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## [Research Note] The Zetlin Interviews: the anti-Vietnam movement in Australia 1962-1975

Rowan Cahill

*University of Wollongong*, rowanc@uow.edu.au

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## [Research Note] The Zetlin Interviews: the anti-Vietnam movement in Australia 1962-1975

### Abstract

A significant resource relating to the 'Long Sixties' is in the archives of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), Canberra. It comprises 82 professionally filmed interviews, filmed against a green background to enable future film-makers creative freedom regarding their use. The interviews range in length from about fifteen minutes to over an hour; the subjects are well-known and not so well-known activists, male and female, in the anti-Vietnam movement in Australia, 1962-75.

### Keywords

Vietnam War, activists

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## THE ZETLIN INTERVIEWS

### The anti-Vietnam movement in Australia 1962 – 1975

Rowan Cahill

University of Wollongong



A significant resource relating to the 'Long Sixties' is in the archives of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), Canberra. It comprises 82 professionally filmed interviews, filmed against a green background to enable future film-makers creative freedom regarding their use. The interviews range in length from about fifteen minutes to over an hour; the subjects are well-known and not so well-known activists, male and female, in the anti-Vietnam movement in Australia, 1962-75.

The films are individually catalogued, with full details of length, film stock, place and time of filming, along with, in most cases, detailed biographical material about the subject. The subjects and the creator of the films have granted public access and use for non-commercial purposes. The collection is Australia-wide in terms of interviewees, and the places of filming. This generous geographical sweep breaks free of a research tendency that gives accounts of the period a Melbourne,

and to a lesser extent Brisbane, focus, where, to date, some of the best accessible archival materials for the period are located.

The interviews were filmed over two years, 2013-14, by a small team headed by veteran Australian documentary maker Larry Zetlin. Over 100 interviews were recorded; at the time of writing, 82 of the participants have agreed to release their interviews to the AWM archive. Zetlin did a nationwide search for people willing to be interviewed and travelled to meet those who agreed. The intention was, and is, to use the material in an hour-long documentary film project about the Australian anti-war movement with a particular focus on those at the pointy end of the movement, those who were either conscientious objectors or draft resisters. The working title of Zetlin's film project is HELL NO! WE WON'T GO.

However, as there has been a lack of interest in the project by film-financiers and broadcast outlets, HELL NO! is a slow work-in-progress. On the Gulliver Media Australia website, Zetlin is listed as the film's Producer/Director; Chris Carroll as the Writer; and documentary film-maker Martha Ansara as the Consultant/Advisor.

Project head Larry Zetlin came to Australia as a youngster with his parents from Harbin, China, and in the 1960s was active in the Australian music scene as a band promoter and journalist, and in the underground film movement. While studying at Queensland University, he was Brisbane correspondent for Australia's first pop music newspaper *Go-Set*, which was published weekly from 1968-74. After training in the UK at the London Film School, Zetlin returned to Australia and worked for the ABC, specialising in natural history film work and production. In a lifetime of film work, he picked up a swag of international and national awards, and is now an independent documentary film-maker.

Explaining the HELL NO! WE WON'T GO interviews to ABC senior journalist Peter McCutcheon in 2016, Zetlin said: "My generation is getting to the stage where we are going to drop off the twig soon and I wanted to record as many of these memories as possible to make it available to all future historians and future film makers to use". To bring up the interview collection, go to the AWM catalogue, click on the 'Collection' portal, which brings up another page, then tick the 'Collections' box, and enter the Search term HELL NO WE WON'T GO.

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