**Photography and Scanning**
*for the Newfane Community Memory Project*

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Vermont Folklife Center



## Group Introductions

- who are you?
- what interest/experience brings you to this project?
- specific questions about photography / visual media?

## Vermont Folklife Center

**Who We Are:**

- Independent 501c3 founded in 1984
- Based in Middlebury, Vermont
- Cultural Research and Education Organization

## Vermont Folklife Center

**What We Do:**

- interview-based, ethnographic research
- exhibits and collaborative media products
- maintain a multi-media archive
- education outreach, provide professional learning opportunities for educators

**Why We Do It:**

- To make Vermonters *visible* to one another
- To sustain *living* cultural practices and expressions
- To build *resilient* cultural communities
- To understand how people make the past useful in the present

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**What we're doing today at Moore Free Library:**

- Basing our work in a collaborative ethnographic framework
- Reviewing key concepts of photography
  - Composition & Lighting
  - Technical considerations/equipment
  - Interpersonal considerations (if photographing people)
- Doing photography - we'll create, share, review, critique, and learn from our own and each other's photos today
- Learning about and practicing scanning for digital preservation
- Receiving and reviewing instructions about file naming and organization

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**Goals/Outcomes for today:**

- Feeling well-oriented and confident with photography
- Being familiar with the scanning process
- Understanding how to organize digital files for this project
- Feeling prepared for your involvement in the project
- Knowing where to go for further practice/questions
- Knowing your own next steps. We are here to support you!

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# Introduction to VFC approach to documentary work: Collaborative Ethnography

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**Fundamentals of ethnography:**

- **understand experience from the perspective of the person to which the experience belongs**
- Our practice rooted in:
  - Collaboration, participation and reciprocity
  - Co-production of knowledge with communities
  - Interpretive authority lies with those whose stories and experiences are being shared and represented

**In the context of photography:**

- History of photographic representation and "storytelling"
- Everyone is expert in their own experience, let's honor that.

**Why is this important?**

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# Let's talk about: Photography in General

Q: What equipment should I use?
Q: What are the "rules" of photography I need to know?

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## Photography: Primary Questions

**Q: What equipment should I use?**

- The equipment you have
- The equipment you know how to use

**Q: What are the "rules" of photography?**

The most important ones are:

- Pay attention to the background!
- Make the most of the light that you have

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## Equipment:

**Use what you have and what you already know how to use well**

- there are smartphone apps for "manual mode"
  - Open Camera, Footej, and Camera FV-5 for Android phones
  - Camera+2, Halide, ProCam 5 for iPhones
- digital cameras

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## Photography "Rules" to remember:

### 1. Pay attention to the background!

**Uncluttered or relevant backgrounds:** Notice the background of a photo before you take it. A simple, uncluttered background is best, because it won't distract from the subject of the photo. However, if the background *is* relevant to the object or person or relevant to what someone has talked about in an interview, then including the background makes sense.

1. Background is busy, but relevant.

2. Background is busy, does not appear relevant.

3. Beware objects behind heads.

Object photography

1. Pay attention to the background:
   Examples - object photography

Blood Orange Lemonade
SPARKLING
POLAR
with
essence of
fresh lemons
SELTZER

No Sweep
Sweep
source: fstoppers.com

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## 2. Make the most of the light you have

**Natural light**/daylight is best (outdoors, or indoors near a window or windows)
**We should always be seeking (or trying to create) an advantageous combination of light INTENSITY and DIRECTION.** We want to balance those factors.

- if it's TOO INTENSE (noon on a sunny day), it washes out your subject or is difficult to expose correctly.
- if it's TOO SOFT/EARLY/LATE in the day or coming from too narrow of an angle, there may be extreme shadows and lack of detail.

## 2. Make the most of the light you have: Examples - object photography

## Object Photography: practice

You may wish to work in pairs or individually -- either way is fine, but please maintain 6-foot distance and masking.

**1. Find an object** -- can be anything - wallet, bag, glasses, a shoe, a book. Don't spend too much time on this at the moment, just use something readily available.

**2. Asses your environment** (available backgrounds, light) **and make a decision** about where and how to photograph your object.

**3. Photograph your object** (you may want to try different locations/light).

4. Email your photo(s) to mrizos@vermontfolklifecenter.org. We will view the group's photos after this exercise (~ 15 minutes) (assuming smartphone use primarily -- can adjust instruction if this is not the case)

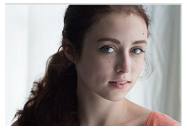
Break time ~ 10 min

View participants' object photos
- link to slideshow

Portrait photography /
Photographing people

## 1. Pay attention to the background: Examples - portrait photography

## 2. Make the most of the light you have: Examples - portrait photography



source: dpmag.com source: picturecorrect.com

## Additional tips for taking portraits:

1. Take 3 different types/distances
   a. close (headshot or head and torso) (focus on person's face)

      (include example photo)
   b. mid (full body, immediate background/context) (focus still mostly on person's face, some info about environment)
      (include example photo)

   c. wide angle (person in the environment - environment is bigger than the person) (focus is on the environment/person's relationship with the environment)
      (include example photo)

2. Vertical or Horizontal, what to do?

## Portrait Photography: Let's practice

Work in pairs to practice photographing people. Maintain a greater-than-6-foot distance if you are not wearing masks, if closer than 6 feet, keep masks on.

**1. Discuss with your partner the options you see for background, lighting.**

**2. Make a decision about the location(s) to take the portraits.**

**3. Take portraits of each other.**
- Try to notice as you're going through this process how you're feeling -- both as photographer and as subject. Are you distracted by technical details? Are you uncomfortable being photographed? What could you or others do to make the experience go more smoothly for you (in either role?)

**4. Email your photo(s)** to mrizos@vermontfolklifecenter.org. We will view the group's photos after this exercise (~ 20 minutes) (assuming smartphone use primarily -- can adjust instruction if this is not the case)

View participants' portraits - link to slideshow

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### How to ask people to take their photos:

- In the context of an already-established or already-arranged interview:
  - Make sure that any initial request includes your interest in photographing the person and/or artifacts.
- In any context outside of an already-arranged interview, always explain:
  - Who you are
  - What you're interested in
  - What you can offer the interviewee (a copy of the photographs e.g.)
  - That the photography will be conducted in the safest manner possible (following pandemic safety protocols - remote vs. in-person, masked)
  - How long you expect the photographs to take (15-30 minutes)
  - Where the photos will end up (with their permission)
  - Mention the archive and release form

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**Using a release form**

- Why use a release form?
- What does it really mean?
- How to introduce and discuss a release form with a person you're photographing or a person who is contributing photographs to this project?

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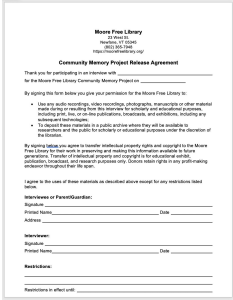

**Moore Free Library**
23 West 55
Hardwick, VT 05245
(802) 505-7846
https://moorefreelibrary.org/

**Community Memory Project Release Agreement**

Thank you for participating in an interview with _____

for the Moore Free Library Community Memory Project on _____

By signing this form below you give your permission for the Moore Free Library to:

- Use any audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, manuscripts or other material made during or resulting from this interview for scholarly and educational purposes, including print, live, or on-line publications, broadcasts, and exhibitions, including any subsequent technologies;
- To deposit these materials in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for scholarly or educational purposes under the discretion of the librarian.

By signing below you agree to transfer intellectual property rights and copyright to the Moore Free Library for their work in preserving and making this information available to future generations. Transfer of intellectual property and copyright is for educational exhibit, publication, broadcast, and research purposes only. Donors retain rights in any profit-making endeavor throughout their life span.

I agree to the uses of these materials as described above except for any restrictions listed below.

**Interviewee or Parent/Guardian:**

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

**Interviewer:**

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

**Restrictions:**

_____

_____

Restrictions in effect until: _____

# Vermont Folklife Center

**Community Memory Project Release Agreement**

Thank you for participating in an interview with _____ for the Moore Free Library Community Memory Project on _____

By signing this form below you give your permission for the Moore Free Library to:

- Use any audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, manuscripts or other material made during or resulting from this interview for scholarly and educational purposes, including print, live, or on-line publications, broadcasts, and exhibitions, including any subsequent technologies;
- To deposit these materials in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for scholarly or educational purposes under the discretion of the librarian.

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# Vermont Folklife Center

**Moore Free Library**
23 West St.
Newfane, VT 05345
(802) 365-7948
https://moorefreelibrary.org/

**Community Memory Project Photography Release Agreement**

Thank you for being photographed by _____ for the Moore Free Library Community Memory Project on _____ (date)

By signing this form below you give your permission for the Moore Free Library to:

- Use any images made during or resulting from this interview for scholarly and educational purposes, including print, live, or on-line publications, broadcasts, and exhibitions, including any subsequent technologies;
- To deposit these materials in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for scholarly or educational purposes under the discretion of the librarian.

By signing below you agree to transfer intellectual property rights and copyright to the Moore Free Library for their work in preserving and making this information available to future generations. Transfer of intellectual property and copyright is for educational exhibit, publication, broadcast, and research purposes only.

I agree to the uses of these materials as described above except for any restrictions listed below.

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**Person photographed or Parent/Guardian:**

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Email Address: _____

**Photographer:**

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

**Restrictions:** _____

_____

_____

Restrictions in effect until: _____

# Vermont Folklife Center

**Moore Free Library**
23 West St.
Newfane, VT 05345
(802) 365-7948
https://moorefreelibrary.org/

**Community Memory Project Photography (Donation) Release Agreement**

Thank you for contributing photographs to the Moore Free Library Community Memory Project on _____ (date)

By signing this form below you give your permission for the Moore Free Library to:

- Use any images made during or resulting from this session for scholarly and educational purposes, including print, live, or on-line publications, broadcasts, and exhibitions, including any subsequent technologies;
- To deposit these materials in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for scholarly or educational purposes under the discretion of the librarian.

By signing below you agree to transfer intellectual property rights and copyright to the Moore Free Library for their work in preserving and making this information available to future generations. Transfer of intellectual property and copyright is for educational exhibit, publication, broadcast, and research purposes only.

I agree to the uses of these materials as described above except for any restrictions listed below.

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**Person donating photo or Parent/Guardian:**

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Email Address: _____

**Person receiving/scanning photo:**

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

**Restrictions:** _____

_____

_____

Restrictions in effect until: _____

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**Photography fundamentals RE-CAP:**

- Remember two main "rules" (background, light)
- Portraits: It's your job to make that person feel comfortable.
- Portraits: *They* are the expert in their experience. Collaborate with them to create an image that represents that.
- Prepare:
  - Know your equipment
  - Try to get a sense of the person you'll be photographing ahead of time if possible (via interview, email, phone)
  - Practice a lot with people you know
  - Prepare release forms

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**Photographing people is similar to interviewing:**

- Skills you need to do a great interview, connect with others, can transfer to photography:
  - → Listening
  - → Eye contact
  - → Body Language

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**Photographing – Before:**

- Set up and test equipment/get a sense of the space, light
- If a portrait
  - make sure person to be photographed is comfortable
  - Review release form

**Photographing – During:**

- Move things/people in environment for best lighting/background
- Balance your attention between technical concerns and needs of the person you're photographing

**Photographing – Immediately after:**

- Complete release form
- Ask if/how the person would like to receive copies of the photo(s)
- …say thank you!

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**Photography – Once you get home:**

- Send thank you note/follow up phone call
- Upload/save photos to computer and/or hard drive
- Make copy of photos and send to the person you photographed/person whose objects you photographed
- Next steps: File Management (file names, metadata)

## Scanning:

Creating digital copies of photographs, documents, flat objects

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**Equipment:**

- **Scanner (located at Moore Free Library)**
- **Computer (also available at Moore Free Library)**

Connected to each other via USB

## Scanning: How-To

**Step 1: Set up scanner to be a scanner and connect to the computer**

## Scanning: How-To

**Step 2: Open the "Windows Scan" program on the computer, and tell the scanner to scan your photo/doc**

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**Scanning – during and after:**

- After each individual scan, update filename according to guidelines for this project
- After a filename is updated, fill out metadata form
- Make a copy of scanned image files and send to the person whose photos or documents you scanned

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**Scanning – other details, options, considerations:**

- **feeder v. flatbed**
- **wearing gloves when handling materials**
-

## After photos OR scans - File Management

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**Saving your photos and/or scans for this project:**

- *Save to computer and/or hard drive*
- *Select the photos/scans that will be contributed to Community Memory Project*
- *Update selected file names according to project guidelines*
- *Fill in metadata using project template*

(do this directly on Moore Free Library computer/hard drives, or you may do on your home computer and share via Google Drive or other channel)

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**Describing your recordings – file naming:**

- **Some examples of file names:**

  smith-jane_2019-10-31_audio001.wav
  smith-jane_2019-10-31_image001.tif
  smith-jane_2019-10-31_image002.tif
  smith-jane_2019-10-31_image003.tif
  smith-jane_2019-10-31_transcript001.doc

- **Resource on file naming for oral history:**
  - http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/2012/08/file-naming-in-the-digital-age/

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**Describing your Photos – Metadata**

- Who, what, when and where
- Intellectual content
- Permissions
- …or, in other terms, information **about** the files you've created and their **content.**

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Where to go for reminders, review, more info, or to expand upon what we've talked about here?

**For photography:**

**For portrait photography:**

**For scanning and organizing files:**

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**Upcoming Workshops:**

- **Oct 31: Audio Editing Basics (1-3 PM):** A hands-on introduction to basic audio editing for anyone looking to create interview-based audio content, from simple cuts and excerpts to the core skills needed to build a longer-format podcast. Participants will learn to trim, cut, assemble and mix a simple audio piece using free, web-based editing software.

## Thanks!

Presentation developed by Mary Rizos and Andy Kolovos of the Vermont Folklife Center.

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