

## Two-part Assignment for the “What is your Hilltop?” Class

**WHAT?** The Hilltop community has a proud history that is largely undocumented in terms of personal and place-based stories, individual accomplishments, issues of importance and community events. As library patrons, we hope you’ll help us collect and document—from a personal perspective—points of community pride. By that we mean that we want you to create interesting stories

- of people you know and feel are important to the community, people who help hold things together,
- of active citizens or creative individuals,
- about important places (to you and other community members),
- about important community events. and
- about community issues and individual experiences.

Consider including the stories of your family, friends, acquaintances, or yourself in the “What is your Hilltop?” Project.

### Short Hilltop Stories (a 3-5 min. video)

VERSUS

### Community Histories and Folklore?

**Part 1:** We hope, over the next few months, you will collect many interviews, take a great many photographs, scan many photos and artifacts, and collect other materials appropriate for your story. That entire collection will help document some of Hilltop’s history & folklore (past and present).

**Part 2:** BUT only a small portion of your interviews, images, and materials will fit into a 3-5 min. video. Both the larger collection and short video are important. Here’s why.

Your short video will entice more people to explore the more complete collection that you make. The usage data of extensive online collections (particularly those that include audio or video) indicates that most materials are rarely viewed or used. Short, powerful, focused stories *are* viewed and passed around. If you pique someone’s curiosity and tell them where to go for more information, they are more likely explore your larger collection. Your story will be the doorway into your larger set of materials. Make sense?

**HOW?** Over the next two months, we will help you record and edit audio interviews or story-telling sessions and combine them with photos and scanned images to make short digital stories (3-5 minutes long). With your permission (and the permissions of your interviewees), we hope to archive (online) three things:

- the short 3-5 minute video,
- the longer interviews and
- all the photos you take and the materials you scan.

For those people who are concerned about being identified, we can produce stories that keep them anonymous.

**Technologies:** We will be using several technologies to collect and compose your materials. They include

- *digital audio recorders* to collect interviews with people or, if you are lucky, record the music people play at public events or play for you during interviews.
- *digital cameras* to collect pictures of people, places, and events
- *scanners and photo software* to digitize appropriate photo albums and documents that people permit us to use
- *audio editing software* that will allow us to use only the most important statements made by those who are interviewed

- *video editing software* that puts everything together into short movies that family, community members, politicians, and academics can watch
- *a web-based storage system* that will allow others to view your work (with permission).

As you use these technologies, technical consultants will be on duty to answer questions in an attempt to minimize frustration. But we also hope that all members of this class will help each other as we go along. As you learn something, show it to someone else.

## **Free Community Class Schedule**

Session 1: **April 10**, 4-6 PM Hilltop Branch Library

1. We will talk about people, places, events, and issues that you think represent the Hilltop community to you. You'll identify at least one person to interview.
2. We will watch several digital stories and identify the best parts of those short movies: in terms of content and production quality.
3. Each person will write or talk through a set of questions that they'd like to ask someone in the Hilltop community.
4. Technical consultants will show everyone how to use the audio recorders. Afterwards you will have a chance to practice on each other: Who is this person and why are you REALLY interested in this class?
5. Homework: we'll ask you to record a short interview with someone important to you OR your project before the next lab session.

Lab 1: **April 17**, 4-5 PM Hilltop Branch Library

We will give you supported time (with someone around to help) to work on your story.

Session 2: **April 24**, 4-6 PM Hilltop Branch Library

1. Each person will share no more than :30 seconds of the best audio from their interview.
2. You begin writing a script that will help organize your story. We share stories in class and give you as many helpful suggestions as possible.
3. Audio editing: edit the audio you captured with the audio recorder
4. Digital Camera: Show you how to use the digital cameras
5. Homework: You go out and take appropriate pictures and collect permission to use those pictures.

**Lab 2 (Optional): May 1, 4-5 PM Hilltop Branch Library**

Supported time (with someone around to help) to work on your story.

Session 3: **May 8**, 4-6 PM Hilltop Branch Library

1. Each person will share the best image or materials that they have taken or collected
2. Supported time to work on all the media assets (audio and still images) for your stories. Prepare them for use in iMovie HD.
3. Class members outline what is *missing* from their stories: images, audio comments from the "talent," or voice-over background and transitions.
4. Homework:

- Class members return to their “talent” and collect media assets for another round of editing.
- Class members collect permission forms that allow us to make movies available online.

**Lab 3 (Optional): May 15 4-5 PM Hilltop Branch Library**

Supported time (with someone around to help) to work on your story.

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**Session 4: May 22 4-6 PM Hilltop Branch Library**

1. Supported time (with someone around to help) to work on your story.
2. We give you another chance to get feedback on the initial parts of your “What is your Hilltop?” media project. You revise your movie according to the best advice you receive.
3. Supported time (with someone around to help) to work on your story.

**Lab 4 (Optional): May 29 4-5 PM Hilltop Branch Library**

Supported time (with someone around to help) to work on your story.

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**Session 5: Final Presentations on June 5<sup>th</sup>, sometime between 4-8:30 PM Hilltop Branch Library**

Supported time (with someone around to help) to finalize your story. We have a final “party” where we preview all of the stories for you, your friends, family, and Hilltop patrons

The fun begins all over again, only this time we hope that some of you will step up and help run another class called “What is your Hilltop?”

**Resources**

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdedA9rJoaM&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdedA9rJoaM&feature=channel_page) (Brown’ promise unfulfilled)
- Dickie Selfe’s digital story: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auakEY05TpQ>
- Loring Rensler’s digital stories
- Ray Cashman quote (Prof. of English and Folklore at OSU), “Once camera is in hand we can't take the visual scene at face value but rather need to look to oral traditions to see how locals invest their landscape with meaning, turning space into place.”
- <http://www.storycenter.org/stories/>
  1. Couches
  2. Shoes
- <http://www.storymapping.org/placemeant.html>
  1. The Telephone
  2. Hit and Run Theater
  3. Johnie’s Market
  4. Pygmy Forest
  5. Seabiscuit