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THE USE OF ORAL HISTORY AND NARRATIVE RESEARCH IN BROADENING THE
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THE USE OF ORAL HISTORY AND NARRATIVE RESEARCH IN BROADENING THE
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To my two sons, Kale and Tanner

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ABSTRACT

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The historical foundation of the agricultural communication community (consisting of both academics and the profession) is shallow and void of humanistic perspective, and there is a minimal amount of historical content that focuses on academic and professional history. The need to explore and interpret historical dimensions of this field is vital to further development of the discipline as an academic and professional field. Oral history was utilized to capture and preserve the interview content from a small sample of agricultural communication and Extension professionals and faculty while narrative research, interpretative theory, and constructivism were utilized to further understand and interpret their oral history data generated from the interviews. This process includes exploring the oral history transcribed from interviews, and then coded utilizing initial coding to identify themes. Numerous themes then emerged, but my research centers on three themes: women in the agricultural communication field, departmental mergers, and technology. Interpretative theory and constructivism were further utilized to explore themes that emerged during the transcription process. From there, narrative research was

applied, and the purpose of narrative research is to further understand and explore perspective. It was important to see how narrative research can reshape the current historical narrative in order to include these perspectives which have either been ignored, misinterpreted, or unknown. The oral history content has also provided for a tremendous amount of new interesting and provoking historically-related content that can be discussed, debated, and utilized in numerous capacities.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Agricultural communication is a field that consists of both a professional and academic history that lacks a strong historical foundation. The current historical dimensions of the field are fragmented and void of human perspective. Agricultural communication history can be traced back to numerous starting points including the history of journalism, the Founding Fathers, the land-grant system and experiment station bulletins, and early editors and journalists for agricultural publications. Even though these historical dimensions provided for an eclectic historical foundation for the field, there is no holistic historical foundation upon which to build. There are also very limited human experiences and voices that contribute to the understanding and deeper analysis of this historical content. Limited historical scholarship and literature have been developed about the agricultural communication field.

In the following chapter, I will explore agricultural communication as it historically stands and describe what this field looks like today. I will also define the term “agricultural communication” and explore the roles agricultural communicators have played over the decades as communicators of agricultural information. Agricultural communicators were first defined in their roles as agricultural journalists who

communicated about agricultural-related topics to agricultural audiences and to the general society. These pioneer journalists were also advocates and educators, as they communicated important agricultural educational information to increase farming production and business practices. The field has also been male-dominated, but a shift took place in the late 1980s, at which point more females started entering the academic programs and the professional field of agricultural communication. As of 30 years ago and prior, this field was historically led, organized, and managed by males. These men were only trained as editors, writers, and journalists.

Today, both the definition of agricultural communicators and their role in American society have changed dramatically. No longer are they strictly journalists; students of agricultural communication today are trained as writers, editors, marketers, social media managers, public relation specialists, web designers, communication directors, and advertising representatives. Their role within the field has diversified as technology and the audience in which agricultural journalists had traditionally served have broadened tremendously. The invention of the radio and the television added the professional dimension of broadcasting to the list of agricultural communication professionals. These two inventions also helped to jump start scholarship and research that focused on how audience used, interpreted, and incorporated what they saw and heard from radio and television into their everyday lives and farming practices.

As an academic program, agricultural communication has grown and changed from its early historical roots, which started in Iowa in 1905 when the first agricultural journalism class was taught. Irani and Doerfert (2012) state that, “Agricultural communications as a field or practice evolved from agricultural journalism, itself a

specialized form of print and broadcasting news journalism that is strongly associated with science journalism communications” (p. 7, para. 1). The curriculum and career opportunities in this field started to expand with the development of the radio. Farm broadcasting became a reality, and students not only focused on journalism, but also had a curriculum that focused on radio broadcasting and then television. The field and academic programs were completely altered as the Farm Crisis of the 1980s hit, followed by the development of computers, digital media, and the implementation of the Internet in the 1990s. The academic and professional field has adapted to and embraced tremendous shifts in communication technology, professional demographics, and social media.

Career opportunities that focused more on advocating, educating, communicating, and management of communication technology were becoming complex and vital as the year 2000 approached. It was recognized by the agricultural community that they needed individuals who understood agriculture in all of its complexities. They needed individuals who could communicate about challenging topics, through numerous communication channels, to the general public and the agricultural community. Therefore, academic programs adapted to these demands by shifting and altering their curriculum to better prepare students for careers in public relations, marketing, advertising, communication directors, public affair positions, and many more. Curriculum in the 1990s included courses that focused on science journalism, technical writing, traditional journalism, as well as publishing, capstone- and foundation-related courses, and crisis communication.

Due to tremendous growth and shifts in the field, the history of the agricultural communication field is diversified and splintered into many pieces. Tucker, Whaley, and

Cano (2003) describe the field of agricultural communication as eclectic in nature, and what is known about agricultural communication is still not collected, housed, or located in a single place, or even in several places. The history of agricultural communication is dynamically interwoven into the broad historical constructs of agricultural history, Cooperative Extension Service (CES) history, the history of land-grants, and the history of journalism and communication. Professional and academic experiences, memories, and insights about agricultural communication and journalism are pivotal in analyzing and formulating the historical dimensions and understanding the complexities of this field. This research also has the potential to expand and drive future scholarship within the agricultural communication community.

1.2 Significance of the Study

As an undergraduate student in agricultural journalism during the 1950s, I heard troubling reports about the future of agricultural publishing and broadcasting. We heard predictions that farm broadcasting would be dead in five years as farm populations continued to drop. These and other concerns of the time did not dampen my professional interest but stayed with me as I moved into my career. And only through experience and historical analysis did I begin to understand more clearly the dynamics of agricultural communications and journalism... Historical perspectives have added greatly to my professional focus. (Boone, Tucker, & Meisenach, 2000, p. 5, para 1)

Boone et al. (2000), in the passage above by Dr. James Evans, Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois, directly point to historical perspective as a way to better understand the complexity and dynamics of this discipline as a profession and as a field

of scholarship. Evans (2006) has challenged scholars, researchers, students, and professionals to think more broadly about the historical dimensions of agricultural communication and journalism. He argued that numerous theories and models have been used to develop agricultural communication scholarship during the past half century (2006). Some theories, however, have been explored more than others by professionals and scholars. One of these under-explored theories is to further the development of the history and theories related to the communication aspects of agricultural and rural development. This theory has been explored with small fragments of historical perspectives, timelines, and limited literature (Evans, 2006).

Utilizing oral history as a research method can help to build a foundation of historical content for this discipline and to expand the small body of collected history about agricultural communication/journalism. Building and analyzing historical foundations where there is a limited amount of literature and perspectives also provides opportunities for new scholarship and research topics. Not only is there very limited history about this field, but there is also no historical perspective that sheds light on women, ethnicity, and race within the field of agricultural communication from both the academic and the professional prospective. Other historical dimensions that are in need of human perspective include shifts in academic programs and the dramatic changes to communication technology. This type of research and data will only further propel the discipline and help it grow and develop. Historical dimensions are vital to understanding where the discipline has been and in what direction it needs to go.

Faculty and staff who work for agricultural communication academic departments across the country have recognized the need to incorporate historical perspective into

their curriculums. Simon et al.'s (2004) agricultural communication curriculum Delphi study explored curriculum development for graduate students in this field. This study examined current curriculum and how it can be better developed, what areas of concentration need to be included in order to better prepare students for graduation, and what specific topics should be covered in agricultural communication curriculum. Out of 121 curriculum-related areas that the group explored, the participants weeded this number down to 23, and one of these main areas of focus was history and philosophy of the agricultural communication discipline.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to capture and preserve the voices of those working both in academia and as professionals within the agricultural communication field by utilizing oral history as a research method to collect data. Current historical perspectives about the agricultural communication field are minimal and lack human perspective. These experiences were collected in order to help better construct or deconstruct the current historical narrative about this field. The human experiences captured from the oral history interviews provide additional layers of understanding about phenomena, personal lived experiences, and leadership roles. These data were further analyzed by using narrative research, interpretative theory, and constructivism to explore and examine the data generated from the interviews. This historical foundation does not include diverse perspectives.

The following pages of this document will explore my research and the qualitative research methods that I utilized, which make this research a hybrid between that of the humanities and that of the social sciences. Though narrative research and oral history are

not typically utilized in the agricultural communication field, this document will provide students, faculty, and professionals the opportunity to learn more about these qualitative research methods. These qualitative research methodologies will be utilized to explore data through historical analysis and inquiry, to further understand historical meaning that focuses on communication technology, academic program shifts, and women within the field.

1.4 Objectives

“Every old man that dies, is a library that burns” (Ancient African proverb).

The proverb above reminds scholars that each of us holds valuable perspective and insight, but when we leave this world, our memories and narratives go with us. Oral history and narrative research are used to collect, preserve, and analyze human experiences, and will be further explored in this chapter. The oral history process consists of numerous steps. Even before selecting a topic on which to focus an oral history project, one must conduct a good deal of research to understand the state of the field. Yow (1997) argues that oral history is subjective and provides a critical understanding to the meaning of the past. When working with oral histories, it is important to understand the complexities and the process of oral history. Sommer and Quinlan (2002) provide a detailed, step-by-step guide to conducting oral history interviews. They stated that goals, objectives, outlines and formation of course of action should be laid out prior, and these steps lay a foundation and groundwork for the rest of the process (p. 7). The project objectives are as follows:

- To collect and organize these human experiences about historical perspectives in order to better construct, understand, and interpret history about the agricultural communication community.
- To further analyze, study, and explore the oral history qualitative data/content for causal themes by using narrative research and interpretative theory.
- To take this content and make it applicable to agricultural communication students and professionals in the form of podcasting, classroom outlines, content for textbooks, or other publications.
- To educate others about oral history and narrative research as a research tool and an area of scholarship.
- To build, expand upon, and broaden the current body of agricultural communication literature.

1.5 Arriving at Oral History and Historical Perspective

The use of oral history as a method to collect, organize, and analyze the history of agricultural communication will be further explored in many dimensions. Discussion will focus on the historical foundations of oral history, the development of this tool, and the process and theoretical aspects that are guiding my research.

The study of oral history theory and methodology is relatively new, while the use of oral history to share oral stories and traditions is thousands of years old. The rapid growth and implementation of oral history projects started to raise questions with historians and researchers in the 1980s in regards to content, quality, and credibility as they were heading into the archives and utilizing these types of primary sources. A need to further develop and explore oral history in relation to application, methodology, and

critical perspectives has become an increasing topic of interest for many scholars. A number of theoretical approaches were identified and continue to grow in diversification, implementation, and critical analysis. Due to the subjective nature of oral histories, the theoretical applications and methodology can vary depending on the oral history project, the content collected, the method of collection, and the manner of analysis. Even though the subjective nature of oral history can overwhelm, it also leaves room to discover new perspectives and insights into the field of agricultural communication.

When I was conducting research on the history of women in Indiana agriculture as a graduate student, the *Indiana Hoosier Homemakers* (1984) series provided a wealth of valuable information, insight, and perspective. This series captures the history of homemakers' roles in the home and on the farm from the early twentieth century through the 1980s. Their stories were full of human perspective and insight that reflected both the joys and frustrations of being a farm wife. For example, they talked about washing clothes by hand, making soap, and what life was like when they got a washing machine. They talked about how hard and isolating it was to live in the country, but at the same time, how much they enjoyed raising their families in rural communities. Their experiences also captured the revolutionary changes in technology to the rural home, which significantly changed rural life inside the home and also, on a much larger scale, altered social and gender roles for women. Technology provided women a little more freedom from daily chores and leisure time to visit friends and family or to join social clubs. This research provides depth to the social and economic changes that were occurring in society and on the farm. Their voices provide a different layer of

understanding beyond the physicality of everyday routine, responsibilities, and work, but also explore how it truly felt to be a homemaker during this time.

It was also during this time that banker boxes with Dr. Ralph Reeder's name were located in the attic of one of the buildings on campus. Reeder was the Department Head for the Agricultural Communication Service Department at Purdue University, where he worked for over 25 years. The boxes were filled with his professional correspondence, personal papers, research documents, and much more. Universities normally save professional documents and files that belonged to staff and faculty. Sometimes they remain in storage type facilities, and other times they make their way to a depository or archive. This plethora of material and documents, stored in banker boxes, was Reeder's archived professional agricultural communication collection waiting to be organized and placed in an archive.

Archivists physically dig through the boxes, explore the materials, and find ways to sort them. They organize the materials so that the documents, as a collection, make sense and are pieced together or connected in some way. Establishing order then converts the box of documents into a collection, a holding of organized historical matter that is then filed away for future use. An archivist will also discard, clean, and write documents to describe the collection. The documents that accompany a collection are usually called a finding aid, which consists of a collection description and a list of documents and short descriptions of the documents in the collection. Reeder's collection consisted of documents that were either correspondence or documents that related to important communication topics of the day, which include the introduction of the television, rural audience analysis, the radio versus TV surveys, and Extension communications. One can

piece together Reader's professional life and even pieces of his personal life from the contents in the boxes, but there are no oral sources to help provide depth to his collection.

1.6 Definition of Terms: Defining Oral History and Other Related Terms

When reading through an edited collection of oral history essays, books, and journal publications, each author has his or her own definition of oral history. These definitions tend to have some commonalities or overlaps while others do not. A list of dozens of journal articles and books about oral history definitions was assimilated and consisted of 20 different definitions of the term "oral history." Other terms also came into the literature, such as memory, narrative, ethnography, story-telling, and folk history. These terms are all interwoven within the definition of oral history, thus displaying the many interdisciplinary dimensions of oral history. This section will discuss the meaning of oral history so that readers will have a better understanding of these terms before exploring this project. Definitions provided by critics as well as supporters of oral history will be discussed. Other important terminology will be reviewed and the link between these terms and oral history will be further established, thus providing a foundation of understanding for the term oral history.

Portelli (1997), a professor of American literature at the University of Rome-La Sapienze, defines oral history as a specific form of discourse in which history evokes a narrative of the past, and oral indicates a medium of expression. Another historian, Walker (2006), has used oral histories extensively in her research about memory, communities of memory, and how people construct the past. Walker explored the history of agriculture in the South as it shifted into a more mechanized and technology-driven industry through the voices of male and female farmers. She states that, "The very act of

telling stories about the past is a way of making meaning, of interpreting, and explaining” (2006, p. 2, para. 2).

The Oral History Association (OHA, 2009) defines oral history:

As a method of gathering a body of historical information in oral form, usually on tape. Because the scholarly community is involved in the production and the use of oral history, the association recognizes an opportunity, and an obligation on the part of all concerned to make this type of historical source as authentic and as useful as possible. (p. 1)

The OHA purpose has changed over the years to include the oral history framework for principles and the best practices, along with professional development, critical understanding, and scholarship for those utilizing oral histories. When further exploring the OHA, they elaborate on oral history as:

Refers both to a method of recording and preserving oral testimony and to the product of that process. It begins with an audio or video recording of a first person account made by an interviewer with an interviewee (also referred to as narrator), both of whom have the conscious intention of creating a permanent record to contribute to an understanding of the past. A verbal document, the oral history, results from this process and is preserved and made available in different forms to other users, researchers, and the public. A critical approach to the oral testimony and interpretations are necessary in the use of oral history. (2009, p. 2)

This is the most detailed definition that can be found that communicates what oral history is, in what form (audio/video), and preservation of the oral document, application, and critical approach. Other historians such as Ritchie (2003) define oral history as a way

to collect memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interviews. Morrissey (2007) argues in a similar fashion that oral history is recorded interviews that preserve historically significant memories for future use. Both of these definitions have overlapping themes that parallel the OHA definition. However, there are also some great variations between the definitions and uses of different terms to help define oral history. For example, Ritchie used the term “memories” in his definition, which is not used in the OHA’s (2009) or in Morrissey’s (2007) definitions.

Oral histories are loosely used to uncover or fill in the “gaps” that exist in historical context through perspectives and experiences that have been largely ignored or voices that have been suppressed. Oral history has been vital in uncovering and capturing the history of marginalized groups, communities of shared memory, political struggle and strife, and social history, while also being used to capture family histories, lived experience, and much more. Sometimes history is written for others without human experience or human voices. Oral histories about military experience, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Women’s Rights Movement, for example, have been written from mediated historical perspective and have thus lacked human perspective. Oral history has been able to provide some of these missing pieces while also expanding, uncovering, and providing new layers of content to these existing bodies of literature.

The study of memory is very interdisciplinary in nature. Memory studies tie into numerous fields such as psychology, anthropology, oral history, linguistics, sociology, cultural studies, and history. Portelli (2006) explains that memory is, “An active process of creation of meanings” (p. 37, para 5). Memory can be collected in relationship to shared or individual experience related to class, women, race, ethnicity, life experience,

public memory, and identity. The list goes on and on. Memory can be studied individually or in a group form (e.g., community memory, group memory, national memory, popular memory, family memory).

When exploring memory from an anthropological perspective, there are very diverse perspectives about the meaning and making of memory. Berliner (2005) explains that the social and cultural experiences that our memory captures define who we are as individuals and as a society, which can be ambiguous. There is need for further investigation about how people remember, what impacts their perceptions and narratives, what filters they psychologically use, and what influences how they remember. Berliner's (2005) work focuses on the challenges and questions that arise by those utilizing the "concept of memory" in anthropological studies. He argues that, "The label of "memory" aims to grasp the past we carry, how we are shaped by it and how this past is transmitted" (p. 200–201, para. 2). Narration is an active process in which one engages in the oral history process, and the next step is to take a narrator's words and piece them together into a narrative.

The word "narrative" is the foundation of the oral history process. When focusing on the narrative, the oral historian not only explores what is being said, but also how it is being communicated, and how the narrative is organized, shared, and constructed. The interview process allows for the narrative to be shared. The narrative takes on a deeper meaning when exploring it for patterns, logic, linguistics, language, and consciousness. Narratives will vary from one person to another, but are also affected in narration by the interviewer. It is more than just sharing a story—narratives help define human experience and make sense of social, cultural, and life occurrences. When shared, the narrative is

constructed by memory, communicated as a narrative, and then explored by the oral historian for deeper meaning, understanding, and validity. Narrative theory is applied and utilized by Portelli (1991) in his numerous works in which he focuses on subjectivity. He states that he uses, “literature, folklore, and linguistics to develop a method for the study of subjectivity by focusing on verbal strategies used by the narrators” (p. xii, para.1).

Folklore is often associated with oral history and can also be referred to as folk history. Folklore is defined as a form of oral tradition. Some examples of folklore include epic ballads, legends, poetry, and oral traditions passed down from generation to generation. Folklore, like a narrative, is found in cultures where there is little or no written record. Folk histories are normally stories/traditions shared about a certain culture, peoples, communities, or groups that explore events or personal experience. This is found in tribal and Native American cultures. Danielson (1996) explores the differences between oral history and folklore as follows:

Oral history is a technique that may be used for a variety of purposes. It involves collecting different types of oral material about the past. The data can be used in the reconstruction of historic occurrences, or it can use in the analysis of popular conceptions of past event and behavior. Therefore folk history, unlike the methodology of oral history, is a substantive, particular subject matter. If we are interested in folk history, we are interested in the native view of the past, whether it is in the form of collective tradition or a personal reminiscence. (p. 189 para. 2)

Therefore, oral history is used as a tool to collect folklore or folk history. Some historians would probably label oral history in this perspective as a technique more than a tool. Either way, one could argue that folklore and oral history go hand-in-hand, but they

are very different by definition. Oral history can focus on a particular subject matter, but folklore tends to explore a perception of the past. Some examples of popular folklore include *Beowulf*, *Bluebeard*, and *Pocahontas*. All of these examples explore a story or perception of the past. Pieces of it may be factual, while some pieces may not be. All of these stories tend to entertain and also educate the listener. Maybe not all aspects of the story are true, but there are bits and pieces that are grounded in historical significance. They provide a different form of content and understanding to historical perceptions, and each story can be studied and matched with historical documentation and varying perspectives to locate the more accurate pieces of the folklore. This can be true about oral history as well.

1.7 Oral History and Historical Background: What It Is and How It Came to Be

Rather than replacing previous truths with alternative ones, however, oral history has made us uncomfortably aware of the elusive quality of historical truth itself. Yet, an inspiration towards “reality,” “fact,” and “truth” is essential to our work: though we know that certainty is bound to escape us, the search provides focus, shape, and purpose to everything we do. (Portelli, 1991, p. xi, para. 4)

Portelli (1991) argues that oral history provides a more elaborated perspective of historical experience that may vary from one person to another. However, understanding the meanings behind the varying narratives, coupled with additional documented research as a cross reference, only provides historians with a deeper analysis of the past. Portelli (1991) began his oral history journey and scholarship in hopes of recording, saving, and analyzing suppressed memory. Having witnessed political upheaval in Italy in the late 1960s, Portelli felt the urgency to capture voices of those who experienced cultural

conflict as he did. He further developed, studied, and expanded the scholarship, application, and methodological structure of oral history.

There are some debates over the true origins of oral history. Hundreds of cultures with ancient origins have communicated their history through oral sources for thousands of years. Great wars, battles, famine, cultural history, traditions, and stories of death and disease were shared from generation to generation as oral traditions. Historian Sharpless (2007) argues that Greek historian Herodotus employed individuals to collect first-person interviews in order to gather information about the Persian Wars (p. 9). Herodotus arguably could have been collecting and preserving Greek culture. Oral histories were used to communicate animal breeds, slave history, elite history, historical events, natural disasters, and traumatic experiences. Native American and tribal cultures have utilized oral and folk history for thousands of years as a way to pass down information and educate others about their culture. It was not until the early twentieth century that oral history started to gain speed as a research tool due to the Great Depression. Historians and scholars started to utilize oral history to collect life histories thanks to the New Deal in the 1930s.

Historically, the need to collect and preserve oral histories, in America, can be traced back to Allan Nevins, who was a Columbia University historian, journalist, and author. He published the book *The Gateway to History* (1938) in which he expressed the need to collect histories about the Great Depression from those who had lived it. He knew that these perspectives, memories, and experiences would be gone when those who lived through the Great Depression passed away. Nevins recognized, as a scholar and writer, that these lived experiences truly captured the historical dimensions of the Great

Depression. A tremendous amount of history about this event that is found in textbooks, scholarship, and museum exhibits was originally compiled content that came from oral histories. However, an ocean away, the military was also utilizing oral histories to capture war experiences. Military generals and other military figures would travel throughout Europe, interviewing different divisions and regiments about their battlefield and combat experiences. These oral history projects were helping to create data and documentation that was being funneled into archives. Back in the United States, Nevins was searching for a way to financially support his oral history endeavors. The death of Columbia professor Frederic Bancroft provided for a generous gift of \$1.5 million dollars, which was donated to pursue the need for historical materials. This gave Nevins the funds he needed to embark on numerous oral history projects and establish the Columbia Oral History Office.

Other oral history offices started to appear on campuses in the 1950s, such as the Regional Oral History Office of the University of California. Berkley and UCLA followed suit by establishing campus oral history offices. Universities and colleges recognized the value in oral history as oral history projects took flight across the country and academic programs were established on campuses. Some of these prominent oral history projects include oral histories for the Ford Motor Company and the history of the Texas oil industry. During the 1960s, the National Archives took an interest in oral histories along with numerous presidential libraries throughout the nation. Approximately 90 large oral history projects were being conducted throughout the United States in the 1960s, a majority of which were working out of oral history offices. Tape recorders were starting to be used by this time, which made collecting oral histories much easier. With

this expanding number, it was necessary to address the need to establish professional protocol and overall methodological structure to oral history as an area of academic scholarship.

In 1966, the Oral History Association (OHA) was established with the intent to communicate and educate others in the field, as well as those who worked in public history, about oral history projects and practices. Manuals, guides, and pamphlets were published during this time that focused on the numerous aspects of oral history, which served mostly as “how to” guides. There were discussions that focused on ethics, standards, common practices, and project goals at annual OHA meetings. With incredible social and cultural shifts in American society during the 1960s and 1970s, some oral historians turned their focus to capturing the experiences of those involved in the Civil Rights Movement, the Women’s Movement, labor history, immigration history, and Native American oral histories. The Foxfire project was established in 1966 by Eliot Wigginton (1972) and gained national attention in both the educational and oral history communities. He asked his English students to go out into their community, in Appalachian Georgia, and collect local folklore. Wigginton (1972) used the content from the projects to help teach his language arts topics.

In the 1970s, more critical perspectives about oral history were brought to the table. Researchers and scholars wanted to know more about the reliability and validity of oral histories. There was a lack of theoretical backbone and methodology that had not been overly explored in relation to oral history. Historians and other researchers who were utilizing oral history content wanted to better understand the process, structure, and quality of the oral history product. What made the oral history interview just as or less

factual than the written document or other literary sources? Were oral historians utilizing other forms of documentation to support their oral history interviews/content? What best practices and ethics had been implemented into the field? These were all very important and justifiable questions that needed to be addressed if oral history was going to be respected within the realm of academic scholarship.

In the 1980s, there was a surge of oral history scholarship. Historians and oral historians such as Portelli (1981), Grele (1985), and Perks and Thomson (2006) were engaged in conversations that surrounded the interdisciplinary nature of oral history and critical perspectives of oral history. Portelli (1981) reminds historians and researchers that oral history has made us uneasy about the reality of historical truth and its exclusiveness (p. 97). Portelli's (2006) work is pivotal to the study of oral history as a research method. He explains that numerous aspects of oral history are very comparable to documents. He states that "Oral sources are oral sources," meaning that a majority of sources start out as oral sources and then are put into documentation form that scholars use (2006, p. 46, para. 3). He also says that "Oral sources are narrative sources," which meant they are products of experiences that are shared by the narrator who is either a spectator or a participant, or maybe both; this is going to alter their perceptions of experience (p. 48, para. 4). Portelli's (1981) work tackles oral history critics, but at the same time, it helps researchers and scholars to understand the many layers of subjectivity found within oral histories.

Then, in the 1990s, oral history research took a more broadening approach in order to capture experience from ethnic, racial, women, religious, and sexual orientation perspectives that had not been captured before. Community-based oral history projects

peaked in interest. The International Oral History Association (IOHA) was established in 1996 to stimulate and propel international oral history research, projects, and partnerships. Practicing oral historians started to write and publish oral history manuals and research that contained more of a theoretical background and that addressed many of the critical and ethical issues that had plagued oral history. There has been an increasing interest in understanding culture and how people live, construct relationships, and work together. These require more of an interdisciplinary approach to oral history today, one which helps to draw on a number of disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, history, library sciences, and linguistics.

The interdisciplinary nature of oral history makes it very fluid and dynamic. More and more researchers are going out into the field and utilizing oral history, interviewing, ethnography, and many other more experienced or perception-based forms of data and research collecting. The study of oral history is relatively new, but there is a continually growing body of research that focuses on oral history theory and methodology. The study of memory, the interviewing process, transcription process, narrative studies, and folk history are all areas of academic study that are also connected and overlap with the study of oral history from a theoretical perspective. Due to the subjective nature of oral histories, the theoretical approaches and methodology can vary depending on the oral history project, the content collected, how it is being collected, and how it is being analyzed. All of these different terms (memory, narrative, storytelling, and folklore) all contribute to and play a vital role within oral history scholarship.

1.8 Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions: When working with oral histories and interviewees, assumptions include that they (interviewees) were going to be honest and forthcoming with information that related to the historical nature of the field. They would be comfortable and willing to share their personal insights and perspectives during the oral history process, as well as to work collaboratively with the interviewer during the interview and transcription processes.

Limitations: This study consists of a very small sample of individuals who have been or are still involved in the agricultural communication field today. There were seven interviews, from five individuals. The demographics about each interviewee will be discussed in chapter 3; however, there was a need to collect broadly not only from the field but also in diversity. There are limited perspectives that display diversity in this historical foundation, which include a lack of ethnic, women, and race perspectives that are not part of the historical foundation. This study consists of four males and one female. The interviews were conducted in 2008 and from 2013 to 2014. Four of the interviews were interviewed once while two of them were interviewed twice.

Additional limitations include the use of memory, which can be both fallible and in-fallible, but the oral historian must evaluate and support them with evidence. Yow (1994) states that, “The basic question we oral historians have asked is this: does what is remembered constitute evidence we can use? I use psychologists’ research here to argue that oral history testimony based on memory can be informative about actual events” (p. 57, para. 4). Additional limitations include the subjectivity of qualitative research methodologies that will be utilized to further explore the oral history transcripts.

1.9 Researcher Bias

The research conducted prior usually focuses on learning more about a person, including his/her life, professional life, and education. Prior to each interview, I would sit down and reflect about my own relationship with each of the interviewees, what I already knew about them, and my assumptions and goals for the interview that were framed within the interview questions. Anderson and Jack (2006) explored the importance of listening and reflection prior to and during the actual interview. They suggest that the narrator (interviewer) should ask himself/herself a number of questions prior to the interview:

- What meaning and how does one construct meaning of their life experiences?
- What assumptions and attitudes does the interviewer/researcher bring to the interview?
- Is it one of receptiveness to learn or trying to prove pre-existing ideas that were brought into the interview? (2003, p. 134–137)

These were pivotal, reflective questions that helped guide both my both personal and researcher roles during the interview process and when working with the data. All of the interviewees are personal friends of mine whom I have either worked with or have known for decades. They are all wonderful people who have contributed greatly to the field in many different ways. However, keeping their personal and professional relationships separate was challenging at times. I wanted to make sure that they were comfortable with the oral history process and with their transcripts. I did not feel the need to guide their interviews because I knew so much about each person and had a good idea of what they

would possibly contribute to the project due to their academic and professional experiences.

Creswell (2003) explains that the researcher's role has to consist of a flexible approach to personal interest, biases, and values. He further explains that, within the limitations for utilizing interviews as a qualitative data collection tool, the "Researcher's presence may bias responses" (p. 186, para. 6). The researcher can bring preconceived ideas and notions to the interview. Just the physicality of the interviewer has more impact on the interview process than what some may acknowledge, and I argue that this has tremendous impact on the interviewee and data derived from the interview process. Human interaction is part of the process, and the engagement and relationship expressed between the interviewee and interviewer is important to the oral history process.

Constructivism came into play during the interviews, throughout the coding process, and during the writing of this document. Constructivism is part of the methodological framework because it integrates the researcher's role within the contexts of the actual research process and data. It is an approach that argues that humans make or construct their own realities from their experiences and then filter them through psychological filters. Then, in regards to sharing those experiences, there is an element of construction between the person who is sharing and the person who is listening.

My own personal biases, toward oral history as a research method or tool, need to be addressed. I feel that oral history is a reliable research method that can provide factual and valuable content that cannot be gained from any other form of research methodologies or tools. However, I do also recognize that neither humans nor human minds are perfect. We are all subject to incorrect facts and data that are stored, processed,

and filtered in and through our minds. As Portelli (2006) reminds us, oral history is credible, but it is a different kind of credibility, so we cannot look at it through a microscope or with quantitative measures. It is pulled apart to further understand meaning and perspective. Then, on a deeper analytical level, it is analyzed to understand the making of meaning, and what influenced this perspective, or helped to shape it. Additional measures can also be taken to help qualify the oral history content via records, newspapers, and archival documents.

The burden of truth lies within the researcher and interviewer. It is his/her job to seek, research, learn, and dig through written records, newspaper articles, and conference proceedings in order to clarify and better understand where the interviewee is coming from and how he/she is constructing his/her lived experience. This process might also help open the door to other theories, discrepancies, and comparative experiences that have not been explored. Polishuk (1998) utilizes Portelli's (1981) theories in regards to dealing with inconsistencies we can encounter in oral history interviews. Polishuk (1998) shares that Portelli viewed discrepancies as value added to the historical account and that this is part of the process generated by memory and imagination in an effort to make sense of lived experience or important events (p. 14). Therefore, Portelli (1981) and other oral historians worked to make sense of the varying perspectives instead of discrediting them. Well-prepared oral historians will make themselves self-aware of where the discrepancies might come into play when collecting an oral history, but this sometimes does not happen until later on in the process.

The need to further explore the historical dimensions of the agricultural communication community through oral history is necessary to help discover layers of

perspectives from those of diversity, gender, ethnicity, race, and cultural experiences that are not found within the historical literature of this field. These layers provide us with additional insight into what it was like to work within the field of agricultural communications. All my interviewees have been males with the exception of one female. This field has been dominated by males due the agricultural roots that relate back to the history of Cooperative Extension Service (CES), the land-grant college, and traditional social roles for women during this time. Women, as agricultural writers, editors, and in other roles of leadership and scholarship within agricultural communication, were not present in this history until much later in the twentieth century. I have worked in the agricultural communication field, and my degree is in agricultural communication. I have had to confront more personal assumptions and biases because I have been a part of this field.

1.10 Agricultural Communication Field Today

The agricultural communication field today is more specialized and diversified than ever. The complexities of agricultural-related topics, for example genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and animal well-being, can be found throughout all forms of media. Immediate communication technology today also provides a tremendous amount of potential and challenges for faculty, students, and professionals. Credible and non-credible media that focus on agriculture in all aspects can be found in forms of digital and social media outlets and applications. Irani and Doefert (2012) further describe the academic field as it appears today in terms of curriculum development and in department organization:

Within the academy, academic programs in agricultural journalism have given way to “comprehensive” agricultural communication programs that cover strategic communications, new and social media, public relations and marketing in addition to writing, editing, and production of mass media. Also, academic programs have been integrated into agricultural educational departments, where disciplines exist as a “concentration” through which students may take anywhere from a handful of courses to full program of study. (p. 8, para. 3)

There are 45 agricultural communication academic programs today in the United States. Due to the shifts, many campuses have consolidated their agricultural communication programs into other partnering disciplines such as Extension, agricultural education, youth development, and leadership. These departmental mergers have brought great challenges to the discipline due to its smaller size and its roots in humanities. As the programs have grown, the shifts in student demographics have changed over the decades. One very important aspect about the field and the academic programs that is not overly explored or mentioned within the literature is the shift of a male-dominated field into one that consists of a high percentage of females. Academic programs have observed that over the past 30 years, the number of males enrolled in the programs dwindle tremendously, and the number of females grow in numbers. There is no research that addresses these shifts, why it has occurred, or when it occurred.

There are conversations occurring right now that focus on where the field and academic program have been and where they will go in the future. Understanding the historical dimension of the agricultural communication field can help provide guidance and insight into the future. Oral history can help unearth a remarkable amount of

historical data that can be further analyzed to help build and strengthen the historical backbone of this field and provide insight into these dramatic shifts in technology, communication, academic and programmatic changes, as well as shifts in careers, gender, and much more about the field. In order to further explore, understand, discuss, and construct more about the historical dimensions of agricultural communication, one must understand where the field has been and what challenges it has incurred. Evans (2004) argues that those engaged in the academic field need to sharpen their sense of history and the tradition of this field (p. 4.9). This has been recognized by students and faculty as a vital need for the academic program. Oral history can help build, analyze, and broaden agricultural communication historical discourse and literature that is based on human perspective.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to Literature Review

This chapter will focus on literature about the agricultural communication field while also exploring literature that focuses on Cooperative Extension Service (CES) history, women in agricultural communication, technology, and the archive. This literature provides a background to what already exists about the agricultural communication field and how these topics are interwoven. Oral history, narrative research, constructivism, and interpretative literature will be explored in order to provide a foundation for the methodological aspects of this research. Memory studies and cultural studies literature will be analyzed given their relationship to the oral history process and narrative research. This literature provides understanding and perspective in regards to the process of inquiry and exploring layers of truth.

2.2 Framework

The topics that will be explored in this literature review include oral history, narrative research, memory studies, agricultural communication history, CES history, and archival theory. The Agricultural Communication Documentation Center (ACDC) houses thousands of documents that relate to the agricultural communication field. Their holdings were utilized as well. These additional sources added to the literary foundation

and provided additional substance, support, and validity to the oral history transcripts and narrative research process. Other publications that were utilized include *The Oral History Journal*, *The Journal of Applied Communication* (JAC), *Journal of Extension* (JOE), *The Agricultural Education Magazine*, and *Journal of Agricultural Education*. These publications provide a tremendous wealth of literature that relates to the oral history content and that focus broadly on departmental mergers, academic history, women-related aspects, technology, scholarship, and much more. Online libraries and *JSTOR* were utilized along with dozens of books that relate to oral history, narrative research, CES, and agricultural communication history.

When going through the transcripts and utilizing initial coding, I developed a key that helped organize the content from the interviews into categories. These categories helped to steer the literature review. The key from the coding process is below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Codes

AGED	Agricultural Education
AU	Audience
AgComm	Agricultural Communication
A	Advice
AC	Academic / AgComm
BS	Behavioral Sciences
C	Career
CH	Challenge
Comm	Communication
Eth	Ethics
E	Education
Ex	Extension (CES)
FIN	Financial
F	Future
G	Women
H	History or historical
IN	International/Global

Lg	Land-grant
MIL	Military
OR	Organizational/ACE for example
PC	Personal Career
P	Personal (related to family for example)
PR	Professional Development
Pre	Present
Re	Research
Tech	Technology
Tr	Training
Lit	Literature
Ser	Serve or servitude
Loyal	Loyalty
Rel	Relationships
Jour	Journalism

The key terms show an overlap with personal and professional experiences that provide further validity of the oral history content. The terms were shifted into categories and then were used to help define strong themes. From this, it was easier to determine where there were shifts in perspective, inquiry, and positioning of self within the context of the actual events or experiences. These codes then helped provide direction for further literary research.

2.3 How Do We Read Historical Sources?

Historical literature reviews and social science literature reviews share some similarities, but there are also some differences. The similarities lie within how researchers of both disciplines approach searching, locating, and organizing documents. Both would utilize computerized databases, Internet searches, and campus libraries, while also utilizing references and citations to locate additional sources, key word searches, and much more. Historical literature is written differently and is meant to serve as an analysis of a historically-related event, person, or experience. Historians are looking for gaps in

historical literature, missing pieces, voices, and perspectives that are not present. Then they are trying to find out why these pieces are not there and how to go about locating, analyzing, and incorporating them into the larger narrative (Boote & Beile, 2005). By using inquiry as a compass, this leads us down unexplored or underexplored paths of historical experience that need further analyzing, constructing, or sometimes deconstructing. There are no surveys or statistics to grapple with; historical researchers work with people (oral histories, interviews, etc.), documents, primary sources, secondary sources, archival materials, artifacts, and objects.

Historical researchers use both primary and secondary sources when conducting literature reviews and approach both of them differently given the nature of how they are written and who helped to shape the historical content that is found within the documents. Secondary sources are everywhere and consist of journals, magazines, monographs, and a majority of books. Secondary sources are normally read for interpretation and argumentation. Primary sources include newspapers, letters, diaries, journals, taped interviews, photographs, newsletters, and personal journals. These objects are used more within the realm of historical analysis. When reading primary sources, a researcher should raise questions about the author, why he/she wrote what he/she did; how we make sense of his/her experience or content, that is, its credibility; and how the experience fits in with other perspectives. These are humanistic-related questions that help the researcher understand the person and what influenced and shaped his/her writing or perspective. Literature was analyzed to gain an understanding of the thesis, argument, and organization in content. This literature was evaluated from the perspective of layers and how these layers do or do not fit into what the researcher already understands about this

topic. The need to identify the methodology, the ability to incorporate both supportive and critical literature or perspective, and the organization of content in the form of rhetoric are all strong components of good literature.

2.4 Agricultural Communication Professional Historical Literature

The next two sections explore literature that focuses on the professional and academic history of the agricultural communication field. Evans (2004) provides a great amount of reflective thoughts and advice in his resource document for the Agricultural Communication Summit. Besides exploring program development, trends, and future progress, Evans argued that a tremendous amount of energy is thrown into communication technological scholarship, which he believes marginalizes research that needs to also focus on the past and what we can learn from historical perspectives (2004). The distractions of technology and scholarship relating to it seem to take priority due to how technologically integrated society is today, and the need to disseminate and communicate information. However, the historical dimensions, literature, and scholarship for this field are shallow and scattered.

Agricultural communicators communicate with agricultural audiences and the general public using numerous forms of communication. Historically, the communicating of agricultural information started with agricultural publications and societies back in the late 1700s. Tucker et al. (2003) claim that the origins of agricultural communication can be traced back to the first agricultural writers and publishers such as Jesse Buel, Luther Tucker, and Henry Wallace. These individuals are described not only in the sense of communicators (i.e., writers, editors, and publishers) but also as agricultural leaders, educators, and advocates. Seevers, Graham, and Conkin (2007) discuss the role that

Benjamin Franklin and the other Founding Fathers have played in encouraging, educating, and communicating agricultural information. This was due to their involvement in the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture (Graham & Conkin, 2007). Telg and Irani (2012) argue that the history of communicating farm practices can be traced to agricultural societies.

Boone et al. (2000) published one of the first agricultural communication textbooks that captured the history of agriculture, the land-grant system, communications, research, ethics, media influences, and electronic communications. They provide insight into the growth of agricultural journalism and communications as it parallels the advancements in agriculture and communication technology. Tucker et al. (2003) published a short historical perspective of the agricultural communication industry and the academic field, but their historical analysis is very short. It is meant to serve as an introduction to their main research topic, which explores how agricultural education and agricultural communication academic disciplines can better work together while still retaining their unique and distinctive structures.

Boone et al. (2000) recognize that the first agricultural communicators were scientists, working at land-grant colleges, who were publishing their works. CES history overlaps tremendously with agricultural communication because they both share some of the same philosophical goals, which are to help communicate, disseminate, and educate the public about agriculture in order to help improve lives. Both, however, have different roles in the process of disseminating agricultural information. The role of the agricultural communicator is pivotal to the history of CES, land-grant history, and agricultural

history, but agricultural communicators are acknowledged in a limited way within these histories.

Experiment station bulletins were some of the first forms of agricultural research education that were communicated from the college campus to farmers and homemakers. Home and agricultural demonstration work was also very popular during this time. Bulletins were written, edited, and published by writers, researchers, and editors at land-grant colleges that focused on agricultural and homemaker related topics. Demonstrations were conducted at community spaces or at homes or farms, and an extension agent would walk through the steps of completing a task while educating them about the task and campus related research that supported the tasks. These documents and demonstrations were meant to help educate and improve the quality of lives of rural families. Donnellan and Montgomery (2005) argue that communicators, or those serving in “public information roles” are needed to help develop CES programming that will effectively target audiences, and that this is key to effective outreach. They addressed the vital role that agriculture communicators play today in CES programming, and the need for this partnership is essential to CES success. However, CES history still does not include or acknowledge the role of the agricultural communicator.

Rasmussen (1989) credits CES in educating rural audiences about modernization in all forms to the farm and home. However, he does not mention the role of agricultural journalists or public information officers in helping provide training, publications, and guidance to CES so that it could go out and work with audiences. Agricultural communication faculty and professional staff were some of the first people to build upon and explore audience behavior and audience perceptions of new technology such as

adaptation to the television. Social sciences and behavioral sciences, such as audience behavior and decision science, are a part of the agricultural communication historical foundation. During the 1950s, with the development of TV, many researchers and professionals questioned the effectiveness of TV, how TV was being used, whether people value information from TV, and many other important communication-related questions. Then they would explore these communication mediums in regard to general use or adoption, and then also within the realm of agricultural content.

Organizational literature, such as literature about Association for Communicating Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, Life and Human Sciences (ACE) has played a vital role in this historical narrative due to the leadership and professional development support it has provided to agricultural communicators both in academia and to professionals. ACE's history is connected to land-grant history as six agricultural editors met at the University of Illinois (one being from Purdue) in 1913 for the first ACE meeting. Carnahan (2000) traced the historical dimensions of ACE to their first conference, which focused on six topics or challenges that were facing agricultural communicators at the time:

How agricultural colleges reach people through newspapers; how colleges and newspapers work together; whether newspaper syndicates render satisfactory services; whether there should be an effort to provide special material for farm papers; if they do, how that would be done; and whether the custom of providing a page to only one paper in a town was necessary. (p. 9, para. 1)

ACE has published and supported a large number of research projects and communication publications that addressed how new forms of technology were impacting

how people lived, learned, and communicated. ACE conferences, newsletters, pamphlets, and other documents have captured the dramatic changes in communication technology through their role and involvement in the National Project in Agricultural Communications.

The historical foundation for agricultural communication, as a profession, rests in pieces strung across many fields such as agriculture, journalism, communication, and CES, among many others. An archive for the field exists, which contains a tremendous wealth of information about the field, but is in need of more historical documentation. Numerous faculty and staff have provided small historical perspectives of the field that draw upon the historical dimensions of broader fields and parent disciplines. Organizations such as ACE have golden nuggets of historical perspective in the form of documents and historical objects that need to be further explored and tied into the agricultural communication historical foundation. However, this history is void of humanistic voices and perspectives from professionals and scholars who have lived, worked, and devoted their professional lives to the agricultural communication field. It is also void of diverse perspectives.

2.5 Agricultural Communication Academic History

The academic history of the agricultural communication field started in 1905 at Iowa when the first agricultural journalism class was offered to students. Scholars, such as Evans (2004), have authored and published a small number of articles and papers that trace the academic history of this discipline and very broad historical dimensions of the larger field of agricultural journalism and communication. Evans has traced the historical origins of the agricultural academic program, which he explores from two perspectives:

agriculture and communication. In his think piece for the 2004 Agricultural Communication Summit, he argues that the rise of the profession was due to shifts in agricultural developments and technology (2004). Communication shifts also helped to alter and propel the field. Evans explores a number of themes or trends that he believes contributed to the development of agricultural communication, which includes diversification in communication curriculum and increased specialization (2004).

Academic programs in agricultural journalism developed into agricultural communication programs in order to meet the needs of a more diversified agricultural industry and tremendous changes in communication technology. Tucker et al. (2003) report that agricultural communication programs have grown steadily over decades, but remain small in size. There are about 45 agricultural communication programs in the United States today. The changing of the program name from journalism to communication started to occur in the 1970s. Boone et al. (2000) explain that journalism refers to the reporting and editing of newspapers, journals, magazines, and broadcasting media. Communication encompasses persuasion, information, entertainment, and advocacy. The changing of the department name and discipline was significant because it visibly displayed the shift in careers from that of the journalist to that of the communicator. This shift caused another major shift in academic programs and curriculum development.

These academic programs were historically located on campuses within either communication or agriculture-related departments. Many programs started out as part of the agricultural communication service departments on land-grant campuses. As the programs continued to grow and develop in curriculum, scholarship, and student

numbers, many colleges looked for ways to better combine or merge their agricultural communication programs with other academically-related fields. Tucker et al. (2003) explore the shifting of academic departments and the impact it has on the faculty, students, and the program itself. They argued that merging with agricultural education departments seems to impact the academic program in negative ways depending on the department leadership and level of respect that has been established on behalf of both programs in regards to philosophical approaches to teaching, curriculum/program development, and scholarship. There are many factors that bridge both programs, but they are separate programs. Tucker et al. (2003) also explain that merging agricultural communication programs with other programs that normally have more faculty/staff puts agricultural communication programs at a disadvantage. Important program decisions about agricultural communication may be dictated by faculty and staff that have very strong backgrounds in other fields.

It is visible from a historical literature perspective that these major shifts in the academic discipline, program development, and career involvement have not been historically explored through the departmental merging process. There are no demographics recorded that capture diversity or shifts in women for the profession or the academic field. These challenges and changes have created road blocks for many programs and challenged their growth and development as academic programs. These are huge hurdles that many academic and professional disciplines have not had to face over the decades. These dynamic shifts make the field very unique, and human perspective can help people better understand these historical shifts and the impact these shifts have had on the professionals, faculty, and students.

2.6 Oral History, Memory, and Narrative Literature

Oral history methodology has further developed over the decades, and so has the scholarship and literature relating to oral history. The physical sharing of oral traditions or history is thousands of years old, but the methodological, theoretical, and scholarship aspects of this method are relatively new. Oral history can be utilized in any field and draws upon a number of other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and history. This literature review is going to explore the oral history process, which includes conducting interviews. By utilizing inquiry, memories are constructed and shared through a narrative. Examples of work by researchers and historians who utilize oral history and narrative research will be highlighted throughout this literature review.

When we study people and how they live, which reflects their traditions, ideas, and ways of life, we are studying them from a cultural perspective. Evoking memories of past experiences through the oral history process allows us to further understand how and why people remember. Memory studies are rooted in anthropology, which is broadly defined as exploring experience and culture. Portelli (1991) reminds us that, “Memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creating meaning” (p.52, para.3). Memories are not places where we dump our experiences to sit or be sorted and stored away. Our memories do more than just store our experiences. They are places where we assign meaning and make meaning of our experiences, which is done through interpretation.

Portelli’s (1991) book emphasizes the many dimensions of oral history through his research about Italian cultural conflict in the 1960s. He explores how Italians remember and construct memory of political strife, social class systems, and industrial

societies (Portelli, 1991). Prior to Portelli and the use of memory, these voices in Italian history and their perspectives, firsthand accounts or narratives had not been collected, researched, or published. Portelli's writings are pivotal to the study of oral history, especially from a literary perspective. His many books and articles all provide deep insight and understanding into the use and implications of oral history. Thomson (1999) has published numerous oral history-related research and articles for decades. He is considered a strong authority on oral history theory and methodology. In his writings that focus on memory, he explores the need to examine the movement of oral history and positioning throughout the late 1970s and into the early 1980s when oral history gained popularity. Many new areas of history were emerging that had been ignored or marginalized. Researchers and oral history were giving them a "voice" Thomson (1999) explains:

An important emerging trend is the renewed effort to link theoretical sophistication about the narrative and memory with the political commitment to the history of oppressed or marginalized groups which motivated the first generation of feminist and socialist oral historians. (1999, p. 295, para. 2)

Thomson, Frisch, and Hamilton (1994) explore their ideologies and positions on oral history and memory in an incredibly insightful article that tackles the oral history and memory debate from an international perspective. These debates included the use of memory, critical perspectives, and theory while drawing upon their own work and the works of others to help explore challenges that oral historians were facing in the 1990s. Thomson et al. (1994) explain that the use of memory can not only help uncover hidden histories, but also provides a means for people to make their own history. Making their

own history is a powerful and yet frightening statement in relation to traditional research. However, Thomson et al. (1994) have further encouraged the use of memory while exploring critical perspectives of the unreliability of memory, and how there are measures in place to further understand memory and interpretation. They state:

Some practitioners lost sight of the reasons why individuals construct their memories in particular ways, and did not see how the process of remembering could be a key to exploring the subjective meaning of lived experience and nature of individual and collective memory. (1994, p. 33, para. 5)

Memory does not always show us the actual truth, but instead a layer or perception of what one thought was the truth. These layers or perceptions are vital to our understanding of many dimensions of historical events. They provide us with new insight and help to underline other areas of needed research. Thomson et al. (1994) explain that some practitioners see the distortions or fallible aspects of memory as a hindrance instead of a resource. However, Portelli (1991) took the fallible aspects of human perspective, and peeled back another layer of historical perspective about social class systems. Thomson et al. (1994) remind us that our memories are our own, memories are individualist, and conflict arises when people demand that others should remember just as they do.

Narrative sources are not easy to work with and can be very challenging. Collecting the oral histories, listening to the narratives, and reading and coding the transcripts have further displayed to me the importance of helping others share and interpret their own personal narratives. This process helps individuals come to terms with their own experiences and how they make sense of them. Then these aspects contribute to their own personal understanding and identity in regard to the history of the agricultural

communication field. All the participants' narratives are interwoven in some way, shape, or form. Beyond their professional and personal experiences, their perceptions and interpretations also overlap and provide for new insights and understandings of historical and lived experience.

Women studies also employ these types of methodologies to explore, analyze, and compare women roles and perspectives. There is a limited amount of literature that focuses on women roles in regard to CES and agricultural history outside of homemaker-related historical perspectives such as the *Hoosier Homemaker's Series* (1985) and other scattered projects and writings. Babbitt's (1993) article focuses on the role of Extension Home Economists in New York State from 1920–1940 in relation to working with farm women. She argues that, "Historical literature about Cooperative Extension rarely acknowledges the important roles home economist and farm and rural women played in the extension service" (1993, p. 83, para. 2). There is no mention of women in relation to agricultural communication or journalism work throughout the early and mid-1900s, and the few pieces of women perspective can be traced to ACE. The first female ACE president took her position in the 1950s, so we know that women have been actively engaged in agricultural communication roles for decades; however, there is little history or literature that reflects their contributions and perspectives.

Walker (2006) explains that the way a narrator tells a story is based on his or her assumptions about who is listening, so that oral history narratives are always filtered through a web of social relationships. Her research has given voices and identities to those who are not part of the traditional historical narrative of agriculture through the process of interpretation. Walker (2006) uses oral history interviewing and narrative

research to explore southern farmers' memories in order to learn more about farmers' experiences that related to major agricultural changes such as financial hardship, integration of farm machinery, and land ownership. Her three main goals, outlined in her book, were to see, "What experiences molded Southerners' sense of shared past, how they remember rural transformation, and what the shape of their stories about change tell us about how people use memories and knowledge to make sense of the world around them" (p. 35, para. 3). Walker conducted 475 interviews with 531 people, which are broken down statistically by race, gender, landowner farmers, and non-landowning farmers. She addressed the many challenges of working with oral history, narratives, and memory.

Walker's (2006) work with community memory and agricultural history addresses tremendous economical, technological, mechanical, racial, and landownership challenges that the traditional historical agriculture history did not include. Her oral history work has given hundreds of southern farmers not only a tool to reconstruct and communicate their narratives, but also an opportunity to give meaning and legitimacy to their feelings of loss, lack of control, and transformation. The data was then utilized to explore not only individual perceptions, but also community-based perceptions. Walker (2006) explains that, "Studying ways people use memory and connect individual memory to the larger past has the potential to provide scholars with new insights into the past" (p. 227, para. 2). When working with oral histories and interviewees, the psychological understanding of painful, traumatic, or confrontational events tend to get marginalized or are not as forthcoming as other events. For example, with all of these shifts in agriculture after World War II and throughout the rest of the century, many farmers felt powerless, lost

their farms, felt failure, and were overwhelmed by change. Racial discrimination was very evident in the interviews as well as women roles, class system divides, and the process of larger corporate farmers who overtook small farms. This content surfaced during Walker's (2006) interviews. These valuable insights provide new ways in which historians and researchers can further explore these layers and themes within the constructs of agricultural history.

Oral histories and narrative research are also used to explore social class systems and social hierarchical structures within numerous fields and social structures. Tyson's (1996) work explores the history of accounting by conducting and utilizing oral histories. What he found is that this field, historically, has collected information based on an internal class system of those in management positions. Accounting historical perspective has been told by those in management roles and only explored topics that were relevant to their class distinction or position of leadership. However, with those who worked in non-management positions, their oral histories shed light on social structures, daily routines, changes in tax laws, and other developments. By utilizing oral history, Tyson (1996) is able to obtain perceptions and recollections from those who implemented, designed, or were impacted by accounting procedures. This is a very common challenge for oral histories. Historically, oral and traditional histories have been hierarchically collected from those in high class rankings throughout all of society, and also from those in positions of power or authority.

Another powerful oral history example is included in Haley's (2006) article that focuses on the use of oral history and regional pronunciation and tribal dialect to trace his family's African American roots back to Africa. He had a very small foundation from

which to work. For many who work within Black history, there is little written documentation, and family names are lost or have been replaced with Americanized names. Black history, like that of other minority groups, has faced incredible challenges in constructing its historical roots. History about minority groups has often been written in a mediated way, and not by those who were actually part of those groups. Oral history as a qualitative research methodology has provided these groups with a method or tool to help construct and deconstruct their historical foundations. Historians also utilize oral history to provide a voice for varying perspectives.

When Portelli (1991) employed oral history in order to learn about the death of a young steel worker, Luigi Trastulli, he started to see that people had many different perspectives about this event and this person. He saw how the perspectives of participants who witnessed or were part of this social movement that took Trastulli's life were all very different. Instead of calling this "rubbish," he stepped back and made a striking analysis that helped him to understand the role of oral history, narratives, and memory in how they are shaped by social systems, location (regionally), and class systems, which all shaped their historical discourse and memories (Portelli, 1991).

Without the use of memory and oral history, the historical perspectives of race, labor history, feminism, gay culture, military history, ethnicity, and much more would not be part of any historical conversations. Oral history and memory are vital to all aspects and fields of historical analysis. Individual memory should be just as valued and utilized in historical discourse. The use of oral history is the method of collection, which provides a structured process in which to collect and organize the data. The employment

of constructivism, narrative research, and interpretivism, all provide a means in which to help retell these stories.

2.7 Constructivism and Interview Literature

The oral history process is considered a constructivist approach to qualitative inquiry. The humanistic aspects of the interview and the nature of the interview process and the data generated from the interview are all co-constructed. Both the interviewee and interviewer have an impact on the shaping of the narrative during the interview process. When working with this approach, the literature encourages the researcher to be aware of his/her own assumptions and bias throughout every aspect of the process, which includes initial research, sampling, the interview, and the coding process. There is a tremendous amount of detail and organization that go into the interviewing process. Understanding people, culture, experiences, and events takes a lot of time, relationship-building, research, communication, learning, listening, reflection, and respect for the person, event, and the interview process.

Blumer (1969) explains that human interaction during the interview is defined as interpretative interaction. What he means by this is that humans respond to one another, as carrying on a conversation, by interpreting each other's actions or remarks and then reacting based on interpretation (1969). This displays the importance of the interview process and the analytical reflection of the researcher's role within the formation or construction of the interview data. Blumer's own interpretation of the interpretivism perspective originates with social psychologist George Herbert Mead (1962), who developed and refined the notion of symbolic interactionism. Blumer (1969) then

incorporated Mead's perspective of constructed human interaction, which ties directly in to the interviewing process.

Seidman's (2006) book provides a foundation for learning about interviewing ethics and techniques while addressing how to analyze and interpret interview content. He reminds researchers that interviewing is a mode of inquiry that, as researchers, we are using to help people make sense of their experiences and of themselves. He provides further clarification that the purpose of interviews is neither to test hypotheses nor to gain answers, but to examine and understand lived experiences and the meaning that these experiences have on interviewees (2006).

Interviewing techniques and analyses that focus on listening are discussed by Seidman (2006) and Anderson and Jack (2006). Humans tend to struggle to listen, let alone be good listeners, pay attention, and retain what is heard. In an interview, poor listening can make or break the quality of the interview and the content that is recorded. Anderson and Jack (2006) provide three themes to help guide the oral history novice when it comes to interviewing and listening with her research that focuses on women, depression, and practicing lawyers:

1. The first is learning to listen in a new way, to hold in abeyance to the theories that told her what to hear and how to interpret what women had to say (p. 136, para. 2).
2. The second way of listening that allowed authors to hear the voices of the subjects was to attend to the subject's meta-statements (content) instead of researchers' own preconceptions (p. 138, para. 4).

3. The third way to listen was to attend to the logic of the narrative, noticing the internal consistencies or contradictions in person's statements about recurring themes and how the themes relate to each other (p. 139, para. 3).

Jack and Anderson (2006) both argue that oral history is a great tool to use to explore women's experiences that traditionally tend to shape their narratives by cultural constraints or are more likely to turn the focus from themselves to their family. They encourage researchers to explore distortions that may not fit into the wider, cultural, and socially acceptable historical narratives that fill our traditional historical perspectives, and narrative research to help further analyze these data.

2.8 Narrative Research and Inquiry

Oral sources and narratives are the oldest forms of communication and inquiry due to the nature of human development. People, no matter what culture they are a part of, have shared oral narratives about their lives, traditions, history, records, practices, and more. Narratives are stories or accounts that are shared and communicated. Narrative research is built upon the process of inquiry, as well. Hendry (2009) explains that, no matter how inquiry and knowledge are based, inquiry is the foundation of research no matter the field, and inquiry is part of human life. It shapes and reshapes our lives and helps people make meaning of their lives.

Numerous researchers such as Hendry (2009), Sewell (1992), Hart (1999), and Creswell (2003), all explored the use of narratives in historical discourse. Their literature provides a much broader view and further understanding of narratives, inquiry, and social identities. Sewell (1992) examines the historical development of narratives in his research and addresses, and what makes narrative research and history so different from social

science history. He explains that the historical dimensions of narrative research began in the 1970s and 1980s when there was a rebellion against the restrictions of quantitative research approaches and more humanities-centered approaches were sought out that were rooted in anthropology, psychology, and philosophy. Sewell (1992) then traced the development of narrative research through key literature produced by Lawrence Stone, George Steinmetz, Mary Jo Maynes, Margaret Somers, Luisa Passerini, and Janet Hart, who were all leading figures in narrative work. Sewell (1992) critiques and raises a number of challenges that need to be addressed, which include the use of the term narrative and how social science historical research and narrative research can and do intersect. Literature that explored the use of women within the contexts of experiences captured utilizing oral history and analyzed utilizing narrative research will also be included in this section.

Narratives can vary tremendously among people due to numerous demographical factors. Men and women encounter, remember, and share varying perspectives while those of different races, ethnicities, and social class structures (to name a few) provide a different layer of understanding. Walker (2006) utilizes narratives as way to explore agricultural, historical experiences from those who are not part of the national historical story. Those groups include individuals of ethnicity, race, and women. Walker explores women roles in agriculture and how women coped, contributed, and altered their roles on the farm due to economic hardship and poverty. These narratives challenge the notion of women's roles in American society, as well as reshape the agricultural historical narratives.

Hart (1999) utilizes narrative research in order to construct historical accounts of Greek women's prison life from the stories of their involvement in the Greek resistance to the German invasion that occurred in the early 1940s, as well as the continued challenges that Greece faced as a post-war state during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Hart gives a voice to Greek women who were political prisoners and examines how they functioned, survived, and interpreted their own experiences in the prison community. She further explores the phenomena of the women prison community through the women prisoner's narratives, as a culture and construction of personal ideologies. Their narratives expose the abuse and hardships women encountered in the prison system, but Hart was also able to learn about how the women found ways to cope. The women, "Attempted to colonize their living spaces and to shape authoritative prison culture" (1999, p. 495, para. 5). The women shared their memories that conveyed passive resistance, myth-making, self-actualization, and occasionally protest (1999). Their stories contributed to a broader historical understanding of women's roles within the Greek prison system, while Walker (2006) has accomplished the same tasks in utilizing narratives to share women's contributions and perspectives about agriculture economic hardships and family struggles during this time. These histories both challenge and add a layer of perspective to the already constructed historical narrative.

2.9 Technology and Memory

"The idea that you can 'remember,' for instance, the Kennedy assassination means that you remember its presentation on television or radio, rather than having direct experience of this event" (Thomson et al., 1994, p. 42, para. 2). Technology has tremendously changed how we record, save, and share oral sources, documents, and

transcripts with society, as well as how we communicate knowledge and information. It also provides a form of mediation of our experiences that relate to memory. It influences not only what we remember, but also how we remember. Technology impacts mass culture and popular culture, thus having a tremendous influence on how we remember or construct our own identities and narratives. Thomson et al. (1994) argue that, “Mass technology changes not only our sense of temporal but also the spatially specific nature of remembering” (p. 42, para. 2). Other forms of technology and communication alter what we see, hear, and experience, and therefore impact how we remember.

Oral history needs to be further explored through technological dimensions, which includes how technology shapes memory. Thomson et al. (1994) provide an incredible insight into many histories and memory debates that challenge oral history and national identity from an international perspective. Thomson et al. (1994) explore critical perspectives, implications of positioning memory as history, and the politics of memory, which impacts national past. The authors address memory, understanding, perspectives, experience, identity, empowerment, marginalization, and other aspects as they relate to national identity through the use of oral history. They discuss what influences our memories through the example of Australian historical past, which displays influences from popular culture and technology.

Technology, as a mediator of memory, affects how and what we remember. Everyone who witnessed the assassination of John F. Kennedy has a slightly different perspective of the tragic event. Those who watched it on TV or heard about it on the radio had a mediated form of communication that impacted how they, too, remember this event. Technology plays a vital role, even more so today than ever before, on how and

what we remember. We are surrounded by technology and it affects every aspect of our lives. Our personal memories and narratives are easily shaped by technology. They link us to our personal archives and culture. Even the process of conducting the oral history interview and the transcription process both involved technology to record, listen, digitize, computerize, and transcribe. Therefore, the interview and the transcription are both mediated by multiple forms of technology before the actual tape and transcription even make it into an archive.

Technology also plays a vital role in communicating information, which impacts the field of agricultural communication in many ways. Personal lived experiences about these shifts provide a unique understanding of what it was like to learn, study, and adapt to these new technological advances. Experiences about communication technology within the agricultural communication field have been captured, but there is a limited amount of content that has been published that traces some of these historical changes. There needs to be further preservation and analysis of those who have experienced new technology and the digital revolution in regard to communicating agricultural information. These changes have brought new challenges to face, but they have also opened the door for audience and social behavior type research that focuses on technology adoption. This part of the historical landscape in regards to agricultural communications scholarship needs to be located and is vital to the field.

2.10 Agricultural Communication and Women

The literature and historical dimensions of this field are void of women's perspectives and lack initial personal perspective from female faculty, support staff, and students. Walker (2006) and Hart (1999) both provide excellent examples of how oral

history and narrative research can be used to explore women's perspectives that are not part of the traditional historical landscape. When exploring women within the agricultural communication field, it should be explored through two lenses: women in academics and women within the profession. The tremendous historical shift in women in both academics and the profession further displays the need to build and construct historical perspective from female voices. Women's social roles were very different in the 1950s and 1960s as compared to today. One of the few sources of historical memory that relates to women and communication (in a very broad sense) is the *Hoosier Homemakers Series* (1985), which captured the historical perspectives of rural women and their way of life. They do share some of the memories that relate to communication and technology on the farm when they got electricity and washing machines, or the first time they used the phone.

There were women working as homemaker agents (today Educators) during this time who traveled throughout the state doing demonstrations. Their demonstrations focused on how to organize a farm house, cook and preserve food, health and hygiene education, and childrearing advice. Numerous times, in the oral history content, these women's professional roles were acknowledged, and they were doing some of this communication work before other fields (such as 4-H and agriculture) were doing it. Babbitt's (1993) research focuses on home economists' roles within the broader historical dimensions of CES history. She argues that CES historical literature "rarely acknowledges the important roles home economists and farm and rural women played in extension service" (1993, p. 83, para. 2). Babbitt also explores the CES hierarchical dimensions within the CES organization that hindered home economists in their positions

and rural women who were unclear about the division of labor within their local or stated CES agencies.

Literature that focuses on academic history and further development of academic programs does not mention the changes in gender dynamics nor the impact this had on academic programs and professional fields. In Evans's oral history, he broadly acknowledges both gender shifts in academics and also the growth of women producers (farmers). No one has explored why this academic shift occurred or when it started to change from predominantly males to predominantly females who are majoring in agricultural communications today.

There has been an attempt to incorporate female roles into academic curriculum by McGovney-Ingram and Rutherford (2008) at Texas A&M. Their development of women in agricultural communication courses provides a foundation and short timeline of women's contributions from the 1950s onward. However, this timeline can be further expanded. Where are the voices of women agricultural writers and editors? Most newspapers in the mid-1800s up to the early to mid-1900s had women's sections, and women were contributing and submitting writings for these columns. Brace (1999) explores the role of women journalists and editors in the 1840s through their journalistic contributions to *The Ohio Cultivator* and *The Ohio Farmer*. She explains that women were writing about homemaking, nutrition, gardening, fashion, education, poetry, and basic agriculture in these newspapers. These are some of our first female agricultural communicators and journalists. They need to be part of this historical foundation.

Narrative research and oral history are valuable methodologies and processes that further explore these pockets of perspectives and experiences that relate to women, race,

and ethnicity, which will help broaden the historical landscape. The pieces are there—they just need to be located, organized, and analyzed.

2.11 The Role of the Archivist and Dust

Oral history tapes, transcripts, and documents are considered objects that make their way into special collection archives as part of larger archives, which then provide accessibility and preservation of documents and artifacts, including tapes, DVDs, CDs, videos, and film reels. More conversations between oral historians, researchers, and archivists are needed. Oral history content not only finds its way into scholarship and research, but also into public history, museums, and libraries. Curators and librarians play an important role when conducting, transcribing, and digitizing oral histories. Swain (2006) explores the role of the archivist, librarian, or curator as “gate keepers” of information. Collection development has changed tremendously due to technology. The need to digitize and provide accessibility through web-based catalogs have added greatly to the job responsibilities of libraries, archivists, and curators.

The need to collaborate is vital to establishing much-needed partnerships that could lead to understanding, funding, and new project opportunities. Swain (2006) explores three main themes in her writings, all of which relate to oral history and archives. The first theme is a lack of scholarship being published by curators, librarians, and archivists that focus on oral history and the new electronic and technological needs that come with oral history projects. The second is the need for collaboration across professions in order to engage in meaningful conversations about oral history issues. The third and final theme is the need for librarians, archivists, and curators to become more

aware of historical research needs and trends in order to meet the need of their consumers/users (2006).

As the oral historian and archivist for this project, I wielded a level of authority and power in relation to the project design, sampling of participants, the transcriptions, the actual interviews, and the finished products. What I have learned about being in this role is how underexplored it is within scholarship and research. This should be a part of the research communities' agendas when it comes to primary sources, special collections, and archives. I think that many people take these artifacts at face value to be the "truth," or close to it, without the thought of who has conducted this project, who has mediated this information, what the original purpose of this study is, and how they decided what made its way in and what did not. Everything is mediated, regardless if it is tape or a document or any other form of research that has been composed and published, thus ending up in an archive or part of a collection in the archive.

Steedman (2001), Derrida (1996), and Schwartz and Cook (2002) focus on the role of the archive in relation to "gate-keeping." This position of power and authority is addressed in both the public archives (physical structures/holdings) and personal archives (psychological). Steedman's (2001) work encourages us to think more about archives in both the physical and psychological senses. The term "dust" stands for the experiences, memories, and personal perceptions that we carry with us into the archive. This alters how we look at the documents as well as the dust that is there, which is the historical content in the archive. How we carry dust into the archive, the dust that surrounds us there, and the dust we leave with alters our own historical perceptions, but rarely do we question the dust that exists in the archive (Steedman, 2001). How it has been altered,

mediated, or how it is swept under the rug and is not part of the archive are all bigger questions and thoughts that we should be addressing as researchers. We need to be more reflective about the “dust” that we carry into the archive and the dust that leaves with us that we incorporate into our research.

The idea of “dust” has to be addressed because it is so important to the entire oral history process and to this project. By my own personal dust and my role as the gatekeeper, I am determining what makes its way in and what does not. Addressing the role of the archivist and oral historian is pivotal to any interview- or oral history-based project, as well as my constructivism approach in regard to both the interview and oral history processes. Any and all researchers who enter the archives (which would be most if not all of them) need to be very cautious of this role and authority as they mediate through their own research documents. Dust can be very powerful.

2.12 Conclusion

All the objects and documents that rest in the archives are entrenched in dust, and we also carry in our own dust to the discourse and contexts of our research and our sources. Steedman (2001) explains that, “To recognize and deal with the understanding that nothing goes away; is to deal with Dust” (p. 166–167, para. 1–2). Dust refers to particles, which I would also describe as pieces of memories, experiences, perspectives, and insights that are stored in our memories, constructed into narratives, and shared with others. Our dust helps us to make meaning out of our experiences and helps to construct or deconstruct our sense of self and our identities. This literature review consisted of sources that provided more depth and understanding to the oral history process, memory, interviewing, narrative research, inquiry, constructivism, CES, women, technology, the

archive, and “dust.” By utilizing oral history and narrative research, we can start to kick-up the dust that incorporates voices and experiences based on human perspective, and heads down uncharted paths of women and diversity.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction to Methodology

This type of research project is novel in that it combines the social science aspects of the agricultural communication field while utilizing historiographical research methods found in the humanities discipline of history. Both oral history and narrative research were utilized to seek out and analyze data, and then to use these data to retell or reposition the history of the agricultural communication field. Oral history is a collection tool used to seek out human perspective, record it, and analyze it for deeper meaning and preservation. Narrative research was utilized as the methodology to then look at the data generated from the oral history interviews to see how it compared or fit into what is already known about the history of agricultural communications. This type of data also yields valuable content in the form of oral data that has often never been shared or explored from perspectives of those who have been overlooked or excluded in helping build the traditional historical foundation of this field. Oral history, narrative research, memory, inquiry, and other terms will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter in order to provide a helpful foundation and background to this historical tool and method.

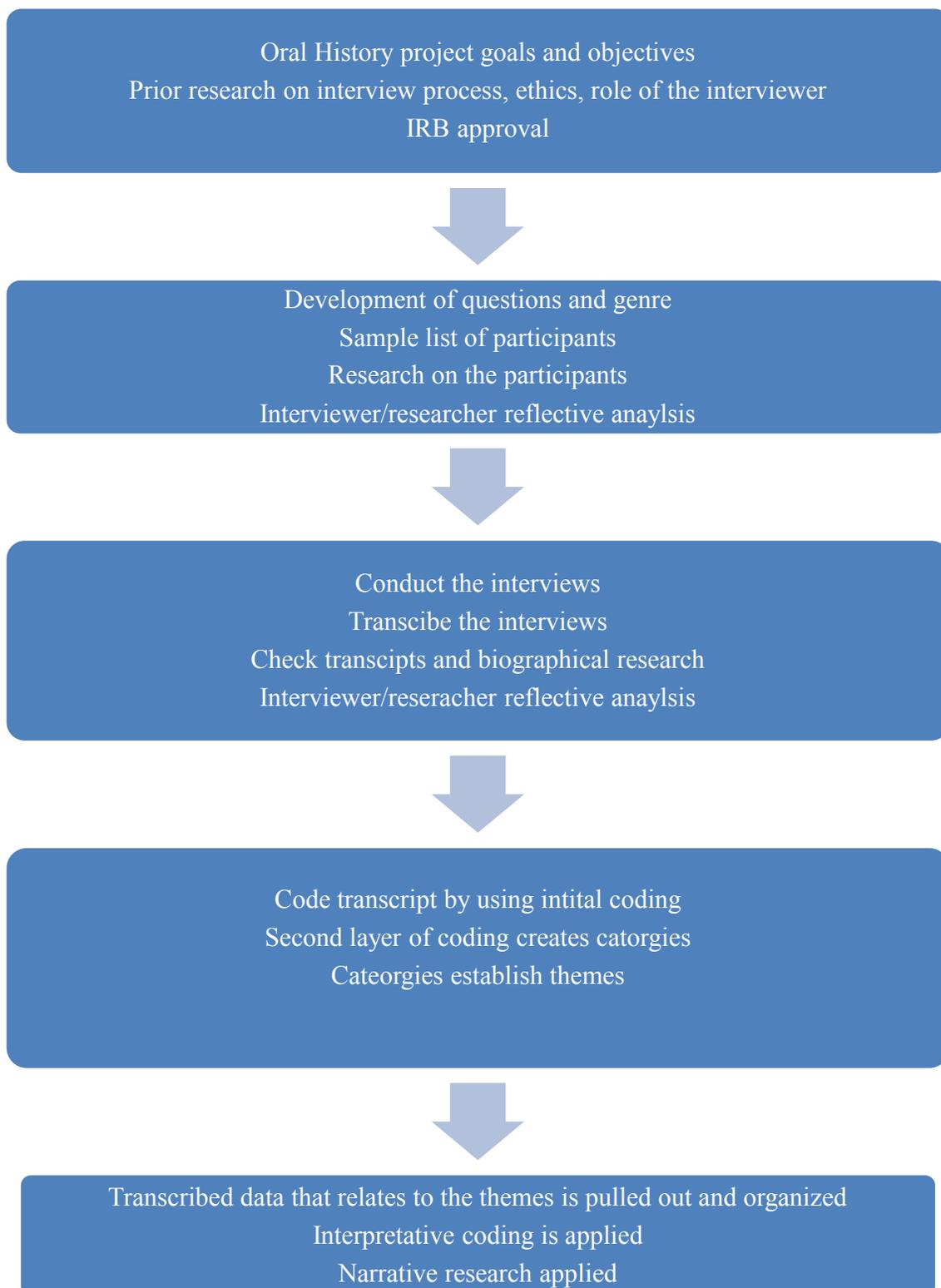
3.2 Research Design

This section will further explore the qualitative research design that consisted of oral history and narrative research. Table 3.1 displays the research process, which is discussed in further detail later in this section. Both oral history and narrative research are approaches that are utilized to understand human experience, which is built upon inquiry. Epistemology for this type of qualitative research focuses on subjectivism, and the theoretical perspective is constructivism and interpretivism. This means that the researcher makes the assumption that individuals construct meaning out of their own experiences and interpret them in many different ways. There are multiple meanings or interpretations to events, ideas, and experiences. Yow (1994) explains that subjectivity and the making of meaning of lived experiences through the use of oral histories are incredibly important to our understanding of the past and present (p. 23). The act of sharing and communicating memories and stories helps to construct personal identity and to better define our roles in society.

The oral history process starts with objectives and goals. Defining the subject matter in relation to the goals and objectives is done by exploring oral history genres. Genres are defined by inquiry, the subject, and the nature of the content from the interview. The four basic genres utilized by oral historians are (1) life histories, (2) community histories, (3) family histories, and (4) subject-oriented histories. Genres help to group oral history interviews by inquiry and subject matter.

Larson (2007) suggests subject-oriented oral history is when certain topics of interest are formulated into the interview questions. I chose to utilize subject-oriented histories for this oral history project given the nature of the subject that is being explored.

Table 3.1 Overview of Research Process



Larson (2007) explains that subject-oriented histories are normally used to help fill in the “gaps” or “holes” due to previous work being done where not enough information, or more layers of content need to be collected and explored.

With a genre defined, the goals were utilized in order to develop a list of interview questions, and then a list of interviewees was constructed. This sample list of possible interviewees was co-constructed with a number of faculty and staff from this field. Communication with the interviewees was established, IRB documentation was filed and approved, and then the interviews took place at locations across the county. The oral history interviews were then transcribed, memo/observation writings were retyped, and transcripts were coded, and categorized. Themes then emerged that helped to generate focused historical topics that were further analyzed by utilizing narrative research.

3.3 Project Overview

The initial goal of this project is to capture and preserve oral history data, and then to further analyze this content. Prior research about oral history and each interviewee took place prior to, during, and after the interviews. Any biographical information was obtained, their published writings were collected, and publications they had contributed to were all collected and studied. This content helps to direct the interview questions that were generated by the interviewees and me. The questions consist of a broad range of biographical, personal, educational, and professional questions. Depending on the interviewee, the questions could be altered to fit his/her professional or academic experience. For example, if it was noted that the interviewee had traveled around the world on agricultural communication work, then his/her questions would further explore

and reflect these experiences. The interviewee also had the freedom to control the content of the interview. My voice is not part of the first four interviews, but it is in the last three very minimally. I did not want my perceptions, interruptions, or voice to derail the conversations.

The project continued to grow and change with each interview. The questions set the tone for the project and the interviews. They sparked discourse that was subjective, and the process allowed for flexibility. The questions included:

Biographical questions:

- My name is:
- The date and location of interview was stated
- I currently work or have retired from:
- I have worked in this field for _____ years
- My education journey started with: (Bachelors, Masters, Ph.D.); where and in what area of study?
- Can you describe your career path?

General:

- How has agriculture changed the most?
- How has communications changed the most?
- What are some of the key accomplishments of agricultural communication and journalism before and during your career?
- Who was your biggest influence in the field of agricultural communication and journalism and how did he/she influence your professional development?

Research:

- What kinds of research and scholarly activity are most needed to propel our field today and into the future?

Professional:

- What professional organizations have you been involved in?
- What leadership roles did you fulfill in the organizations?
- How much of a role did professional development have during your career?
- Can you describe some of your most memorable professional experiences?
- Do you have international agricultural communication experience? If so, describe and how did that affect you as a person and a professional?
- What did you enjoy most about your career and why?
- What advice would you provide to young people about professional development?

Program-related:

- Agricultural communication and journalism education is led by a range of disciplines, including agricultural communication; journalism; and increasingly, agricultural education. Are there any advantages or disadvantages that stand out to you from this arrangement?
- What do you think about the professional shift from journalism to other areas of communication such as public relations, advertising and marketing (as examples) and why has this occurred?

- What were the relative strengths of agricultural communication/journalism at your institution during your career?
- What have been some of the major challenges over the years?
- What advice would you have for young people entering the field today?
- What advice do you have for academicians?
- What do you foresee for the future for agricultural communication/journalism at the university and as a profession?

3.4 Sampling

The genre of the defined oral history project narrows down both the phenomenon that is being observed and what is being described by the interviewee. Both the genre and phenomenon determine the participants or the sample. Therefore, it was very important to structure the selection of participants to include professionals and faculty who provided a broad representation of the agricultural communication community as well as varying professional and academic experiences. Seeking out a broad spectrum of experience was vital to the establishment of the historical dimensions of this field given the variation in his/her concepts, phenomena, and experiences.

The list of participants started with names found in the Ralph Reeder boxes. Reeder worked in agricultural communications for decades and provided leadership and dedication to the professional field. I then sat down with numerous agricultural communication faculty and professionals from across the country at annual Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Life and Human Sciences (ACE) conferences. They provided names of individuals who they felt were significant contributors to both the professionalism and scholarship of the agricultural

communication field. I had conversations with agricultural communication professional staff (editors, writers, graphic designers, photographers) and department heads to see who they felt should be part of this project and why. I also was given an ACE past president booklet that had personal and professional information about ACE presidents who had served the organization from 1913 onward.

When conversing with a broad number of individuals, I heard different perspectives on why they felt that this person or that person should be included. The most interesting aspect was that a majority of the names were the same, and the people I was encouraged to include in this project were those who had historically dynamic agricultural communication backgrounds in professional work and scholarship. Many interviewees contributed names of others to include in their interviews or in conversations before or after the interviews. Some were agricultural communication service department heads while others worked as photographers, journalists, editors, writers, and graphic designers. Most of them held leadership positions in the ACE organization over the years. The majority were men, but a few women were mentioned. Those participants were also from the era that I would define as born in the early to mid-1900s. Their oral histories also consisted of military involvement, marriage, education, and career. Almost all are between the ages of 60 and 90. The following is not a concrete list of sampling requirements; this is just how the sampling pools (participants) demographically all came together after this list was created.

Table 3.2 Interviewees

Name	Title	Employment	Age	AgComm Background
Dr. James (Jim) Evans	Department Head Faculty Retired Faculty Agricultural Communication	Retired from the University of Illinois at Urbana Director today of Agricultural Communication Documentation Center	Mid 80's	Scholarship, literature, faculty, professional organizational leadership
Dr. Robert (Bob) Kern	Department Head AgComm staff Faculty Communication Consultant	Retired University of Iowa Retired from international consulting work	Mid 80's	International work, Service department leadership, professional organizational leadership
Dr. Delmer Hatesohl	AgComm staff Student academic advisor	Retired from University of Missouri	Mid 80's	AgComm professional, Advisor to students
Dr. David (Dave) Petritz	Faculty Director of Cooperative Extension Service	Retired from Purdue University	Mid 70's	Extension specialist and Director, partners with agricultural communication, Administrative perspective
Dr. Laura Hoelscher	Professional Staff in AgComm Service Dept. Editor for Journal of Extension	Still actively employed at Purdue University	Early 60's	Editor for AgComm Department, Editor to JOE

3.5 Interview Process

Prior to the interview, I conducted research on the interviewee to learn about his/her professional contributions. If needed, I would slightly restructure interviewee questions depending on his/her professional or academic experiences. I would send the questions and give the interviewee the freedom to change, alter, or add to the list. Also, the prior communication, the prior sending of the interview questions, and the co-

constructivism approach helped to make this part of the process more collaborative in nature. I would also analytically reflect on my own personal experiences and biases prior to conducting the interview. To gain access to people and to gain their trust, so that they will talk openly about their experiences, merits a great deal of time, communication, and establishment of a relationship.

Portelli (1997) explains that the interview process is a form of story-telling or history-telling. The interview is a process of inquiry and those who go to the archive to use this type of valuable research content need to keep that in mind. Charmaz (2012) describes the interview as “a useful data-gathering tool and method for interpretative inquiry” (p. 25, para. 3). Seidman (2006) defines the purpose of interviews as not a means in which to gather answers, but a means to gain understanding:

That the purpose of in-depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions, nor to test a hypothesis, and to evaluate as the term is normally used. The root of an in-depth interview is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people the meaning they make of that experience. (p. 9 para. 1)

Portelli (2006) explains that, during the interview, interviewees reveal unknown aspects of events or unknown events (themselves) that shed light on unexplored areas of daily life. During the actual interview process, the interviewee is being asked to recall his/her own memories and to interpret them based on the formation of questions. Depending on the questions that are generated by the interviewer, this is a shared process. This research is collaborative and constructive in nature. The interviewee’s narrative is going to be altered or shaped in some way, shape, or form due to the participation of the interviewer. Portelli (1981) argues that a requirement for the interviewer is to understand and give the

interviewee priority to tell his/her story that he/she wants to share rather than what the interviewer wants to hear.

Thompson (1978) explains that having no preconceived agenda or ideas leads to free-flowing interviews when the main purpose is to record narratives rather than to seek out information (p. 227). The organic nature and lack of preconceived notions helped this project to generate valuable data. When interviews have to be guided or directed, there tends to be interruptions that cause break-up of the narrative. Interruptions break up the thinking and constructive patterns that the interviewee is trying to put together from memory. However, some oral historians are active participants in the interview, which is a personal choice. A well-trained interviewer can effectively be part of the interview, but, based on the personal nature of this content derived for this project, I chose not to interject, or to do so sparingly. I did not want my voice to be a part of this oral history, nor did I want it to show in the transcripts, but it did in places. Pieces of data are collected, then more, and more, until the researcher feels that he/she has saturated his/her data field with data that fairly represents or provides a level of perspective to be gained.

3.6 Data Analysis Section: Transcriptions

The interviews were conducted in office spaces, the interviewees' homes, and on college campuses utilizing a digital recorder. Each of the interviews lasted anywhere from one to three hours in length. Therefore, the length of the interviewee transcripts varied greatly from 18 to 46 pages in length. The data that is generated from the interviews is oral in nature, which was then transcribed into documents either by myself or a professional transcriptionist. The transcripts were typed out, painstakingly, word-by-word. Each interviewee received a copy of his/her transcripts and could edit them for

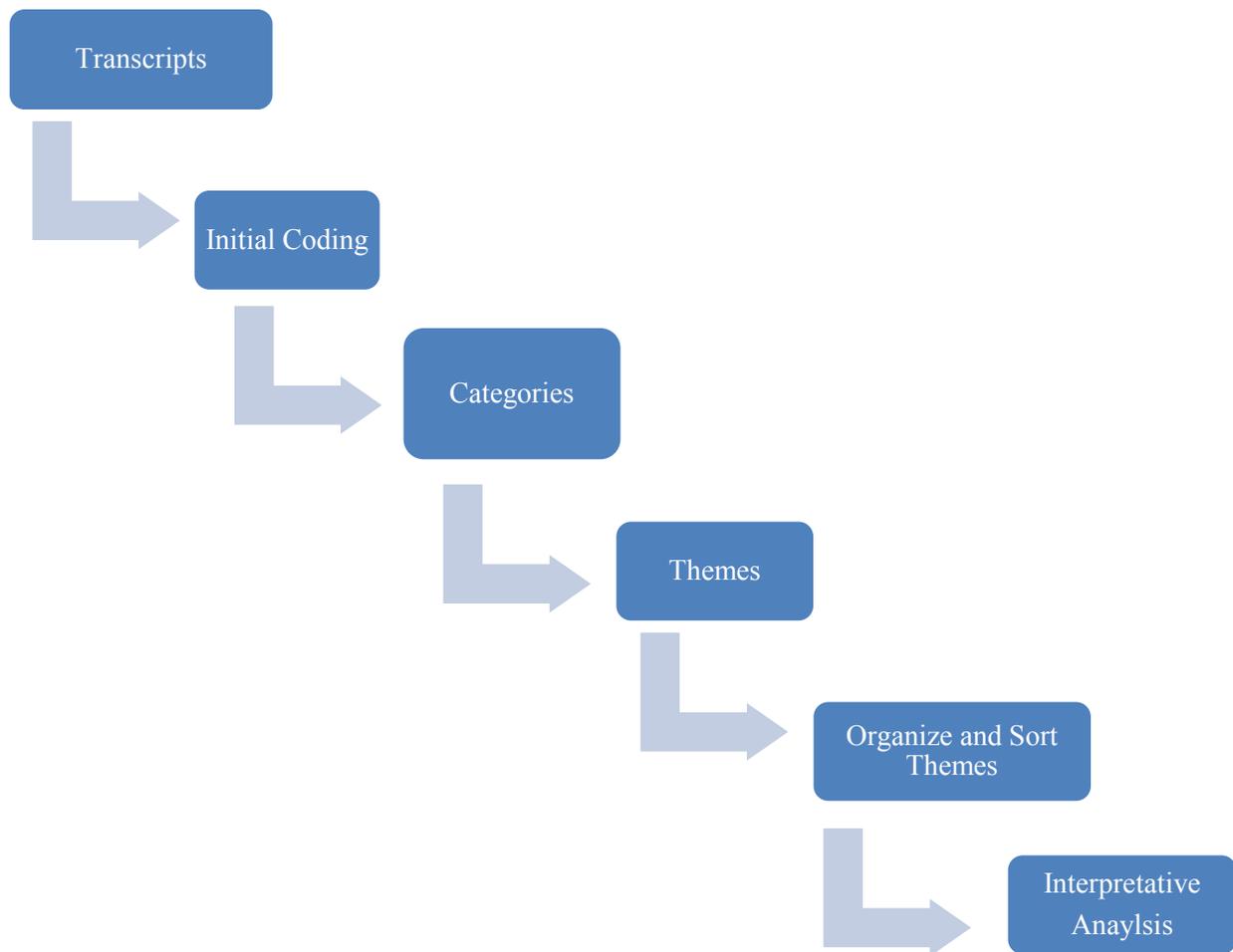
corrections if needed. I also checked the dates, names, and other details in the transcripts to provide a level of accuracy of the data. No one asked to change words or content to the point that would have altered the subject matter (genre).

Participants did not like to see all the pauses, the filler words, or how they may have stumbled or stammered on a question. This did not impact the quality of the content, but it did have a personal impact on the interviewee who wanted to sound more polished, professional, and clear-thinking. Some were very critical of their voice, their words, and their responses. Even though they understood the intent and full purpose of this project, some were still very self-conscious about their oral history content.

3.7 Coding

Coding allows for and draws upon comparisons and variations in experiences. Due to the nature of this project, initial coding was utilized. Then the researcher compares one set of data to another to help further develop categories. The work of Mills, Booner, and Francis (2006) encourages researchers to enter into the coding process with as few predetermined thoughts as possible because this helps to reduce the chances of the researcher filtering the data through his/her own pre-existing experiences. Then, categories emerged from the coding, which led to themes. There were eight themes total, and three were selected for further analysis. The transcripts were then sorted and filtered by using terms that relate to the three themes. From there, this content was explored by using interpretative theory and narrative research. See Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 Process Flow Chart



3.8 Initial Coding Process

Initial coding is an inductive coding process that provides the researcher with the opportunity to look at the content and take note of actions, terms, and experiences. The coding process is visibly seen in the tables with the transcriptions as I went line-by-line and word-by-word during the initial coding process. Coding was approached through interpretivist assumptions (Creswell, 2007). This process was conducted in two different processes. Then I went back through a second time to focus mainly on the initial codes that I had established from the data to form more in-depth coding and to further interpret the data and codes. During this process, I created a key. The key consisted of about three dozen kinds of codes (see Table 2.1) that identified the categories, which include academic history, mentors, technology, Extension, women, historical, and many more. This helped to create categories that were further explored through narrative research. See a sample of the initial coding process in the following table (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Initial Coding Process

<p>To strengthen your own insights. They helped me tremendously. They affected me tremendously in my career.</p> <p>Help students connect with this dimension of their future.</p> <p>Develop contacts with colleagues abroad who share your academic interests and you'll be surprised at what may blossom from those contacts.</p> <p>27:32</p> <p>In working with your academic programs, do what you can to strengthen the centrality of your program within the colleges,</p>	<p>Strengthen your own insights Help students connect</p> <p>Strong campus support Make connections and keep them</p> <p>Positioning of the programs, support them Teaching</p>	<p>AC</p> <p>AC support</p> <p>AC</p>
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<p>which you are a part. Through service teaching, you help students throughout those colleges become better communicators. And through it, you can serve every discipline within our science-oriented agriculture colleges. Your contributions in service teaching will be appreciated by administrators, by faculty members in those disciplines, and by others.</p>	<p>Help students grow in comm skills</p> <p>Contributions in service teaching will be appreciated</p>	<p>AC Service Validation</p>
<p>28:19</p> <p>Help strengthen and sharpen the sense of history and tradition in our field. An onslaught of technological advances and other forces threaten our understanding. These focuses tend to bury our understanding of our academic homeland. They blind us to the deep roots of this field. And I think they blind us to the valuable lessons we can learn from the past.</p>	<p>Connect to history</p> <p>Technology changing and challenging us</p> <p>Blind us to our roots They pull us from the past at times</p>	<p>HIST</p> <p>TECH Challenge</p> <p>TECH</p>
<p>28:54</p> <p>Finally, remember the importance and urgency of your work. However the world's food enterprises may change during the years ahead, our special field of interest – the substance, the flow, the dynamics of humans communicating- is central to the success of it.</p>	<p>Importance of your work Role comm plays w food Ag can change but comm is vital</p>	<p>NEED Validation Role AG</p>

Then, from these categories emerged themes that were organized by subject matter. The themes focused on numerous historical related topics that emerged from the interviewees' oral histories. There were numerous themes that emerged from the

transcripts that focus on numerous aspects of the field. Below is a list of the themes (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Themes

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.) The need of agricultural communication historical dimensions and the role retirees have within this discussion.2.) Extension and agricultural communication: sharing a historical foundation.3.) Agricultural communication contributions to international agricultural communication work.4.) Addressing the circular pattern of challenges in the agricultural communication field: the past, present, and future.5.) Coming to terms with validation, loyalty, and professionalism within the agricultural communication field.6.) Departmental mergers: ideologies, beliefs, and even partnerships.7.) Technology and historical meaning: it buries us and blinds us at the same time.8.) Women's experience is missing in the agricultural communication historical narrative.
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All of these themes are important and focus on numerous historical and timely-related topics of interest, but three were selected that I felt were most predominate throughout all of the interviews and would provide the most value to the historical and current status of the field, which included women, departmental merging, and communication technology.

3.9 Analysis of Themes

Next, the transcribed content was filtered using terms that related to the themes. For example, gender is a theme; therefore, the transcripts were filtered through the use of the terms: women, gender, ladies, girls, homemakers, and home economics. The terms derived from the subject matter and terminology utilized in the transcripts that relate to the theme. The transcribed data from each interview that consisted of any of the terms above was organized into a new table. Then, narrative and interpretative research was applied to analyze transcribed data on a deeper level. A sample of interpretative and narrative research application is provided in Appendix F.

3.10 Narrative Research

The process of applying narrative and interpretative methodologies to analyze the data is meant to serve as a means of repositioning or retelling a story that has been told and explored through marginalized lenses. The history of the agricultural communication field has been mediated from perspectives of those in positions of leadership and authority, and as a result, the experience of women and minorities is diminished. Narratives are constructed from memory and tend to focus on lived experience and phenomena. Creswell (2003) defines narrative research as a “Form of inquiry in which the researcher studies the lives of individuals” (p. 15, para. 3) and can continue to broaden the number of interviewees/participants who are sharing their personal and lived experiences. “This information is then retold or restoried by the researcher into a narrative chronology. In the end, the narrative combines views from the participant’s life with those of the researcher’s in a collaborative narrative” (Cladinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2003, p. 15, para. 3). Narratives, as a form of inquiry, remind researchers and

those utilizing oral history transcripts of the complexities of human experiences and how individuals make sense of their personal lives through the sharing of their stories.

Creswell (2003) provides a process for conducting narrative research, which I followed throughout my own research. His outline for conducting narrative research was adapted from the work of Clandinin and Connelly (2000). The first step is to define the research topic, and step two is then to select individuals who have stories to share about their experiences. The third step is then recording the interviewees' experiences. This step consists of researchers utilizing additional artifacts such as letters, diaries, newspaper clippings, photos, and more to help assemble the stories about the interviewees. During this step, it is important for the researcher to also collect personal demographical information about the interviewees. Step four consists of analyzing the interviewees' stories and the researcher then "restories" them into outline or framework (Creswell, 2003).

The narrative process also consists of organizing the stories into a chronological order. It is during the restorying process that the researcher links the ideas that are shared within the stories (Creswell, 2007, p. 56). Stories are also shared or organized structurally with a beginning, a middle, and an end. They can also be shared and restoried within the framework of the past, present, and future.

In order to help restory these data, as I worked through the data in regard to narrative and interpretive methodologies, numerous questions came to mind that helped to deeper analyze the content that related to the themes. The questions that were formed throughout the interpretative process for the theme of women are displayed in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Reflective Analysis Questions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does this mean? • What is really being said? • What was said? • How does this explore the roles of women in AgComm? • What does it tell us about their historical contributions to the field? • How do the interviewees' perceive women's roles and contributions to the field? • How do they construct their perceptions of women's roles? • What contributes or influences their perceptions of women in AgComm? • How does my role as the interviewer and as a female impact the interview content? • How do women define and confront their roles within the field?

Crotty (1998) provides an outline of assumptions based on the theoretical perspective of constructivism:

- “Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world around them that they are interpreting.”
- “Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives.”
- “The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. Process is largely inductive” (p. 8–9, para. 3–5).

Creswell (2003) argues, through the use of social constructivism, which is often combined with interpretivism, that assumptions held by the researcher assume that people “Seek understanding of the world in which they live and work” (p. 8, para. 3). Therefore, people develop, foster, and assign various meanings to their actions, experiences, and objects.

Creswell (2003) explains that researchers then look for varying perspectives and complexities that surround the participant's view and the process of constructing meaning during the interview. The process is often developed through discussion, interactions, and negotiation of meaning (Creswell, 2003).

3.11 Limitations

Qualitative nature of oral histories and narrative research can provide a number of challenges. For example, each time data are collected, they provide different content. There may or may not be overlapping themes that emerge. Creswell (2003) explains that qualitative research is emergent, meaning that the process, interview, and questions can and may change throughout the process, which is due to the nature of the data that is being collected. Also, unlike information from surveys or other forms of inquiry, these data are numerical-based and cannot be replicated to yield the same data. The use of constructivism can be limiting as well. It provides a great amount of flexibility and subjectivity while traditional social science-based research tends to be more grounded in objectivity. The integration and level of interviewer involvement throughout the interview process can provide for challenges if not managed and reflected upon.

The lack of diversity in the sampling (interviewees) provided for limitations. The list of names I have for oral history interviews consists mostly of males, and that is problematic. Thus, capturing other voices within this field is necessary, and may help to further develop research that focuses on race, women, ethnicity, and class systems within the agricultural communication field. Diversity of experiences and perspectives provides for more layers of historical understanding that need to be further explored in the historical context of agricultural communication as a field.

Oral history can be further explored from a critical perspective based upon a lack of theoretical structure, a lack of strong scholarship (in regards to reliability and validity), and the imperfections of human memory. Exploring critical perspectives sheds light on the many challenges of utilizing oral history, but there is still much about oral history to be celebrated and valued. Tuchman (1996) provides researchers with important critical viewpoints about oral history interviews and oral sources. She raised interesting and tough questions about the position of the historian. Is researcher inside or positioned outside of the event, and therefore writing from within or outside? How can one collect the whole story and all perspectives if the researcher is positioned inside or outside? These are excellent questions that all researchers should ask themselves when working on research or scholarship. She discussed the role of the oral historian by questioning the actual process of oral history interviews and the data that are collected as “a few veins of gold and vast mass of trash is being preserved” (Tuchman, 1996, p. 94, para. 3).

Tuchman further explored her position by arguing that:

With the appearance of the tape recorder, a monster with the appetite of a tapeworm, we now have, through its creature oral history, an artificial survival of trivia of appalling proportions. To sit down and write a book, even of memoirs, request some effort, discipline and perseverance which until now imposed a certain natural selection of what survived in print. But with all sorts of people being invited merely to open their mouths, and ramble effortlessly and endlessly into a tape recorder, prodded daily by an acolyte of oral history, a few view of gold and vast mass of trash are being preserved. (1996, p. 96, para. 4)

Depending on the purpose of the oral history project, this may be true. Not everything that is collected may be of value or add to the historical foundation or conversation. It is through the establishment of strong protocol and analytical and reflective oral history procedures that the researcher can tease out and pull together data that are fruitful and enlightening. I would also challenge critics to further define who should decide and how should we value or devalue personal experiences and perceptions.

Grele (1985) and Henige (1986) explore critical perspectives of oral history from the position of theoretical and methodological structure. Grele (1985) states that this issue has led to “endless activity without goal or meaning” and continues by arguing that because of this problem, that oral history might not develop into a respectable and accepted research tool in academic study (p. 127, para. 1). Oral history can be utilized as historical evidence, and Moss (1977) explores this very idea in his research that focuses on appreciating and understanding the value of oral history within the context of historical analysis. Many researchers utilize validity and reliability to justify their data analysis and outcomes. Moss (1977) proposes a number of ways to evaluate oral history for integrity. There needs to be a level of respect, understanding, and appreciation for oral history, but still a somewhat critical view of its value unless the oral history has been critically evaluated. Moss explains that the researcher should know that if the oral histories are unaltered; under what restraints was the interview recorded; and, if needed, what type of equipment was used (1977). When exploring the historical content from an oral history, Moss suggests a list of evaluating questions that researchers should consider:

- Does this research provide a unique contribution?
- How sound is the interview?

- Is the interview thorough?
- Are there both rational and local facts present?
- Does the interview content seem out of place? (1977, p. 457, para. 2)

Thomas (1996) explains that the value of oral history and the fruitfulness of perspectives can be examined and interpreted. We know that human minds are subject to error; we are not perfect. Walker (2006) acknowledged the fact that memories are filtered and altered depending on the interview process, social relationships, traumatic experience, personal lived experience, preconceived notions, and many other forms of experience. I argue that this is what makes oral history content different than other forms of documented research. It is humanistic—it does not have measurements, experiments, or statistical analysis—but it has words, contextual meaning, and emotional layers of human narratives. Portelli (2006) reminds us that “oral sources are oral sources” (p. 33, para 3). The interview, itself, is derived from memory. The burden lies within the oral historian and the researcher to understand the challenges of working with memory from a psychological and anthropological perspective depending on the topic and the interviewee.

3.12 Validity and Reliability of Oral History and Narrative Research

Thomas (2006) argues that moving toward new forms of inquiry, and by challenging some of the traditional assumptions and judgments of historians, this process brings recognition to groups of people who have been ignored. Oral history, as a method, is helping people to make their own histories. Oral history is being done in regards to scholarship, which means it follows academic rigor, research standards, and protocol in

order to purpose a scholarly product that is insightful, applicable, and can add to the documented sources that already exist.

Portelli (2006) argues with conviction that oral sources are a different kind of credibility. He explains that oral testimony can be untruthful if not adhering to facts, but even divergence from the truth can lead to further exploration of the imagination and symbolism. There is an underlying reason for divergences. I agree with Portelli that, even when diverging from the narrow track of factual historical accounts, oral history can provide another dimension or layer to the event or the account. Portelli (2006) continues by explaining the credibility of oral sources as:

Once we have checked our factual credibility with the established criteria of historical philological criticism that apply to every document, the diversity of the oral history consists in the fact that ‘untrue’ statements are still psychologically ‘true’ and that these pervious ‘errors’ sometimes reveal more than factually accurate accounts. (p. 37, para. 1)

However, other historians have argued that credibility is void when oral histories do not systematically match-up with factual sources such as documents. Some historians believe that an overflow of human experiences about one event provides for many meaningless accounts of the past, as argued by Tuchman (1996). So, how does one decide which historical perspectives are worth saving and which are not?

Validity and reliability are consistently evaluated through numerous reflective processes. Especially during the coding process, Charmaz (2012) has advised the researcher to explore actions throughout the data in order not to apply preexisting categories. The coding process allows for the researcher to sort, organize, analyze, and

get a deeper understanding of the data. Then, throughout the theoretical sampling process, Charmaz (2012) reminds us that this process is emergent, which means that the researcher does not always know the concepts or the sample(s) before he/she starts to analyze the data.

A powerful example of reliability within the constructs of oral history and narrative research has been experienced by many scholars such as Polishuk (1998), Walker (2006), Haley (2006), and Hart (1999). Polishuk's (1998) oral history research led her down the path of understanding the meaning of "misremembering" as she explored one woman's role in feminist activities in Oregon in the 1930s, which is a great example of a scholar confronting challenges with reliability. Julia was her name, and she helped to organize timber workers' unions and longshoremen's unions. As Polishuk (1998) conducted numerous oral history interviews over a period of time with Julia, she built timelines of Julia's life both from her feminist role and her personal life.

As she explored the many life events that Julia shared in her oral history interview, Polishuk (1998) started to see some inconsistencies with years, activities, and people in relation to Julia's narrative. Julia is even quoted as saying during an interview that, "Some of my errors were intentional because I was embarrassed by your questions and I did not want and still do not like to dwell on that painful period of my life" (p. 21, para. 2). Julia's narrative about her union work in the 1930s from a female perspective is still very insightful and under-represented in the field of union/labor and feminist history. Julia wanted to portray herself in a way that was unique and personal to Julia. This was Julia's oral history, her story, her narrative, and Polishuk respected Julia's position and learned from this oral history experience.

Researchers and scholars must also remember that historical documents can also be flawed, biased, or untruthful. They are no different than oral sources, and most documented sources started out as oral sources at some point in time. There is also a need to respect and understand the humanistic nature of this kind of research and data. Misremembering or challenges with reliability can be just as powerful and insightful to the historical conversation.

3.13 Institutional Review Board

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) process consisted of Research Exemption Request, Human Subject Applications, Research Participant Consent Forms, and all communication corresponding documentation. The applications and all IRB-related documents were filed and processed with Purdue University's IRB office, and all documents are stored in locked filing cabinets and on a campus desktop computer filing system. This research project has undergone two separate IRB processes: one for the initial project starting in 2008, and the second in 2012. Purdue University, Department of Youth Development and Agricultural Education, which is home to the Agricultural Communication academic program, provided storage in the form of locked filing cabinets for these data as well. The IRB process is pivotal in providing a structure of research accountability and responsibility in regards to the research participants involved.

3.14 Role of the Researcher

This section will explore my positioning within my research, theoretical sensitivity, and personal bias. I was not only the researcher, but also the interviewer. Therefore, I was involved in the formulation of the data, to an extent, and also the analysis of the data. An epistemology position, in regards to utilizing oral history, also

focuses on the reflexivity of the role of the researcher or interviewer within the oral history process. This position allows for a more dynamic interaction and reflection of the relationship between the interviewee and interviewer. Leavy (2011) argues that, “Researchers actively participate in the knowledge building process” (p. 8, para. 1). She further describes this as malleable, adaptable, and fluid (Leavy, 2011)).

From a pragmatic perspective within my role, I believe that people are perceptive and creative. They are capable of understanding and interpreting the world around them, and that there can be more than one interpretation of lived experience. The reflexivity that I have incorporated into this project also displays my own thoughts, fears, challenges, and successes in regards to my research and my oral history experience. Oral history research also provided me with a good foundation for understanding my role in regards to the oral history interview and process. Many scholars have established different reflexive frameworks, which oral historians can utilize in their work.

One aspect of the theoretical and methodological process would be reflective analysis of the actual interview process by the interviewer or researcher. Leavy (2011) defines this process of reflection and analysis as the context of discovery. She further explains that this is when the researcher defines and gains an understanding of his/her role in the methodological procedures. She generated a number of self-provoking questions that researchers should ask themselves:

1. How did you come to your topic?
2. What made you interested in this topic?
3. From what standpoint did you approach this topic?
4. What was the nature of your relationship with your interviewees?

5. What was it like to end the process?
6. What status issues had an impact on the process (race, women, age, etc.)?

(Leavy, 2011, p. 71)

All of these factors are influenced by the researcher's assumptions. The need to step back, think, and evaluate one's own assumptions can and does help to produce a more reputable piece of scholarship.

The interview is one of the most important aspects of the entire oral history process. In the past, some practitioners have taken more of a backseat role in the interview compared to those today who seem to have a more active role in the interview. Perks and Thomson (2006) argue that not only is the interview process viewed as a co-construction, but also as a dynamic process of interactivity. The interviewer needs to recognize his/her role in shaping the interview. This gets even more complex due to the multiplicity of women, cultural, and identity-specific variables that researchers must negotiate as interviewers.

Constructivism is a joint process, a partnership that includes the interactive element of engagement between the people being interviewed and the interviewer or researcher. A number of factors impact the interview data, such as levels of interaction, the researcher's interview training, the interview environment, the subject or genre of the interview, and the type of data being collected. More integration may influence or alter the data being collected. Glaser (2007) argues that the constructive approach utilized by researchers is "An effort to dignify the data and avoid the work of confronting researcher bias," (p. 95. para. 3). I argue that this approach does just the opposite—it forces the researcher to confront his/her bias more so than most other qualitative or quantitative

research methods. If not confronting research bias, I would think, this would be incredibly self-evident to others as they read through the data and the research, thus producing a very flawed piece of work.

3.15 Researcher Bias

I must acknowledge my positioning in regards to the agricultural communication field. My bachelor's degree is in agricultural communication, and I worked in this field for almost five years prior to taking an Extension position that removed me greatly from the agricultural communication community. I have worked in Extension for four years and have found that a lot of what I do as the County Extension Director and 4-H Youth Development Educator is agricultural communication-related. Therefore, I stand in a position of having been both inside of the field and outside (or removed). Also, I am a female within the fields of agricultural communication and Extension, which have both been altered greatly by the increasing presence of women in the fields. As some interviewees speak of the all-male offices and teams, females had very limited leadership roles within this field early on. I also have a certain understanding of the agricultural field from both a professional and academic perspective, which may or may not be different from those I interviewed. Recognizing this aspect and reflecting upon how my own perspectives could impact the interview and the content is very important to understand and analyze.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1 Overview of Data

The information that is discussed in this chapter was collected over a period of six years and captures the historical dimensions of the agricultural communication field. The interviewees' personal lived experiences were also recorded and add additional substance to understanding the phenomena of their own personal paths in life that led them to or contributed to their agricultural communication careers. Their personal reflections about their professional lives, communication projects, international experiences, changes in communication technology, professional organizational experiences, and changes to academic programs have been captured and analyzed utilizing an initial coding process, interpretivism, and narrative research.

What makes these data different from what has already been written about the field? The data collected from the oral history interviews provides for humanistic depth and understanding of the events, activities, and historical milestones that had a profound impact on the field. The interviews reveal why there is so little awareness of the experiences of women and minorities in histories of the field. Given the nature of the objectives for this project, these interviews were explored for historical significance and variation from a constructivist approach. Then, it was further explored to see how these experiences are interconnected or if they share

similarities, and how, and also to further engage the researcher in a reflective role throughout the process and when working with the data.

The interviews have been transcribed and consisted of 240 pages of transcriptions that were coded by utilizing initial coding, and then formatted into categories to form themes. Eight themes emerged, and from those, three were selected. The key terms from the themes were then used to filter or sort through the transcriptions a second time, and interpretivism was applied to analyze the themes on a deeper and more focused level. Narrative research was applied to question, explore, and further construct or deconstruct pieces of historical discourse that need to be added to the historical foundation of the agricultural communication field.

4.2 Participant Overview

Five participants were interviewed between 2008 and 2014. Two of them were interviewed twice, once in 2008 and again in 2013. The reason for this was due to the five-year span in this project and an effort to capture newly-formed ideas, influences, or perspectives. The participants are from a broad range of backgrounds, career paths, and partnerships within the agricultural communication field. Some oral history transcripts were 40 pages in length, while others were approximately 18 pages, which displays the variation in the length of interviews. Some interviewees were more organized in thought and content, and others talked off the cuff. Their lives and careers span a period of time from the 1920s to the 1980s (some into the 1990s). Many participants were retired or newly-retired, but still very active and engaged with campus life, along with programmatic aspects of their programs and departments. They also remain very involved in professional organizations. One participant was not retired.

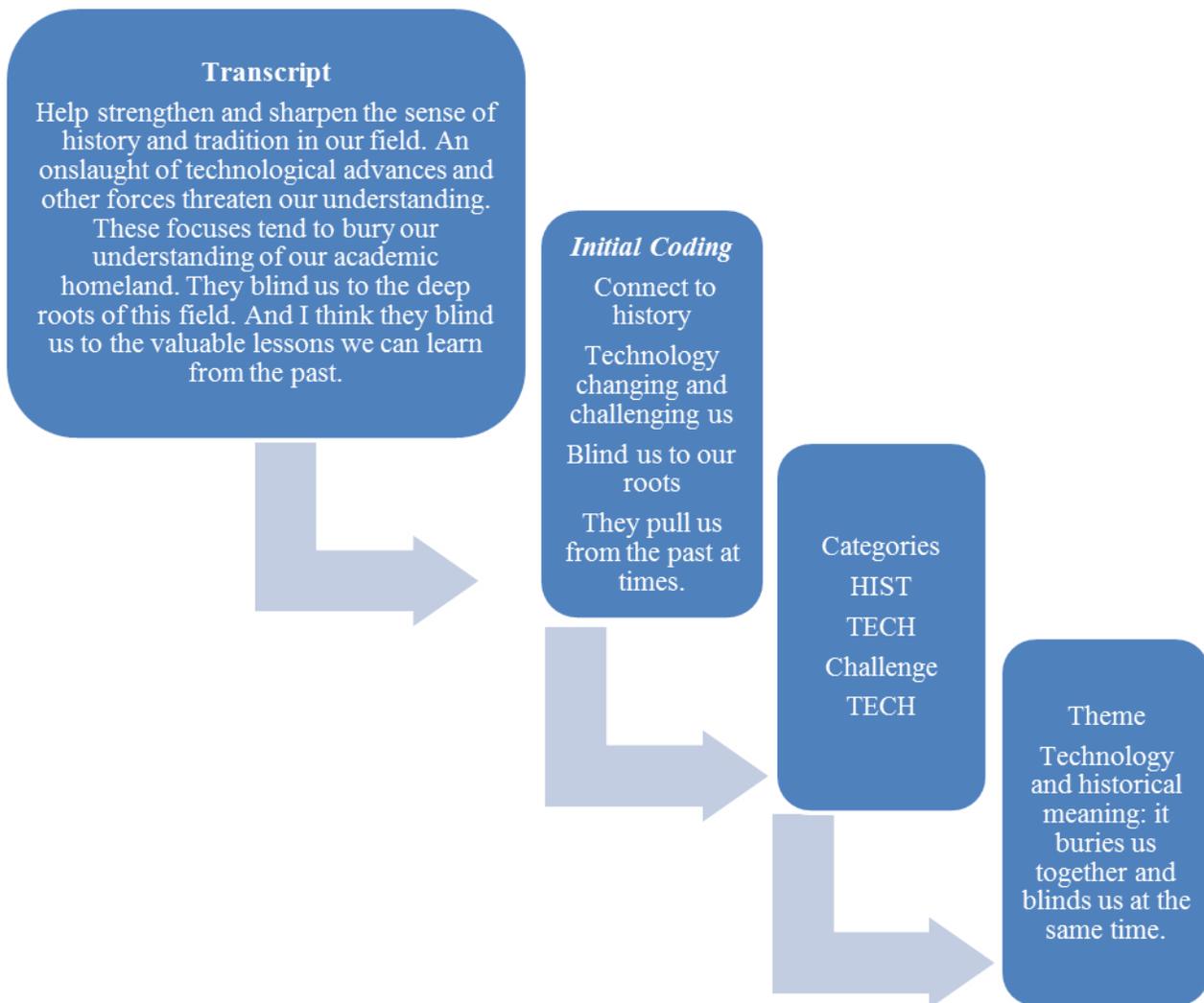
Those who participated were contacted via email and informed (via IRB documentation) about the project and intended use of the oral histories. James (Jim) Evans, Robert (Bob) Kern, David Petritz, Laura Hoelscher, and Delmar Hatesohl all said they would participate. Kern and Evans were interviewed once in 2008 and again in 2013. Others were contacted, but numerous individuals could not participate at this time. The five participants have all worked as faculty, professional communicators, and Extension employees. They all worked for agricultural colleges and programs, thus binding some of their experiences together, but also providing differentiation in their perspectives. For a more detailed description of the participants, refer to Table 3.2.

4.3 Themes

Themes derived from the transcribed content as it was organized into tables and initial coding was conducted. Then the initial coding content was organized into categories. Table 4.1 provides an example of the process of how themes emerged.

Though the three themes underlined in the table below (Table 4.2) will be further discussed and analyzed in the following paragraphs and in chapter 5, it is important to note that these three themes were selected due to a number of factors. Departmental mergers were discussed by all the interviewees who were engaged in academic programs, and it is currently a very timely and relevant topic that has not made its way into the historical narrative for this field. Some departments have merged and then separated due to failed partnerships.

Table 4.1 Theme Process



Technology was a consistent and pivotal part of all the interviewee's oral histories. It was discussed more than any other theme. The last theme (number eight) was selected because no questions were asked that related to women, and yet it emerged organically. Women's roles and perspectives are also currently not included in this historical narrative, and I believe that women have been contributing to the field over the past century, but I wanted to learn more about their roles and contributions to the field.

Table 4.2 Themes

1. The need of agricultural communication historical dimensions and the role retirees have within this discussion.
2. Extension and agricultural communication: sharing a historical foundation.
3. Agricultural communication contributions to international agricultural communication work.
4. Addressing the circular pattern of challenges in the agricultural communication field: The past, present, and future.
5. Coming to terms with validation, loyalty, and professionalism within agricultural communication field.
6. Departmental mergers: Ideologies, beliefs, and even partnerships?
7. Technology and historical meaning: It buries us and blinds us at the same time.
8. Women's experience is missing in the agricultural communication historical narrative.

By utilizing these three themes (underlined in the table above), the transcriptions were then filtered or sorted by using key terms that relate to the three themes that have been selected. The key terms highlighted content in the transcripts that related directly to these themes from each transcript. This content was then extracted and organized into tables that display another initial coding process, then categories, and then the application of interpretivism. Interpretivism allows for a deeper look at analyzing and interpreting these themes on a deeper level. The following sections are going to further discuss the three themes by exploring summaries of the transcribed content that relate to those themes, which are organized by interviewee.

4.4 Theme: Women's Experience is Missing in the Agricultural Communication

Historical Narrative

This section explores the interviewee's content that relates to women, while analyzing these data through the perspective of interpretative analysis, to further understand what is being said, why it is being said, and what we can learn from it. Key terms that were used to seek out these data include: women, girls, ladies, home economists, and females. I selected this theme to analyze deeper because even though there were no women-related questions asked during the interviews, this topic surfaced numerous times and within each interviewee's data. Also, the elephant in the room is the obvious understanding that this field has been historically led and dominated by males. The history of the field reflects this aspect. Highlighted pieces of data and tables will be utilized to display the analysis of the transcripts that relate to women. The data that will be explored provide ways to further engage, understand, and construct historical discourse that includes women's roles (and those of all forms of diversity) within the

field in addition to their perspectives of what it was like to work and teach within the agricultural communication field. The following interview summaries and tables focus on women and explore each interviewee’s personal views and perceptions about women in the agricultural communication field.

4.4.1 Women in the Field: Evans’s Interview

Table 4.3 presents a small selection of transcribed data from Evans’s 2013 interview that relates to women. His data also display his understanding of shifts in women as it relates to the agricultural communication field. He mentions the changes in women demographics in the field and the need for literature that serves women working as producers inside and outside of the US. Evans speaks of women in relation to producers or farmers and their need for resources to support them in this production both within and outside of the US. He uses words such as “support” and “need” which displays his understanding of women’s need or want for resources and literature, and their desire to learn. It also displays his understanding that women sometimes need different kinds of support than their male counter parts, and that women are challenged based on the needs, availability, and access to agricultural information (J. Evans, personal communication, July 2013).

Table 4.3 Evans’s Interview I

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
Another one, over the past 30 years, in particular: Women have increasingly become involved as professionals, scholars and leaders in agricultural communications.	Change/shift Women in AgComm Engaged and involved Professionals Bring dedication Bring skills	Change Gender Prof Description/adjectives Defined skills?	Seeing the change and shift in gender in the field but not sure why? Shifts in socially accepted women roles. Women described as dedicated, more so than men? How is this

<p>They are bringing great dedication and skill to this field.</p> <p>Another major stream of literature is documenting the need for more and better information that serves the needs of rural women who do most of the farming in many parts of the world. This literature documents the information needs of rural woman, the current lack of useful information for them, the cultural and social challenges facing them, and new approach is being used including new information and communications technologies to serve their needs.</p>	<p>Literature needed</p> <p>Serves or provide support to rural women</p> <p>Women in other cultures do farming</p> <p>Flip in women roles culturally</p> <p>They need information</p> <p>Lack of support and info</p> <p>Cultural and social challenges</p> <p>New approaches to serve their needs</p> <p>Comm/Technology can help</p> <p>Women's needs to be successful</p>	<p>Challenges with Literature</p> <p>Lit and women</p> <p>Women roles outside of US</p> <p>Women</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Women challenge</p> <p>Serve Comm/Tech</p> <p>Women</p>	<p>displayed? Women's roles within the field are described as such. Skills set different or broadening</p> <p>Bring perspective.</p> <p>Literature needs, literature that supports women's roles in agriculture (culturally) is limited.</p> <p>Women in these roles need information and resources.</p> <p>Lack of support for them in their roles. Women face different challenges and need varying information that supports their challenges.</p> <p>Idea of serving their (women's) needs</p> <p>New communication/tech that can do this</p>
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4.4.2 Women and Extension: Kern and Petritz's Interviews

The following table (Table 4.4) explores women in the contexts of Extension, home economic programs, and workers. Both Kern and Petritz's experiences of women in the field relate to Extension work and support staff. They both shared stories that display their acknowledgement of women's roles within Extension and in the agricultural communication field. They view women in the field through assistant roles such as office support, typist, and secretaries. These were socially accepted roles for women during this

time. Even though their experiences are Extension-based, there are some very strong overlapping aspects of Extension work and agricultural communication worked together to partner extensively to communicate, disseminate, and educate the general public and rural audiences about food and fiber. Kern shares a story during his oral history interview about how one home economic agent was doing demonstration work but moves right on to an another topic (R. Kern, personal communication, August, 2013). He does not provide any other details, so this content is not included in a chart form in this section.

Petriz shares a story about a female photographer he took to a hog farm. The men on the farm were giving the photographer “guff” and Petriz defended her, so the other men left her alone. He also knew she was physically strong as a person because she was a power-lifter, which he mentions in his interview (D. Petriz, personal communication, December, 2013). We do not know her side of the story or if she truly needed to be defended by anyone, but what we do know is that she was physically strong, which relates (socially) to masculinity. She may have been in a position that did not allow her to comment back while he could. This helped her to relate to Petriz on some level. Is this why he felt the need to protect her? Or did he feel that standing up for her was the polite or masculine thing to do? This story is very one-sided and based on only male perspective. His experiences, working with women, also shed light on the professional roles within agricultural-related careers and how women were viewed both from a campus position and on the farm.

Table 4.4 Petritz's Interview

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
<p>This isn't part of your story, but maybe it can be. Extension and Ag Communication was a man's world. I could say good ole boys at times and yes it was; particularly when Dick Cole was the dean. We wouldn't have been out of jail today doing what we did then, but anyway I took the photographer from the university and she was about your size and she was ranked 2nd or 3rd in the country in power lifting. I took her out to a hog farm and they started giving her guff. I finally just said "You guys keep running your mouth and she'll put all three of you against the wall." "Well, why?" I said "Well, she can probably bench press 200 pounds and I don't think any of you weigh that much." "Oh." Well, that shut it up, but, you know, we went to that.</p>	Whose story then?	Ownership	<p>Defining women's roles and their stories within agricultural and Extension history</p> <p>Authority of power expressed over the story which is male</p> <p>Displays how women roles, within a communication position were challenged</p> <p>Mediated experience, we hear his voice but not hers</p> <p>Did she need someone to stand-up for her? Why did he defend her? Would he have done so not knowing her physical powers? She had strength that was respected by males.</p> <p>Male perspective</p>
	Ag comm/Extension were a man's world	Women	
	Dominated by males	Women	
	Society and women roles	Women roles (accepted)	
	Good ole boys	Challenged	
	Would have been in trouble, he knew it	Photo/women	
	Photographer was a female, petite (described)	Woman of physical power	
	Ranked in power lifting (he knew this)	Challenged in role	
	Took her to a hog farm	Man defended her	
	Guys there ran their mouths	Mediated experience	
	Dave let them know she could handle them (only because he knew of her background)	Male closed it down	
	"Shut them up"	Women perspective not here	
	She did not stand up for herself? Assumed or we don't know		

Both Kern and Petritz share a similar perception of women in the agricultural communication field. That is one of assistant roles such as support staff, clerical, secretaries, and more. However, they acknowledge that there were some professional women doing agricultural communication work, but they are not recognized as doing

such. Once again, both the time period and the then socially accepted women roles during Kern's and Petritz's professional careers must be considered, and this is what frames their memories as they relate to women.

4.4.3 Female Perspective: Hoelscher's Interview

Laura Hoelscher is the only woman interviewed for this research (Tables 4.5 and 4.6). Her perspectives are candid, reflective, and literal. Her interview content (in this section) focuses on mentoring, women, and her career. She shared stories of what it was like to work within the field starting three decades ago when it was still very male dominated. She was teased to a degree and even subjected to a swine farm visit right after being hired to see how she would respond to the situation. Below are two tables that display her female-related experiences (L. Hoelscher, personal communication, January, 2014). From her initial agricultural communication professional experiences, it could be assumed that she was not overly welcomed into the department at first. However, Hoelscher does not seem to care. She also discusses her professional mentor, who was a male. Hoelscher's advice for those in the profession is to find a mentor, and it doesn't have to be a female. She claims that there are certain aspects of the field that women can lend support to, and so can males. (L. Hoelscher, personal communication, January, 2014). This was all based on personal choices and professional needs.

<p>because it was like teaching without grading. That seemed like the best of both worlds to me. My colleagues here in Ag Communication, thought “Hotey, ho, ho.” “This is a city girl.” “We’re going to get her.” They took me to a hog barn and they thought I’d become... I grew up in the backyards of Chicago.</p> <p>I: I was going to ask where you were born and raised.</p> <p>P: Right off 50th and Halsted, the cattle trucks drive. Unlike many city people, I know where food comes from or at least where meat comes from. Oddly enough there is a connection between the work I started doing and my academic training in American Studies. That’s the interdisciplinary study for American Culture.</p>	<p>She knew of animal agriculture</p> <p>Academic training American culture Humanities</p> <p>Works with rural sociologist</p>	<p>to a degree</p> <p>Personal Agri-animals</p> <p>reflective</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Career Relationships</p>	<p>Outsider: ag and women</p> <p>Grew-up around the Chicago Stock yards.</p> <p>Was familiar with livestock animals so she was intimidated by her surrounds. Very broad educational background. Seems very self-assured.</p> <p>Enjoys working/partnering with others</p>
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Table 4.6 Hoelscher’s Interview II

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
<p>P: Jon Smith, a fellow editor here in the department of Agricultural Communication. He was a person whom I had very little in common, but somehow we clicked because we’re both extraordinarily picky. He kind-of taught me the tools of the trade, included</p>	<p>Jon Smith mentor</p> <p>Little in common</p> <p>But they clicked Very picky people Detail oriented</p> <p>Opposites in many ways</p>	<p>Mentor</p> <p>Relationships</p> <p>Prof Career</p> <p>Relationships Women</p>	<p>Her mentor was a male and he was very different from in her in many ways.</p> <p>But they clicked over their talent and enjoyment of editing and attention to detail</p>

<p>me in, and he is a very, very religious man and I am not a religious person; not a conventionally religious person. At his retirement I told a joke and I said "Jon is my mentor, he is my avatar," and I told him that and then he kind-of shied away. I said "Once I assured him that it didn't have anything to do with sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll, he was okay with that." (Laughter) He was very influential.</p> <p>P: Yeah. One of the things is find mentors and find more than one mentor because you don't want to say "I'm only going to accept a mentor who is a woman," but a woman will give you certain kind of support or certain kind of mentorship that a male could not with the best will in the world and many of them have the best will in the world. Poor guys can't help it.</p> <p>It was a mixed course. It was a seminar so it was a 600 level but since it was the first one, they let everybody in so there were people like me who were doing their dissertations, people who just discovered that we'd only won the right to vote in 1920, so there was a range of levels of sophistication. Some people, one person wanted to write on women in gym and various...so</p>	<p>Conservative but they got along well</p> <p>She teased him about his mentor role, he shied away</p> <p>She had to assure him of his mentorship role based on professionalism</p> <p>Find a mentor</p> <p>Women related, does not have to be a female</p> <p>But a woman can support differently Depends what you need</p> <p>College course Women's studies One of the first</p> <p>People who got women's studies and others who were new to it</p> <p>Range in understanding and perspectives</p> <p>Women related research projects in the class</p>	<p>Women Career</p> <p>Women Mentor AgComm</p> <p>Mentor</p> <p>Women/Male Leadership</p> <p>Women Relationship</p> <p>College education</p> <p>Women studies College course</p> <p>Women studies</p> <p>Personal education Connections to women/women studies</p> <p>Women roles Assertiveness Good for a male Bad for a woman</p>	<p>She teased him at a dinner about being her mentor and she said he shied away, was this due to the attention or the fact that she was a female. Crossing women boundaries.</p> <p>Because she was a female, she had to clarify their mentorship as a professional relationship and nothing more.</p> <p>Women and mentors, does not have to be a male. But a woman may be able to provide support in a different way depending on needs.</p> <p>You need to know what you need. Know yourself; She has a strong sense of self.</p> <p>Talks more about her women related college courses which help to familiar her more so with women relations/social constructs of women roles.</p> <p>She had experienced a wide range of non-traditional perspectives</p>
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<p>my history with that goes back a long way. There are sometimes dismissive comments made about women. This really happens. An assertive man is assertive and an assertive woman is shrill. They are just perceived very negatively. If a woman or perhaps, especially a woman in authority shows a bit of emotion, it must be her time of the month. That still happens.</p> <p>I: Uh-huh. Do you think maybe it's because of the Land Grant Mission and the historical aspects of the Land Grant Mission? Maybe especially pertaining to Purdue?</p> <p>P: I don't know that I would describe it to the Land Grant Mission but there is something about the innate conservatism of agriculture.</p> <p>I: That lends itself to that type of dynamic, I guess.</p> <p>P: Now by no means universal. It's still there. It's still there.</p> <p>I: I agree. It's still here in bits and pieces. Your 31 years here in Extension, what shifts have you seen, as far as women within the department and within...</p> <p>P: Well, we have a woman department head.</p>	<p>History with women studies goes back a long way Dismissive comments made about women Assertive man is assertive, Assertive woman is shrill Female aggressiveness is negatively viewed Female authority negative Showing emotion relates to women's time of the month</p> <p>Why is this? Is it due to historical traditional of the college, land-grant system?</p> <p>Does note connect it to this, but to the conservatism of agriculture in general</p> <p>Not across the board but still there</p> <p>With her experiences, what shifts have she noted in women (not a question in</p>	<p>Women authority bad Relates to emotion</p> <p>Why is this?</p> <p>Conservatism Rural Midwest America Agricultural community</p> <p>Women/still there</p> <p>Questions shifts in women in the field</p> <p>Woman dept. head for AgComm</p> <p>Women Leadership</p> <p>Women</p>	<p>in these courses in relation to women.</p> <p>Helped to navigate the traditional confines of ag comm.</p> <p>Women related comments made today in regards to women and assertiveness still within the system. Women who are aggressive, authoritative are viewed negatively Showing emotion is also to shows weakness or blamed on menstrual cycle.</p> <p>She believes that this mentally relates to the culture of agriculture. Traditional Mid-west America women roles/socially accepted roles are much defined.</p> <p>Women comments and stigma are still there but it is better.</p> <p>The first woman department head for AgComm, was named less than five years ago. First female to lead the 100 year old department ever.</p>
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<p>I: Is she the first woman department head for Ag Comm ever in the history?</p> <p>P: Yes.</p>	<p>the script but emerged during this conversation)</p> <p>Have a women department head (leadership)</p> <p>A question is she the first?</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>The first ever in almost 100 years</p>	<p>A step forward, yes, but sadly a step that took too long to make</p>
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4.5 Women Conclusion

What we know about women in relation to the agricultural communication field is that women were viewed and historically remembered in subordinate roles. A few women were doing professional communication work, but it was not always acknowledged. When exploring these different perceptions towards women, there are some similarities in experiences that display the validity of social norms, women's subordinate roles in the field, and also the interviewee's ability to be confronted by the discrimination or taunting of women. Some interviewees were very careful or cautious of what they said in relation to women, while others were more open or spoke more freely. Women as both professionals and as agriculture producers share many similarities; both are in need of support systems in some way, shape, or form, in order to do their jobs.

Deeper questions in regards to Hoelscher's oral data is how and why she gravitated to a male role model and what she found in this person as a means of support within the agricultural communication field. It is apparent from the data that she truly connected, respected, and enjoyed working with her male mentor. What more can we

learn about her female-related experiences, and the experiences of others, in order to restore the historical dimensions of this field? Maybe her experiences are unique and maybe they are not.

4.6 Theme: Departmental Mergers: Ideologies, Beliefs, and Even Partnerships

A reoccurring concern that was expressed was the positioning or the location of agricultural communication academic departments within land-grant universities. Many academic departments have undergone departmental mergers over the past three decades. The key terms used to seek out these data include: mergers, agricultural education, separate, and reorganize. Any form of merging is usually not a welcomed process. Merging is a physical moving of spaces that throws together people, objects, and ideas into one space in which they are forced to coincide. The merging of space is much more than just physically moving objects such as desks and filing cabinets. This process challenges the psychological ideologies of the merging departments' approaches to programmatic development, scholarship, and research. Most disciplines approach these aspects in different ways. Agricultural communication is a young program and tends to be smaller in student and faculty numbers than their merged counterparts. The interviewees shared challenges and frustrations with this process. The sense of smallness and domination by larger and more authoritative disciplines have caused tremendous growing pains for agricultural communication. Some department mergers have already been de-merged and remerged with other disciplines.

4.6.1 Departmental Mergers: Evans's Interview

The following table (Table 4.7) focuses on Evans's interview content that focuses on a departmental merger that did not work out, but then he was part of a new remerger that was much more successful. As he explores his own experiences, he is very knowledgeable of the pros/cons of the merging process and feels very strongly about the process. He uses words such as "traditional" and "historical roots" to help explain how and why he believes the 2nd merger has been a success (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013). Note that he speaks with authority due to his experiences and his strong feelings about why some mergers work and why some do not. He also was in a leadership role through these mergers, which impacted his views and memories.

Table 4.7 Evans's Interview II

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
A substantial share of these programs is housed administratively in academic units that also included related interest such as agricultural education, extension education and leadership development. These departments generally operate within colleges for agriculture, natural resources and other aligned disciplines. These agricultural communications programs often draw upon professional courses provided by schools of journalism and communications. Experiences during recent years in this relatively young multidisciplinary	Agcomm programs housed in academic units	Agcomm AC	Home to academic programs has been shifted over the decades. Merged with aged, CES, leadership, youth development and other disciplines.
	Units include aged, ex ed, leadership dev.	Aged CES	
	In the college of ag.	Ag	Why these get grouped together, not sure. Unlikely pairing? Agcomm foundation is journalism
	Agcomm draws upon journalism foundation and communications which is outside of the school of ag. Reflective and experience provided understanding in multidisciplinary approach that is used.	Jour Agcomm Education AC Growth	
		AgComm AC	Takes their students outside of the Ag for course

<p>academic approach revealed growing maturity in collaboration. These experiences also reveal a continuing need to strengthen relationships and the visions of scholarly focus.</p>	<p>Growing in collaboration and partnerships. Strengthen, develop, grow Opportunities</p>	<p>Ag</p>	<p>Has had experience with this type of merging process</p> <p>Need to grow, develop, nurture partnerships, and provide opp. But was this happening with dept. mergers?</p>
<p>Here at the University of Illinois, the agricultural communications degree program has been based from the beginning in 1962 in the College of Agriculture. Now the College of Agricultural Consumer and Environmental Sciences or ACES through a joint agreement students have had access to courses in the College of Communications, now the College of Media, and during the 1980s, we developed an academic unit in which the academic program in agricultural communications teamed up with programs in agricultural education and extension education. Now we are embarking on a model quite different from that. It is designed to strengthen ties connecting the agricultural communications program with both the College of ACES and the College of Media.</p>	<p>Univ. of Ill, AgComm has taken a different path.</p>	<p>Jour Agcomm Ac</p>	<p>Does this display how the program was stifled?</p>
<p>The College of Media now serves as administrative home for the program giving agricultural communications faculty members closer connections</p>	<p>Was in college of ag</p> <p>Had agreements with journalism, communication for spots in classes for ag comm students</p>	<p>merger Aged CES</p>	<p>U of I took a new approach to the merging process.</p>
<p>The College of Media now serves as administrative home for the program giving agricultural communications faculty members closer connections</p>	<p>The in the 80s, AgComm was paired up with aged and ex ed.</p>	<p>New No longer merged</p>	<p>Moved from ag to college of media. Unique merging but has provided many benefits</p>
<p>The College of Media now serves as administrative home for the program giving agricultural communications faculty members closer connections</p>	<p>Today, new model which is very unique and different</p>	<p>Merger with jour and comm, media</p>	<p>In ways, it has helped the program to better develop, blossom and grow.</p>
<p>The College of Media now serves as administrative home for the program giving agricultural communications faculty members closer connections</p>	<p>Strengthens ties to journalism and comm, media, and ag.</p>	<p>Agcomm Ac</p>	<p>Unique but is working for them</p>
<p>The College of Media now serves as administrative home for the program giving agricultural communications faculty members closer connections</p>	<p>College of Media home to AgComm Students and faculty</p>	<p>Relationships Partnerships</p>	<p>Strengths are in journalism, then why not have AC program in with media, communication</p>
<p>The College of Media now serves as administrative home for the program giving agricultural communications faculty members closer connections</p>	<p>Connects, relationships, partnerships with comm discipline ACES still interwoven</p>	<p>Ac Curriculum</p>	<p>Has provided relationships,</p>

<p>with peers in their communications discipline. The College of ACES remains closely aligned with the program as well. In fact, within this ambitious interdisciplinary approach, students in the agricultural communications program have full access to courses, scholarships, internships, student services and other resources of both colleges. They become alumni of both colleges. The agricultural communications program is no longer administratively connected with the agricultural education, extension education and leadership development programs for which the College of ACES continues to serve as home base. Their ties with the agricultural communications program remained active; however, through informal collaboration. This model also is different from many others in the sense that it treats journalism as the foundation discipline of agricultural communications.</p> <p>It recognizes the roots of journalism education as being based in the humanities and the humanistic social sciences such as literature, creative arts, facial expression, languages and philosophy. This orientation on which we wished to build has several purposes. It is intended to strengthen teaching and research in</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary approach, students get a broad range in curriculum</p> <p>Access to courses, Opportunities for internships, scholarships, etc.</p> <p>Alumni of both colleges, belong</p> <p>Not supported nor connected to aged, ex ed, nor leadership.</p> <p>Both there are ties to these programs, informal collaboration efforts.</p> <p>This approach focuses on journalism as foundation</p> <p>Traditional</p> <p>Roots (historical roots) in journalism</p> <p>Keeps this front and center</p> <p>Keeps program and students aligned with humanities</p> <p>Purposes for this, strengthen teaching in this field</p> <p>And research</p>	<p>AC</p> <p>Alumni both</p> <p>Aged CES Leadership AC</p> <p>Collaboration Research</p> <p>Jour History Foundation Tradition</p> <p>Hist</p> <p>Jour</p> <p>AC Curriculum Courses</p> <p>Teaching Research Prof Opps</p>	<p>connections, partnerships that must not have been occurring, or not at the same level of what is found in new merger.</p> <p>This benefits the students and their accessibility to courses. Which could have been of a question, w/o strong admin support, hard to get into those classes.</p> <p>Students have more opp with internships/scholarships, must not have been there prior</p> <p>Not connect, removed, separated, separate programs</p> <p>Ties still remain in some ways. But stronger ties to communication/media</p> <p>With a foundation in journalism, this makes sense.</p> <p>Historical roots are grounded in humanities, as all forms of comm are.</p> <p>Keeps this focus on journalism which is vital to the growth and success of the program.</p> <p>Strengthens teaching, must be more support for faculty and research</p>
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<p>agricultural journalism. It is intended to encourage and prepare more of our students for professional work in agricultural journalism, and it is intended to assure that all the graduates of this program including those specializing in agricultural public relations or advertising or other point of view communications leave this program with strong skills in writing and journalism. Also, it is intended to assure that all our students develop a foundation of understanding of the role and importance of independent effective journalism in democratic society</p>	<p>Better prepare students for professional work In the field, but that they are also well trained in journalism and writing, not matter the comm career Foundation in writing Students understand role of journalism, Effectiveness Ethical implications Importance of role in free society</p>	<p>Journalism Writers AG comm Career Writing AC Role of jour</p>	<p>Better prepare students, more opportunities, All have a foundation in writing, journalism, no matter the career, This is pivotal Effectiveness of writing, ethical considerations, importance of role, which are all part of academic conversation and are valued.</p>
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4.6.2 Mergers From a Distance: Kern and Hatesohl's Interview Summaries

Even though some of the interviewees did not witness or were not part of these departmental mergers, they still provide important perspectives to the historical dimensions of the academic field. The academic programs were historically housed in either the communication department (which was home to journalism programs) or in the agricultural communication service department (which was also called agricultural information on some campuses). Programs were then either physically positioned in the College of Liberal Arts/Communication or were housed in the College of Agriculture.

Programs that were housed in agricultural communication service departments or agricultural information offices needed a home in an academic department, if they were not already part of one. On campuses across the county, many departments merged a

number of programs, which normally included a combination of agricultural communication, agricultural education, leadership, youth development, and Extension. What concerned some of the interviewees was not so much the merger itself, but with whom they were to be merged. Both Kern and Hatesohl (Tables 4.8 and 4.9) express great concern over the challenges of smallness and domination of larger disciplines, which were similar to Evans's perspectives. Hatesohl discusses his merging concerns in relation to departmental leadership, which has often lacked any understanding or experience in agricultural communication (D. Hatesohl, personal communication, July, 2009).

Table 4.8 Kern's Interview

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
Unfortunately, at the other side, there are programs such as at Iowa stated where the agricultural journalism program was actually taken out of the Journalism School and placed in Agricultural Education. This was not a move that I favored. There was a time when our stated Board of Regents, headed by a businessman, were keen to root out any kinds of duplication. And he thought that journalism programs at both Iowa stated and the stated University were surely duplicative, and therefore he wanted to get rid of that department if he could. Well, the graduates of	Not a good situation, Were AgComm/journ Was removed , taken away from journalism school	Bad Ag jour	Did not favor the move or merging of the ag journalism program.
	Merged in with aged	AC Merger Aged	Merged with Aged, not sure why aged.
	Not supportive of this move	Top down	Top down, administrative leadership, did not value ag jour Program
	Administrative leadership favored a different direction	Agjourn Duplication	Felt it was duplicated Therefore a waste of resources
	Thought that agjourn was a duplication of programs	Remove Get rid of	To rid of it, remove completely
	Therefore it was not needed	Alumni Save	
	He wanted to get rid of it completely		
	Graduates of the program, alumni some		

<p>the journalism department really came in defense of the department, and there were some outstanding well-known names of people bearing degrees from Iowa stated. One of the leading ones was Hugh Sidey with <i>Time</i> magazine, and many others who were important in the field. So we managed to keep the department, but a few years later we lost the ag journalism part of it but the degree program is still available. I've not really tried to figure out if it's as strong as it was once or not.</p>	<p>were very well known, came to the rescue</p> <p>They championed for the program to remain Alumni such as Hugh Sidey</p> <p>Who were important to the field</p> <p>We managed to keep the dept. But lost the agjournal part</p> <p>But degree is still there Not sure where it stands</p> <p>Not sure of strength today</p>	<p>AC</p> <p>Alumni</p> <p>Agjournal</p> <p>Agjournal</p> <p>Agcomm</p> <p>Ag</p> <p>Agcomm</p> <p>unclear</p>	<p>Graduates and alumni came to the rescue</p> <p>Advocated to save it</p> <p>Some impressive alumnus have grad from this program</p> <p>Makes it more important, more valued, or should be?</p> <p>Who were important to the field</p> <p>Lost agjournalism, meaning changed name to ag comm, still as sense of loss, loss of traditional role, name, program</p> <p>Slightly un attached today, not sure of strength of program. Strength in administrative support, alumni support, and to handle merging or other challenges.</p>
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Table 4.9 Hatesohl's Interview

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
<p>You had a question about being concerned when Ag communications departments, let's say, units more or less merged or go into another department such as Ag education at one time at Missouri. We're talking about going into rural sociology, and I really get concerned when I see the Ag</p>	<p>Concerns about the program</p> <p>More/less merged into another department</p> <p>Such as Aged</p> <p>There is talk about partnering with rural sociology</p> <p>He sees AgComm units being merged,</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>Mergers</p> <p>Aged</p> <p>Agcomm</p> <p>Rural soc</p> <p>Merged</p>	<p>He is concern, cares about the program and the challenges it faces</p> <p>Merging of dept with aged worries him</p> <p>Felt the partnership with rural sociology was more fruitful, more sharing of ideologies towards researcher, scholarship and academic program</p>

<p>communications unit being merged into something else, because I think when you look at the responsibilities of communications department, at least the way we are organized at our place at University of Missouri, we had the Ag Information office which included research bulletin editors, extension publication editors, broadcast and then some academics on the side. At the time I was there, we didn't have one person fully identified as academic. A couple of us shared the advising and the responsibilities in that way, but, you know seeing those responsibilities just go across the whole college, whole stated and so forth, I just think it would be a little difficult. I'm not downgrading anybody, but a little difficult for, let's say a chairman of the Ag Education department to fully understand the problems and the opportunities and the responsibilities that Ag communicators get into because they deal across the whole college and so forth. But I see it happening.</p>	<p>into something else, not their own anymore</p> <p>Look at how comm dept runs and is organized at Univ of Missouri</p> <p>We also had the AgComm info office which included all the professionals And also was home to some academic professionals</p> <p>There was no staff developed to academics, they just helped the kids Shared the responsibilities</p> <p>So he understands the responsibilities and student needs</p> <p>Not putting anyone down but finds it challenging for someone w/o AgComm or comm experiences such as aged dept head to understand (respect) the program Understand the responsibilities</p> <p>To understand their programmatic layout, purpose But he sees this happening</p>	<p>AgComm</p> <p>Prof Ac Service side</p> <p>Advised</p> <p>AC program Service</p> <p>Prof AC Reflective</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Aged Leadership</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Challenge</p>	<p>Differences in how an agcomm dept and aged dept are ran and organized. There is a difference in responsibilities and ideologies.</p> <p>The space in which the service dept functioned was full of professionals and supportive staff that would help the AgComm students.</p> <p>They provided comm and student services, shared responsibilities, shared same goals, ideologies</p> <p>Knows there is change across the stated and college</p> <p>Not pointing figures but a challenge for an aged faculty member to run an AgComm program. Seems to be lack of respect for the program and that aged over powers in some cases. Leadership really needs to understand the program, scholarship, the students, and the field. Sees these mergers happening, felt of loss and helplessness.</p>
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4.7 Merging Conclusion

The data above display that strong terms provide depth to these experiences. Terms such as smallness, traditional, leadership, domination, and support all provide a sense of helplessness. Evans is the only one who speaks of this process in a positive light, but that is after only one failed merger. The stress, time, and frustration experienced from these types of programmatic, top-down administrative actions can and does have a negative impact on the programs, students, and staff. This impacts all aspects of the programs, and in some cases, possibly stifles them completely. This content should be further collected and explored to better examine how some mergers have been a success while others have failed, and why. Is it due to smallness or leadership? Is it due to overpowering programs or different philosophical ideologies toward scholarship and research? There are many unanswered questions about this process and the impact it has on programs.

4.8 Theme: Technology and Historical Meaning: It Buries Us and Blinds Us at the Same Time

Technology has changed our way of life, including but not limited to the way we learn, communicate, educate, and consume. Agricultural communication professionals have witnessed tremendous changes to communication technology as well as changes to agricultural technology. Key terms used here to seek out content include: technology, computers, Internet, programming, and email. The interviewees were living through and experiencing waves of technological changes that impacted both their personal lives and their professional careers in tremendous ways. Many of the interviewees also helped Extension Educators, farmers, communicators, and others learn to use and adapt to these

new forms of communication. The history of the field does include some aspects of communication technology, but how these changes impacted the field and professionals working within it are not part of the historical conversation. Communication technology opened the door to new forms of scholarship and research in studying audience behavior. Many of these professionals and scholars were active in the field when these changes and developments occurred. The following tables display their understanding of communication technology and how it impacted both their lives and the agricultural communication field, as well as how they confronted these changes and challenges.

4.8.1 Technology: Evans's Interview and Summary

Evans's technology-related content (Table 4.10) focuses on his own understanding of place, time (as he was in the "thick of it"), and experiences of the excitement that came along with introducing television sets into American homes. Technology is discussed by Evans's in four capacities: challenges, audience, role of agricultural communication service department, and ethical implications. As all the interviewees discussed technology from the perspective of a challenge, Evans also provides more depth in explaining why technology has pros and cons for the field. Both he and Hatesohl expressed concern over audience and who is being left behind (D. Hatesohl, personal communication, September, 2009). How do professionals integrate the old and new forms of communication technology today, and how effective is it? Their shared sense of being left behind in regards to technology provides an understanding of how quickly technology evolves today compared to their historical experiences. They truly got to submerge themselves with the television and the audience behavior research that went along with it. Today, it seems that technology changes so quickly that

professionals do not have the financial support, training, or ability to keep up with new devices and applications.

Table 4.10 Evans's Interview III

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
<p>And then, of course, during my career, we have seen the introduction of computers and a barrage of new electronic technologies that are new channels for information services that are useful for agriculture. Computer based editing, publishing and design, e-mail, Internet and a host of brand new media are blossoming right now. I think we have seen a revolutionary stream of new media during my career. I mentioned starting with television. Since then, video, computerization, Internet, interactive media and other new channels of communicating have become increasingly abundant and complex. The existing media have not disappeared. Instead, existing media have changed. They have looked for and found new niches that capitalize on their unique advantages as media. And for example, in the online electronic era, newspapers and other traditional print media are struggling to examine and redefine their roles. Globally, we are seeing thousands of documents about new information and</p>	Reflection on career	Career	<p>Witnessed a tremendous amount of change technology and was a part of these changes and shifts in communication technologies. These changes altered how communication professionals disseminate information and the channels that they used. Evans was there, right in the thick of it and was learning of the changes and challenges (growing pains) of these new technologies. He can historical relate to these shifts and the impact it had on the field. He defines the changes in technology as increased and complex. Maybe overwhelming today Has AgComm found their niches and it so, how and how successfully? How does AgComm integrate the old and new technologies? Traditional roles of comm? Does everyone struggle to define their roles with tech?</p>
	Technology changes Dramatic and diverse	Tech Tech	
	Channels of new tech	Tech Changes	
	Blossoming of new comm technologies	Media Change Media	
	Defined as revolutionary	Comm Challenge	
	Historical, started with TV during his career, then leap forward		
	To include computers, video, Internet, media, etc.		
	Channels increased/complex	Tech Challenge Traditional Comm	
	Old media has not disappeared	Capitalize on media	
	Agcomm utilizing niches in comm tech		
	Changes in tech, there are comm medias that struggle to find their role	Media Newsprint	
		Globally Lit	

<p>communication technologies being tested and applied to agriculture, computers, online information systems, mobile phones, telecenters, websites, blogs, digital audio-visuals, social media, and other new equipment and software. Literature about risk and crisis communications continues to abound in agriculture communications. Especially this is true in connection with food safety. This literature documents the information needs of rural woman, the current lack of useful information for them, the cultural and social challenges facing them, and new approach is being used including new information and communications technologies to serve their needs. Here are some of the current ethical issues facing agricultural journalism and communications at present. Also, of note, the sampled steps being taken to assure high standards of ethical performance in our professional work. Some of the emerging information and communications technologies raise new questions about how to use them ethically. For example, agricultural journalists and communicators are</p>	<p>Globally, literature coming in ACDC reflects comm tech</p> <p>What is being applied, tested and used</p> <p>Tremendous amounts of new info and comm tech</p> <p>Lit about risk/crisis comm has increased</p> <p>Connection to food</p> <p>Serves or provide support to rural women</p> <p>They need information</p> <p>Lack of support and info</p> <p>Cultural and social challenges</p> <p>Women's needs to be successful</p> <p>Ethical issues with tech</p> <p>Displays complexities of these technologies</p> <p>Ethical performance is a must for the field (credibility)</p> <p>Tech raises new questions about ethics</p>	<p>Comm Tech Research</p> <p>Tech</p> <p>Lit</p> <p>Risk comm</p> <p>Crisis comm</p> <p>Agcomm</p> <p>Food safety</p> <p>Lit</p> <p>Needs rural women</p> <p>Women Challenges</p> <p>Info</p> <p>Comm</p> <p>Tech</p> <p>Serve their needs</p> <p>Ethical</p> <p>Jour</p> <p>Comm</p> <p>Ethical</p> <p>Challenges</p> <p>Comm</p> <p>Tech</p> <p>Ethic</p> <p>Agcomm</p> <p>Jour</p> <p>Ethic</p> <p>Photos</p> <p>Tech challenge</p>	<p>From a global perspective, from ACDC literature coming in, Evans has the ability to see trends in literature developing. Comm tech is one and how it is being tested and applied is very important</p> <p>Literature about risk/crisis comm that I assume focuses also on tech and the impact of tech comm in educating and comm this info</p> <p>Food safety is huge, comm tech needed here to effectively comm</p> <p>Literature needs, literature that supports women's roles in agriculture (culturally) is limited.</p> <p>Women in these roles need information and resources.</p> <p>Idea of serving their (women's) needs</p> <p>New communication/tech that can do this</p> <p>Ethical concerns for the field (only place that ethical is mentioned by anyone) further displays the complexities and challenges</p> <p>Comes great responsibility</p> <p>Credibility is vital</p> <p>Ethical concerns with how tech is used and by whom it is being</p>
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addressing matters such as use of software that permits alterations of agricultural photographs and other visual images, what digital manipulations are ethical and appropriate, what are not.	<p>Challenge and need in the field, to recognize these challenges</p> <p>How easy it is to alter, change photos, text, etc.</p> <p>What is ethical and what is not?</p>		<p>used and who is consuming it</p> <p>How is ethical considerations addressed with prof and students?</p> <p>Part of the curriculum (for some it is)</p> <p>Education of ethics is vital</p> <p>Too easy to alter, change what is communicated</p>
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4.8.2 Technology: Hatesohl's Interview and Summary

Hatesohl's content (Tables 4.11 and 4.12) that relates to technology displays his lack of engagement in technology, and it is clear that he feels technology is moving too fast. He does not want to try to keep up. Due to his own personal experiences and perspectives about communication technological changes and his background in audience behavior, he talks about who is being left behind when it comes to communicating agricultural information. He assumes that many are like him (in thought and age) and are not keeping up with technology, but still need information (D. Hatesohl, personal communication, September, 2009). Hatesohl, like Kern, has a background in audience adaption of the television, which makes sense with his concerns of leaving some of the audience behind in relation to technology. Both Hatesohl and Kern share the similar perception that they enjoyed their work and that what they were doing with their work and research was benefiting American society. There is a sense of gratification and contribution.

Table 4.11 Hatesohl's Interview I

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
<p>P: We were hard-wired. We had unit-spaced machines and then designers got apples and then for a while the publishing unit had one apple that was a floater and it would go from office to office to office. (Laughter) The baud rate was so slow and these letters would go across. This is back when WYSI wind was still discussed. What you see is what you get I've overseen a huge...</p>	Attached and connected, physically	Connected	Physically connected to machines and to too each other in relation to technology. Today very transportable, disposable.
I: Shift in technology.	Had one apple and it floated from office from office	Technology	Very slow, time consuming, catching up, Trying to catch up with technology today and technology had not caught up to us at this time. Waiting.
<p>P: Yeah, shift in technology and son of a gun, all of a sudden I ended up as an editor of a web-based journal. Who would have think it?</p>	It was soo slow and you could watch the letters move across the screen	Challenge Tech	Very slow, time consuming, catching up, Trying to catch up with technology today and technology had not caught up to us at this time. Waiting.
I: Now do you also help manage that site then as far as the content?	What you see it what you get was all you got	Tech	Today, her role as editor of a web based journal, never thought that was how academic journals would be produced. Loss of paper Tangibility
I: Now do you also help manage that site then as far as the content?	Shifts in technology, her role as editor of a web based journal	CES Tech	Today, her role as editor of a web based journal, never thought that was how academic journals would be produced. Loss of paper Tangibility
P: No. we have a web developer who is based at Ohio stated for the technical stuff.	She does not handle the technical side of the site, mainly the content	Tech Prof	She does not manage the technological side of the journal, just the content.

Table 4.12 Hatesohl's Interview II

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
Of course, the technology has changed so much that I'm sure some of it has left me behind. I don't try to keep up with it. Frankly, sometimes I just enjoy getting a good book and sitting in my easy chair and that's the way I like to read yet	Technology has changed Dramatically Left him behind Enjoys just reading a book	Tech Challenge Past	Technology has changed tremendously today, moved slower during his time. Maybe he has been left behind, sadness to a degree, can't keep up and maybe doesn't want to.
And then we made some recommendations for, a few recommendations on use of bringing computers in at that time, and some on what training they needed to give some their ag communications people. And that's a major problem in those areas, or at least, I found that their staff had usually, well they came in through a variety of ways, and they really didn't have much in the way of specialized communications training.	Bringing on computers, Some went to trainings to do this Trainings for technology were important and not always provided Limited training opportunities for technology	Tech Challenge AgComm Trainings Challenge Change Past	Went thought the process of bringing computers on and were in need of trainings and others needed trainings. However, there was limited support for this. Challenge and a frustration, when trying to integrate something new. Not sure why there was a lack of support in this area? Too new, lack of funding, etc.?

4.8.3 Technology: Kern's Interview

Kern's technological-related content (Table 4.13) focuses on how much the role of the agricultural communicator has changed. He describes their professional roles as very narrow in focus, for example, a writer was just a writer. He/she did not have to know about publishing, layouts, graphic designs, photography, or other similar subjects. Today, with technology, Kern believes that professionals have to know a little about everything

technological that relates to their professional role. For example, Kern explains that you are not just a writer today, that he/she knows how to use Publisher for publication layouts, can use Photoshop to edit and fix photos, and then can upload the publication online (R. Kern, personal communication, August, 2013). There is a sense of feeling overwhelmed, and wondering how one can know how to do all of this and still be proficient in their work. The transition of diversification in the agricultural communication industry and academic curriculum show the historical nature of this trend in work.

Table 4.13 Kern's Technology Interview

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
We didn't expect the writer to become an expert in audio-visuals, but we did think he or she had a role in determining what was going to come out from the audio-visual specialist.	Roles of AgComm professional's change in responsibilities from very focused, too much broader.	Agcomm Prof Technology	Technology has impacted ag comm professionals in their roles. It shifted their roles from very narrow, or specific to very board.
This, of course, would no longer fit what's currently done now. The computer and programs like PageMaker have made all the difference in the world. There is no longer a funnel through which publications, for example, go. There was a time that, well, as head of the information group I was in charge of the full publication budget	Technology and changes Knows this does not work today Technology changed how AgComm functions Processes have changed, due to technology, roles and purpose have changed	Challenge Technology Technology Agcomm Past	Technology changed how the AgComm department functioned as a unit. Technology has changed the communication process internally and externally.

4.8.4 Extension and Technology: Petritz's Interview

Technology was a tremendous part of Petritz's interview (Table 4.14) due to his role as Extension director during the time of technological integration on campuses and in the Extension field offices in the late 1980s and early 1990s. His interview content that relates to technology is lengthy, but I decided to include all of it here due to the nature of the content, which was Extension and communication focused. He describes this as one of his biggest achievements during his long Extension career, but he also talks about technology in relation to his work as an Extension Specialist as he prepared programs and class content using hundreds of slides. During the Farm Crisis of the 1980s, he was helping to train and implement FINPACK, which was a credit-based program in which a farmer would put all his/her inputs (cost in) and determine outputs (cost out). FINPACK revolutionized the agricultural financial sector and provided a form of relief for farmers. Petritz mentions training Educators and Extension Specialists to use this machine, and in one county in Indiana, a farmer they were working with committed suicide. The Farm Crisis was devastating to many Indiana farm families, and many lost everything. Technology could not and did not save this farmer (D. Petritz, personal communication, December, 2013).

Technology-related growing pains and trainings were hard to organize for Extension. Also, when the Internet was established for use in county offices, Petritz stated that not many residents in the state knew what it was, how to use it, or had access to it. Then offices started running with their own websites and Agricultural Information Technology (AgIT) would not support them, nor could Extension. He struggled to gain control and consistency with this new technology throughout Extension within Indiana.

He also describes this time as “out of control”, which suggests a sense of helplessness, feeling overwhelmed, and loss of control over what was happening in 92 different Extension offices (D. Petritz, personal communication, December, 2013).

Table 4.14 Petritz’s Technology Interview

Transcript	Initial Coding	Categories	Interpretivism
<p>P: But Eldon Fredericks is the one who can talk to you about bringing those computers in because keep in mind, I plopped a computer down in the office of whoever was the county agent in early 70's in your Winnemac and “How the hell do I do this thing?” “Turn it on?” “Who does it talk to?”</p> <p>I: (Laughs)</p> <p>P: You know, we were writing simple little programs and mailing them out on discs.</p> <p>I: Uh-huh.</p> <p>P: You know, we had, well eventually we got around to using modems and phone lines, but I did something and here you asked me what was one of my big things was using computers. In 1983-1984 when the Farm Crisis hit, Ed Carson had developed what we called FINPACK. No, Ed developed C4, the financial management planning program, which really was a program built on top of calculations and</p>	<p>Eldon was in AgComm when the computers were brought in</p> <p>But what did they do with this type of technology in CES?</p> <p>Very big learning curve and investment</p> <p>Simple, small programs, put on a disk</p> <p>Then had to use modems and phone lines</p> <p>Most memorable or achievement, was bringing technology and computers into CES in different ways.</p>	<p>Agcomm Tech</p> <p>Tech Ces</p> <p>Challenge Fin</p> <p>Tech Past</p> <p>Tech</p> <p>Prof CES Tech</p> <p>Ag Tech Tech</p>	<p>Technological impact not only on campus but also in the CES offices.</p> <p>Learning and training of technology on campus and at the county level was a huge investment in time and money</p> <p>Most memorable/achievement was bringing CES online with computers.</p> <p>He had been a part of development in technological advancements in agriculture Started out with FINPACK as means</p>

<p>you put numbers in and it was nothing more than a giant adding/calculating machine. You fill in all the blanks, put it in and it would spit the numbers back out and you'd sit there all day trying to change the price of corn or the price of fertilizer or your interest rate on a loan until you made something work. All of that was key-stroked on campus, so I'd go out and teach a class. I used to be gone and I believe it was Sunday night and come back Friday night and the girls in keypunch would work all weekend and they'd key it all in on Saturday, run it and I'd go back out on Sunday night with the outputs and get back to the farm families. Well, one time in southern Indiana, we used to have a terminal about yay by yay and weighed about 100 pounds and I drug the thing down there and actually punched it in myself and showed them how to get answers back. Well, we couldn't solve the financial crisis of the 80's doing that, so the University of Minnesota had FINPACK and so I actually went to... I sat here one night and wrote about a 3-page proposal, went the next morning to the Ag council which was the dean and the department heads and presented it, scared to death, and said "We need</p>	<p>Farm Crisis and FINPACK as technology</p>	Tech	<p>of calculating inputs and outputs</p>
	<p>Financial management technology</p>	Tech	<p>Oversized calculator</p>
	<p>Built on calculations</p>	Process	<p>Put in the data and it would spit out figures</p>
	<p>Like an oversize calculator</p>	Tech	<p>Used for farmers during the Farm Crisis</p>
	<p>Fill in in the blanks and it would spit out the numbers</p>	Women Tech	<p>Hand entered, the girls entered in the data (female role) and he would pick up after they had punched everything in, then share the results with farmers</p>
	<p>Then you would change, alter price of something to make it all work out</p>	Women Tech Ag	
	<p>Entered by key strokes</p>	Tech Challenge Past	
	<p>He would leave the data with the girls on campus and they would spend all weekend punching in numbers.</p>	Women Tech	
	<p>He would come back and get the outputs and take them to the farmers.</p>	Tech Tech	
	<p>Computer terminal that weighed 100 pounds and they drag that thing around the stated</p>	CES Ag Tech Fin Training Challenge	<p>Huge, heavy, hard to take, transport, took it around the stated</p>
<p>He learned to punch in numbers</p>	Tech	<p>He learned to punch in numbers</p>	

<p>to buy a bunch of these computers and have Minnesota come train us,” and I wanted ten computers and Bernie Liska was the dean and he said “Hell, if it's that good of an idea, Hank buy this boy twenty-five computers!”</p>	<p>Taught others how to use it</p> <p>Tech didn't solve the problem</p> <p>So FINPACK was being developed, same type of technology</p>	<p>Tech Challenge</p> <p>Tech CES</p>	<p>Trained others</p> <p>Technology did not solve the Farm Crisis but it may have bought relief to some</p>
<p>P: The problem was that it left what the old system was and all of that behind and made this gigantic leap to lug-gable computers, which was basically a desktop with a little screen built in to the front of it about that big and a fold down keyboard and you put two 5.25” discs in it and it probably had 128k of number crunching, but the point was I trained for a week or two weeks. Twenty-five agents who worked the entire e stated...that was the breakthrough. Those guys became the computer gurus in addition to financial management gurus. Some were able to say to farmers “Do this and that and you'll survive.” I mean Wayne Williams down here with the high rollers in Clinton County, he had family members commit suicide while he was helping them.</p>	<p>He felt CES needed this to help farmers</p> <p>He was scared that dean and others would shoot down his proposal for these machines and to be trained</p> <p>He asked for 10 Dean said, sure, and gets him 25 computers.</p> <p>Surprised by this response because of the investment and no one was overly familiar with the machines.</p> <p>Problem with current technology then, it was large, hard to move, and they made a huge leap with technology with desk tops</p> <p>Describes the computer and the size, which was so small compared to what they had worked with</p>	<p>Trained CES Tech Tech Fin manage</p> <p>Ag Helped</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Tech Help</p> <p>Provide service</p> <p>Tech</p> <p>Tech</p> <p>Fin Challenge</p> <p>Tech</p>	<p>CES was providing a service, trying to save agriculture, through the use of technology, there was no a whole more they could do.</p> <p>He need funds to purchase computers and was scared that he would be told no</p> <p>But that was not the case, he got more than he expected, huge investment</p> <p>This was a big leap in technology, to have computers at every desk</p> <p>Trained for weeks, needed support</p>
<p>I: Wow.</p>			
<p>P: Bad things happened and then we went out and tried to help the lenders</p>			<p>Financial technology was vital</p>

<p>deal with stress and stuff, so probably my high point in being a specialist was what I organized in the mid 80's around the financial crisis of agriculture and the adoption of computers to do that. Well, once we got that all of a sudden the educators, the on-campus people, were now using a lot of IBMs, and you know, the various sizes and shapes. Now we had to spend the money to get the counties caught up so we went to asking counties for money, we put up money. I couldn't tell you what we bought first but Hank bought Unix machines because at that time, the Ag IT part was so bad. Hank got mad and went over and asked the guy in engineering to come over and help us get organized because the engineers were well-computerized.</p> <p>P: Needless to say, I think Hank had Unix machines for awhile but the counties very quickly wired around that and would buy you a \$3,500 IBM down at the local store.</p> <p>I: Yeah.</p> <p>P: And then you would use the modem to connect and blah blah and things went crazy from there. The problem was that nobody understood websites or to say "We'll put it on the computer."</p>	<p>Trained for few weeks 25 CES agents got them, that was a huge achievement These guys played a vital role in financial technology</p> <p>Helped farmers to survive during the Farm Crisis</p> <p>Very stressful, hardship, some farmers committed suicide</p> <p>Tried to help With technology</p> <p>Help deal with stress</p> <p>Started with the adoption of computers into the offices in the late 1980s</p> <p>Using IBMs being use on campus</p> <p>Spend money to get the counties caught up</p> <p>This was a huge investment in time and money</p>	<p>Tech Tech support Challenge</p> <p>Tech support Engineering</p> <p>Tech Fin</p> <p>Internet</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Tech Ag/rural Audience</p> <p>Web CES Challenge</p> <p>Tech CES Challenge</p>	<p>Tried to save farmers and farms with this type of technology</p> <p>Very stressful working with farmers and technology</p> <p>Hardship, some committed suicide during the Farm Crisis. Hopeless, tech couldn't save them</p> <p>Need to provide service</p> <p>Educate Communicate</p> <p>Computers in CES field offices</p> <p>Spend money to get the counties caught up, causing other budget restraints, investment in machines and trainings</p> <p>Who would provide tech support? AGIT could not What is there role? How is it defined?</p>
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<p>“Well, where is it on the computer?” “Well, it's on memory and Ag animal science.” “Well, go find it!” I don't have time to go through fifty specialist websites. You know, and so we struggled with websites and we struggled with “How do you tell us on the website?” And then we had county websites and you had people at the county level who were smart in the big counties who developed a county Extension website in St. Joe County, which we wouldn't support. There was horrendous growing pains and anger and bad feelings in the 90s.</p> <p>I: It seems very fragmented almost or almost like splintered between two or three.</p> <p>P: Well, yeah and then we wanted Ag Comm and Ag IT got crossways. They wouldn't work together. They hated each other. Dave _____ was in Ag Comm and Dave was more of a computer technology guy than a department head, which meant he fought with the people in Ag IT and thank god Vic Lechtenberg was the dean then because Randy Woodson, bless his sweet heart, all he'd say was “Hal, figure it out!” Well, and then whoever got to him last, is “You figure it out.” “Tell him what to</p>	<p>Unix machines first AGIT was bad Couldn't help support</p> <p>Engineering helped them with technology</p> <p>Unsure of best computer, expensive, what to purchase, some bought IBMS</p> <p>Then going online Got crazy, out of control</p> <p>No one knew or understood websites Audience were not familiar with computers, let alone the Internet</p> <p>Fragmented websites, everyone in Extension was doing their own thing, little technology support,</p> <p>Overwhelming</p> <p>Some counties could create and manage their sites,</p>	<p>Growing pains</p> <p>Agcomm Roles Service</p> <p>Challenge Tech Web support</p> <p>Info Too much</p> <p>Challenge Tech</p> <p>Tech Today</p> <p>Comm Photos</p> <p>Process Changed</p> <p>Tech</p>	<p>Engineering providing support at this time</p> <p>Helped them adapt</p> <p>Internet created new challenges, sense of overwhelming, loss of control with tech from a leadership position</p> <p>No one really understood web sites, no one was really trained yet in web development</p> <p>How was audience to know or use web in relation to CES</p> <p>Fragmented in tech and tech services and support, and also training,</p> <p>How to pull this all together</p> <p>Some counties created their own sites, others could not</p> <p>Horrible growing pains, hard to control, make everyone universal</p> <p>How to pull this all in</p> <p>Agcomm, agit tug of war in defining roles</p>
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<p>do.” (growls) So, anyway, but the point was I think the instant information, information overload, probably roll in what Extension has always been. Trying to help them sort out what is the real thing that you need to know? You know, now you've got apps for diagnostic training, for diseases. I remember when I first started, the county agents, we had to buy them some cameras. They'd take a picture of the plant and send it in and you know, it'd take half a day to download the thing in the plant and pesticide diagnostic lab. But then you look at the customers, I just happen to think this morning and I don't know what made me think, you know I wrote down, farmers are big, technical, specific roles, and smarter. They're all college graduates now or most of them.</p>	<p>and others could not Couldn't support</p>		<p>with technology and web site development</p>
	<p>Horrible challenges and growing pains</p>	Challenge	<p>Who would handle what in relation to CES and Internet support and web site support</p>
	<p>Agcomm and Agit, tug of war</p>	Tech Challenge	<p>Too much info, overwhelming Overloaded today How to filter it out</p>
	<p>They didn't work together</p>	Role of AgComm	
	<p>Defining their roles and who handled what aspects of web communications</p>	Tech	<p>Today we have moved to apps</p>
	<p>Information, too much of it, Overload Challenge</p>	Tech overload	<p>Process of sending in pictures and samples, getting them tested, sending back a report,</p>
	<p>Now we have apps That can diagnostic plants</p>	Tech Comm	<p>Today can do this with an app</p>
	<p>Used to take pictures, then send them in and upload them</p>	Tech Comm	<p>Advancements in technology</p>
	<p>Took a couple of days</p>	Ag Specialized Need	<p>However getting to this point was challenging</p>
	<p>Got sent to a lab</p>		<p>Still a sense of overwhelmingness Farmers need info, specialized info, they are more specialized in their production methods</p>
<p>Farmers are more specialized and technical</p>	Educated	<p>They are more educated today</p>	
<p>Most are college grad</p>			

4.9 Technology Conclusion

There are overlapping experiences with technology, as most of the interviewees talked about challenges and the sense of feeling overwhelmed as leaders in their field during the Internet boom. From a professional communicator perspective, Kern and Hatesohl share similarities in their technology-related memories, which is due to their audience behavior and adaptation research. Both have a background in studying and learning about audience behavior as television entered the American home in the 1950s. They were a part of the shift from radio to television, which impacted agricultural communication tremendously. Evans discusses technology as it relates to these same shifts, but also as it relates to the scholarship and research in academic departments. He reminds us that technology can hinder or blind us at times (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013). Even in these words, there is a sense of feeling overwhelmed or a loss of control. Technology changes so quickly today, and trying to keep up with it has become problematic for many disciplines and professional fields. Petritz's experiences are from a position of leadership as he helped to rein in the use of Internet, websites, technology trainings, computer integration, and historically, FINPACK usage in the counties. His technology-related memories and experiences also display the significant impact technology had on the agricultural community during the 1980s Farm Crisis and the vital role that Extension and agricultural communication played in regards to helping farm families survive the crisis.

4.10 Memo and Observational Data

Memo writing and observational data helped to further analyze the data and the themes that emerged during this project, as well as how each one of the participants

confronted his/her interviews. Charmaz (2012) states that memo writing helps researchers in many ways. For example, memo writing assists researchers in discovering gaps in the data; encourages engagement with the data; and may spark ideas, create new concepts, and demonstrate connections and the need to further organize codes. Leavy (2011) explains that some forms of memo writing include utilizing memo writing to help with the coding process, and she views it as a “concurrent analytical process” (p. 58, para. 3). However, memo writing does not have to be utilized in the coding process, but can be used to further develop, explore, and interpret themes. For example, memo writing helped me to better understand the role of constructivism throughout the coding process.

I utilized memo writing as additional documentation to help me further connect the interviewees’ physical actions with their oral history content. This process helped me to better understand how they formulated their memories in order to compose their narratives that formed the oral history interview data. I took notes on how they prepared for the interview, how they acted or performed during the interview, the level of engagement I had in the actual interview, and also how their actions and voices were altered throughout the interview. They all spoke with great determination; they spoke with authority and pride when discussing their personal lived experiences and their career paths. Some were more adamant about challenges, ethics, direction or shifts in literature, professions, and research, but this also displays where they felt their strengths were in contributing content to this foundation of historical content.

A perfect example of this is Kern’s interview content that focuses on his international agricultural communication work. Kern could remember trips, dates, years, the nature of the projects, partnerships with other organizations, and cultural challenges

that he encountered when he started international consulting. He spoke with great pride and fondness about his work abroad and reflected upon the positive impact he had on other communities abroad in relation to agriculture, communication, and technology. He also spoke with great fondness about his co-workers and the ability to take his family abroad with him, which all helped to make his international experiences successful.

When participants seemed to feel comfortable about their topics of interest, they spoke with more determination and excitement. Their passion for their work was very obvious, as was their loyalty, dedication, excitement, and optimism for the field. When they spoke in regard to interview questions that they did not feel comfortable answering, their voices changed and the responses were shorter.

By utilizing oral history, I provided the interviewees a platform for their voices to be heard. Right or wrong, their perspectives deserve respect, and we can all learn from their experiences in some way, shape, or form. Even though each person confronted the interview differently, which was captured in the memo writings and observation data, this provides for an interesting dynamic in further exploring lived experiences and memory. My memo writings serve as co-constructed documents that lend themselves to deeper analysis of the physical confinements of the oral history interview process. I did not use memo writing in helping to form and develop the codes and themes that developed through the use of narrative research and interpretative theory. However, when exploring the memo writings, there is a tremendous amount of overlap in themes and in my personal notes. I do feel this aspect of the process is very important. If I had to do it over, I would have taken more detailed memo-type notes and I would have been more prepared and experienced in this type of note-taking and writing. Memo writing can and should be

used more like a guide in relation to narrative research, and, when filled with strong detail, can help new insights arise.

4.11 Conclusion

There is great value in utilizing oral history, narrative research, interpretivism, and constructivism to further examine personal experiences and memories. These themes provide a deeper insight into the field, beyond that of what happened, and enable us to further engage in the constructive process of making meaning out of what the interviewee thought and felt during these experiences. Additionally, the way these experiences tend to merge together at different times provides for more validity and consistency in experiences. The data from this project may not be prolific, but they do display the valuable use of oral history and narrative research in order to help construct layers of perspectives that are not part of the historical foundation of this field. I hope that others will use many of these themes, thoughts, experiences, and ideas to dig deeper in order to explore history from diverse perspectives. These data can also help us to see where there are shifts or transitions in academic and professional diversification, technology, and women's roles occurred. These data have not been collected or documented prior, and can help to better construct this historical narrative.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion and Recommendations: Introduction

This chapter will explore the three themes listed in Table 5.1 by utilizing the oral history data and interpretivism to further examine human perspective and how it relates to the historical dimensions of this field.

Table 5.1. Three Themes

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <u>Departmental mergers: Ideologies, beliefs, and even partnerships?</u>2. <u>Technology and historical meaning: It buries us and blinds us at the same time.</u>3. <u>Women's experience is missing in the agricultural communication historical narrative.</u> |
|---|

Additional discussion will focus on the use of narrative research to re-piece together the historical foundation of the agricultural communication field that includes these perspectives, experiences, and ideas. As we examine the interviewees' memories, experiences, words, and perceptions, keep in mind that sharing this kind of humanistic and personal information can be challenging. These are personal recollections, and they are being explored for understanding and connections in regard to the historical dimensions of the agricultural communication field. I also argue that this type of

research, which incorporates a number of qualitative approaches, such as oral history, narrative research, and interpretivism, should be utilized more in scholarship because this pluralist approach provides a great amount of flexibility and reflectiveness. Discussion focusing on recommendations, researcher assumptions, and limitations is addressed at the end of the chapter.

5.2 History: Where We Are Now and What to Do With It

The main intentions of this project were to seek out, establish, and analyze human perspective to help broaden the agricultural communication historical foundation. Leavy (2011) argues that oral history projects should be, “Understood in terms of the particular project—both in aims and execution” (p. 134, para. 2). Therefore, this is twofold—the process that was utilized to collect the data, and then the data analysis process. My initial project goals are listed below, and I truly believe that these goals were fully met, but there is still more work that can be done in this field.

Several of the major questions that historians ask themselves in regard to their historical research is what and how these data contribute to what we already know and whether it adds value to the current historical understanding or conversation. Human experiences provide a tremendous amount of understanding and insight to the already established historical foundation. These voices provide layers of understanding, validation, and additional perspectives to historical events and experiences.

There is an incredible amount of potential in what has been collected, what still needs to be collected, and the additional layers of perspective that need to be further explored, such as women, race, and ethnicity. Tyson (1996) argues that, “Recollections

and personal insights about the past provide a unique perspective on the complex, human side of history” (p. 91, para. 2). Tyson helps us to remember that this type of historical perspective is important, and dynamic because it is human experiences and memories that are being shared. Walker (2006) explains that being able to share memories is a restorying of people’s lives and the opportunity to make sense of their memories and experiences (p. 223). This project and interview process gave the interviewees the opportunity to tell their story, in their own words.

Utilizing interpretivism helped themes to emerge due to the community-like aspect of participants’ shared experiences that express frustration, loss, powerlessness, tension, and empowerment. These experiences also display how the interviewees embraced or resisted changes in departmental mergers, technology, and shifts in women’s participation in the field. Many of their perceptions are reflective of their age and time in the professional and academic field, but display the rich historical experiences and phenomena that were part of their personal and professional experiences, and which are not part of this historical foundation. This research does not seek to disregard the historical interpretations already established, but to take this foundation and build upon it through the use of oral history and human perspective in order to establish a foundation that is more inclusive and consists of human voices. There is value in finding a way to incorporate both the old and the new into the historical discussion.

5.3 Role of Oral History and Narrative Research in Developing Historical Perspective for Academic Fields

People cannot tell stories about the past without reference to the past. As scholarship on memory has shown, human beings constantly re-interpret past experiences through the prism of subsequent ones. Storytellers believe that contrasting the world of the past to the world of today can help their listeners understand the past. (Walker, 2006, p. 177, para. 2)

This section further explores how narrative researcher, oral history, and interpretivism were utilized to analyze data that were then coded, categorized, and constructed into themes. The three themes are outlined in this section, and each one is organized by interviewee's names, and discussion follows at the end of each theme. The discussion focuses on how and why the theme was realized and validated, what we can learn from it, and how we can further expand upon each one. I would argue that constructivism played a pivotal role during the construction of emerging themes. It provided an approach to further link historical shifts in technology, in academics, and in the profession, to explore understanding, and to examine convergences in experiences that aided in interpretation of meaning.

Charmaz (2012) explains that, "The logical extension of the constructivist approach means learning how, when, and to what extent the studied experiences are embedded in larger and often hidden positions, networks, situations, and relationships" (p. 130, para. 6). The interviewees are all connected together due to their involvement in agricultural communication, but they do not all know each other. Even so, their experiences overlap in relation to certain topics. The following sections are going to

explore and discuss the interpreted content as it is retold or restoried utilizing narrative research. This will be done by analyzing interviewee's content from the charts in chapter 4, and their perspectives, to see how and where they fit into the current agricultural communication historical narrative. This content may fill in the gaps, or even create more. Some of the content may be very different from what we currently know or understand about the field.

5.4 Discussion and Recommendations

5.4.1 Women's Experience is Missing in the Agricultural Communication Historical Narrative

It is no big secret that women, race, and ethnicity need to be further explored in the agricultural communication field and in many agricultural disciplines. Exploring these perspectives is not meant to make professionals, faculty, or administrators feel awkward or embarrassed about the past or to make others feel bad for what and who they are as people today. Instead, by discussing what is out there and learning how we can further build upon it, we can strengthen our scholarship, profession, and academic fields. There must be some consideration paid to social and American history (social contexts) at the time, as well, to further understand social structures that play important roles in this type of historical interpretation. Evans discussed women as consumers of information and literature as well as professionals in the field. He uses words and phrases such as "dedicated" and "women bring new skills" to the field, but he does not define in what ways. Kern and Petritz, on the other hand, both explore women in agricultural communication through their interactions and work with Extension, and more so, to home economics, which was a female position within the Extension system during this time.

5.4.2 Evans's Summary

Evans's interviews were both very organized and structured. He was always prepared with typed-out answers to the interview questions; therefore, he did not deviate from the list of questions. However, even though women were not mentioned in the interview questions, he does very briefly touch upon women in the field. Evans discusses women's literature resources, and he believes that women need these types of resources in order to be successful and supported in their producer roles. It seems to me that Evans does see trends in women's experience within the field, but in an informal way. Evans notes in his 2008 interview that he has witnessed women becoming more engaged in the field, but does not provide an explanation, nor was he asked to. The idea of addressing women within the field has not been explored, nor has this topic been a focus of scholarship or professional development. As Evans states in his interview that women need "information and communication technologies to serve their needs", I wonder if we truly know their needs as agricultural producers if we do not even take note of the role of females within the agricultural communication field. He uses the term "serve," which is an interesting word choice when speaking about women (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013).

5.4.3 Kern and Petritz's Summaries

Many of the interviewees discussed women in regards to agricultural communication, and in connection to the home economics program (Extension work). The data from the oral history interviews display how challenging it was for some of the interviewees to separate women's professional roles from women's traditional roles between the 1950s and the 1970s that they were more familiar with and comfortable

discussing. In the context of home economic programs, Kern (2009) discusses how the campus home economic programs were doing agricultural communication work through demonstration work. He states, “At the time, Candace Hurley was the home economics editor and she was doing this by nature” (2009). By nature, it means assumed, or that naturally a woman would be filling in as a teacher or demonstrator. Kern’s later interview in 2013 also connects women to home economic programs because it helped train women to be good homemakers:

I had a sister-in-law who married my brother who was a first-grade farmer. She learned to become an exceptional home-maker on the basis of what was in Illinois called the “Home Bureau Clubs,” the Home Economists, the Extension Home Economists brought lessons to them month by month and she mastered those lessons, became a tremendous cook and manager and all of this. Having come from a family of tenant farmers without the kind of background that would have blossomed in a daughter. She learned it from the Extension service. If I were in the business today, my biggest concern would be where is the audience? How do I relate to the audience? (B. Kern, personal communication, August, 2013)

Kern’s understanding of women’s roles within the field and socially accepted roles of women displays the gendered spaces that women could socially engage in. The spaces that were socially safe for women during his professional career were the private spaces of a home, and publically, in a workplace, but only in subordinate roles like that of a secretary.

Petritz’s understanding of women’s roles within the context of the agricultural communication field are Extension-based, but this is due to his Extension leadership role.

He references the role that women played in providing administrative support to FINPACK, which was a farm financial program utilized in the 1980s to analyze credit, farm inputs, profits, and losses. The women worked all weekend and punched in all of the data. Women did the labor of working and punching in the data, which seems very time-consuming and redundant. Men would then pick up the data outputs on Monday and take it to the farmers or to a program. Thus, the women did the vital, time-consuming labor of typing all of the data in and producing the outputs, and they got little credit for this work. This displays the marginalized role that women played within Extension Service, due to their subordinate roles. Women's roles within the field, for some people, correlate with Extension Service and home economic programs. This is an interesting but understandable connection, which is rooted in a more traditional service, educational, and nurturing role that women played in Extension and in the home. The history of the agricultural communication profession must include their perspectives. Based on the oral history interviews, women's contributions to the field and to the profession have been ignored. They not only provided secretarial and clerical support, but they also brought innovation, dedication, and great skills to the discipline in their roles as professors, graduate students, and communication professionals.

5.4.4 Hoelscher's Summary

Hoelscher has worked in the agricultural communication service department at Purdue for 31 years as an editor. She grew up in Chicago and described herself as a "city girl," but she grew up not too far from the Chicago Livestock Yards. Even though she had little agricultural background, she says during her interview, with a smile, "I knew where my food came from" (L. Hoelscher, personal communication, January, 2014).

Hoelscher shares that it once was very male-dominated, but today the agricultural communication service department at Purdue is close to 50/50 between men and women. She did not go into detail on her position within the department in relation to women because she appears unaffected by it, and it seems like it does not define her in her role and her professional work.

Hoelscher also marginalizes her experiences to these situations by reminding me that it was male-dominated, which means dismissiveness still occurs, and she is trying to determine the level of assertiveness that a female can portray within the field. At the same time, however, she encourages women to seek out mentors, and they do not have to be females—they can be males (L. Hoelscher, personal communication, January 2014). She, herself, had a male mentor throughout her career. Hoelscher's interdisciplinary background gave her a foundation in women's studies, and her natural ability to be self-assured and independent as a person provided her with a stronger understanding of her role and position within the field as a female. She was not the traditional housewife, mother, or support staff in the office. She is a very independent and professional woman who knows and observes the boundaries of women and mentally notes, comments, challenges, or even blurs the lines from time to time. She states in her interview that a mentor should be someone who can provide you with the type of support you need. How often do we see this type of pairing (male and female mentorship) occurring today, and if so, in what way or form? Are women paired with women mentors or not, and why is this? What do women bring to the professional table that men do not, and vice-versa?

5.5 Rewriting This Historical Narrative: Women in the Agricultural Communication Field

There have been a few attempts to explore women in the agricultural communication field, and one of the few places that I found women within this history was through classroom curriculum. However, I argue that current historical narratives dismiss and marginalize women's roles and roles of diversity. Even though some interviewees shared that discrimination toward women was common and even accepted, women's perspectives could change the historical landscape of this field tremendously. Some of the interview content bluntly referred to the working cultural environment of the College of Agriculture as a "good ole boys" club and that there is little to no history about females in the field, because "they just were not there", further dismisses women's contributions to the profession and to the field. I argue that women were actively engaged and working within the agricultural communication field during this time—their contributions have just been overlooked.

Rutherford and McGovney-Ingram (2008) created content for a senior course in agricultural communication at Texas A&M in 2008 that focused on women who have impacted their field. They worked with the Agricultural Communication Documentation Center (ACDC) to locate materials and utilized a first women in the field timeline to trace the involvement and leadership of women over the course of the past 60 years. Their timeline began with Marjorie Arbour, who became the first female president of the Association for Communicating Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, Life and Human Sciences (ACE) in 1950. This was a progressive move for the organization at the time. However, no other female served in this role for another 30 years, not until 1980.

Why is this? What literature or historical records does the field have to reference in regards to women in leadership roles within the profession, academic field, and professional organizations?

Rutherford and McGovney-Ingram (2008) recommend the need to further implement courses that focus on race, women, and ethnic diversity into the curriculum. Part of their intentions for creating this course was the fact that academic programs are over 50% female, and students need female role models and perspectives on how females have contributed to the field. However, there are little to no records or statistics of student demographics for the program. Their timeline consists of nine important females who were organizational leaders or award winners for their work and their contributions to agricultural communication. Historical narratives need to include the challenges of embracing female roles as well as frustrations and empowerment that women witnessed and were part of throughout this historical narrative. We can trace the physical presence of women's roles as acknowledged in the interview data, but there is a need to further engage with their historical perspectives and memories of what it was like to be a female agricultural communicator at the time.

The history of women in the agricultural communication field can be traced even further back in time than what Rutherford and McGovney-Ingram's (2008) timeline reflects. The history of women in the field can start much earlier than 1950 with Marjorie Arbour. I argue that females have been involved as writers and editors in the agricultural communication field for well over a hundred years. This history just needs to be dug out and explored, but it is there. Brace (1999) writes in her work on women contributions to *The Ohio Cultivator* and *The Ohio Farmer* that women were writing and editing for these

two agricultural newspapers starting back in the 1840s. Both papers had sections on women, and women wrote and edited these columns. They contributed content that focused on housekeeping, health and exercise, nutrition, poetry, education, parenting, basic agriculture, gardening, and women's suffrage (Brace, 1999, p. 17). Brace utilizes women's writings in agricultural periodicals to further explore modern cultural studies. These publications can be utilized to learn so much more about the role of women as agricultural journalist and editors.

Women have played a vital role in helping the agricultural communication field grow and develop. Even though their work was not acknowledged or was dismissed in their supportive and professional roles, their contributions have helped propel the field over several decades. It is very visible from the interviews that women were subjected to discriminatory behavior, and men were actively promoted while women were not, during what was described as the "good ole boys" days. Therefore, their work and contributions were not part of this historical narrative because their work was not valued or was lesser-valued by some. The male culture of the field, even later on in the 1980s and 1990s, still actively displays a level of demeaning thought expressed by male co-workers towards their female counterparts, as described by two interviewees. There seemed to be an overall feeling that women did not really belong in the field, and that, if they were working professionally in the field, they were subjected to additional challenges.

The last conclusion I want to address in this section focuses on home economic agents and their contributions to the profession. Home economists were educating, communicating, and demonstrating how to improve rural lives, but they were given very little credit for their contributions to the agricultural communication profession. Evans

made it very clear in his interview that home economists offered educational opportunities to women who lacked the resources to gain a formal education (J. Evans, personal communication, October, 2008). Home economists were communicating agricultural information that focused on gardening, health, hygiene, family management, and basic agriculture, all of which helped to improve rural families' lives.

Having only one female perspective does hinder this project because more female voices would provide additional validity and insight into this historical foundation. I hope that others will take the lead in exploring all of the underexposed layers of human experience in this field. As displayed by the data from the interview content, by saying that "it was a man's world", which was a fair and true statement, or "that history just is not there", does not and should not undermine the level of historical perceptions that are out there about women in relation to the agricultural communication field. The oral history data show that all the participants acknowledge the role of females within the field and also explain that there were not very many women involved in the profession when interviewees started out in their careers. The participants have witnessed a tremendous amount of change demographically in relation to women in academic programs and in the profession. They are aware, and they acknowledge these aspects, but the subject of women was not a focus in their interview content (or data), just as seeking out women was not one of the original goals or intents of this project. However, because this subject arose naturally, it must be discussed.

5.6 Departmental Mergers: Ideologies, Beliefs, and Even Partnerships

This theme explores the mergers of agricultural communication academic departments with other academic departments, which has been occurring for the past

three decades. The participants could speak about this topic with authority and assertiveness in regards to their personal views. This displays their sense of ownership of the program and a sense of loss of control of what was or is happening in their home departments. People have strong ownership and pride in their own personal dimensions of space, as well as a sense of loyalty to their philosophical ideologies. Why have some of these mergers been successful, and what hinders others from growing into dynamic and fruitful partnerships? What research has been done to further understand these complexities, and what can be done to learn from successful and unsuccessful mergers? Further discussion must focus on a narrative that includes how some mergers have been better embraced while others have not, and the challenges of powerlessness that are a part of this process.

5.6.1 Evans's and Hatesohl's Summaries

Agricultural communication academic programs historically date back to agricultural journalism, which was first taught at the University of Illinois in the early 1900s. It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that programs in agricultural communication began to develop at land-grant universities. These programs have blossomed over the decades, and Evans reported in his 2011 interview that 45 colleges and universities across the country have agricultural communication or agricultural journalism programs, and that enrollment in these programs was around 1500, with more than 130 graduate students (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2011). With young and growing programs, there are normally growing pains that have historically plagued agricultural communication/journalism over the decades, which were also addressed by all the interviewees.

Evans (2004) has published literature that traces the historical dimensions of the agricultural communication academic field that is utilized in some programs today. The programs have witnessed a tremendous amount of change in communication technology, academic curriculum, career shifts, and changes to the agricultural industry. As some programs started out in either journalism departments or agricultural communication service departments, the normal pattern was then to combine the program with other agricultural disciplines, such as agricultural education, leadership, 4-H youth development, or Extension, which were all popular choices as departmental counterparts. Other departments kept their programs housed in the journalism department or communication department, separate from the agricultural campuses. Every program is organized and set up in different ways, but all of them have a foundation rooted in journalism.

Evans and Hatesohl worked directly with students and watched the transition of the agricultural communication programs shift in departmental leadership over the years. Hatesohl feels very strongly about this shifting of academic departments and the leadership that was being provided:

I think it is a little difficult for, let's say a chairman of the Ag Education department to fully understand the problems and the opportunities and the responsibilities that Ag communicators get into because they deal across the whole college and so forth. But I see it happening. (D. Hatesohl, personal communication, September, 2009)

He continues to explain that he is not trying to pick on agricultural education, but this is what appears to be occurring. Why is this? Is it due to the newness or smallness of the

agricultural communication academic unit compared to other programs such as CES, agricultural education, and leadership development? I would argue that is this due to the historical dimensions of these fields that are steeped in tradition rooted in agriculture, and are usually larger units in relation to student and faculty numbers.

Disciplines such as agricultural education have been around for over 100 years. They appear to be very consistent, structured, conservative, and traditional. Agricultural communication is humanities based and does not have these structural confines to operate in and with, but it has had the ability to change and alter the way in which it works due to technology and changes in communication. Though small in numbers, the agricultural communication programs are still growing and show diversification in disciplinary approaches to learning and communicating agricultural information (Evans, 2004). The name change from journalism to communication also seemed to create this idea of newness or lack of historical roots. However, agricultural journalism has a long and deep history that needs to be strengthened by further exploring historical perspectives.

Evans shared his personal experiences from two merging processes. The first process was a merging of agricultural communication with agricultural education, which was unsuccessful. Then, they removed agricultural communication and remerged the program with the College of Media, which is part of the College of Communication (at the University of Illinois at Urbana). This was a big jump because it removed the entire program from the College of Agricultural Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES). Though Evans describes the many benefits, it can be assumed that these opportunities were not open or available to students when the program was merged with agricultural education. Journalism and agriculture both have very deep histories, but

when combined as agricultural journalism, these histories become muddy, vast, and overwhelming. With shifts in communication, however, the word journalism was changed to communication, and then shifts in communication technology have yet again challenged the historical foundations of the discipline. Communication is a relatively new term, and the bases for communication technology are recent, fast-paced, and overpowering.

Experiences during recent years in this relatively young multidisciplinary academic approach revealed growing maturity in collaboration. Within this ambitious interdisciplinary approach, students in the agricultural communication program have full access to courses, scholarships, internships, student's services, and other resources in both colleges. (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013)

Evans describes this as a “unique” model, but he has witnessed and experienced tremendous benefits from this final merging process, and the program has blossomed. This partnership has helped the program remain rooted in journalism, which Evans feels very strongly about:

It recognizes that root of journalism education as being based in the humanities and the humanistic social sciences such as literature, creative arts, languages, and philosophy. This orientation on which we wished to build has several purposes. It is intended to strengthen teaching, encourage and prepare students for professional work, and that all students have strong writing skills. (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013)

Evans further explains these many benefits and the direct impact they have on the program, the students, and the faculty. So, why was none of this occurring during the previous merger? It appears from the transcribed data that the programs are stifled from these mergers. No one talked about the positive outcomes from a merging process done within the College of Agriculture. The one positive aspect that Evans briefly mentions is that there is still informal collaboration between agricultural education and agriculture communication.

5.7 Rewriting This Historical Narrative: Departmental Merging Today

Many departments are merged due to bureaucratic decisions that cannot be changed; despite this, however, we have to find better ways to respect, understand, communicate, and work together. How one discipline functions can be very culturally different from others, and not all disciplines should function alike. Some of the participants were part of departmental mergers while others were not, but they all spoke of the challenges they brought with them from a personal and professional perspective, or that they heard from others who have experienced departmental mergers. Most interviewees expressed great concern or were part of unsuccessful mergers in the past. The idea that their departments were or are being pulled and pushed into other departments and possibly devalued, misunderstood, or disrespected as a professional and academic department troubled them.

Does it matter where the agricultural communication program is housed? Which part of the title “Agricultural Communication” should be emphasized? The interviewees felt very strongly about the location and partnering programs that agricultural communication is paired with academically. Should there be more focus put on

strategically aligning this program in liberal arts, within a journalism- or communication-related department? Or should it be housed in the College of Agriculture, among social science-related fields that focus on agricultural- and science-related work, which is the focus of the subject matter that agricultural communicators are communicating? These are challenging questions, and some programs have thrived in either home or location. The focus needs to be on where the students are gaining their technical communication training—in communication and journalism courses. Evans states in his interview that a program that is rooted in both agriculture and communication, but which is housed in liberal arts and communication, better benefits the students with access to communication and journalism classes, internships, scholarships, etcetera. Even so, he assures that the partnership with agriculture is vital and still strongly emphasized. Some programs have been able to strike a successful balance between the two and have watched their academic programs and students thrive.

How can oral history and narrative research further help with departmental merging dynamics? They all have some historical overlaps, but much of their present and future are interwoven. Understanding human perspective from the position of past, present, and future would provide for an interesting debate regarding these academic mergers. These perspectives could possibly display where these disciplines merge and where there is differentiation. They could even explain where they complement each other and how this can be used to strengthen partnerships. Human dynamics play a huge role in merging dynamics. It is not just the shifting or moving of physical objects and arrangement of space; intellectual and academic philosophies, programmatic traditions, differing yet merging scholarship/research ideologies, and respect for other disciplines

and their scholarship seem to be pivotal pieces of a merger. That is why working to solve or gaining a basic understanding of why these mergers are successful or not, requires humanistic-related research measures such as oral history. Is there a proper way to conduct departmental mergers, and if so, what was done to make them more successful? Academic departmental mergers can be further explored through the use of qualitative research methods that can establish a continuum of understanding, inquiry, and perceptions that can further analyze this process in its many dimensions.

5.8 Technology and Historical Meaning: It Buries Us and Blinds Us at the Same Time

“I mentioned starting with television. Since then, video, computerization, Internet, interactive media and other new channels of communicating have become increasingly abundant and complex” (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013). Evans, much like the other interviewees, talked about technology extensively throughout his oral history interviews. The breadth in technological advances can be examined throughout the transcribed data and has impacted the program and the field in numerous ways. Technology has not only changed the way in which we communicate agricultural information, but has also created this tremendous breadth of technological communications. Breadth in technology means breadth in programmatic development, academic curriculum, and expectations from employers who hire agricultural communication students. It has also created more concern in regards to ethical communication and journalism choices and considerations.

The interviewees discussed technology as both hindering and blinding today’s professionals and academics in many dimensions, such as ethical considerations,

communicating information, and audience behavioral research. The participants were very conscious of their age or generation in regard to technology- and audience-related research. As they lived through these tremendous changes, at a much slower pace than we do today, we must keep in mind that they were very integrated and fully immersed in technology as it impacted their work and personal lives. For example, the transformation from radio to the television was a decade-long process. Many people did not understand how television worked, and many feared this new change. The interviewees' understanding of integration of technology was on a much slower pace, which in turn slowed the pace of scholarship or research.

5.8.1 Kern's Summary

Kern's technological memories come from both his international work experiences and his work in the US, as he remembers setting up computer systems in other countries and here at his department office as well as sending his first email. His experiences are similar to Petritz's due to their position of leadership, as Kern was a department head for an agricultural communication unit and Petritz was a department head and the associate dean for CES. They had neither known nor worked together, yet they share some of the same experiences. They both reflected upon technological impacts internally, within the office, and how they responded to the integration of technology as it impacted their leadership roles and their professional careers. Kern reflects upon the important shifts in communication he experienced and his role as a part of this historical change in communication technology. He also touches upon this idea of broadness in technology, which is out of his hands, leaving him powerless, to a degree. He states that, "We didn't expect the writer to become an expert in audio visuals, we did think he or she

had a role in determining what was going to come out from the audio-visual specialist” (R. Kern, personal communication, August 2013).

5.8.2 Petritz’s Summary

Petriz’s interview reveals a rocky and challenging transition when all Indiana CES offices received computers, followed by the networking, database development, and training that had to occur, all of which had to be coordinated. He talked about technology as well, in regards to FINPACK, which was being used during the Farm Crisis in the early 1980s. Many agricultural professionals believed that FINPACK could help save farms, or at least provide some level of financial security for many. This machine was huge, heavy, and described as a gigantic calculator of sorts. This was a stressful time for farmers, for those using the technology, and for Extension staff. Petritz said that it did help, but technology could not save or stop the Farm Crisis (D. Petritz, personal communication, December, 2013). There was a family that Extension was working with in Clinton County with FINPACK, and one of the family members committed suicide during this time. Petritz explained, “Bad things happened and then we went out and tried to help lenders deal with stress and stuff, so probably my high point in being a specialist was around the mid-1980s, during the farm crisis, was the adoption of computers” (D. Petritz, personal communication, December, 2013).

He defines his most important contribution to his Extension work as the integration of computers both on campus within Extension and out in the county offices. Even though he describes this process as challenging, overwhelming, and with tremendous growing pains, it was a huge leap in Extension education and

communication. Then, every office was brought online with the Internet, and that was another huge transition.

I didn't have time to go through 50 specialist websites. You know and so we struggled with websites and we struggled with how to manage them. Then we had county websites and you people at the county level were smart and they were developing their own county websites which we couldn't support. There were horrendous growing pains and anger and bad feelings in the 90s. (D. Petritz, personal communication, December, 2013)

From these growing pains, there were challenges on campus to further define and utilize both the agricultural communication service department and agricultural information technology department (AgIT). He described both of them as a tug-of-war over who was going to provide support and handle communication development aspects of these new websites. Between the battles on campus between the agricultural communication department and AgIT, and the ongoing implementation of computers and the Internet in Extension offices across the state, Petritz describes this time as "An instant information overload" (D. Petritz, personal communication, December, 2013). Petritz's interview content that focuses on technology only further supports and justifies the immense impact technology had on field.

5.8.3 Evans's Summary

Evans's interview focuses on technology through scholarship, academic programs, and leadership from the perspective of an agricultural communication department head. He spoke of the positive aspects as well as the many challenges that

technology brings with it. He reminds us that technology is faddish, or trendy and disposable. It moves quickly and it is instantaneous. Even though these are interesting aspects, he explains there are also downsides to technology, such as audiences adapting it, preparing students to utilize a plethora of technological devices and programs, and integrating these pieces into academics, scholarship, and research.

There seems to be a good sense of how agricultural producers utilize information, as reflected upon in most detail by Evans:

Producers throughout the world are looking for niches and specialties that can add value to their enterprises and their livelihoods. It seems clear that research that producers are using involves new information sources along with their traditional sources. Producers are experimenting with and sometimes adopting a wide array of new information and communication technologies available to them. At the same time, they are continuing to gather information from face-to-face interactions, agricultural periodicals, farm, radio, and television broadcasts, meetings, field demonstrations, shows, and other traditional channels. (J. Evans, personal communication, July, 2013)

In relation to the agricultural communication academic program and historical perspectives that relate to technology, Evans further explores the need to engage with new forms of technology, but not at the expense of pulling students and faculty from the historical dimensions of the field:

Help strengthen and sharpen the sense of history and tradition in our field. An onslaught of technological advances and other forces threaten our understanding. These focuses tend to bury our understanding of our academic homeland. They

blind us to the deep roots of this field. And I think they blind us to the valuable lessons we can learn from the past. (J. Evans, personal communication, October, 2008)

Does technology bury and blind us? If so, is it due to the breadth and the pace of technological change? Technology had a significant impact on the interviewees' personal and professional lives, and the historical dimensions of communication technological transitions were a consistent part of interviewees' oral histories. They also referenced these transitions as challenges, however; support systems were put into place to help with the technological transitions. These transitions also moved slower in integration and research than compared with today's onslaught of technological changes, which continually come at a rapid speed. They could learn a tremendous amount in regards to audience and research about one technological shift before another one hit.

5.9 Rewriting This Historical Narrative: Impact of Technology Today on the Agricultural Communication Field

Technology alters how we remember, as well as the narratives we construct. As interviewees communicated their experiences, their memories were not clouded by the use of technology. Evans stated in his interview that he and others had witnessed a revolutionary stream of communication technology during their careers. Technology entered their lives in a much slower pace, and then the integration process took years, unlike today with new Apple products coming out every three to six months, for example. Technology altered the interviewees' perspectives due to their leadership roles. Their views are reflective of their own experiences in how they confronted technological integration and how they overcame numerous hurdles.

Students today have a very different perspective on technology. For example, digital cameras have always existed for this generation. They do not know what camera film is, or what the term 35 millimeter stands for. Photography to them is cheap, quick or instant, disposable, and lacks technique; anyone can take picture with his/her cell phone. Does technology hinder the field due to funding resources, educational resources, scholarship, training, investment, time, and more? How we can work with these students in the classroom and out in the field to better understand our historical roots in relation to technology? How does agricultural communication curriculum reflect changes in technology in the classroom?

Breadth and the pace at which technology is changing and impacting the field needs to be further explored. It is too important and has tremendously altered the academic program, the students, and has impacted what employers are looking for in new employees. This broadness is a double-edged sword—how do we make this all manageable? How can students become diversified in technology while also specialized in focus? How do academic programs address this challenge, and then, how are ethical considerations being addressed?

Numerous challenges were mentioned in regards to technology such as audience, cost, trainings, and technology support. How do we keep up with the latest and greatest communication technology? Technology impacts the agricultural communication industry, which then impacts careers and employment, which then alters academic programs to meet the needs of the industry. As Hatesohl pointed out in his interview, he wondered, with all the different forms of technology, whether or not we are leaving some of our audience behind. He mentions that the average age of farmers is around 55. What

types of technology are they using? There needs to be more discussion about how to integrate both traditional and new technology to meet broader audience needs. There is much we can learn about communication technology, women, and departmental merging from their experiences that can be used to guide us through turbulent waters today.

5.10 So What Do We Do With All of This Historical Content?

The oral history transcripts, themes, and other historical dimensions of the agricultural communication field shed light on the shallow historical foundation and the gaps in the narrative that have formed over the years. Freund (2009) explains that, “In order to make full use of oral histories, it is fruitful to understand them not simply as sources to be mined for facts but rather as complex social constructs that are inherently subjective and thus offer multiple layers of meaning” (p. 23, para. 2). Numerous themes and data generated from this oral history project have been reviewed, which helped to peel back numerous layers of memories, experiences, and perspectives. This content is versatile and can be used in numerous ways such as in research, literature, and academic curriculum. If new scholarship is produced that contains historical aspects, these data can be analyzed and used to further construct or deconstruct what we know about the agricultural communication historical foundation. There have been dozens of questions raised throughout this chapter that make for interesting and insightful research projects, papers, lecture topics, and debates.

The narrative research aspect of the data reflects the need to restructure and rewrite some of these histories. This process helps to pull out pieces of content that help add to or construct this historical narrative. We already know what little of a narrative exists and that it is told from a traditional and mostly male perspective. Other dimensions

of this historical narrative, however, are pulled from numerous other disciplines such as journalism, advertising, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), communication, and Extension. This narrative seeks to add additional layers of experiences that provide a deeper understanding of the merging process, the role of women within the agricultural communication field, and the changes in communication technology, and how these changes impacted the field, those who work in it, the students, and program development. Exploring narratives through the sense of empowerment, broadness, powerlessness, dependency, tension, and embracement further define and provide an analysis beyond what was happening, to further engage with what people were actually experiencing and feeling during these changes.

Restructuring narratives is obviously done with oral histories and other interview-related research methods, but artifacts and objects can also be used. An often disregarded resource in scholarship and in classroom curriculum is the integration of historical objects as part of this discussion. Just exploring historical data is one aspect, but the physicality of objects and the visual representation provides a different experience and can help restory the traditional narrative. DeSilvey (2007) explores the material culture of a dilapidated homestead in Montana and started sorting, collecting, organizing, and analyzing objects that she found on the property. DeSilvey describes her initial process as complete chaos. By being grounded in ethnographic practices, however, the objects she found tell the story of the family and their farm, their lives, transformation of agriculture, and the farm home (p. 889).

By incorporating historical objects such as newsletters, organization publications, booklets, pamphlets, and letters, students can and will gain a stronger sense of historical

significance. Not only are students learning about the field, but they are also touching, reading, and exploring the actual documents. This aspect, paired with the context, will strengthen the historical dimensions of this field and help students engage more with historical data. DeSilvey (2007) argues that, “The significance of the objects altered as they moved through the different contexts and as they came into contact with people who asked different things of them” (p. 888, para. 2). Integrating historical objects into this foundation will continue to help it broaden, but in a different direction than just data driven from text and oral sources. Objects hold great possibilities for deeper understanding of historical dimensions and can help fill in the gaps where voices may not be present.

5.11 Limitations

There are a number of limitations with my research. The first and most obvious is that this is a small sliver of representation of the professional and academic community. To make this research manageable, a time period was established in order to provide a beginning and an ending point. Those who worked and taught during the 1990s and beyond are not part of this project. Another limiting factor is the fact that women and racial and ethnic minorities are very marginal in this historical foundation. Additional limitations include the pros and cons of utilizing oral history, narrative research, and interpretative theory. Many of these concerns were addressed in the previous chapters, but I do realize that these qualitative methods can be problematic if not used properly.

Oral history and in-depth interviews are not the only ways to collect, organize, analyze, and preserve historical experience, but I argue they are some of the best methods to use if one wants to incorporate human experience into the broader historical

conversation. I believe that understanding the theoretical and methodological aspects of oral history is pivotal to following proper ethical and rigorous protocol that provide a high level of validity, reliability, and credibility to the research that is being collected. Given the qualitative nature, the sometimes unreliability of memory, and other humanistic aspects, there will always be critics of this type of historical research. Exploring and addressing these critical approaches and perceptions allow for a deeper and more reflective understanding between the data and the researcher. What we have experienced in the past will be filtered through our memories in the present state. With oral history, interpretivism, and narrative research, I wanted to understand beyond “how” things change and to further explore “why” they did. I believe this goal was accomplished by examining these themes.

5.12 Personal Bias

There are a number of limitations I would like to further address, which consist of my personal role as the researcher, research bias, and personal assumptions. I cannot dismiss the complexities of my personal and professional views on women within the historical dimensions of agriculture (from a much broader perspective). However, I did not start out to learn about women, nor did my interview questions include women related topics. Some of the interviewees commented that this perspective may not be there because females were not overly engaged in the field during their careers. However, I argue that women were involved, but their work may not have been noted, recorded, or recognized as contributing work. Also, given the fact that I am an agricultural communication alumna and am familiar with this field with my past five years of Extension work, I was struck by the interwoven nature of Extension and agricultural

communication. I also harbor some bias toward both fields because of my own personal experiences.

5.13 Conclusion

By examining the present in light of the past and finding that the present does not measure up, rural southerners' stories serve as powerful critiques of modern life.

Values and beliefs rooted in their experiences on the land provide the standards of criticism for today's world. (Walker, 2006, p. 178, para. 1)

Walker's oral history experiences with southern farmers displays the missing dimensions of historical perspective that were lacking in the traditional American agricultural historical narrative. Much like that of the historical narrative for the agricultural communication field, both narratives are missing layers of human perspective that could provide a deeper analysis for what was occurring in the field and how people confronted these changes and challenges. Walker's (2006) work is an excellent example of how oral history can be utilized to broaden historical foundations to include voices of those impacted by mechanical technology, economic downturn, ethnic and racial discrimination, land ownership, and more. People tend to compare and critique the past with the present, which provides value to their own experiences and memories. This was very much displayed during these oral history interviews when it came to discussion about technology and departmental mergers. It was during the oral history process that interviewees were able to make sense and meaning of their own experiences. The oral history process is just as important as the valuable data that has been collected and analyzed.

The use of memory, inquiry, and discovery can provide valuable insight into the historical dimensions of any discipline. This project set out to accomplish the same tasks of broadening the agricultural communication historical foundation with new perspective and human voices. This process and the use of oral history, interpretivism, and narrative research gave interviewees a chance to share their own stories, in their own words. This research also bridges the social sciences and the humanities, which makes it a hybrid project. The blending of these two disciplines and methodologies together helped to generate very valuable data. The interviewees' oral history content generated data that change what is already known about the history of the agricultural communication field.

The history that already exists lacks women's voices and contributions. From this research, it is documented that women were involved and played vital and important roles as agricultural communication professionals, support staff, and home economists. Women's contributions to the field have been overlooked and dismissed by many. Women have been writing and communicating agricultural information for over a century as writers, home economists, support staff, professionals, and secretaries. From the oral history data, there is a very minimal acknowledgement of their contributions and important roles they have assumed over the past century. Women were even subjected to hazing and discrimination at times in the oral history data. Their experiences need to be captured and incorporated into the historical narrative of this field. This is the starting point of a great and fascinating journal submission or book that could focus directly on women's experiences and contributions to the agricultural communication field.

Technology was a pivotal piece and the most reoccurring aspect in all of the interviewees' oral histories. Technology is incredibly powerful, and interviewees'

communicated their experiences and feelings that related to technology as challenging, overwhelming, frustrating, and exciting. They all confronted technology from different perspectives of professional roles, scholars and researchers, and leadership positions. These data display the powerful role that technology played during the Farm Crisis in the 1980s; how technology has altered and impacted the academic programs and industry; and the importance of ethical considerations in relation to technology. Here in lies a very interesting research topic that has not been overly explored, if ever, and that is the use of technology and the role that CES and agricultural communications played during the Farm Crisis. As Evans's interview content revealed, teaching journalism ethics was part of the foundational aspects of the curriculum, but with new communication technology, there are also ethical considerations that relate to photography, social media, marketing, graphic design, publishing, and web designing/publishing.

Departmental mergers were discussed by those who watched from a distance, and by Evans, who was a part of two mergers. What one can take away from this oral history content is a sense of loss, change, and identity. As agricultural communication departments were merged together with other departments, the gender demographics were changing, technology was expanding, and even the name of the department shifted from agricultural journalism to agricultural communication. All of these shifts created instability. This content has not been overly explored in regards to historical aspects, and how this topic fits into the historical narrative of this field needs to be further investigated. Taking these data from the oral histories and building upon it by collecting and analyzing more oral histories from faculty, staff, students, and alumni that have been through a merger would add even more validity to the data already collected.

The oral histories captured many professional and personal perspectives that provided understanding and analytical reflection in regards to psychological dimensions about value, loyalty, and need. Even though there are limitations with oral history research due to the use of memory and the humanistic nature of the content and research methodologies that were employed, this project yields valuable data that would not have surfaced any other way. The bridging of social sciences and humanities has helped to create a dynamic research project that has produced oral history content. This content then further raised a number of dynamic questions, conversations, discussions, and prospective debates. The application of narrative research then helped alter what is already known historically about the field by generating new knowledge from personal experiences. There is so much work that can be done, and the data from the oral histories can help propel these important and underexplored research topics. These experiences were explored and interjected into the traditional historical narrative in order to broaden this historical foundation. This interdisciplinary project and process has provided ideas for some additional, new, and exciting research projects. These data do change what is known about the field historically, and imagine the possibilities of what this history could look like when collecting even more oral histories. The possibilities are endless.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. IRB Documents—Consent Forms



HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARDS

To:	KATHRYN ORVIS AGAD 227
From:	JEANNIE DICLEMENTI, Chair Social Science IRB
Date:	01/24/2014
Committee Action:	Approval
IRB Action Date	01/23/2014
IRB Protocol #	1311014268
Study Title	Agricultural Communication Oral History Project
Expiration Date	01/22/2015

Following review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the above-referenced protocol has been approved. This approval permits you to recruit subjects up to the number indicated on the application form and to conduct the research as it is approved. The IRB-stamped and dated consent, assent, and/or information form(s) approved for this protocol are enclosed. Please make copies from these document(s) both for subjects to sign should they choose to enroll in your study and for subjects to keep for their records. Information forms should not be signed. Researchers should keep all consent/assent forms for a period no less than three (3) years following closure of the protocol.

Revisions/Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, please submit the requested changes to the IRB using the appropriate form. IRB approval must be obtained before implementing any changes unless the change is to remove an immediate hazard to subjects in which case the IRB should be immediately informed following the change.

Continuing Review: It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain continuing review and approval for this protocol prior to the expiration date noted above. Please allow sufficient time for continued review and approval. No research activity of any sort may continue beyond the expiration date. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the approval's expiration on the expiration date. Data collected following the expiration date is unapproved research and cannot be used for research purposes including reporting or publishing as research data.

Unanticipated Problems/Adverse Events: Researchers must report unanticipated problems and/or adverse events to the IRB. If the problem/adverse event is serious, or is expected but occurs with unexpected severity or frequency, or the problem/event is unanticipated, it must be reported to the IRB within 48 hours of learning of the event and a written report submitted within five (5) business days. All other problems/events should be reported at the time of Continuing Review.

We wish you good luck with your work. Please retain copy of this letter for your records.

Research Project Number _____

For IRB Office Use Only

A	APPROVED	D
JAN 23 2014		
EXPIRES 1-22-15		
PURDUE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD		

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
Agricultural Communication Oral History Project
 Dr. Kathryn Orvis
 Purdue University
 Department of Youth Development and Agricultural Education

Purpose of Research

The purpose of the oral history project is to capture and preserve the history of agricultural communication and agricultural journalism from several of the key leaders in these specialized fields. Many of these individuals have retired or are close to retiring. Their thoughts and what they remember about the origins of agricultural communication/journalism programs needs to be recorded and preserved for future professionals and students.

Only a limited collection of history has been saved or preserved about agricultural communication/journalism. The current project will allow us to save and preserve this history for presentation at professional conferences and in the classroom. The interviews will be recorded on a digital audio recorder and each interview will be archived individually. A professionally edited version of the interviews will be accessible to universities and members of this field's professional organization, the Association for Communication Excellence (ACE). The project will also help build the researchers' expertise in the area of oral history research.

Specific Procedures

Interviewees were selected from membership directory of the Association for Communication Excellence (ACE) based on their expertise and academic reputations. Participants will be contacted via phone in June (see attached script). Each participant was then e-mailed a list of interview questions (see attached list of interview questions). Interviews will be conducted at participants' homes or, if they prefer, at Purdue University. Interviews will last from 1-2 hours. The interviews will be recorded. Each participant will receive an IRB approved consent form prior to the interview via mail. They will receive two copies, one for their own records and another to return to the researcher prior to the interview.

Duration of Participation

Interviews will last from 1-2 hours in length. The timeframe to collect oral histories is July 2013 to July 2014.

Risks

The standard for minimal risk is that which is found in everyday life. Subjects' identities are well-known within the specialized fields of agricultural communication and agricultural journalism. All are distinguished and award-winning members whose addresses and contact information are widely available through association directories. In the interviews, the participants will be asked to share their recollections and provide advice for the future. No sensitive information will be collected. Participants are free to pass on any question they do not wish to answer.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to the subjects. To archive and preserve the history of the Agricultural Communication discipline and be able to share it with other professionals and students who have an interest in this field.

Compensation

None

Research Project Number _____

Confidentiality

The original tapes of the interview will be stored at Purdue in the Department of Youth Development and Agricultural Education (YDAE). Copies of the tapes will be made and given to Purdue University's Special Collections. The interview will also be transcribed with the original transcription being stored in YDAE and a copy will go to Purdue University's Special Collections. After being placed in Special Collections, the academic community and general public will have access to the interviews. Purdue (YDAE) will retain ownership for perpetuity. The data will be used in research and academic writing. Data will be stored for 50 years and the access is granted through special collections. Project's research records may be reviewed by the departments of Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Voluntary Nature of Participation

You do not have to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate you may decline to answer any of our questions. You may also withdraw at any time without penalty.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact Dr. Kathryn Orvis or Natalie Federer at 765-494-8433 or 574-946-3412 or by e-mail at Orvis@purdue.edu or nfederer@purdue.edu. If you have concerns about the treatment of research participants, you can contact the Institutional Review Board at Purdue University, Ernest C. Young Hall, 10th floor-room 1032, 155 S. Grant Street, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114. The phone number for the Board's secretary is (765) 494-5942. The email address is irb@purdue.edu.

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research project and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research project described above. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

K. Robert Kern
Participant's Signature

12 March 2014
Date

K. ROBERT KERN
Participant's Name

[Signature]
Researcher's Signature

2014
Date

Appendix B. Recruitment Email

E-mail script

(sending interview questions)

Dear _____,

This is Natalie Daily Federer, at Purdue and I contacted you a few weeks ago in regards to an oral history project I am working on that focuses on the history of the agricultural communication field. Thank you for your willingness to participate and please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about the project at any time. Attached is a list of interview questions. Please look through them and let me know if you have any questions. May we also arrange a date and time for me to come visit you to collect the oral history? Would any of the following dates work for you?

(list of dates)

Attached information about this project. Please take a look at it and contact me with any questions. Thank you so much for your time and I look forward to working with you on this exciting project.

Sincerely,
Natalie Daily Federer

Appendix C. Abbreviations

Agricultural Communication Documentation Center	ACDC
Agricultural Communicators of Excellence	ACE
Agricultural Institutional Technology	AgIT
Cooperative Extension Service	CES
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA
National Project in Agricultural Communication	NPAC
Institutional Review Board	IRB
Oral History Association	OHA
Journal of Applied Communication	JAC

Appendix D. Sample of Transcripts

Voices of the Past: Historical Perspectives on Agricultural Communications

Interview with Jim Evans, Interview 1

Date of interview: October 8, 2008, Jim's home in Philo, IL.

Interviewer: Natalie Daily Federer

Transcriber: Natalie Daily Federer

Transcribed: 4/18/2009

Began with CD 1, interview 1, Wav file

0:00

<p>My name is Jim Evans and I am talking on October 9, 2008 from our home near Philo, Illinois. I retired from the University of Illinois in 1995 and my first job began in 1954 just a few days after my wife, Marlene and I were married. We packed-up in a little Studebaker car and headed for Green Bay, Wisconsin where I became an associate farm director for a CBS station, WBAY radio and television.</p> <p>The Korean conflict was going on at that time and I was called into active duty in the Air Force. I spent 2 years in the Air Force. The first year as a career counselor at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and the 2nd year as an assistant information services officer at</p>	<p>Identification Home, family</p> <p>University of Illinois Memory-career</p> <p>Wife and marriage</p> <p>Move and start a new life together</p> <p>stated with radio and TV in relation to career</p> <p>Reflective</p> <p>Military service</p> <p>Air Force, responsibility</p> <p>Career counselor in AF</p>
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<p>Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne (Wyoming). Then after my military service, for some reason, we moved to Chicago. I never expected to live or work in the city but I went to work with Aubrey, Finlay, Marley and Hodgson, which was a major agriculture advertising agency. I gained experience working in marketing communications with the farm equipment division of International Harvester Company, Illinois Farm Supply Company, Murphy Feeds, PAG Hybrids, International Minerals and Chemical Corporation and other agriculture clients.</p> <p>Then I took a leave of absence because I felt I needed more marketing experience and understanding. After the masters then I expected to go back into my professional work, but in January of 1962, I became a new assistant professor in agricultural communications at the University of Illinois. I had never taught a course. I had never taken an education course. I was teaching 2 ag journalism courses and leading a new ag comm. program there. And I found that I loved it. I ended up leading that teaching and academic program for 23 years, until 1985 when I went into an administrative position helping organize a new academic unit that combined agricultural</p>	<p>Worked in communications</p> <p>Then moved to Chicago, but cannot remember why</p> <p>Questionings/reflects on the experience and living in an urban area</p> <p>Worked for ag advertising agency Gained marketing experience</p> <p>Farm equipment division</p> <p>Numerous “big” names in the ag industry, he worked with</p> <p>Questioned his skills/education in relation to marketing, wanted to gain more knowledge Went to school for a Masters Go back to work but was asked to stay on as faculty</p> <p>Never had taught a class, no experience</p> <p>Taught 2 ag journalism classes</p> <p>He loved his faculty position and teaching Live long passion of teaching</p> <p>Then leadership role with administration</p> <p>New combined unit consisting of ag comm, ag ed, extension education and support groups.</p>
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<p>communications, agricultural education, extension education and the support groups in extension communications, experiment station publications and the vocational agriculture resources. And I retired from that administrative position in 1995. I continue as a retiree, as a volunteer associate in the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center (ACDC) and I enjoy working informally with students and the agcomm program here.</p> <p>This question deals with some of the key accomplishments in agricultural journalism and communications before my career began. This is going to be my perspective on the historical dimensions of our career field, with all the limitations that my view may contain. I think that the growth and emergence of the commercial farm press was one of the major developments, and that began in the early to mid 1800s. The emergence of agricultural advertising in the late 1800s would be on my list of key changes or accomplishments. I would note the establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service in the early 1900s, as a major channel for the flow of information to farmers and farm families, nationwide. Through the USDA in support</p>	<p>Large dynamic group and many responsibilities</p> <p>Retired in 1995</p> <p>Still connected and involved with agcomm</p> <p>ACDC passion for this program and work he does</p> <p>Enjoys working with students</p> <p>Personal thoughts</p> <p>Accomplishments (historical, present) ag journalism and ag comm</p> <p>Personal reflections Historical dimensions based on his career</p> <p>Knowledge's personal limitations with his personal views</p> <p>Growth of commercial farm press major</p> <p>Ag advertising (major accomplishments)</p> <p>Growth and development of Extension</p> <p>Their role in communicating to rural audiences Nurturing of land grant colleges</p> <p>Publications developed through land grants</p>
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<p>of the young land grant university system. I think the development of publications offices within the experiment stations of the land grant institutions would be on my list of key accomplishments that began in the early 1900s and has continued through offices and publications since then. These accomplishments all have brought with them the need for professional communicators and for communications services.</p> <p>5:29</p> <p>The development of new farm and ag organizations were key accomplishments before my career began. Many of these began during the 1910s and 1920s, and on. I am talking here about the cooperatives at local, stated and national levels. I am talking about the farm bureaus, the breed organizations, and the commodities groups. Elective cooperatives, and hundreds of others that took shape. All of them involved communication dimensions.</p> <p>The development of the rural free delivery of mail starting in the early 1900s, would be on my list of key accomplishments because that opened up the flow of information into the farm country.</p>	<p>Impact on the agricultural industry and rural communities</p> <p>These accomplishments validate the need for agricultural communicators and journalist.</p> <p>Opportunity to grow in radio and TV</p> <p>Natured an appreciation for the field/discipline</p>
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Appendix E. Sample of Memo Writing

Memo Writing Bob Kern

August, 2013

Ames, Iowa

I met with Bob at his retirement community apartment which he had just moved from a duplex home to the apartment. Another note to make is that I was aware he had lost his wife of 66 years, just that past May. I knew that this had been hard on him and you could sense the sadness that he carried with him.

We visited for a few hours and turned on the tape recorder. He had the questions in his hand but didn't look at them very often.

Bob has always spoke off the cuff with his interviews. He does it all from memory and can remember, dates, years, names with good accuracy. I could tell from his interview 2008 to this one in 2013 that he still could remember much about his personal and professional life but he did question or reflect upon his memory a little more in regards to names, not so much dates.

He spoke with clarity and confidence in regards to some of the questions and he just talks. I don't inject unless I need to stop the recorder or ask a clarifying question. I get the sense that he knows what he going to say and he knows what he remembers.

He speaks with great fondness about co-workers, mentors, professional experiences and international work with get pride. His mind is very sharp on memories and experiences that meant a great deal to him.

You can tell that he felt that his work was greatly contributing to the greater good, to greater society. That he played a vital role in helping others through his work both as a leader, manager and co-worker.

His international work has impacted him significantly. He even wrote a large biography about his travels abroad and he logged and recorded every trip, the year and the time he stayed in that country. Bob's attention to detail and organization have helped him keep his memories focused and very detailed.

Some of his content did overlap with the 2008 interview but there was little change in the substance and details. Actually, hardly any. He could still talk about some of the same experiences with great insight and detail as he did in 2008.

Unlike other interviewees who wanted to prepare answers and make sure they sounded informative, Bob didn't do any of that. He just spoke, with eth questions in hand, with great pride and self-assurance.

How he approached the interview, was then very different than some of the others. Also, the fact that interview was done in his home, may of contributed to how he comfortable the interview as well.

Even though he loves to write, he didn't write anything down. He does enjoy visiting, sharing, learning, presenting, training, etc. He enjoys human interaction and communicating. How he approached the interview further confirms his enjoyment of training and orally communicating.

Appendix F. Example of Interpretive Analysis

<p>Ace Tyler would...</p> <p>One of the things is find mentors and find more than one mentor because you don't want to say "I'm only going to accept a mentor who is a woman," but a woman will give you certain kind of support or certain kind of mentorship that a male could not with the best will in the world and many of them have the best will in the world. Poor guys can't help it.</p> <p>The editors are 50/50, no the editors are no longer 50/50. Most of us are women. I'd say we're roughly 50/50. There might be a little bit of a preponderance of women, which would not be surprising because this is not a particularly well-paid profession. (Laughter) There is another historical connection. It will always be fulfilling, but it isn't remunerative.</p> <p>I took the first women studies. Of course it was offered in the Department of History here at Purdue. It was a mixed course. It was a seminar so it was a 600 level but since it was the first one, they let everybody in so there were people like me who were doing their dissertations, people who just discovered that we'd only won the right to vote in 1920, so there was a range of levels of sophistication. Some people, one person wanted to write on women in gym and various...so my history with that goes back a long way. There are sometimes dismissive comments made about women. This really happens. An assertive man is assertive and an assertive woman is shrill. They are just perceived very negatively. If a woman or perhaps, especially a woman in authority shows a bit of emotion, it must be her time of the month. That still happens.</p>	<p>women/male matters</p> <p>women provide certain support</p> <p>← sympathy</p> <p>new guys don't look like</p> <p>← not well paid</p> <p>← new diff. from men</p> <p>← unremunerated</p> <p>← underpaid</p> <p>← full-filling/career support (intentional?)</p> <p>women studies</p> <p>range of people who's understanding varied</p> <p>← dismissive comments</p> <p>← assertive women</p> <p>← not stopped changed? why not?</p>
<p>more women-assertive</p> <p>← negatively</p> <p>← busy</p> <p>← role</p> <p>← submissive?</p> <p>← self assurance?</p> <p>← women studies</p> <p>← esteem</p> <p>← marriage</p> <p>women emotion</p> <p>← self?</p> <p>← show never hard</p> <p>← nature of women</p>	

VITA

VITA

Natalie L. Federer**Education**

Doctor of Philosophy, Agriculture, May 2015
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

- **Field of study:** Oral history of agricultural communication community and study of human experience, memory, and narrative research.
- **Special interest:** The introduction of historiographical research methods (oral history) as a way to capture, organize, preserve, research and produce scholarly work that displays the breadth and depth of the agricultural communication community. The utilization of material culture studies as a way to learn about the history of the agricultural communication field. Dissertation title:
The Use of Oral History and Narrative Research in Broadening the Historical Foundation of the Agricultural Communication Field

Master of Arts, American History, December 2006
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

- **Field of study:** The study of material culture and archival theory and practice.
- Non-thesis option

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Communication, December 2002
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

- **Field of study:** Agricultural Communication
- Minors: English

Experience

Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, County Extension Director and 4-H Youth Development Educator
Winamac, Indiana 2009-present

- Oversee all office management, budgets, scheduling, and leadership to office staff of 9.
- Lead and organize all aspects of 4-H program for over 375 youth and volunteer management of over 120 adult volunteers.
- Facilitate, provide leadership support, and advise three Extension Boards.
- Management of Pulaski County Learning Network and all courses.
- Organize, teach, and development school enrichment programs and write 3 grants annually for school program support.

Agricultural Communication Academic Advisor
Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 2005-2009

- Advised 50 college students with course scheduling and alumni relations, organized scholarships, internship, graduation job placement, advisor of Agricultural Communicator of Tomorrow (ACT) student club.
- Wrote, edited, and designed the YDAE alumni newsletter, helped developed department identities, departmental recruitment display, and recruitment pamphlet, provided content to the YDAE Web site, and managed student writers for the Web site.

Agricultural Communication Instructor
 Purdue University, West Lafayette 2005-2009
 Courses

- YDAE 15200: Agricultural Communication Seminar course
- AGR 12100: Agriculture: History of Agricultural Communication through historical literature
- YDAE 49100: Introduction to Agricultural Web
- SA 316: Agricultural Communication Study abroad course to England (2 week summer course)

Developed curriculum, lead course lectures, organized course projects, graded, created assessment materials, and manage teaching assistants.

Purdue College of Agriculture, Office of Academic Programs, Townsend Debate Coordinator
 Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 2005-2009

- Coordinated an annual debate competition for undergraduates in the College of Agriculture. Responsibilities included: debate, argumentation, research, critical thinking and reading curriculum for workshops, development of debate handouts, Web content, press releases, advertising, participants' binders, judges' handbooks, administer the debates, create and administer assessment materials, manage debate budget, and additional research components.

Purdue Agricultural Communication News Service News Writer
 West Lafayette, Indiana 2005-2009

- Conducted research and interviews on agricultural, science and student issues, composed news and press releases, feature story writer for *Connections* (alumni publication) and *Agricultures* magazine, advised and assisted with *Destination Purdue* (student publication), and wrote for online publication for stated Extension staff titled *On Target*

Ancilla College Enrollment Counselor
 Donaldson, Indiana 2004-2005

- Advised incoming students on the enrollment, financial aid and registration process, helped coordinate incoming student events such as orientation and preview days, worked at promotional events and the recruiting of students, created presentational materials and implemented them at area high schools and advised the Ancilla Student Ambassador's Club, and member of Student Development Committee.

PACE Adult Computer Instructor PACE Center, Winamac 2003-2004

- Wrote curriculum for Microsoft programs for adult students and taught adult computer courses in Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, and Publisher.

Web Based Project

Agricultural Communication Oral History Project Web site. Hosted by the Agricultural Communication Documentation Center (ACDC) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2009).

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/funkaces/acdc/oralhistory.html>

Agricultural Published Writings

"The History of the Agricultural Communication Community," *Signals* (ACE newsletter) Spring 2010.

"Where Art and Agriculture Intersect," *Agricultures*. (Quarterly magazine) Fall 2008.

"Pigs never boar retiree," *Connections*, Purdue College of Agriculture. (Quarterly magazine). Vol. 16 Number 1, Winter 2007.

"Seeds captivate Capper," *Connections*, Purdue College of Agriculture. (Quarterly magazine). Vol. 16, Number 2, Spring 2007.

“Talkin’ about our generations,” *Connections*, Purdue College of Agriculture. (Quarterly magazine). Vol. 15, Number 3, Fall 2006.

Historical Published Writings

“Dressed in black from head to toe: the story of mourning clothes,” *ExPress* (community magazine) Sept. 2008.

“At the Museum: Pulaski County’s German Heritage,” *ExPress* (community magazine) Oct. 2008.

“A Picture tells a thousand words,” *ExPress* (community magazine) Feb. 2009.

Awards

2005 Technology grant recipient (co-author)

2006 Purdue International Programs grant recipient

2006 Indiana Humanities Council grant recipient

2006 Departmental nominee for Outstanding Service to Students Award for College of Agriculture

2007 Association for Communication Excellence gold award for magazine and periodicals

2008 Association for Communication Excellence professional development grant recipient

2009 Association for Communication Excellence professional development grant recipient

2009 Indiana Humanities Council grant recipient

2009 Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc., travel grant recipient

2011 REMC grant recipient for Extension Programs

2011 REMC grant recipient for livestock identification support

2011 IEEA 4-H Youth Development Section Award

2012 Indiana Humanities Council grant recipient for Civil War Club

2012 Pulaski County Community Foundation grant recipient for PCHS

2012 REMC grant recipient for preschool literacy program

2012 Pulaski Alliances for Community Education grant recipient for Pulaski Co. Learning Network

2013 REMC grant recipient for preschool literacy program

2013 REMC grant recipient for Extension Programs

2013 Pulaski County Community Foundation grant recipient for PCHS

2013 Pulaski Alliance for Community Education grant recipient for Pulaski Co. Learning Network

2013 CASA volunteer certification for completion

Activities

Member of Pulaski County Drug Free Council 2013-present

Victor Chapel Cemetery Association Board Member 2012-present

- Secretary and Treasurer
- Write all forms of communication
- Donate time and labor in mowing and upkeep of the cemetery
- Assist with all forms of documentation and correspondence

Pulaski County Historical Society Board Member 2006-present

- County museum coordinator
- Opera house committee
- Write and edit organization’s newsletter
- Participate in volunteer activities
- Historical architectural surveyor

Pulaski County Jr. Historical Society Civil War Club 2012-present

- Co-advise the club
- Organize meetings and trips for youth
- Organized Indiana stated Museum exhibit leases to local library
- Provide leadership to educational programming at the library in partnership with the club

Pulaski County Jr. Leaders 2009-present

- Co-advise the club
- Assists in organizing all fundraisers and community service activities
- Organize all forms of publicity and communications for the club
- Provide leadership to the club at meetings and committee meetings

Indiana Extension Educator Association (IEEA) 2009-present

- Secretary of Interest Committee
- Chair of Interest Committee
- Advisor of Interest Committee

Star City Sesquicentennial Board Member 2009-2010

- Director of Communications
- Participate in volunteer activities

Advise (facilitator of the following boards)

- Pulaski County 4-H Council
- Pulaski County Fair Board
- Pulaski County Extension Board

Volunteer

- Star City Youth Baseball and Tee-ball Ledge (coach)
- 4-H Project Leader, Heritage Project
- Pulaski Co. YMCA Fundraising Campaign volunteer (2013-2014)