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HST580

03/14/2021

Dr. Kole

Week 9 Journal Entry

The process of creating an oral history is quite complicated. My nerves often get the best of me and they never turn out exactly as I had hoped.

The process starts long before the actual oral history recording. I started listening to people's stories, thinking about what gaps their stories may fill in the archives. For me, I wanted to interview people who were interesting and had an experience to share beyond something like my own experience. I think I did a good job in that department. I found two people to share their stories and they are both vastly different than me. They both had important roles and were affected differently by the pandemic. I didn't want to interview someone who spent the last year sheltering in place. While that is an interesting point of view, I have seen plenty of them in the archives already.

After that, I approached the people I wanted to do the oral history with. I was lucky in that they were interested in sharing their truth with the archives. I drafted questions and tried to keep them open ended. I tried not to influence the narrator's story. I put the questions aside for a few days and then reviewed them later with fresh eyes and edited them. Scheduling a meeting time for us was difficult. We are all terribly busy with work. I appreciate you Dr. Kole for allowing us wiggle room with our timing on these oral histories. I was able to get the second oral history done this morning.

I have to say that I loved the way both interviews turned out. I have to forgive myself for the imperfections. Because that makes them more real, more theirs. Each narrator made the oral history into their own. I am so impressed by that. I am sure to get their consent and release forms signed. I try hard not to react with anything but my face.

I love oral history! I know it wont be a career for me but I love the process and the result.