

Evan Michales
HIST 667 - Oral History
Field Journal for Interview with Nancy Shia

I was recommended to speak with Ms. Shia by Professor Daniel Kerr, the oral historian teaching the course, as he had spoken with Ms. Shia before and knew her to be an excellent person to interview, especially for a project like mine that is centered on photographers. As such, I was able to reach out to her first by email and second by phone for further clarification of details for the interview. I met her at her apartment building (1736 Columbia Road NW), where it was established that the best place to conduct the interview was on the building's roof, thus accounting for the background noise and distractions at various points. Of the interactions before and after the recording that have much bearing on the content was a conversation I had with her following the interview where I talked about my own travels to Cuba, for she had mentioned visiting the island. It was because of that that I asked about her outfit, because she was wearing a Fidel Castro beret and a Che Guevara shirt, and that was something I wished to talk about from my end. Of the interactions during the interview, there was a major issue towards the end where the battery of the audio recorder kept dying, thus forcing Ms. Shia to recap the story she was telling (about the Adams-Morgan plaza) several times, however thankfully I was able to catch the battery's decline in time to prevent the loss of a major segment of her story. She did at times point to various nearby buildings to emphasize her point, and it was difficult to identify which buildings she was pointing to even during the interview itself. Lastly, there was an interruption towards the beginning of two other members of the apartment complex who came up to the roof to chat amongst themselves, thus adding some additional background noise at times.