

MDOCS

THE JOHN B. MOORE DOC STUDIES COLLABORATIVE

Fall 2014, 1.3



October 21, 2014
A Bi-weekly
Newsletter

Learning to Listen with Eileen McAdam A Sound & Story Workshop

On Friday, October 17, Eileen McAdam, Director and Producer of the Sound & Story Project, led an MDOCS workshop on the art of the interview for students, faculty & retirees. The hands-on introduction to methods of oral history—a first-hand story or memory—put new handheld audio recorders and headphones to work, as participants learned to listen and then how to conduct an interview.

McAdam emphasized the importance of establishing a

good rapport and ensuring a comfortable and quiet setting. (Getting to quiet can be hard. McAdam told us that some documentarians leave car keys in a silenced, unplugged refrigerator as a reminder to turn it back on!) Participants learned how to frame open ended interview questions. We practiced in the workshop, finding that listening through headphones changed how we heard, and that holding a recorder close enough to get sound required practice.

Then we tested our skills

by interviewing volunteers from the library, IT, and retirees, who shared Skidmore and Saratoga memories. We ended the day by discussing as a group the successes and challenges we faced.

Whether working on social work, education, biology or American Studies, we look forward to listening more.

- Lisa Fierstein '16

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UPCOMING DOC DATES...

Conversations, workshops and presentations on documentary.
(LI 113 unless otherwise noted)

October 22:
What's Up, Doc?
Larry Hott & Diane Garey,
"Every Cut is a Lie," Ladd 307

November 5:
MDOCS Planning:
Inclusive Documentary:
How can MDOCS serve all
campus communities?

November 12:
What's Up, Doc?
Nicole Coady, "Screenwriting
for the Real World."

November 19:
What's Up, Doc?
Noah Throop, '14

RELATED EVENTS...



October 21:

Media & Film Studies
Presents:

Larry Hott & Diana Garey
*Frederick Law Olmsted:
Designing America*

Tuesday 10/21, 8 PM,



MDOCS director J. Dym, President emeritus D. Porter, E. McAdam

Director's Note

What a difference a Cube makes!

Over the weekend, MDOCS welcomed Eileen McAdam of the Hudson Valley Sound & Story Project and her portable (and shiny) sound recording studio to campus.

While the mirrored polyhedron drew onlookers--reflecting (as intended) the community whose stories Eileen captured--the visit did more than add glitter to Case Green.

Eileen led a workshop on audio documentary (p.1) and inaugurated the Skidmore-Saratoga Memory Project with interviews (p. 4) that captured some amazing voices and drew out stories about Skidmore's Miss America and Happy Pappy (father's weekends before the college went co-ed), a president's first day on the job with students protesting Apartheid-era South African steel in a new teaching center,

and the challenges of bringing a teaching museum to campus and college registration online.

But collecting stories is only the first, and very public, stage of the Memory Project. In meetings with librarians, Eileen dug into best practices for permissions and releases, & for cataloguing, streaming and preserving recordings. Then she brainstormed with an interdisciplinary group about how a college might use its own portable studio.

In other words, Eileen modeled the generosity of the documentarian, providing mentoring on the behind-the-scenes work needed to make a memory project matter—to keep it safe, to make it accessible to those who want to hear the stories, and to build community.

Hers is a voice worth listening to. J. Dym

Comida Latina

Although many people think “film” when they hear the word documentary, Viviana Rangil’s multimedia project, Comida Latina, follows a different recipe. Her interviews, images, and analysis of the ways that food matters to Latin American communities in Mexico, Puerto Rico and New York blend traditional research with an innovative web-based archive & exhibit platform. On October 15’s Doc Date, Prof. Rangil explained how it takes a team to present a multimedia project—the



Viviana Rangil

researcher, programmer, and exhibit designer. Whether reporting from a market or with a family cooking a wedding feast for 2000, clatina.skidmore.edu reveals a scholar’s process and perspective.

ABOUT
PERSPECTIVES
Comida Latina
RESOURCES
COLLECTIONS

SPANNING CULTURES • BUILDING BRIDGES

The role of food in our daily lives is first and foremost that of nourishment, sustenance, and nutrition. But food is much more than just fuel for our bodies, as it touches so many aspects of our lives: it is related to how we celebrate life, it is framed by family and tradition, it travels with us when we migrate in this increasingly globalized world. Food bridges cultures and at the same time is integral to cultural identity. The study of food allows an alternative view of the “Latinization” of the US as a reciprocal and transformative trend for both the Latino and the US cultures.

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Food isn’t always abundant. Raoul Peck’s *Fatal Assistance* (2013), to be screened November 6, 7pm, offers insight to the challenges of rebuilding Haiti, an island nation devastated by earthquake in 2010. While on campus, Peck will be meeting with students from International Affairs, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Latin American Studies, and the Science Literacy



“Invasion Project” to talk about filmmaking with a point of view and an international lens.

MDOCS Meets the Parents!

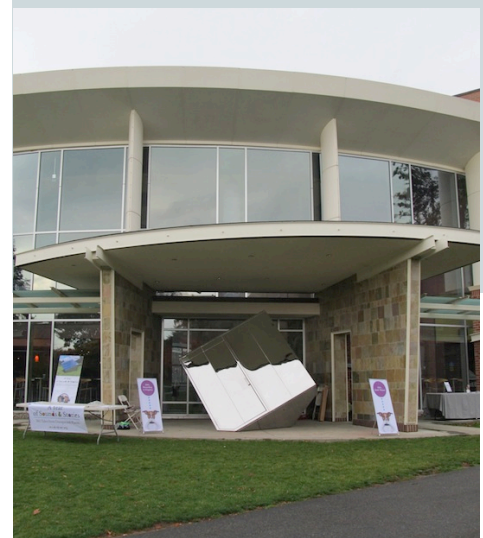
Celebration Weekend
October 2014

With fall in the air this weekend, students showed their families around campus, and almost everybody’s eyes were drawn to The Cube at the dining hall!

The Sound & Story Project’s portable digital recording studio, used to collect interviews from all over, is this shiny, handy Cube. On Saturday, we saw retired Skidmoreans and Saratoga Springs historians heading in to tell their stories.

It was quite the spectacle to see so many families stroll by asking about this strange contraption.

MDOCS director Jordana Dym’s mini-college introduced families to MDOCS program—its classes, workshops, summer plans, and resources in LI 113. Now both students AND families know what’s going on with MDOCS!



Introducing the Skidmore-Saratoga Memory Project

How can a city find a new way to tell its story? Who can work with a local group—a senior center, a worker's advocacy group, a history museum?

The Skidmore-Saratoga Memory Project (SSMP), an MDOCS initiative!



McAdam interviews Palamountain

Both Skidmore College and its hometown, Saratoga Springs, are rich in history and people with stories to share. The SSMP partners students with a relevant documentary skillset or interest with a faculty or community member who is documenting a piece of Skidmore-Saratoga's history. Together the SSMP teams might create or organize an archive, build an exhibit, reimagine a historic site, or make a video or radio show; in other words, they help celebrate the community, events, and milestones of the past.

On October 18, Eileen McAdam conducted the first SSMP oral histories with city history doyenne Minnie Bolster, and Skidmore College's Ann Henderson, Anne Palamountain, Don McCormack and David Porter, laying the foundations for a rich understanding of our past. Looking forward, students will take up SSMP internships, and "practica" classes will offer hands-on skills and projects. Over time, the Skidmore-Saratoga Memory Project will foster a greater connection between the past and the present for the Skidmore and the Saratoga Springs communities, helping to recover forgotten stories and tell some new ones.

(LF/JD)

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