

Kent State Shootings Oral Histories





May 4 Oral History Project

- Collection of recordings of eyewitness accounts
- Students and faculty who were on campus that day
- Area residents

May 4 Oral History Project overview

- 1973: a few early interviews
- 1980s: a handful of interviews
- 1990: Oral History Project established formally
- 2006: Greater professionalism; new staff with oral history training
- Oral histories are now recorded digitally

Digitization project

- 2002: Proposal submitted to OhioLINK
- Selection of oral histories accepted for inclusion in the OhioLINK Digital Media Center
- Estimated time to complete digitization project: six months
- Actual completion time: closer to two years

Steps in Digitizing

- Convert cassette tapes to digital audio files
- Select which recordings to include
- Prepare metadata for each recording
- Upload to OhioLINK's server using Documentum DAM
- Attach metadata
- Provide links to transcripts
- OhioLINK DMC has now migrated to new platform

Issues & challenges

- Digitizing the recordings
 - Tape quality problems
- Editing the audio files
 - Anonymous recordings
 - Privacy issues

Issues & challenges

■ Cataloging

- OhioLINK metadata standards not yet established at the time
- Subject field was limited in size
- Descriptions were time-consuming to write
- Many recordings hadn't been transcribed

Issues & challenges

- OhioLINK DMC changed platforms
- Method for ingesting new content not established yet
- Lack of local control

Kent State Shootings

Oral Histories

OhioLINK Digital Media Center

Audio, Video & Image Collections Provided by OhioLINK.

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Kent State Shootings Oral Histories is a collection of recordings related to the May 4, 1970 shootings of Vietnam War protestors at Kent State University. The oral histories include many eyewitness accounts of the event and its aftermath, contributed by people who were students, faculty members, and City of Kent residents at the time, as well as an account by an Ohio National Guardsman.

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Collection Size

Records: 70

Online Images/Media: 70

Access

This collection is open to the public.

Kent State Shootings

Oral Histories

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listen to **audio** 

Title	Naomi Goelman Etzkin Oral History
Description	An undergraduate student at Kent State University in 1970, Naomi Goelman Etzkin relates her eyewitness account of the May 4 shootings on campus. She describes seeing the National Guard camped and doing practice maneuvers in a football field near her dormitory, Olson Hall. She attended the noon rally on the Commons on May 4 and describes what she observed about the movement and positions taken by the National Guard troops and the tear gas that was used. She describes seeing, from her dormitory window, ambulances arrive and Dr. Glenn Frank speaking to the students who had remained in the Commons. She describes the military jeeps that came to her dorm with men using bullhorns to announce that campus was closed. She was the last resident to leave her dormitory; she describes talking with National Guardsmen, who were eating dinner in the cafeteria, about what had happened.
Place	Kent (Ohio) ; Streetsboro (Ohio)
Date	1990-05-04
Creator	Etzkin, Naomi Goelman
Creator Role	Undergraduate student at Kent State University in 1970

Subject	Kent State Shootings, Kent, Ohio, 1970 Ambulances Tear gas munitions Ohio. Army National Guard Frank, Glenn W. Kent State University. Olson Hall Students--Ohio--Kent--Interviews
Coverage Temporal	1970
Work Type	Sound recording
Copyright	Kent State University
Contributor	Dept. of Special Collections and Archives, Libraries and Media Services, Kent State University
Institution	Kent State University
Transcript	View transcript
Collection	May 4 Collection. Oral History Project

To bookmark this page use: http://dmc.ohiolink.edu/cgi/i/image/image-idx?cc=kentmay4;view=entry;e_b34991;viewid=90-NAOMI-GOELMAN-ETZKIN-TAPE14-SIDE-B34991.MP3

Kent State Shootings: Oral Histories

dispersed. I went over the hill on the side of the pagoda. And there was a practice football field on the other side of the driveway that led to the parking lot by the Architecture building, and the Guardsmen marched over the hill and down to the practice football field. And they were doing—they were being given some orders; they knelt, they pointed guns, then they got up and they started to march back up the hill. By this time—and they were separated from the rest of the Guardsmen—this time they really had been surrounded by the students, because when they marched up the hill and the students went all around the hill, and they marched back up to the pagoda. And there was taunting and jeering at the Guards, calling to them to get off the campus. And that moment—without any warning—because they already had been shouting some orders and going through little maneuvers and marching right and left and so on. **Evidently the order came to shoot, and they pointed in the opposite direction of where I was standing. When we heard the gunshots, we did not believe that they were real bullets. We thought they were shooting in the air, and we just didn't believe that the bullets could be real. And we went running back to our dormitory, and we watched out the fourth floor window in Olson Hall as the ambulances came over the hill.** And people began coming back into the dorm, having walked over bleeding bodies. We then went to another window in the dorm, and we watched Dr. Frank address the students who were still on the hill. Everybody sat down in shock, and he said—that to the best of my recollection—something like, "They've already committed murder and they can do it again. Now I want you to follow me off this hill." And miraculously everyone followed

Benefits

- Worldwide access via the Internet to these historically important recordings
- Keyword and subject access to topics discussed
- Preservation of old magnetic media recordings
- Increased visibility for the May 4 Oral History Project