

This is a transcript of the video clip "Collecting the First Sets of Narratives for the DALN" from the interview with Dr. Cynthia Selfe in Samuel Head, "A Scholarly Legacy: Professor Cynthia Selfe and the Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives" published in *Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, Pedagogy*, 22(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/22.1/interviews/head>.

Dr. Selfe:

And the other story I can tell you is when we finished constructing the digital archive, after we got the IRB approval, we had to have seed the collection -- the archive -- with certain collections of narratives so that there would be something there for people to look at; it wouldn't be just like an empty bucket. Right? And so my idea would be to go to scholars that I knew, Brenda Brueggerman, Beverly Moss, I went to Brenda and I asked her if we could do deaf and hard-of-hearing citizens, and if she'd help us with that effort, which we did. It's a still collection in the digital archive, and it's used all the time by people because it includes not only the question-- the interviewer -- plus the participant, but a translator -- a signer and translator -- and there was simultaneously voice and signing. So that was a terrific exercise for us. We learned a lot about how different populations need to be accommodated with both the technology and the setting and the, you know, what different kinds of questions are prompted, what kinds of involvement that prompted, who might be involved, how we might go about doing it.

And then the second question -- the second incident -- was when I went to Beverly Moss, and I thought we should do black women academics because Jackie Jones Royster was here, Valerie Lee was here, there were many people I knew would be terrific participants. And so I started this effort by sending out an email to all the black women academics on the campus of I knew, and I sent out this email asking for their involvement. And I didn't get a single blessed email back. None. Zero. I was -- it was busted. It was nothing. I got nothing back. And I was just discouraged, and I went over to Bev's office, her office is right down the hall. And I said "Bev! What's happening here? What is happening here?" And she was very patient, and explained to me how often these women were approached because they are, in a sense, so rare within the academy, so rare within our culture in some regards, so many duties and obligations devolve to them, and they have so much on their plate. And they, for good reason don't trust all the people who come to them asking for involvement, for very good reason. And so Beverly schooled me a bit on that, with great kindness and generosity, and then she sent out a similar email message, and within like two minutes got back all sorts of responses. And as a team we went back and we interviewed people, sometimes in groups, sometimes alone, black women academics, and I had another population with which to seed the DALN. So I learned a lot from Beverly and from Brenda about what it takes to actually carry through a project like this, and how different populations will approach the task of telling a story and thinking about what it means to tell a story in very different ways, and that the DALN had to be -- had to not just accommodate, but seek all those different voices, and be ready to adjust its practices and its collection efforts and its -- project to all those different voices because every single voice that we listened to had something need to tell us about literacy.