came around.

I know it was interesting for me because Ed Fedders had spoken to me about the possibility of receiving in the language school, where I was director ’55, ’56, ’57. So I agreed to have one, I saw no difficulty, but then there was this problem of Maryknoll.

**Interviewee:** Oh, right off?

**Interviewer:** Yes, well, see it was in the making ….
**Interviewer Agreement**

This tape (or tapes) and the accompanying transcripts are the result of one or more voluntary interviews conducted by ___________________ with _____________________.

Any reader of the transcript should bear in mind that s/he is reading a transcript of our spoken words, and that the tape, not the transcript, is the primary document.

I hereby permit the Maryknoll Society History Program and all researchers approved of or associated with the Society History Program full use of this interview and full use of all other materials I donate to the Program.

____________________________________________________________
Signature of Interviewer   Date

____________________________________________________________
Signature of Interviewee   Date

**Interviewee Agreement**

(To be used only in the event of a restriction)

I, _____________________, make the following contributions to the Maryknoll Society Program, and through it, to the Maryknoll Mission Archives, and wish to place the following restrictions on the interview materials:

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________
Signature of Interviewee   Date

**Acknowledgement**

The Maryknoll Society History Program gratefully acknowledges the above contributions to the Program.

____________________________________________________________
Signature of Research Director   Date
Date: __________________________

I, ____________________________, give permission for my interview with ___________________________ to be used by individuals engaged in writing the History of the Maryknoll Mission Community in Brazil. I further permit these materials to be donated to the Maryknoll Society History Program of the Center for Mission Research and Study and the Maryknoll Archives in order for my thoughts and ideas to be available to future researchers.

________________________________    __________________________
Signature of Interviewee            Date
Lecture 4

Transcription
TRANSCRIPTS

* Verbally Label your Tape
* Each Cassette Tape should be clearly labelled
  - directly on tape and on case
* Keep a list of Correct Spellings
* Regulate Style Points
* Be Specific About Deadlines
* Discuss Costs before You Begin
* Use Red Ink to Edit Transcripts
* Do an Audit/Edit of Each Interview
## INTERVIEW LABELING

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At Maryknoll Center | Tape 1 of 3

Interview of Rev. John Q. Smith with Jane Jones at Maryknoll Center
Tape 1 of 3, 01/01/93
Annel: Yes, that’s all you can do. I’m very glad that the Maryknoll Sisters have the policy that whoever you are, however great and exalted you might be, you can be a peon for a while. If I wanted to come back and work as a doctor here, probably they would have me up on the fourth floor, to work with our nursing home, or something like that.

I wanted to step out of that role for a while and it was a good time for me. I’d been on call for too long. I mean besides doing all the teaching, I had done a fair amount of work in the hospital and everything else. And I think I wanted out of being on call for people’s illness. That was delightful. But now I’m real ready to go back into medicine and be on call.

McDonald: So, you’ve been out since 1988?

Annel: Yes, the end of 1988, four years.

McDonald: And you haven’t done any medical work since then?

Annel: No, not really. Not directly other than talking about it and educating. The closest to doing it is that while I’ve been here in the States, I’ve been doing something that’s called training for transformation courses.

McDonald: I have never heard of it.

Annel: It’s based Pablo Freire’s methods of participative education, and empowerment of the people who are being educated. And I’ve given courses in those methods. It’s not specifically medicine, but it’s very close to what I did with the health workers, and the types of teaching techniques we used.

McDonald: I think I’ll take you up to the present now.

Annel: Ok. You don’t want to know more about the hospital in Jacaltenango and that health work?

McDonald: If we have time I would like to know more about that. Yes, I do want to know more about that (laughing), but I also want to know about this AIDS ministry thing. Are you going to be working on that similar to the way you did the training?

Annel: I think everything I’ve done and been up until now has been training for the AIDS ministry. And we do bring our history with us I think. I do feel that God has been leading me to this.

About a year and a half ago I felt called in prayer to say to my community that while I’m still young enough to learn another culture and another language, I would be willing to change regions if they could set
Lecture 5

Thematic Analysis
THEMATIC ANALYSIS

is a classification of your data from the interviews according to a system that corresponds to your need and purpose and that is as efficient as possible within the limitations of the budget and equipment at your disposal.
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Lecture 6

Review and Suggestions for Writing
REVIEW 1

- Consider from the beginning of the project the range of anticipated users.

- Familiarize yourself with the significant literature in the field.

- Research thoroughly the specific individual and incidents you expect to cover in the interview.

- Regularly evaluate your interviews and work to improve your interviewing techniques – consult OHA’s *Evaluation Guidelines*. 
REVIEW 2

- Always listen to what the interviewee is saying.
- Be prepared to follow-up on unexpected information gained from the interviewee.
- Don’t be afraid to admit you didn’t know something and ask for clarification.
- Don’t settle for a single session interview unless you are convinced the person has exhausted the subject.
REVIEW 3

- Limit your project to the number of interviews you can reasonably handle from researching to processing.

- Begin processing the interview immediately after it is conducted.

- Transcribe whenever possible.

- Identify both the interviewee and the interviewer at the beginning of the transcript and make sure both sign a deed of gift, specifying the conditions under which the interview may be opened for research.
REVIEW 4

- Index the transcripts.
- Preserve the tapes under optimal conditions.
- Publicize the existence of your interviews as widely as possible.