

Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative

Storytelling 101: Oral History Interviews Presentation Notes

Slides 1-2 Introduction (5 Minutes)

Welcome everyone and introduce yourself!

Start workshop by reading Arizona State University (ASU) Library's **Indigenous Land Acknowledgement** and recognize the communities who have inhabited this land for centuries.

The **Labriola National American Indian Data Center** is actively working with communities in Arizona to decolonize and indigenize archives by centering Indigenous knowledge and sovereignty.

Slide 3 Who We Are (3 - 5 Minutes)

Established in 2017 with the support of Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the **Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative** seeks to:

- Work with Arizona's Latino, Black, Asian & Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and LGBTQ communities to preserve history.
- Create intergenerational and intersectional safe spaces that reimagine archives and support lifelong learning.
- Acknowledge historical trauma by supporting community led healing projects that break cycles of erasure.
- Provide access to archival collections and free library resources.

Slide 4 What's an Archive and Archivist? (3 - 5 Minutes)

Explain what an archive and archivist is. Share the following definitions:

An **archive** is a time capsule and active space where past and present merge. It contains primary resources that preserve the history of several generations.

An **archivist** appraises, arranges, describes, and preserves archives.

Encourage workshop attendees to share what an archives means to them. Who's the memory keeper in their community?

If you're a **professional archivist**, edit slides 1-6 with your information. What do you preserve? Why? If you don't have collections that represent these communities, explain why and be very honest.

Building relationships with historically marginalized communities will take time, trust, and a real commitment from your institution to empower Community Archivists who are ready to share and preserve their stories.

If you're a **community archivist**, please edit slides as needed. Why are you leading this workshop? How has your community been documented in local history? Why should people preserve? What legacy do you want to leave to future generations?

Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative

Slides 5-6 Community-Driven Collections (3 - 5 Minutes)

ASU Library is home to several community-driven archival collections that are accessible to the public in person at Hayden Library or online.

The **Chicano/a Research Collection** was established in 1970 by Dr. Christine Marin when she was a student during the Chicano – Civil Rights Movement. It's the largest archive in the state that focuses on Latino history. We have collections on mining history, farm workers, activism, politics, culture, and family history.

The **Bj Bud Memorial Archives** documents LGBTQ history from the late 1970's to early 2000's. The collection was named after a local lesbian activist named Harlene "Bj" Bud.

Slides 7-8 Ready to be a Community Archivist! (5 Minutes)

Arizona's **Latino, Black, Asian & Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and LGBTQ communities** have been excluded from local archives and memory. In 2012, the Arizona Archives Matrix Project showed these communities currently make up over 42% of the population but are only represented in 0 to 2% of known archival collections. Are you ready to become a Community Archivist!

Explain what an **oral history interview** is. For communities who don't have physical archival material like photos or document, an interview is the verbal preservation of history and memory. This method allows individuals to create and control their own narratives!

Slides 9-10 Show and Share Activity (10 - 15 Minutes)

Archiving is storytelling! Ask community members to share what's in their archive. *Example: If this is an in-person or virtual workshop, people can share a physical photo, an object, their favorite story, or an image on their phone.*

Ask attendees to also share their experience with storytelling. **Who would they interview? Why?**

The first thing you need to do is **select a person to interview**. Choose the oldest family or community member. Ask the person if they want to record the interview in English, Spanish, or their preferred languages. *Example: Parents or grandparents*

The small discussions and activities throughout this workshop will help **create a safe space for everyone**. As professional archivists, we need to center the lived experiences and knowledge of communities. We need to advocate for equal ownership of archives and shared stewardship responsibilities.

Community archivists are experts who need to be engaged at all levels of the preservation process. This is a good opportunity to uplift personal stories and collective memory as well as promote self-reflection and solidarity. The average length of this workshop is 1 hour 30 minutes. If the activities take up more time, the workshop can be extended to 2 hours.

Slide 11 Interview Information Form Activity (10 - 15 Minutes)

Ask attendees to fill out the Interview Information Form based on who they selected to interview. This will help them prepare for the interview by conducting preliminary research on the person. The form can be completed individually or as a group and people can share their results during workshop

Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative

Slide 12 Interview Outline (3 - 5 Minutes)

Create an outline for the interview. The outline should include a list of questions that provide structure during the interview but encourage storytelling.

Share the outline with the person you are going to interview so they feel prepared. Make edits to outline as needed. Ask them if they have photos they want to share during the interview.

Make sure you practice asking questions before the interview so you are comfortable.

Slide 13 Record the Conversation (5 Minutes)

Conduct interview in a quiet and comfortable space. Add breaks during the interview and provide food or drinks. Be aware and respectful of their needs and experiences. If a person is triggered and becomes emotional, stop the interview and continue when they are ready.

Use an iPad, phone, or camera to record the interview. You can download apps that record audio or video like StoryCorps or StoryCenter. Before you record, make sure the equipment is working. ASU Library loans technology to community archivists who want to conduct an interview. Please contact our CDA team if you want to borrow equipment (camera or listening station).

Begin the interview by asking the person their name, date and time, and interview location. An average interview should last one hour. When you press record, some people might feel nervous or shy. If an answer is short, be prepared to ask a follow-up question to continue the conversation. Thank the person for their time and story. Schedule a follow-up interview if clarifications are needed.

Slide 14 Interview Practice Activity (15 - 20 Minutes)

If this is an in-person event, the CDA team will provide access to listening stations.

Ask attendees to interview the person sitting next to them using the **Interview Practice Activity form**. This is a good opportunity for community members to ask questions, learn how to use equipment, and feel comfortable interviewing someone. If this is a virtual event and they are alone, attendees can fill out the form using their own life and memory and record themselves.

Slides 15-17 Edit and Preserve Recording (5 Minutes)

When the interview is completed, it's important to **edit and preserve the recording**. If archival material like photos is mentioned during the interview, make sure you scan photos and use them.

You can download special software on your phone and computer to edit videos and audio or create a **transcript of the interview**. You can also transcribe by listening to interview and writing down what you hear word by word. If the interview recording is ever damaged, you will still have the written version. For more information or help, check out the resources on the back of the Storytelling and Oral Histories booklet.

Ask if anyone has old home videos or oral history interviews at home? If you have a physical cassette or VHS, store the recording with your archival material in a safe temperature-controlled space. Make sure to reformat the media as needed. Example: Convert VHS to a digital file that can be stored on an external hard drive. It allows you to view the material without damaging the originals.

If you want to make the interview accessible to the public, have the person sign a release

Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative

form and donate to an archive like ASU Library. You can contact the CDA team to see an example of a form.

Digital Preservation is the process of appraising, arranging and describing your digital files similar to your physical archives. Make sure to organize the digital recordings by people and dates. Create unique titles for each file and folder.

Slides 18 - 19 **Contact us and Thank you! (3 - 5 Minutes)**

Our goal for this workshop was to make sure you feel confident in your new role as a Community Archivist and prepared to start this important preservation journey. If you have any questions or would like to collaborate on future projects or workshops, please contact us! Visit our website and follow us!

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