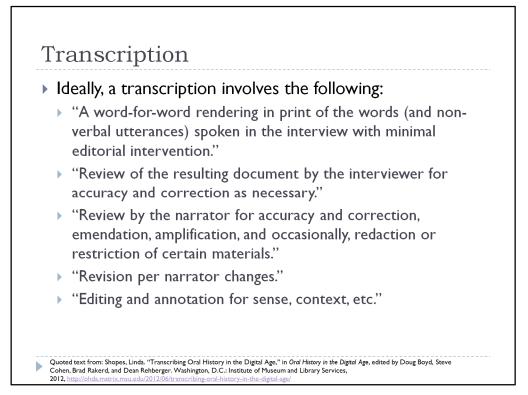
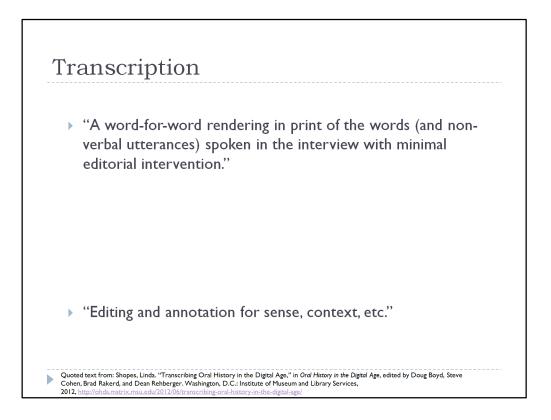
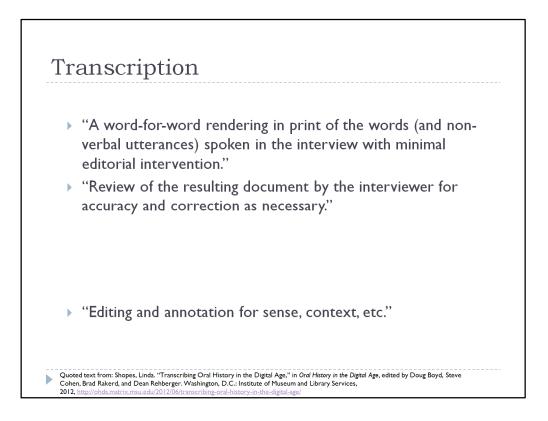


Transcription is important for access, as well as preservation. Some researchers are more comfortable with paper, and working with a transcription will allow them to access most of the content of an oral history.

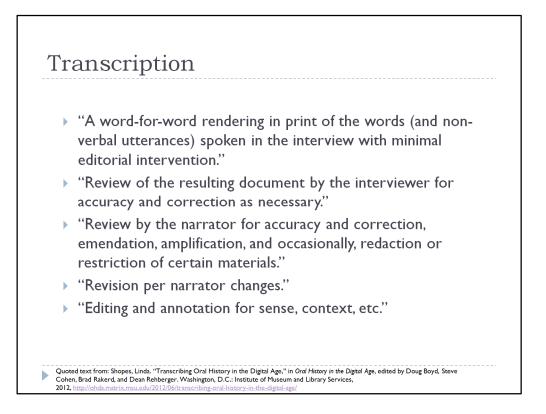




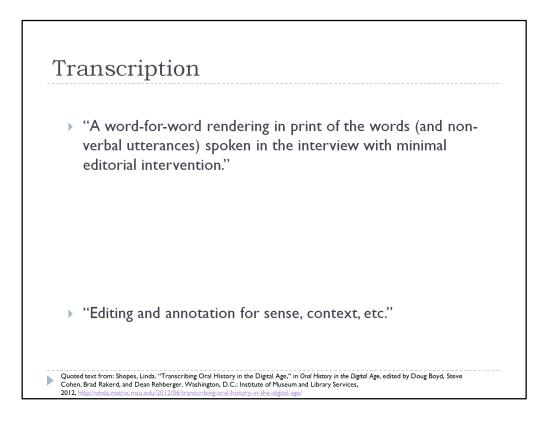
But this isn't always possible. If you've inherited your oral histories, the best you can do for transcription is the first and last listed here.



If your interviewer is still around, you can also pursue the second step.



If you have both your narrator and interviewee accessible, you can attempt to pursue all the steps.



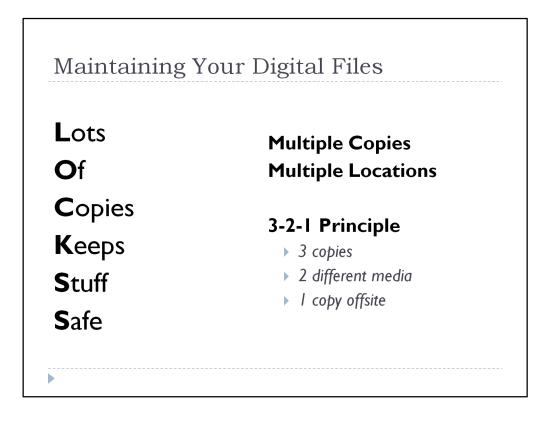
But if you only have the means to simply create a written, word-for word transcription of the interview, that's still a great step towards greater access.

Managing Your Digital Files

"...let us save what remains not by vaults and locks which fence them from the public eye and use in consigning them to the waste of time, but by such a multiplication of copies, as shall place them beyond the reach of accident."

-Thomas Jefferson, Feb. 18, 1791





LOCKSS is a project designed to preserve copies of electronic publications at libraries by ensuring that multiple copies are stored at different organizations administered by Stanford University.

Even though LOCKSS is a library based project, it's a great mantra for thinking about maintaining all of your files, not just the digital. In this case, we're talking about making sure that there is more than one copy of your digital file in existent, in multiple locations.



Legal and Ethical issues, including copyright, are things you need to think about when digitizing any audio material.

One of the most important things to think about when dealing with digitizing oral histories is the consent of the interviewee. Do you have consent of the interviewee to archive and preserve their interview and to make it available to researchers? For older oral histories you might hold, it might be difficult to track down a consent form, if there even was one. If you do have a consent, you need to consider how the interviewee perceived the access of the interview – Previously, an oral history could only be accessed on site, using the physical media, limiting access to researchers in the library. With digitization and the internet, the whole world can access the internet.

In addition, you need to be aware of the content of the interviews you might digitize. Do they contain personal, confidential, or sensitive information that should be restricted? Are there criminal allegations or slanderous statements included?

Belfast Project at Boston College – http://chronicle.com/interactives/belfast

