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People Profile: Doug Boyd

Editor

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reading rooms, boxes of tapes and stacks of printed transcripts.

Oral history is a complex information package with separate components: audio/video, text, and metadata. A further complication is that the audio/video interview or its textual representation is usually rather lengthy. Although the different components of the interview (audio/video, transcripts, and metadata) are relational, they are mostly treated as separate items by the typical content delivery system. One can search text and metadata extensively, but when it comes to linking the text or metadata with the specific correlate embedded in the audio and video interview, the systems usually fall quite short of user expectations.

In my imagined "model" online oral history interface, I wanted the words of the transcript and metadata to interact with the words and concepts embedded in the recording. I wanted to explore a solution that presented this information package according to a series of rules I refer to as LESS: Logical, Effective, Simple and, most importantly, Scalable. This seemed essential as I contemplate access to an oral history collection of nearly 8,000 interviews approaching 30,000 hours of content.

UK Libraries' Digital Programs had already begun experimenting with a system that inserts time markers in the transcript text. I worked with **Eric Weig**, Head of **Digital Programs**, to redesign an interface to search full text of transcripts and display time landmarks within the transcript. These landmarks in the transcript are hot-linked to provide access points to the correlating segments in the audio recording.

The new oral history interface empowers users to search text and to navigate within one minute of the search result in the corresponding audio file. Users can quickly navigate the audio, transcript and metadata, and both discover and pinpoint the specific textual or conceptual information they seek. (See Figure 1: New KDL Oral on page 26.)

History Interface

In addition to redesigning the user interface, we needed to dramatically redesign the process for preparing the interviews for online delivery utilizing embedded time landmarks in the new interface. We developed a custom software solution we call OHMS (Oral History Metadata gatherer and Synchronizer). OHMS guides the audio and text synchronization and additional metadata gathering, as well as serves as a project management tool for synchronizing and uploading the resultant interview. As the synchronizing process performed manually can be quite tedious and error prone, OHMS' game-like quality and workflow enhance the experience and provide a more precisely synchronized end product. OHMS has made the process of time chunking the interviews more accurate and efficient as a **Nunn Center** employee can sync an hour-long interview now in approximately 12 minutes.

The **Keightley** project was the perfect project with which to debut the new oral history

against the grain people profile

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Doug Boyd Ph.D.

BORN & LIVED: Born in California, raised in Ohio.

EARLY LIFE: Cincinnati, OH.

FAMILY: Wife and three kids (all girls under 6 years old).

EDUCATION: BA History, **Denison University**; MA and Ph.D. Folklore, **Indiana University**.

FIRST JOB: Played vintage keyboard instruments in a rock and roll band.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Director of the **Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History** at the **University of Kentucky Libraries**. Previously, managed the Digital Program for the **University of Alabama Libraries**, served as the Director of the Kentucky Oral History Commission and was the Senior Archivist for the oral history collections at the **Kentucky Historical Society**. Currently the media review editor for the *Oral History Review* and co-general editor of the oral history series at the **University Press of Kentucky**. I specialize in digital technologies associated with the collection, preservation, and digital publication of oral histories.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Did I mention that I have three kids under 6?

PHILOSOPHY: Have serious fun – always.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: TBD.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I see a growing emphasis on the unique materials found in special collections departments in forging an academic library's future identity. New and exciting modes of digital access further drive demand for the processing and preservation of these hidden collections. At the same time, there are increasing opportunities for special collections and libraries to reach new audiences, and forge creative collaboration and partnerships. 🍷



interface and to refine our OHMS workflow. The project was featured prominently on the front page of the sports section in the Lexington *Herald Leader*, and our radio segments won two statewide awards including an **Associated Press Award** for Best Sports Feature. Excerpts from **Keightley's** interviews were featured at many **University of Kentucky** basketball games, the **Keightley** interviews were used online several thousands of times over the course of the basketball season and beyond. On each segment listeners heard, "The **Bill Keightley** Oral History project is available at the **Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History** at the **University of Kentucky Libraries** and can be accessed online at <http://www.kdl.kyvl.org>."

The high profile of the **Bill Keightley** project succeeded for the **Nunn Center** on many levels. However, the project benefited our larger library and archives efforts as well. The **Keightley** project opened the door to discussions with the **UK Athletics** and renewed interest in the development of a formal athletics archive. The **UK Athletics** gave \$50,000 to digitize and make portions of our Athletics

Archives holdings accessible online. Athletics programs, especially at schools like **UK**, have the financial ability to assist in both oral history and archival efforts that ultimately pay good dividends to athletics. Our modest oral history project on "Mr. Wildcat" has been used as major leverage to advance efforts the **UK Libraries** had been trying to accomplish for decades.

Oral history provides tremendous opportunities for an academic research library to collect crucial primary source materials for their special collections. But it can also be a tremendous tool for outreach and community engagement. The **Nunn Center**, a fairly nimble entity in the library system, has traditionally taken a proactive and intentional approach to oral history projects, recognizing gaps in the historical record and acting to construct relevant and historically important projects. The **Nunn Center's** underlying principles have always involved strategically planning our projects, cultivating relationships and collaborations to successfully implement innovative projects, and recognizing opportu-

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