



Indexing workflow with the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS) Manual

Created April 27, 2016
by Brett Dion
Oral History Project Archivist

Excerpted from the Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) Oral History Processing Manual by
Julia Lipkins, Oral History Project Archivist, [2015](#)

Introduction

Welcome to this excerpt of the BHS Oral History Processing Manual!

This is a guide for processing oral history collections without transcripts and indexing interviews for the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS) at BHS. (Processing without transcripts includes five stages of work at BHS: Auditing, Indexing, Cataloging, Editing Audio and OHMS. This manual references the first, second and fifth stage.)

Naming Conventions

The BHS oral history legacy assets are titled according to the following conventions:

- bhs_interviewID_lastname-firstname_YYYYMMDD_version.ext
- The abbreviation indicates the stage and/ or purpose of the asset, which applies to audio recordings as well as transcripts, when available:
 - u: unedited
 - t: tracked changes
 - e: edited
 - a: access
 - o: OHMS
 - c: clip

OHMS

Prior to working in OHMS, be sure to watch the instructional videos released by the University of Kentucky: <http://www.oralhistoryonline.org/documentation>.

The indexing work for OHMS is broken down into the following phases:

1. Indexing
2. Creating Records
3. Uploading audio
4. Quality Assurance

Indexing

- Indexing is time consuming and only recommended if transcripts are not available.
- Please see **OHMS-Indexing-guide-5-15-14** for guidance.
- Listen to the interview to identify the general themes of the interview and think about how to subdivide the discussion into segments. The beginnings of these segments are our index points.
- You may find it helpful to create rough ideas of your segments with relative time-code index points at the beginning (TC-in) of the segment. Take notes! They will guide how you make final decisions about the themes of the interview. You may also find that after hearing an entire interview, some themes can be joined together. Or a couple themes may need to be extracted from where there was only one, initially. A small theme may seem like a distraction and tangential to a larger theme of the conversation, so that small theme can be dismissed in favor of the stronger, overarching theme. (Subject headings can later be assigned to that insignificant theme, so don't forget about that theme entirely.)
- Enter your ideal index points and themes organized by a time-code and title in a working document (see below). This will be a spreadsheet usually, but could be a worksheet as well.

INTERVIEW ID# (NARRATOR NAME)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1		projected	processing									INDEX theme 9 (optional):	INDEX theme 10 (optional):	Project Archivist for upload	ready
2		Auditor	time	INDEX theme 1:	INDEX theme 2:	INDEX theme 3:	INDEX theme 4:	INDEX theme 5:	INDEX theme 6:	INDEX theme 7:	INDEX theme 8:			Check	
3															
4															
5															
6															

- Your segment title should be no longer than 89 characters (or length of this sentence). For some examples of constructing themes and keeping titles concise, please see <http://cbbq.brooklynhistory.org/listen>, click on the "SEARCH SYNCHRONIZED AUDIO AND TRANSCRIPT" of some interviews and move the toggle switch on the right to "INDEX."
- Once your index themes are approved, go back through your notes and playback parts or the entire interview to gather authority headings (BHS consults the Library of Congress' Online Catalog), and a bio and/or scope note.

- Consult your institutions policies on assigning access points. As you are culling authority headings, don't dismiss the asides and tangents that you may have correctly dismissed during your gathering of themes. Headings can be attached for the important aside or tangent even if they seem out of place next to the rest of your more relevant headings.
- You may find that you want to use your first pass of listening to find the access points, and then listen for indexing. Please choose the quickest and most productive approach that works for you.
- Speed and accuracy are very valuable to this workflow. Keep in mind that Audacity, Quicktime and Windows Media Player all have speed-adjustment tools. They augment how fast the interview plays but generally do not change the pitch, so the narrators will not sound like they're on helium when you playback fast.

Creating Records (When oral history records are also in an online catalog.)

- Login into OHMS: <https://ohms.uky.edu>
 - UN: [unique to user]
 - PW: [unique to user]
- In the **Interview Manager** tab, click **New**.
- Most OHMS metadata fields are not visible to the public. Only enter information in the following fields:
 - Title
 - Enter **Oral History Interview** with [Narrator's First name Last Name]
 - Accession Number
 - Enter **Asset ID**
 - Interviewee
 - Enter **First Name Last Name**
 - Interviewer
 - Enter **First Name Last Name**
 - Media Format
 - Select **Audio**
 - Media Host
 - Select **Host**
 - Rights
 - Enter "This index and audio recording is hereby made available for research purposes only. For more information, contact [institution name] at [institution @ email address]"
- Click **Save**.

Uploading Audio

- An easy method of uploading audio to your server is via FTP. Download an FTP program such as <http://winscp.net/download/winscp555setup.exe>.
- You will be prompted to enter user/ connection information
- Drag .mp3 to upload window and the relevant collection folder.

- Return to the **Interview Manager** tab in OHMS. Click on **Metadata** in the Metadata column of your record.
- In the **Media URL** field, enter `http://[your server address]` followed by the collection folder name and file name. This link points OHMS to the audio file on the server.
- Click **Save**.

Quality Assurance

- Leave time to review all metadata generated by staff and interns during syncing transcripts or indexing. Editing for clarity and consistency is likely to be necessary.