Anne Sexton’s therapy tapes represent a unique archive in the history of women, poetry and psychotherapy. Donated in 2002 to the Radcliffe Institute by Sexton’s daughter, Linda Gray Sexton, the tapes were used by the late Diane Middlebrook to write *Anne Sexton: A Biography* (1992). Linda Sexton also incorporated material from the tapes into her memoir, *Searching for Mercy Street: My Journey Back to My Mother, Anne Sexton* (1994). Linda Sexton gave me access to this unusual research material of over 300 hours of sessions.

In this paper, I discuss my experience in the archive of Anne Sexton’s therapy tapes. I’ll also talk about the controversy surrounding Middlebrook’s use of the tapes in her 1991 biography, and the various reactions from the literary and psychiatric communities that her research provoked.