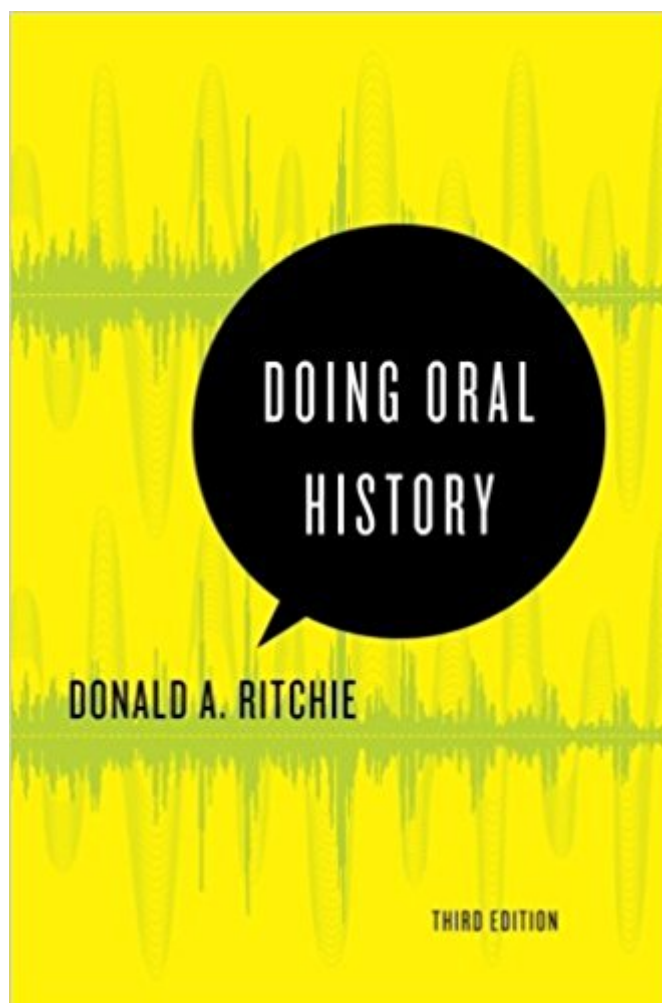


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# Doing Oral History (Oxford Oral History Series)



## Synopsis

Doing Oral History is considered the premier guidebook to oral history, used by professional oral historians, public historians, archivists, and genealogists as a core text in college courses and throughout the public history community. Over the past decades, the development of digital audio and video recording technology has continued to alter the practice of oral history, making it even easier to produce quality recordings and to disseminate them on the Internet. This basic manual offers detailed advice on setting up an oral history project, conducting interviews, making video recordings, preserving oral history collections in archives and libraries, and teaching and presenting oral history. Using the existing Q&A format, the third edition asks new questions and augments previous answers with new material, particularly in these areas:

1. Technology: As before, the book avoids recommending specific equipment, but weighs the merits of the types of technology available for audio and video recording, transcription, preservation, and dissemination. Information about web sites is expanded, and more discussion is provided about how other oral history projects have posted their interviews online.
2. Teaching: The new edition addresses the use of oral history in online teaching. It also expands the discussion of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) with the latest information about compliance issues.
3. Presentation: Once interviews have been conducted, there are many opportunities for creative presentation. There is much new material available on innovative forms of presentation developed over the last decade, including interpretive dance and other public performances.
4. Legal considerations: The recent Boston College case, in which the courts have ruled that Irish police should have access to sealed oral history transcripts, has re-focused attention on the problems of protecting donor restrictions. The new edition offers case studies from the past decade.
5. Theory and Memory: As a beginner's manual, Doing Oral History has not dealt extensively with theoretical issues, on the grounds that these emerge best from practice. But the third edition includes the latest thinking about memory and provides a sample of some of the theoretical issues surrounding oral sources. It will include examples of increased studies into catastrophe and trauma, and the special considerations these have generated for interviewers.
6. Internationalism: Perhaps the biggest development in the past decade has been the spreading of oral history around the world, facilitated in part by the International Oral History Association. New oral history projects have developed in areas that have undergone social and political upheavals, where the traditional archives reflect the old regimes, particularly in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The third edition includes many more references to non-U.S. projects that will still be relevant to an American audience. These changes make the third edition of Doing Oral History an even more useful tool for beginners, teachers,

archivists, and all those oral history managers who have inherited older collections that must be converted to the latest technology.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Donald Ritchie...has produced an invaluable manual that will serve research scholars and teachers equally well...Without pretension, *Doing Oral History* fulfills the promise touted on the jacket cover: to provide 'practical advice and reasonable explanations for anyone.'...[A] significant contribution to making oral history accessible to a wide audience of potential users."--The History Teacher

"Written in a friendly question-and-answer format, this book gives advice for preparing, setting up, and conducting an interview...Ritchie's step-by-step guide will help you preserve your family's experiences for generations to come."--Family Tree

"Ritchie has laid out the fundamentals to guide novices and given long-term practitioners material that will help them re-evaluate their own approaches. This book needs to be on every oral historian's shelf."--Northwest Oral History Association

"This book is not a dustcatcher. It is destined to be dog-eared and full of underlined passages, from the first time you pick it up. In a user-friendly question-and-answer format, much like an oral history interview, Don Ritchie has packed into one modest volume enough practical advice to get an oral history project off the ground, help a novice oral historian conduct a responsible interview, and challenge more experienced oral historians, librarians, and archivists who might use oral history to think broadly about the impact of what they are doing."--Mid-Atlantic Archivist

[The]

standard work for many years to come."--Public Historian"Simple, straightforward, and effective...[A] stimulating and formidable work...[I]t is indeed a guide to practice, but it is much more: it is a stepping-off point to the increasingly large universe that oral history practitioners occupy."--Oral History Review"[An] all-purpose guide to the entire range of the oral history process...[T]his volume provides extensive background on oral history and its relation to the larger realm of historical inquiry, discusses how oral history interviewing compares with journalistic and other interviewing techniques, and considers the workings of the human memory."--American Archivist"A definitive guide that provides all the practical advice and explanations needed to turn your ideas and goals into action and to create recordings that illuminate the human experience for generations to come. Definitely recommended."--The Ultimate Puzzle: Family Research"A comprehensive handbook on the theory, methods, and practice of oral history, based on work by the Oral History Association to revise its professional standards and principles."--Book News, Inc."[A] comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the art of oral history."--Oral History in New Zealand

Donald A. Ritchie is Historian, U.S. Senate Historical Office; past president of the Oral History Association; editor of the The Oxford Handbook of Oral History and author of Press Gallery: Congress and the Washington Correspondents and Reporting from Washington.

This is a comprehensive overview of oral history written in a question and answer format. It is well organized, easy to read, and peppered with funny stories to enliven the text. I use this book as a text in my graduate oral history class and students love it. Don't overlook the extensive bibliography, 12 pages of sources arranged by oral history topic. If you buy only one book on oral history, it should be this one. Don Ritchie is a fantastic writer and draws on his long career as the U.S. Senate historian.

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